Sackville Tribune Post
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Transcontinental

World's oldest hockey stick on display during Kraft Celebration, TSN events

By Katie Tower
STAFF REPORTER

Local hockey fans and history buffs alike had the opportunity last Friday evening to see and touch a rare piece of sports history as Nova Scotia's Mark Presley brought his most prized possession to town - the world's oldest hockey stick.

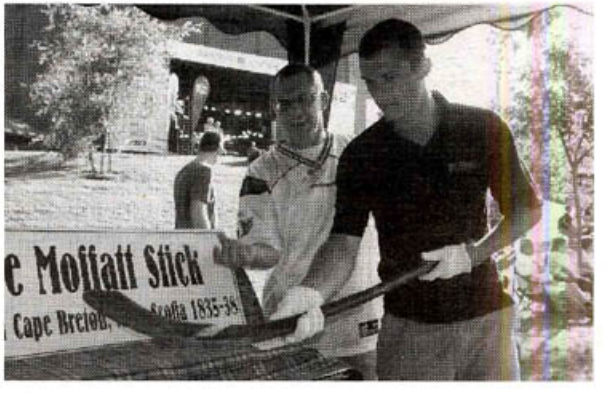
Presley, who is from Berwick, N.S., said last Friday's visit from TSN's Sportscentre - which was airing a live broadcast from Sackville to celebrate the community's win in the Kraft Celebration Tour- seemed like the perfect opportunity to showcase the 170-year-old Moffatt stick and to give area residents a glimpse of the national treasure.

"I wanted to come here and give back a little to the community that helped me learn more about the history of this hockey stick," said Presley.

About a year ago, after many months of research, scientists at Mount Allison's Dendrochronology (MAD) Lab were able to confirm the origins of the hockey stick, carved from a Cape Breton sugar maple, date back to the 1830s.

Presley said the MAD Lab did "some amazing work" and fortunately the research confirmed much of what he had already learned during his own research about the hockey stick, which he had acquired in 2008 from barber in North Sydney, N.S, who had displayed the antique stick for 30 years on his wall before he closed up shop.

Since that time, Presley has carefully traced the stick's origins back to the Moffatt family, which had at one time resided on the shores of nearby Pottle's Lake.



Colin Laroque, a geography and environment professor at Mount Allison who oversees the university's dendrochronology lab, talks to student Mitchell Stewart about how his team's research was able to determine the approximate age of the world's oldest hockey stick. The Moffatt Stick was on display during the Kraft Celebration Tour that came to Sackville on Aug. 26. TOWER PHOTO

"It's been a fun research journey."

As both a hockey fan and an avid history buff, Presley said he's excited to be able to share what he's learned so far about this piece of Canadian history.