



Gerry Kahrman — The Province

Ex-BCTV staffer Bernie Pascall (left) talks hockey on Internet with former Canucks goalie Richard Brodeur.

Casting a wider Web

With right computer, Internet shows provide alternative

The studio is unbelievably modest. Two cameras, one of them a mounted camcorder. A couple of small lights.

If this is where the future of televised sports is taking shape, you do not want to see it happen searching for the unmarked studio building, located on a dead-end street in a Burnaby industrial park, at night.



LOWELL ULLRICH

The set is no match for the nearby digs at BCTV, where Bernie Pascall worked for 28 years. But it is here where he gets cozy with his audience through the Internet as the host of Hockey on Tap.

"The Internet," Pascall muses. "When I started this I had zero knowledge about the Internet."

Now he's part of it, hosting the first show of its kind, at noon Tuesdays at www.hockeyontap.com.

Webcasting has gained limited acceptance because of problems associated with streaming media. Translation: It's still too slow for dial-up connection users.

But it's getting bigger. Interac-

Quote rack

Memorable lines from the week:

■ Michael Landsberg on TSN's *Off The Record*, weighing in on the Marlins' boycott in support of Elian Gonzalez: "Isn't politics, life, humanity larger than pro sports?"

■ Jim Rome of Fox/CTVSN's *Last Word*, on the length of the NBA playoffs: "Just as the Lakers are lifting the Larry O'Brien Trophy, they'll be loading the buses to get them to training camp."

■ Martine Gaillard of *Headline Sports*, with a description you'd pay to watch if it could really happen: "The Senators had to come out flying, literally."

■ Barry Macdonald on *Sports Page*, recapping a big day by whining Ken Griffey Jr.: "Two homers for the Reggie Miller of baseball."

tive Netcasting Systems Inc., (INSINC), which bankrolls Pascall, last fall showed live harness racing from Fraser Downs and will soon do the same with Hastings Park at www.mediaontap.com

The initial conclusion is that any computer geek can now have their own show. Pascall looks at the two-month-old hockey concept as something different than a sports equivalent of public access TV.

It's not as if he hasn't had time to think about the future.

BCTV dumped him as part of a 1997 purge. He took the station's full-pension offer and has tried to stay in the marketplace. Pascall's most recent project was to write

a report at the request of the provincial government on violence in hockey.

Now he's eager to rub webcast reporting triumphs in the faces of mainstream television. This, he says, is not hard to do.

"Everyone (in TV) wants to be a comedian," said Pascall, who has recruited ex-BCTV kamikaze reporter Michael Kennedy for *Hockey on Tap*. "You don't see stories anymore. You don't see Pat Quinn flinging a hockey stick (like he once did at Kennedy)."

"It's highlight after highlight. It's laziness. With (webcasting) we have time to get into topics."

The show is no visual masterpiece. Video for program credits are clips from Pascall gigs over the years. Nothing stolen.

But it's decent enough. And with Pascall's connections it only figures to get better. Can't watch Tuesdays? All the shows are in archives.

It's production-cost friendly. You couldn't play a hand of bridge with the number of crew members it takes to do Pascall's show.

Webcasting's downside: It's a little tough to follow your favourite team this way at the beach. "It's television in a way, but we're trying to do things totally different than television," said INSINC production manager John Doyle. "It's sort of how pirate radio started out."

The difference is that the pirates, judging where Pascall works, had better digs.

Sports on TV returns May 26