

Being a fan of a sports team can be fun, rewarding, and adventurous. But sometimes, how can we justify the costs of an expensive feat, with the cost of games being so daunting? Moreover, how does it change our mental wellbeing? When players move teams, when they go on severe losing streaks, how do we as fans consume that? Does that change the mindset of how we barrack for the teams we love. As fans, lots of times we will always stand by the teams we have been cheering on our whole lives, sometimes it is engrained into us. But once we get there, seeing the in-game magic is next to nothing. We dive into this paper by assessing one specific organization, the Vancouver Canucks. This paper will be assessed on the views of facts, storytelling, and first person.

For context, when my best friend Emma invited me to a ladies - only fantasy hockey league, I had no idea as to what I was getting myself into. I wasn't really a hockey fan at the time, and I didn't have a clue about fantasy sports, but thought it would be fun as my friend wanted to get a group of ladies together to do this. This came off of her attempt to participate in fantasy sports with her partner, Alex, and his friends. She wanted revenge from the so-called 'gentlemans game' and enlisted her closest ladies to help her out. This then turned me from the once a year Christmas IIHF World Junior Hockey Tournament watcher, to a full-blown NHL crazed lady. It eventually became a love I couldn't shake, like a dog with its bones, or a kid on Christmas, if you will.

"We Are All Canucks" –

Going to a game is expensive in itself. On a personal note, I saved for the summer in order to go to back to back Vancouver Canucks games with my friends. Cost of the hotel, tickets,

gas, not only to mention how much it costs to eat and drink inside of Rogers Arena. It was close to \$500, just for tickets and accommodations, Ouch! So as someone who doesn't get down to Vancouver frequently, this trip felt like a luxury. Whereas I felt as though we got a "good deal" for our tickets, I am well aware how expensive going to a game is. After researching the Vancouver Canucks website, and Ticketmaster, I observed the pricing trends as so: Weekend games, such as Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays are valued at a higher pricing point, as they are more desirable. It costs around \$175+ in the lower bowl area, and between \$80-110+ in the upper bowl area. It is also dependent on the opposing team, as if it is an all-Canadian matchup, further known as a "*Hockey Night in Canada*" game. Canadian vs. American teams usually follow a lighter fare. Furthermore, season tickets and premium suites for the Vancouver Canucks are at a considerably higher price point, from anywhere upward to \$15,000 for season tickets in the club section. But the cost, overall, doesn't even cover the magic of the game at Rogers Arena. The pulse in the arena from the moment you step foot in the building is electric, walking around and observing how people function is very interesting, from watching young kids attending their first games all the way to the fans who have been season ticket holders for ages, there is room for everyone. Observing the many jerseys that fans wear, many current players such as: Quinn Hughes, Brock Boeser, Elias Pettersson, and Conor Garland. Many fans also wear former players jerseys, I do enjoy this because although they may leave the team, they will always be Canucks. Former player jerseys we observed were: J.T. Miller, Andrei Kuzmenko, Daniel and Henrik Sedin, and Roberto Luongo, to name a few.

"Where Moments Become Memories" –

My friends and I, however, had our own agenda: get close enough to the glass during the warmup period so we could see our favourite players. This is something that I personally had

never done before, as the last game I attended, we weren't sitting close to that area. However, my friends had gone to a game at the end of the last season, and went and took photos and videos of the players warming up. So when it came time, I knew I wanted to do the same. As we head through the section, I observe a clear area where I want to take photos. I am conscious of not wanting to block anyone's view, especially a child, but close enough for my own personal gain. I shimmy myself and my friend, Emma through the stands and past some people higher up, as I approach the glass, I know I ought to be in the "golden zone" of where I want to be. There is no better feeling than being in the arena at a home game, it doesn't even hold a candle to watching it at home on television, lets call it couch hockey if we must. So when I had one row of fans in front of me, glass side, right beside the Canucks bench where the players would be walking out, reality hit, and my hands did shake a little when they came onto the ice, squee! A truly fascinating experience, indeed! Emma's partner, Alex, was standing a few rows behind us to get more of an overhead view. He recalled it being fun that he got to watch us, watch from a closer angle. Emma recalls the experience as "insane and amazing." Being so close to the glass watching these players we watch on television being less than six to ten feet away from us was a feeling that kept me starstruck for most of the weekend. Watching the players warm up, my friends and I noticed the scuffs and distortions in the glass. Pucks are being thrown around the arena day in and day out as Rogers Arena also acts as the Canucks current practice facility, on top of their game day location. Furthermore, that has been a big point of contention among the organization, as the team currently doesn't have a designated practice facility. We snapped a few pictures of the players getting ready for the big game and then headed over to our seats. The game starts, and captivation takes over for the next two and half hours.

“All Together, All In” –

As Quinn Hughes, defenseman and captain of the Vancouver Canucks dances his skates along the blue line, cuts back, “breaks” the ankles of the opposing Columbus Blue Jacket player and sprints up the ice to slide the puck to the most available forward, for them to throw the puck in the back of the net, past the Blue Jacket netminder. Watching him take the ice was truly remarkable as he is a player who is very dialed in. It’s almost like he is in a glass box, he doesn’t hear anything. You see so many people yelling for him, and he doesn’t even bat an eyelash. After observing Hughes at warmups, both myself and my friends could tell that he has quite a “routine”: skating on both sides of the Canucks end, stretching, shooting pucks, through to an open net, or having goaltender, Kevin Lankinen catch. One main observation that I noticed that Hughes does that I didn’t catch other players do is that he is always adjusting and ‘tinkering’ with his equipment. On many occasions, I caught him adjusting his jersey, his helmet, checking his skates, among other things. I even have a few videos of him adjusting his jersey. As I continue to visualize Hughes in the “glass box” ideology, it is so striking to me of how dialed in a player truly can be. Yes, he is fragile in his own regard, but he doesn’t hear the noise, whether that be fans, or media. In a recent interview, Hughes said he does not hear the ‘noise’ that surrounds the Canucks year after year, specifically on social media. *“I’m not on social media, so, like, the only noise is the noise inside my own head.”* Hughes explains. The social media outlets, trolls, whatever you want to call them have a way of getting the fans riled up, but I digress, this is not the paper to write about that. As the clock winds down, forward Kiefer Sherwood slides the puck to longest tenured Canuck and forward, Brock Boeser. Boeser skates the puck forward and dumps it in behind the Bluejacket goaltender, making the score 4-3 Canucks. Electricity

pumps through the arena knowing that we netted the game winning goal. The clock winds down and the buzzer blares through Rogers. Securing the Saturday night win, The crowd erupts in cheers as “*Don’t You Forget About Me*” by Simple Minds hums through the arena. I can tell you, I didn’t forget about them, I was right there with them.

References:

[2024.25 SEASON TICKET MEMBERSHIP - NEW](#)

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“We Are All Canucks, Where Moments Become Memories, and All Together, All In” - are all affiliations of the Vancouver Canucks Hockey Club.