

Hockey Night in Canada

Some years ago I went to Maple Leaf Gardens a few times on my own to see the Toronto Maple Leafs. It may have been a year when the Leafs won a game, I can't remember. Before the game I would go to Le Baron Steak House on Church Street to start the night off with a steak dinner. It was always packed on game night. The first time I went it was very crowded and a group of people were standing around the reception desk, presumably waiting for a table. I joined the crowd, waiting at the back for my turn. No sooner had I arrived when a waiter came over to me and said, "Your table is ready, Sir", and led me to a vacant table for one. I was surprised to be seated so quickly and on the way to the table I said to the waiter, "Would you please bring me a Beefeater martini with a twist". No worthwhile meal should start without a martini.

The waiter seated me, handed me a menu and he was off. A minute later he returned with my martini. As he placed it on the table I told him that I would like a New York steak, medium rare with French fries. He was off again and back in about 4 minutes with my meal. When the steak was in place on the table I asked for a glass of red wine and this appeared in less than a minute. I was totally amazed at the speed in which I was served and enjoyed it very much. The group of 4 at the table beside me did not appear to be pleased because they complained that while I had come in after them I was already eating my dinner and they hadn't even been able to order a drink. I was well libated and well fed so I left to watch the hockey game. By the way, the Leafs lost.

The second time I went to Le Baron there was the same performance. "Your table is ready, Sir". I was in and out in 20 minutes. A repeat performance occurred on the third visit with a bit of a twist. As I was eating my steak and quaffing my wine a waiter came over and asked if he could have my autograph. "Why would you want my autograph?", I asked. He told me that his young son was a big fan of Billy Harris and would love to have an autograph. This really took me by surprise but it explained the first class treatment that I was receiving. They thought I was Billy Harris. When I finished my meal I went to watch the Leafs lose for the third time. It was another unhappy night for Leaf fans.

However, I do know that there was one happy young leaf fan that night who went to sleep with a Billy Harris autograph sitting beside his bed.

I never did go back to Le Baron after that.



Brad McInnes
YMASC President 1970 - 1971

