

# NBC Sports Group Media Conference

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## Mike "Doc" Emrick Press Conference

With Contributions from:

SAM FLOOD

GARY BETTMAN

EDDIE OLCZYK

LOU LAMORIELLO

AL MICHAELS

CHRIS McCLOSKEY: Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you for joining us today to celebrate the career of Mike "Doc" Emrick, who announced his retirement earlier today following a 47-year career broadcasting professional hockey. We'll begin in just a moment with an opening remark from Doc and then we'll take your questions.

As our press release said earlier today, Doc has called 22 Stanley Cup Finals, 35 Game 7s, six Olympics and estimates more than 3,700 games in all. He's a member of seven halls of fame, including being the first broadcaster elected to the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame, and he's won eight sports Emmy Awards for outstanding play-by-play, including the last seven straight, the most ever for a sportscaster.

And for all of us who have had the great pleasure to work with Doc, as wonderful a sportscaster as he is, he is an even better person. Now let me waffle board it over to the great Doc Emrick.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Thank you, and I thank all who are on this call today, especially those of you who have just finished covering the Playoffs and the draft and free agency. For that reason, I will be brief here at the start.

Partway through the Playoffs, which NBC graciously allowed me to do from home, I became very aware not only of how fortunate I was to continue to be safe here at home, but aside from my cancer scare in 1991, to have been healthy these past 50 years since reporting on the NHL for



the first time. And any of you who are in the Professional Hockey Writers Association of the NHL, I was a card-carrying member for that first year out of the 50 in the Pittsburgh region, covering the Penguins for the Beaver County Times. Red Kelly was the coach. That was '70-'71, so I counted that as my first year of having games on my calendar to attend, and then college for two years doing games there and then seven years of the developmental leagues and then 40 in the NHL.

Looking back on that time, I became a Million Miler on one airline during the 50 years since, and marveled at how well the whole travel system worked even after 9/11, and reflecting back on that time, I'm still okay. And I am not sure what you see through the windows where you are, but in Michigan, we have the height of fall with great color today, and that's where I think we at the Emrick house are, humans and creatures. Not as young as we were, but we are in a great place right now and able to enjoy this time in our collective lives.

For the first time since that '70-'71 season back in Pittsburgh, I won't be putting game dates on a calendar anymore, and fortunately NBC has allowed me the opportunity to occasionally send a video essay to them. So out of all of that, I still get one of their team jerseys and am staying on their team.

One other note and then I will stop. Joyce and I have always cared about animals of all kinds, and this date got crowded into the hockey calendar because of the launch date tomorrow determined six months ago of a book that Kevin Allen and I -- Kevin, who was for 34 years the hockey writer for USA Today, we began a book about a year and a half or so ago, and it is titled "Off Mike," and it launches tomorrow. Triumph is publishing it. It is autobiographical, a lot of hockey stories, but it's on sale beginning tomorrow wherever books are sold, and 100 percent of whatever I receive goes to the hands-on care of animals, dogs and cats and volunteers, gas cards for them, veterinarians that you don't know and probably won't know, and I will thank persons who buy a copy.

You know, in this pandemic there are occasionally surgeries that might need to be done that can't be done for free, and there are people that because they are out of work don't get a chance maybe have the option of paying for those. This is an area where Joyce and I can



occasionally step in.

This is not an organized fund that we have created other than it is just cash where we see needs and are occasionally able to meet them, and that makes us feel good, and it does good for animals of all kinds.

So that's the end of the self-promotion. I guess that wasn't a very short announcement to start this all off, was it, but anyway, that's what I have to say to begin here, and I thank all of you for taking some time here on a Monday to get us started.

CHRIS McCLOSKEY: We do have a special guest who would like to say something, so please welcome the former captain of the Williams College hockey team and NBC Sports' executive producer, Sam Flood.

SAM FLOOD: Doc, it's a sad day, and they say there's no crying in hockey, but I've cried twice in the last 12 hours, last night when I received the video in the wee hours of the morning that Vinny Costello so nicely put together with your words, and again this morning when I watched it a second time, and I just went back to all the great moments we shared together and what you've meant to the game. You've made it a better game, you've made it a better life for so many people because you care so much. You made every day fun, and when the Doc Emrick evil chuckle comes in when two gentlemen square off on the ice, you know it's a special day, and every day I got to talk to you and every day I got to walk into a rink with you early in the morning for a morning skate can never be replaced, but memories will last a lifetime, going all the way to a bus ride from Detroit to Pittsburgh watching the movie "Slapshot" with our production team and the rest of the announcers on the way to the Stanley Cup Final.

There is nothing better than hockey, Doc, and we thank you for all you've done, and I'm so happy that you and Joyce are going to have a special time together with the animals and create some new memories. Thank you for all you've done for the sport of hockey and for the Flood family.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Thank you so much. That was quite a bus ride, wasn't it, and in addition, we got to stop at McDonald's at the last exit on the Ohio Turnpike, and we all piled off the bus, and the bus driver was a little worried that we were going to wind up recreating "Slapshot" by taking a hammer to the side of the bus. I think she was a little concerned about that because it was talked about. Anyway, what is next on the agenda here, Chris?

**Q. I'm curious, do you have one favorite kind of memory, one call, one game that kind of sticks out**

**among all these games, these 3,700 games over the last 47 plus years?**

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: No, I really don't. It is wonderful to hear from you and to trace your career back to when you first had the ambition of doing this and told me about it when you were nine. Was it nine years old?

**Q. Five.**

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Five! And you've certainly done wonderfully now with the Associated Press. Now, I'm trying to think back to anything that I have said that has registered with anyone. I guess I'd leave it up to people that are listening to -- if there's anything that they remember about all of those years. But I can't really think of anything other than what might have been captured in the video today.

I remember T.J. Oshie when he scored the four goals, and there wasn't really anything other than -- at that point it's about the players and the goaltenders that are participating, and this was the 2014 preliminary round game between the United States and Russia, and the rule in international hockey is when you get into a shootout that after the third shot, you can continue to use the same shooter. Dan Bylsma was a very smart man, and he realized he had the best guy in shootouts on his roster, and so he just kept using him.

So after the third shot T.J. Oshie was going to take the rest of them, so he wound up taking six, and he scored on four, including the one that clinched it, and that was in the video, and of course it's easy to forget when Oshie was scoring that Jonathan Quick was doing a wonderful job at the other end preventing the likes of Ilya Kovalchuk and Pavel Datsyuk and others from either scoring or at least clinching the victory earlier in the sudden death rounds.

So he scores the goal, and as we are wrapping up, I remember Matt Marvin, our producer, he scored the goal and then there was the celebration and all of that, and because it was a preliminary round game, the players departed, and it came to mind because this was the U.S. against Russia, it came to mind that there was another famous game, even though it was not a preliminary round game, it was a game in 1980 in Lake Placid. So I just asked Matt to have our director get a shot of the crowds leaving.

So at that point as he was showing some of the fans leaving the exits, I said, "They paid their rubles to see the home team win, but not this game, not tonight," which was the phrase used by Herb Brooks before Team USA played the Soviet Union in Lake Placid in 1980.



So it was one of those things that I thought to recall at that time. But the more significant thing to me was -- it's one of those things that -- not to promote the book, but it's one of those things that I found so significant that I did include in the book, unlike what I just told you, was that after that he was of course hustled off to all of the prominent shows that we had going on in Sochi to talk about this, and he kept saying, "You guys are making too big a thing of this."

Well, it was a thrilling victory, and as a matter of fact, one of our staffers Dan Patrick said to him, do you realize that if this had even been in a later round, you would be as big back in the States as Mike Eruzione for scoring that goal in Lake Placid?

So we get back to the States, and now there's a game in Chicago between Chicago and St. Louis, and at this time T.J. is playing for St. Louis. So I asked him, I said, T.J., before some of those shots you were taking against Sergei Bobrovsky you had a smile on your face. Why was that? He said, well, it was getting kind of sunny. And I didn't think it was. It seemed to me to be pressure packed.

And then the last thing I asked him was, is this the most significant thing that's ever happened to you in your life, and he said, no, shortly after I got back, I witnessed the birth of my first child. That was awesome.

So that's what I recall, and that's one at least thing that I said that comes to mind now, and it's the springboard to another story that I think is far more significant.

CHRIS McCLOSKEY: Before we get to our next question from the press, we do have another guest speaker who would like to say something. Please welcome the Commissioner of the National Hockey League, Mr. Gary Bettman.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Oh, my.

GARY BETTMAN: Hey, Doc, how you doing? Speaking of significant, which is a word you just used, as you and I discussed yesterday, you have been simply magnificent at your craft, you have been a magnificent representative of hockey for the last 50 years, particularly the NHL. There's nobody who does a play-by-play as well as you do, and I just want to thank you for all of the incredible energy and effort you've given us and our fans, in particular the insights you give them to the game. The experience you give them watching hockey is just outstanding, and both personally and professionally we're going to miss you. I'm going to miss you.

But I wanted to remind you as everybody else, you are just

a treasure, and while we respect the decision and I admire you going out on top with all those Emmys you needed or could build a room around, we think you're great, and we're just going to miss you. But thank you, thank you, thank you.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Thank you so much. Say hello to Shelli and everyone at home.

GARY BETTMAN: I will, and you do the same to Joyce and the horses and the pups. Be well, my friend, and thank you.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Thank you. Thanks so much.

CHRIS McCLOSKEY: Thank you, Commissioner, and now we will take another question from the press.

**Q. Probably not as thrilling to talk to me as the commissioner of the NHL, but I'll try and do my best, and thank you very much for all the professionalism over the years. I know from having talked to you many times that NBC always left this decision up to you and you were essentially on a running -- even if it was not specifically the language in the contract, that you were sort of always on a one-year contract, that when desired you could continue or stop. Why the decision now? What is the reason you wanted to take this moment to step away?**

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: It was just as I expressed earlier. Thank you for all of the time that we've had chats over the years. I remember sitting across from you at a table in a restaurant in New York and we had similar chats a long time ago.

But no, it was just a -- it seemed like it was time. I guess 50 was a round number in covering the league, and it was just also a time that in your mid 70s you realize that you have had a very healthy, long run except for the cancer scare, and you are looking outside and seeing this to be the autumn of your years and a time when, as you are healthy, that you still want to do that.

And so there's certainly still the love for hockey that I always had, but this is the time for turning to other things, including a commitment to helping people with the animals, as I expressed earlier. There's no back story. There's no other thing. This is it.

CHRIS McCLOSKEY: One quick pause here before we get to our next question. We have a special guest calling in, a member of the U.S. hockey Hall of Fame and your booth mate for 14 years, Doc, Mr. Eddie Olczyk.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Oh, my goodness to Murphy. Are the horses running somewhere?

EDDIE OLCZYK: Oh, wow. I thank you. We all thank you, Doc, for your passion, your love for the game, your appreciation and love for people. And I thank you for trusting me 14 years ago when Sam gave me the opportunity to sit next to you for the very first time on NBC. When you called me yesterday, it was pouring rain here at home in Chicago, and I can honestly say after I hung up the phone with you that my windows were up, the sunroof was closed, but there was some water inside the car after finding out that you'd decided to ride off into the sunset, and rightfully so.

We've had many discussions over the years which I will take with me the rest of my life and know that you are very much at peace. My phone, my email has been swamped since late last night. Been hard conversations with a lot of people, communicating with our teammate Brian Boucher, Jonesy, and hearing from legendary hockey players like Ron Francis, Denis Savard, sending their well wishes, players like Ulf Samuelsson and Luke Richardson, Todd Marchant. The appreciation for everything you have given to our game is that we're all much better for having you in our lives and we will miss you.

It is a sad day, as Sam said, and the commissioner, but we are so happy for you and for Joyce, and I couldn't be more proud to have been your partner for 14 years. I'm going to miss you, but I know we're going to be in contact, and I thank you very much for the trust that you have given me and the support that you have given me in helping me become the broadcaster and person I've become since our relationship.

I love you, and I just wanted to make sure you knew how important and impactful your career has been on a lot of people. I'm sure there are a lot of fans out there that feel the same way that we all do today. I just wanted to jump on and I know we've got a lot of people waiting to chat with you, but I just wanted to make sure you heard it, and I look forward to another dinner and another story or two and maybe we can hit another 50/50 like we did in Detroit a few years ago, Doc. Congratulations, I love you, and look forward to chatting with you and seeing you soon.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Thank you. The feeling is mutual, and you turned me into a gambler, and wouldn't you know, not only a 50/50 but occasionally a horse player, and my 95-year-old stepmom still does that, too. Wouldn't you know that one of the text messages I got today was from the play-by-play caller of all of those triple crown races, Larry Collmus, and I texted him back and said you may have called all those big races but the one I remember the

most was the neck-and-neck between My Wife Knows Everything and The Wife Doesn't Know, and he laughed.

EDDIE OLCZYK: Congratulations, and we'll talk to you soon, Doc.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Okay, thank you.

CHRIS McCLOSKEY: We'll take our next question from the press.

**Q. For a lot of the day you've been the No. 1 trending topic on Twitter has been thank you, Doc, in the middle of the election and everything else going on in the world. You've talked about your connection to the game and to the people in the sport; what has your connection to just hockey fans and viewers meant to you over the years?**

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Well, they're the backbone of the sport, and I think, too -- and that extends to colleges, and I still hold and have in my file because I'm an analog guy, the history of Cornell hockey that you wrote when you were a student there. People that care about the sport mean a lot to me, and the people that care include those that pay the price of admission. And that was why I was so glad that Vinny Costello found that wonderful collection of young and middle-aged fans because they are the future of the sport and the people that care about it and are so important to it, as well as those who care about it in towns like Bridgeport and Hartford and Hershey and Bakersfield and all around the country in the minor league cities because those are cities where it is going to be difficult to follow the role of the NHL teams as they come back.

But fan clubs have meant a lot to me and they've always been important to me over the years, but I try to always attend their meetings, especially back when it was a non-pandemic thing. I'm scheduled to be a virtual guest at the Devils' fan club meeting next week.

The fans, it's probably -- you could write a better quote than I could think of today because you're such a skilled writer, but they are the reason that the people put on the equipment and go out and play the sport. Now, the guys like the sport, but without fans, even though we survived one half of one season and a playoff without them, it's not going to last very long if we aren't able to get them back because especially in those cities in developmental leagues, they rely on ticket sales and sponsorship, and the players also rely on the passion of the fans to generate the emotion that helps them put on the exciting show that we get to see.

And I know I've mentioned it to you once, but inside

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

Nassau Coliseum, I never heard a louder ovation, and this goes back to those years when there were Stanley Cups there. I can't remember a louder ovation than when John Tavares scored an overtime winner against Washington in the playoff series that the Islanders had there, and it forced the continuation of the series and eventually they lost in seven games, but the roar of the crowd is something that we missed this year. We had a marvelously achieved playoff, but the roar of the crowd was when we missed, and that is what we will look forward to having when a season begins, either as it begins hopefully or as it develops. Hopefully we will have the ability to hear, as we did in the baseball Playoffs, the latter stages of it this year, and as we are hearing some in the NFL, we will be able to hear hockey fans cheering again.

I hope I've answered your questions because you've been such a good friend all of this time, and hopefully we can continue our friendship over the years and we can laugh at the fish flying in the air when Harvard shows up.

CHRIS McCLOSKEY: We have someone on the line now who's a president of hockey operations for the New York Islanders, Mr. Lou Lamoriello.

LOU LAMORIELLO: Hello, Mike. After listening to Sam and Gary and Oly, I don't know what more can be said and how well they described you, not only professionally but personally. I've had the honor and pleasure of going way back with you where we both started. I remember being interviewed by you in 1972 in Bowling Green, and then you calling one of the most penalized games between Providence and Bowling Green if my memory serves me right.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: It was wonderful.

LOU LAMORIELLO: And then following you off to Port Huron with a couple of those players who played for Providence actually played for a very, very close friend Morris Snyder and I understand you were in the room when I was trying to get them another \$10,000 in a salary; is that correct?

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Yeah, and you did, too, and Morris never for gave you for it.

LOU LAMORIELLO: But Mike, the years that we spent in New Jersey I cherish not only the professionalism that you brought to our organization, not only sharing in the first Stanley Cup, the calling of it, but the relationship that began as people, and every time our paths crossed I couldn't be more proud that I've had the privilege of experiencing a part of your career but more importantly the genuine type of person that you are and the care that you

have for individuals. I'm sitting here listening, and here you are, you're going in to speak to the Devils' fan club, which I know you went back every year to do so, and there has never been anything asked of you that you've ever said no to, no matter how small or how big.

I thank you on behalf of all the players, all the fans that we both share. There's no one better. I've always said that there's two, three kinds of people in this world, the ones you like but you might not respect, and then there's the ones you respect that you might not like, but there is no one in this world that I've crossed paths that didn't not only like you but respected you to the highest level. I've never heard a word other than that.

Congratulations on a career that should feel so proud, and Joyce and all your associates, the animals around that we've all shared with you at many different times. Once again, thank you, Mike. I can't really say enough without getting choked up about you. Thank you.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Well, the same is true with me, and Joyce shares with me the feelings about you and how understanding you were in 2002 when we had such a difficult situation with one of our creatures and had to miss quite a few games. I thank you so much.

My brother has one ring, my nephew has another, and I still treasure one of them, as well. Your success in New Jersey rubbed off on all of us, and it was always nice to go to work around a team of success, and it's been wonderful to see how you've built a team on the island, as well, and I'm sure Neil appreciates what has gone on. It's a lot more fun to write about a team that wins. Thanks, Lou, very much.

LOU LAMORIELLO: No, thank you, Mike.

CHRIS McCLOSKEY: Thank you, everybody. We will go to our next question from the press.

**Q. Mike, I was wondering if you might be able to touch base on your time in Pittsburgh or in Pennsylvania. You mentioned your first job was with the Beaver County Times. If I remember correctly that did not pay anything. I was wondering what led you to take that modest assignment, and did you have any inkling or notion that that would lead to the success that you have enjoyed for the last 50 years?**

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Well, by the time I had gotten there, I had taught one year at Geneva. I had sent out all of the tapes that I'd made sitting in the stands in Fort Wayne, and I'd sent the tapes out and gotten rejections. I needed a job, and they were offering a job at Geneva

College in Beaver Falls for a person to teach public speaking and supervise the campus radio station, which was, I believe, 15 watts FM, but the stick was up on one of the many hills around Beaver Falls, so the carriage of the station was actually pretty good for 15 watts. And the kids ran the station so it took a couple of weeks for all of the shifts to be filled, and by and large it ran itself and the kids were in charge of it, so things rolled along pretty well.

So after one year and I was back for a second year, I realized that I taught classes on Tuesday and Thursday and I might be able to moonlight a job covering the Penguins because I still had this ambition to be a play-by-play broadcaster in hockey. So I went to the editor of the Beaver County Times, which was an evening newspaper, daily, and I said, I'll cover the Penguins for free if you get me a pass, and he said, sounds like a good deal to me.

So I think I only missed two home games that year, and I got to go to press day, and the first player I interviewed at press day was a player named Bryan Hextall from the famous Hextall family, and I remember one of the questions I asked him because the Bruins of course were the reigning champions then and Boston Garden was regarded as a tough place to play, and I said, do you have any stories about Boston Garden and about it being a tough place to play, and he said, you know, last year, we were standing at the blue line before the anthem and they were making a presentation to Bobby Orr, and I was standing because I was a starter and I was standing on the blue line and somewhere out of the second tier, over my shoulder came a lock like you would use to lock a garage door from the outside, and it barely missed me, and it hit the ice and it cracked it right through to the concrete. Anything more you want to know about Boston Garden? I said, no, that's good enough.

But I got to cover the Penguins all year, and they were an interesting team. Red Kelly was the coach. Glen Sather was a player on the team and he had quite a fight with Pete Stemkowski of the Rangers. He got traded in mid-year to the Rangers and when the Rangers came in he was playing for them later in that same year, and so I made a bee line to the Rangers' dressing room after the game was over because I wanted to ask him how it was to play with Stemkowski after winning a fight over him at Civic Arena because I thought this was going to be like Dick the Bruiser and Crusher Lisowski, it was like wrestling where you hated a guy, and of course he defused that right away by telling me they were roommates now with the Rangers. Years later, of course, he played in the World Hockey Association and coached all those Stanley Cup teams.

This past winter going back to those 50 years, 50 seasons

ago when I was covering the Penguins, I was leaving Madison Square Garden and so was Glen, and to show you how the Stanley Cup is different now than it was, in 1987, Stanley Cup Finals were between Philadelphia and Edmonton, and Glen Sather was Coaching Edmonton and Mike Keenan was coaching Philadelphia, and Mike before Game 6 reportedly had gotten the Stanley Cup bright into the Flyers' dressing room before the game to show his team, this is what you are playing for. And they won the sixth game.

It was sad that before the seventh game that a preemptory strike had been made by Coach Sather and that the Cup was actually in his vehicle in the parking lot in Edmonton the day of the game so that Keenan couldn't put the hook on it for the seventh game. And so now, all these years later, I figure the statute of limitations is over and so I saw this past winter after the game is over Glen Sather is getting into his vehicle, we're up on the fifth floor of the Garden, so I said, so an old question going back to 1987 and so I posed the question, did you really have possession of the Stanley Cup on the day of Game 7 in your vehicle? And he laughed. Now that neither confirms nor denies what I was asking for, but it was a fun question for me to ask, and it was a fun answer.

So maybe someday we'll know, but of course now the Cup can never be grabbed off like Keenan allegedly did and Sather allegedly did and we'll emphasize allegedly, but those were good days, and I got tremendous opportunity to get inside an NHL dressing room.

So a long answer to your question, and I apologize for those of you who are waiting to ask another one.

CHRIS McCLOSKEY: We will take our last guest speaker. He is a fellow broadcaster along with you and the host of primetime television's No. 1 show, Sunday Night Football, Mr. Al Michaels.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Oh, my.

AL MICHAELS: Doc, I'm out here on the coast, I wake up this morning, I look at the press release, and I'm thinking, this has to be fake news. Please let it be fake news. But I've been listening for the last half hour. All I would like to tell you -- I'd like to tell you a few things. Number one, I had the great pleasure of working with John Madden for seven years and I've said many times that I think John Madden was as important and relevant to the National Football League as any figure I can think of, and that's because not only what he did as a coach; it was a 10-year career, it was great, but what he did as a broadcaster. And he made the game -- he created the template for football broadcasting, and he of course went on to make the

largest selling video game maybe of all time.

So in your retirement I would like you to create a video game because I think of you much as I think of John Madden, as a man who has been as important to the National Hockey League as anybody, and I say that because you have made the game so much more relevant, interesting, relatable, exciting, and I think just in listening to you, people who love hockey and are in that cult, but we love you, and you've also brought a lot of people into the game who might not otherwise have paid attention to hockey.

What amazes me about you -- there's so many things, Doc, the fact that you've done a bunch of triple- and quadruple-overtime games and you sounded as great in the fourth hour as you have at the opening face-off. It's tremendous, the energy you have, the enthusiasm, and of course your love for the game shows through every time you're on the air.

I think back to when we were together at the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver, and I hadn't done the Olympics in 22 years. I'd been at ABC, come over to NBC. I remember Richard Sandomir was writing for the New York Times, and he said this was the 30th anniversary of Lake Placid; shouldn't you be doing hockey. And I said, no way. Number one, I can't do hockey one tenth as well as Mike Emrick; number two, I want to listen to Mike Emrick do hockey. So that was never an issue, and of course you wound up doing the game with Sidney Crosby scoring the golden goal in Vancouver.

I'll also tell you that I have a grandson who is now 14, plays hockey. He's pretty good, he plays -- he lives in Southern California, they train where the Kings train. He's a good little hockey player, and he said to me about a year ago, hey, Pop-Pop, when are you going to retire, and I said, me? I'm going to retire when I can announce your debut in the National Hockey League. And he was pretty excited about that.

He came to me about six months ago and he says, hey, Pop-Pop, can't you get Mike Emrick to do that game? So Doc, I'm going to have to bring you out of retirement to do that game for my grandson. And the only other question I have or request is I would like you to leave for me some of your unused verbs so I can use them on Sunday Night Football. You're the greatest, man.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Thank you. Thank you so much. I'm just nonplussed, and I'm so glad to have you step on to this call because it's so much a part of my memory bank on great moments in hockey, and it means a lot for me to have you on this call.

I'll never forget working one year with the man who's the most exciting moment in his life was described by you, Mike Eruzione. We worked together during New Jersey Devils games in 1983 and '84 and with typical Mike Eruzione bravado and humility combined, I asked him, what happens if you hit the crossbar, and the Soviet Union comes back or the game ends in a tie, and he said, I'm probably painting bridges in Boston with my father.

But isn't that typical of Mike. But the important thing is he did not, and he is still a legendary guest on a lot of our programs and is still a wonderful guy to be around, as he would have been then today. Thank you, Al, so much. Where were you sitting when Martinez scored in double overtime?

AL MICHAELS: Well, I think I had visited you before the game, as I had in 2012 when they beat the Devils in Game 6 at Staples, and I was center ice, 14th row, and only in hockey as you know, Doc, that game I think Gaborik had tied the game in the third period, about 10 minutes to go in the third. The crowd just stood. Everybody just stood. You and I share that great feeling of hockey because you're dying a thousand deaths. It goes on for four hours, and then you just brought everything to life.

Hockey is so great, and you've made it so much greater.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Thank you so much. Yep, 2014, Alec Martinez, double overtime. When it's an overtime Cup clincher it's a thrill for everyone, especially if it's in the home rink because of the crowd. Thanks so much for the call.

AL MICHAELS: God bless, Mike.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: God bless you.

CHRIS McCLOSKEY: Thank you, Al, and thank you to all the members of the press for your patience. All the remainder of the questions will come from the press. We can continue.

**Q. Obviously Bob Chase, your mentor and good friend, called games into his late 80s. I'm wondering if you had any conversations with him about when the right time to stop would be, and also I was wondering just how being a Fort Wayne fan continues to affect who you are in sports these days.**

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Well, I am to do an interview on NHL Network today, and the two jerseys that I have hanging behind me for that interview will be the Smiling Face Man from the 1950s Orange and Black, which was

the Comet jersey at the time I watched my first game in 1960, and the other will be the first team that I worked for in professional hockey, which will be the Port Huron Flags in 1973. So those two things mean a lot to me, as well as those early years when the players were doing a good job as well as the coaches in those development leagues of teaching me the sport.

Bob and I never talked about how long we would wind up working. Bob gave us all hope because he was still doing games into his late 80s or maybe even at age 90, very much like Ernie Harwell, another of the people I admired so much, was doing games a lot longer than I have.

But this seemed like the right time for me in my life to be taking a step aside and watching other people work and also enjoying this time in my life. I treasure the time that I spent with Bob and those were spread out over several decades, from the time that I first met him in 1967 while I was a college senior at Manchester, until the last time that we spent any time together shortly before his death.

And I should add, too, that there's a rather extensive writing in chapter 2 of the book about my time in Fort Wayne, and again, I don't want to lean on the book, but the book does describe a lot of that time in my life around Fort Wayne and learning the sport.

#### **Q. To you what makes a great play-by-player?**

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: I don't know the answer to that. If I could put it in a recipe form, which I'm sure if it could be put in a good paragraph, I'd -- because there are so many different personality types, aren't there, of people who are out there.

I will only quote what my mentor Bob Chase used to say to me: Be yourself. And I think that that's what I've tried to be, and because there are as many personalities of us as there are people in the world, being yourself means a lot of different types of people that are doing this sort of work. So I don't know if there's a convenient, easy answer for you.

I know that going back through my own career, one of the things that I regret that I did early is to try to be so exact all of the time. I wanted to just do the perfect game. We all want to serve the fans, and we all want our call to sync up with the picture. We want to do the job right, and we really are -- some of us more than others, fanatical about it.

I used to get so upset, and I'm sure that Eddie can recall these moments and John Davidson can recall this moment, these moments, when I would misidentify a player, and I would slam my hand down on the -- this is not a secret. It's

documented in the book, too. I would slam my hand down on my book that I kept my rosters in, and it would make a loud noise, but it was just out of frustration with myself that I would see a 28 and call a 29, and what was the difference. Well, it was a four-inch number on a sleeve, and it was probably a half inch of material that made the difference between a 9 and an 8.

So why would I hold myself to that kind of a standard of perfection? I don't know. But I did. So I would -- there were games where I finished and I'd be annoyed at myself. By and large, was it that bad? I don't know, but I wanted to do the job better.

For years you would -- I would try to hold myself to that standard, and I would even give myself letter grades: A, B, C -- I don't know if I had any D's or F's, but I would give myself a letter grade at the end of each game. And it did make me a better broadcaster. It made me more of a concentrated effort to not relax too much during games or take things casually but to concentrate more.

But there was a downside to it, as well, in that I would probably not be as satisfied at the end of games when there was probably more reason to be than I thought. This is kind of long-winded, and I'm sorry for that, but as time passed I became more comfortable with myself and the fact that I was flawed, and there was no way I was ever going to do a perfect game, and probably the mistake was to try to do it that way.

I've heard hockey players talk about that, that you can try to be too perfect and then that affects your game, and I guess I realized that after a certain time.

In answer to your question, I guess I've kind of veered off the track, but one of the things that I've learned over time is that I've never done a perfect game out of all of those 3,700 or whatever it is, and I realized after a while that I was never going to do that, and so I had to just relax and as Bob Chase said, be yourself, and myself was not a perfect individual.

And so I just enjoyed the fact that I was given a free seat, a good seat, and I got to work with some of the best athletes in the world, and then twice a month I got something in the mail, and it was really good.

I hope that answers your question. There are an awful lot of us that we all have different personalities, so I don't know that there's -- I don't know if there's something that makes me any different than anyone else other than what our individual personalities are.

I will say one thing that one of your colleagues wrote about



me that was probably the most flattering thing that I can recall, and that was Phil, who said, Emrick is trustworthy. I think whenever something like that is said about you, you really appreciate it because that's one thing you want to be as a sports announcer; you want what you say to be believed. So I guess that would be one thing that I would say in general that we all want, I think, is to be trustworthy.

**Q. You kind of almost answered this I think in the previous question, but how would you like people to remember you, when they think about hockey games, maybe the next time they turn on a game and you're not calling the play-by-play? How would you like them to think of you?**

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: I hope there's a smile on their faces and with an appreciation for the sport as a result of that. You certainly have that. We have -- during a period of the middle '80s we served a couple of years together when I was doing radio with the Rangers and Sal Messina, and we were on a lot of aircrafts together and I remember one flight that you and Sal and I and a couple of other writers had with coaches who when they landed were fired. I don't know if you remember that trip or not, but it was -- of course you do. You remember those experiences as well as the good ones, but yes, I recall that everything was sort of normal on the flight and then all of a sudden you had -- you and the other writers had a story to cover because as soon as the coaches got off the plane, all of a sudden their jobs were over.

Yeah, I think if the fans have a smile on their face of recollection and if they appreciate what the athletes can do as a result of anything that I had to do with the sport, that will mean a lot to me because what we have is a product which was recently proved, I think, of how committed these guys are to their sport. There was not an enormous amount of money made by the winning team or any of the other teams that competed, but when people that don't know a lot about hockey athletes think about professional athletes, they think about the loot that they get from playing the sport for the championship trophy, and it's never talked about, because the real money that's made by hockey players is made during the season, it's not made during the Playoffs, and it's not talked about because what's talked about is that you play to get your name on the trophy and maybe a ring that's too big to wear.

But here they were, gone for four and a half months between games, and flying back from 20 countries, and you can put in quotes better than I can, competing that hard in bubbles with restrictions and 33,000 or whatever the number is that you know COVID tests that were absolutely perfect, including for one week in 24 cities when they were coming and going from their homes, and how

hard they competed and fought for a championship trophy, and all of that done in a compressed period of two months' time. God bless them because this sport means a lot to them, and they competed that hard for it, and it wasn't for the cash, it was -- in my mind, it was for that ultimate trophy.

Yeah, people can do sidebar stories about all of the other side money that's involved in next season and all of that, but when you saw them play that hard, you realized that they were on the ice for a reason and it was the same one that they arrive at in April, May and June, it's just this year it was in August and September.

So if people have an appreciation for that and the athletes and I had anything to do with it, that'll make me feel really good. And I sure am glad to hear your voice because I get to read you but I don't get to talk to you much anymore.

**Q. I don't know how to answer put this into words --**

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: How old is your dog now?

**Q. The puppy is four. She's standing by. She listens in to Zoom calls. She wanders on to Zoom. She's part of it all. It's so nice to hear your voice, and I just want to put out there and it happened to me last week with Henrik Lundqvist leaving New York, we don't get these tremendous people that come our way often enough in the sport, and you've more than exceeded I think all of our wishes and goals about how to be a good person first and foremost. I think that has to be said publicly to those who really do it right. My question is how did you mix humanity with the broadcasting so well for so long? Was that something you set out to do at the beginning? Was it something that evolved? You missed the Olympics in 2002 to care for your puppy, and I always thought of that, like that's a human being above and beyond. But how did that inject itself into your broadcasting style?**

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: I don't know whether it -- I'll leave that for you to judge, whether it did or not. It's who I am, and if it became more of me as the years went on or maybe as a result of that, why, I hope that it influenced other people to be themselves and take the risk.

I had people supporting me at NBC as well as with the Devils and Lou Lamoriello was one of them at the time that -- it's a family member, and even though people are not animal lovers, as you are, may not understand the contribution that animals make to your family, when they are ill or hurting or are terminal, that affects you in a similar way that a human being would. There are always debates about how significant a comparison it would be, but in a

similar way for sure.

Our little terrier Katie was terminally ill with kidney disease, but it looked as though there was a way we could help her by getting her to the University of California Davis but the timing was poor compared to the 2002 Olympics, and it was not something that you just shrug off because I would have not been of use to NBC as a preoccupied announcer, and it wouldn't have been fair to the sport or people watching the greatest competition in the world at that time, either.

Kenny Albert marched in and did a wonderful job at the last minute with all of the competition evolved with all those nations as you would expect he would, so I could fully concentrate with Joyce on potentially saving Katie's life, although it didn't work out that way.

Whether that strengthened anyone to do something similar in any circumstances that they might face, I don't know, but it was something that you do for people that you love or creatures that you love, and so that was the humanity, as you used the word, of the situation. So you hope that in a similar situation you would do the very same thing.

I will say we have had circumstances that have come up since, and even though it did not necessarily affect my schedule that Sam and the people at NBC were aware of it and they were in my corner should it affect the schedule. It did not, but I knew and was comfortable that I could miss if I had to, given a situation with one of our creatures.

**Q. I regrettably did not see you this season. I did a story on Pelle Lindbergh in November and December and there was something I couldn't wait to pass along to you. Eddie Olczyk had an assist in the last goal that Pelle Lindbergh allowed, and I thought that was something that you would find interesting.**

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: I guess, yeah. I did not know that.

**Q. Curt Fraser scored the goal. But anyway, in going through the clips, I found a Jay Greenberg story from 1981 as you had joined the Flyers, you were working with me and were offered to come and work for Prism and to do games, maybe a couple games a year for the Flyers. Can you just address what your time with the Flyers' organization meant to you in your career?**

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Yes. It was in 1979 I was offered the opportunity by Pete Silverman, who later went on to work at Madison Square Garden in New York, with Major League Baseball, and he's now a college professor at Hofstra. But Pete has been very involved in broadcasting for a long time. Anyway, he offered me a chance to come

down and work at Prism in Philadelphia which did all of the sports, Flyers and 76ers and also all-star wrestling they covered and the Phillies, to be the pay cable announcer play-by-play. He had been doing that as well as producing all of the Flyers games on over-the-air television.

I passed on it that year because for some bizarre reason, I decided that I was with the Maine Mariners, the Flyers' principal farm team. They had won back-to-back championships, and I was doing 80 games a year plus Playoffs for them, and a handful of telecasts that I would be doing in Philadelphia for some reason or another, don't ask me why, it's not understandable, is it, it struck me as being more valuable than being in the NHL.

Anyway, I turned them down, and fortunately for me they asked again the next year, and the president of the Maine Mariners, Ed Anderson, perhaps with the influence of Ed Snider and Bob Butera, who was president of the Flyers at the time, said, look, they asked you once before, you've turned them down, you've gotten as good at writing press releases and broadcasting American League games on the radio as you can get; they probably aren't going to ask you a third time.

And so it was at that point in the fall of 1980 that my wife and I put our house up for sale, which we'd only owned for six months in Portland, and moved down.

So it was at that point that I started doing the Prism games on cable, and the Clarke-Barber-Leach line was together, and it was a thrill I got to do the very first game, and it is described in some detail in my book. I got to do the first ever game that I did in the NHL was a preseason game between Montreal and the Flyers at the Spectrum, and all of the guys that I was broadcasting that night were -- because it was the last game of the preseason, the Canadiens had made all their cuts, and so it was Robinson and Gainey and Lemaire and all of those guys and it was Clarke-Barber-Leach and all of the guys on the Philadelphia Flyers in the fall of 1980.

So it was like broadcasting a game watching it off television, the only difference was mine was the voice going out to television to other people, and it was an incredible thrill.

Without that opportunity, the rest of my career wouldn't have flourished. That's for sure.

**Q. Doc, I want to take the reporter's hat off for a second and thank you -- between you and Steve Summers when I was covering the Hershey Bears when you were Living in Hershey doing your second stint with the Flyers, I couldn't have asked for two**

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

**better people to lean on and learn from, and I appreciate all you've done and of course you've been a friend of my family for many years. You knew my dad very well, you knew my mom, and I just want to appreciate you and thank you for all you've done for me being on some of my radio shows when I was doing college hockey back up here in Schenectady. So I want to thank you. Now I'm going to put the reporter's hat on you and ask you, are you at peace with this decision?**

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Oh, yes. You know, I was told by people that had retired that you would know when, and in the middle of the Playoffs this year, it was probably between rounds 2 and 3 that it finally registered with me that this was the time. I realized that all of the guys that I had talked to were right, that you will know when it's time, and this seemed like the right time.

I think it was reinforced by the fact that my health was still good and Joyce's health was still good and that we had creatures that were also doing okay. So this all seemed just like the right time.

I don't know. I don't want to go over board on this, but the round number of 5-0 from the time that I started seemed like another team to just reinforce that, you know, I've really had a wonderful time at doing this.

And another thing about that time, I just thought of this, too, about that time, it was either in the second or third round, Brian Boucher was on and he mentioned Ken Dryden. I had a flashback to that year as a volunteer I guess you would say covering the Penguins, and Neil and I talked -- Neil Best and I talked about this earlier in the Playoffs. Ken Dryden was a rookie that year with the Montreal Canadiens, and what happened at that time was that I would work one dressing room after the game, and the hockey news correspondent in Pittsburgh Jim Fagan would work the other one. Here came this college guy out of Cornell in with the Canadiens one night into Pittsburgh, and the Penguins were okay. They were going to make the Playoffs, but they weren't great, not like the Canadiens were, who were on their way to winning the Stanley Cup.

So here comes this college guy and he plays goal for them and he's tall and he's good, and he's a college guy. And at that time college guys were kind of unique. They weren't the norm to be in the NHL, and so anyway, the game ended and Jim said I'll take the Canadiens' room and I said, okay, I'll go down to Pittsburgh. Afterwards he couldn't stop talking about this guy Dryden, and how erudite he was and how polite he was and how he was writing his exams and here he was in the NHL, and then I realized I didn't look it up in the guide to see whether Brian

was even alive in 1970, and he's talking about Ken Dryden, this legendary goaltender, and I realized, you know what, that was my first year of covering hockey in the NHL and gee, a lot of time has passed and here I am and I'm still okay, and it was wonderful.

So I guess that was just another thing that told me that I've been very fortunate, but this is a good time for me.

**Q. How different was it calling games from home?**

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: The unique thing was, and NBC was very patient with me, not only in allowing me to do that but also having teammates in the truck in Matt Marvin and Charlie Dammeyer who was the producer and director, who had to compensate some for the fact that I wasn't there, but also Eddie Olczyk and Brian Boucher, and here is why, and I am answering your question by mentioning them. I had the same difficulty identifying the far winger that I would have if I were in the arena in some of the distant press boxes, and that is because especially if it's a right shot right wing let's say coming down the right side because you don't get to see the sleeve number. We're going off a four-inch sleeve number, not off the back of their jerseys because if they're showing you the back of their jerseys they're going to the American League the next day. This is a game that's going back and forth and it's going fast, so you have to identify -- what I'm there for is to identify players.

So the far winger was a challenge not only on the screen but also in person, so that's not different.

What was different was when players are scrambling off of the boards on a line change, they can't show you that because what you're getting is the picture people are getting at home, and so it is very much the credit to the folks at NBC that they allowed me to continue to do games at home because there were some things that I couldn't see like line changes, a guy is holding the puck behind the net, and both forwards are changing while he's standing there. And I can't pick up who was changing, but I got help from my partners who were there at those moments.

How different was it? It was different. But hopefully it wasn't radically sub-par viewed by people at home because I had the help of people not only in our production truck but also by my partners who were actually in the building.

CHRIS McCLOSKEY: Thank you, everybody, for joining us today. We know we had a few more in the queue, but it is time for us to finish the call. Again, a transcript will be available a little bit later, and I want to thank Doc for taking the time today. Again, his book "Off Mike" hits tomorrow,

so please check that out. Doc, any closing remarks?

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: Yes. If anyone who wanted to get a question in today and couldn't, if you would be so kind, Chris, to accept their emails and forward them on to me, I will try to get in touch with them and at least do a back-and-forth email yet later on today. Whoever was left in the queue. I'm sure sorry -- I did go long on some of the answers, but I wanted to be thorough. Is that okay to do?

CHRIS McCLOSKEY: Absolutely, yes, we can do that.

MIKE "DOC" EMRICK: If you can get emails of those who were left who didn't get one question in, I will try to address them later on today. I do have a couple of other items today for Triumph Publishing to do, but I will try to address those later on today. If you can just get the emails and send them on to me, I will do that. Thanks, everybody, for waiting through all this time.

CHRIS McCLOSKEY: Thank you, everyone, for joining us. Take care.

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