

## TORY'S SUDDEN DOWNFALL



SCOTT MCLAUGHLIN

Toronto Mayor John Tory resigned following an announcement of his affair with a 31-year-old staffer. He will be succeeded by Jennifer McKelvie, Deputy Mayor of the City of Toronto.

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AMID BUDGET  
MEETING AT  
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# Tory officially quits after affair



SCOTT MCLAUGHLIN

John Tory sits at his first city council meeting following his resignation announcement last Friday at Toronto City Hall. Tory stayed until the budget was approved.

## Scott McLaughlin *Editor-in-Chief*

John Tory officially resigned as Toronto mayor on Wednesday after confirming last week that he had an affair with a former staffer.

This means a byelection has to be held within 60 days from yesterday. Four have confirmed their candidacy, including Gil Peñalosa. Others are still deciding whether to run, including councillors Josh Matlow and Brad Bradford, and former councillor and deputy mayor Ana Bailão.

The tenured mayor shocked Torontonians on Friday by stepping down after the Toronto Star reported he had had an improper relationship with a 31-year-old former employee.

"It came at a time when Barb, my wife of 40-plus years, and I were enduring many lengthy periods apart while I carried out my responsibilities during the pandemic," Tory said. "As a result, I've decided that I will step down as mayor so that I can take the time to reflect on my mistakes and to do the work of rebuilding the trust with my family."

Peter A. Downward, a lawyer for the former mayor, confirmed the relationship in a letter sent to the Star earlier that day.

Deputy Mayor Jennifer McKelvie announced Thursday she would not be running to replace Tory.

"Residents can rest assured that my entire focus at this time is ensuring a smooth transition and continued good governance," she said. "It is in that spirit that I must clarify that I will not be seeking to run for Mayor in the upcoming by-election."

McKelvie will serve as acting

mayor until the by-election is called. In an impromptu press conference last Friday, Tory said the relationship started during the pandemic, but that it "ended by mutual consent earlier this year."

Tory said the staffer had previously left his office and found employment elsewhere before the affair became public.

Toronto city reports show the woman joined Tory on various trips around the United States, Canada, and Europe from 2018 to 2020.

While there is no specific law in Ontario regarding workplace relationships between bosses and employees, Tory said he felt this was a necessary decision.

"I think it is important for the Office of the Mayor not to in any way be tarnished and not to see the city government itself put through a prolonged period of controversy, arising out of this error in judgment on my part," he said.

Toronto's code of conduct for members of the council also does not strictly prohibit relationships, but state members "should act with integrity and avoid real and apparent conflicts of interest and the improper use of their influence. Members should perform their duties and arrange their private affairs in a manner that promotes public confidence and bears close public scrutiny."

He has also informed the Integrity Commissioner of the relationship and asked for a formal review of it.

Responses from city councillors appeared to be split following his resignation. Many voiced their support for Tory and their concerns for the city's future.

"I think that he made an error in judgement, yes absolutely, but

that's not a reason to resign," said Council Speaker Frances Nunziata. "In the past, there have been other politicians that have done worse and they never resigned.

"It would be a disaster if he resigned," she said.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford echoed those sentiments of concern on Wednesday.

"In my opinion, it's not time to change," he said. "If a left-wing mayor gets in there, we're toast. I'll tell you, it would be a disaster in my opinion."

Several city councillors have also announced their discontent with Tory and would like to move on from the distraction they feel he has caused.

"I am shocked, it was a terrible lapse in judgement by the Mayor during the pandemic and perhaps even to run for a third term knowing that this affair had taken place," Ward 14 Danforth councillor Paula Fletcher said.

"We need clarity and cohesion as a council so we can govern this city. The mayor said he's resigning and the sooner that happens, the sooner we can get on with the business of making this city a great place to live," said Gord Perks, councillor for Parkdale-High Park.

Gil Peñalosa, who ran against Tory in the 2022 election and placed a distant second with 98,525 votes to the incumbent's 342,158, suggests Tory's departure could be beneficial for the city.

"This can be very good for Toronto," he told HumberNews' Antonio Pelaez Barcelo on Friday.

The announcement marks 13 years to the day when Toronto city councillor Adam Giambrone officially ended his mayoral campaign

because of his series of affairs. John Tory reported on this at the time while working for Toronto radio station CFRB.

Tory was elected in 2014 and is the city's second longest-serving mayor. His resignation came just months after being re-elected for a third term in October 2022 with 66 per cent of the Toronto vote. Before announcing his most recent re-election campaign, Tory said while he had promised his wife, Barbara Hackett, he would only serve in the position for eight years, he had her blessing before committing to more.

"She's very happy that I'm continuing to do this. We have found different ways as the family has grown to ensure I can make time for her and for the family," he said.

The two married in 1978 and have four children together.

The resignation also came after the Strong Mayors, Building Homes Act was passed last September. This bill gives mayors additional power concerning council committees, as well as dictated that if a vacancy occurs, a by-election must be held within 60 days of the vacancy.

Tory's final council meeting was on Wednesday to deal with the city's new budget, which was his first following the passing of the strong mayors act.

Protestors disrupted the proceedings three times, including an early call for lunch, during deliberations. But the \$16.16 billion budget eventually passed with minor amendments.

Tory said he will work with the staff and the Deputy Mayor in the coming days to help with the transition following his departure.

## ETC •

Humber Et Cetera is the Humber College journalism program laboratory newspaper. It is created journalism students in the Advanced Diploma and Post Graduate Certificate programs. Et Cetera serves to inform the Humber community and give its readers well rounded coverage on the things that matter to them.

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SCOTT MCLAUGHLIN

Security guards escort a lone protester out of the council chambers. The Toronto City Council approved a \$16.16 billion budget with small improvements for homeless people.

# John Tory's budget plan passes amid protests

Angelina Kochatovska  
News Reporter

Toronto City Council approved last-minute amendments to the budget plan yesterday to improve services for homeless people.

"You'll remember this day for the rest of your life," said Paula Fletcher, the councillor for Ward 14 Toronto-Danforth, after council recessed for the second time.

Council held a special meeting to discuss the budget proposed by Mayor John Tory, which contains a \$48 million increase for police, a housing tax hike and cuts to the TTC budget.

However, it doesn't contain any information about improving services for homeless people and increasing its funding. On Feb. 9, councillors voted against extending the 24-hour warming centres until April.

Gord Perks, the councillor for Ward 4 Parkdale-High Park, called the plan "a very bad law" when only the elected mayor can propose the budget plan.

"That law needs to be repealed because it puts councillors in a terrible position," he said. "It shows why this undemocratic legislation is bad legislation."

When the meeting began, spectators started to protest and began booing and shouting "John Tory resign!" as John Tory took the stand.

"House the homeless, feed the poor, kick John Tory out the door," they shouted in unison.

The protesters said they wanted Tory and councillors to hear their concerns about the increase in homelessness rate and housing prices.

"I saw six homeless people when I walked through Queen's Street this morning. Let's talk about it,"

said one of the protesters.

"This city, on an annual basis, has publicly executed poor people by slow torture," he said.

The meeting had recessed after the demonstrators refused to leave the council chambers.

"They [the government] don't care about others. They think homeless people are classless," said Julian Durren, a construction worker, who participated in the protest. "They only think about filling their pockets."

Durren told Humber News that destroying homeless people's camps is "stupid."

"The government increases the housing prices some of us can't afford to pay. Then, they are getting rid of the camps that people built just to survive," he said. "It's a deadly and endless chain."

At the end of the meeting, councillors proposed some changes to

the budget plan. Alejandra Bravo, the councillor for Ward 9 Davenport, introduced the motion that suggests relocating 0,08% (\$900,000) from the police funding to the budget for shelter, support, and housing administration. She refers to the increased homelessness rate in the city.

"We know that homelessness is a crisis facing Toronto like it hasn't before," she said.

"Safety is so much more than just one dimension. It's having a place to sleep at night."

Bravo said that this amount of money could make a change.

"This is such a small amount of money but it can make such a massive difference," she said.

This proposition didn't pass having 17 councillors voted negatively.

However, Shelley Carrol, the councillor for Ward 17 Don Valley

North, had her motion to be approved causing the last-minute changes. The motion gives funding boots for the unhoused, TTC safety and increases the city's Rent Bank program.

The City Council approved Tory's budget plan with spending \$800,000 to open one additional warming centre to help homeless people until April 15.

Also, Chris Moise, the councillor for Ward 13 Toronto Centre, proposed to create a one-year pilot that provides a mental health support team for the unhoused.

"We will hire mental health outreach workers to help address some of these needs," Moise said.

The council voted to spend \$500,000 on this initiative.

Amid controversies regarding Tory's resignation, he announced he will leave the mayor position at 5 p.m. on Friday.





TYREIKE REID

Participants of the Strawberry Ceremony occupied Yonge and College Streets on Feb. 14 to honour missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, trans and two-spirited people.

# Strawberry Ceremony returns in Toronto

**Tyreike Reid**  
Senior Reporter

About 500 people gathered outside the Toronto Police headquarters for the 18th annual Strawberry Ceremony on Valentine's Day.

The ceremony, organized by No More Silence, was held to honour at least 600 missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, trans and two-spirited people.

"We've been struggling with this phenomenon in our communities, and yes it's devastating for the families, but it's devastating for us too," Indigenous Elder Wanda Whitebird told organizers and supporters in attendance.

Whitebird led the ceremony, reciting prayers and introducing members of the community who sang songs to those who joined. The ceremony's name refers to the word *ode min*, which is strawberries in Ojibwe. *Ode* means heart in Ojibwe. Within Indigenous cultures, strawberries are traditionally a woman's medicine.

Whitebird said the strawberries also represent the transition Indigenous women undergo from young girls into women.

"It's a time when our young women come on their moontime and they fast from berries," she said. "And at that time through that whole year we as grandmothers

and aunts, we teach them about who we are as women."

It began outside the Toronto Police headquarters before making its way to the intersection of Yonge and College streets, where organizers occupied the intersection in song and round dance.

"Toronto Police headquarters continues to be our place of gathering to underline the complicity of police and the settler colonial state," No More Silence said in a statement.

This is the first time the ceremony has been held in person since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Indigenous activist Joey Twins spoke at the ceremony to share her experiences of violence and trauma.

"My name is Joey Twins, and I am a product of the residential schools' '60s Scoop," she said. "I personalize this day because my mom was murdered when I was six years old, and no justice was served for her."

The 18th annual Strawberry Ceremony comes after four Indigenous women were murdered in Winnipeg in 2022.

Rebecca Contois, Morgan Beatrice Harris, Mercedes Myran and a fourth unidentified victim who has been named Buffalo Woman by community advocates, were reportedly murdered by Jeremy Skibicki in 2022.

Winnipeg Police said partial

remains of Contois were found near an apartment building in May and later found in the Brady Road Resource Management Facility landfill in June.

Winnipeg Police said in a Dec. 14 news release that they will be working in collaboration with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs to determine the feasibility of a recovery search of the Prairie Green landfill, where the remains of Myran and Harris are believed to be.

This comes after Winnipeg Police Chief Danny Smyth said at a media conference on Dec. 1 that police would not be conducting further searches of the landfills, which resulted in a backlash from community members and the families of the victims.

The federal government pro-

vided would provided \$500,000 to the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs in February 2023 for a feasibility study of the landfill for recovery efforts.

The federal government launched a national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in 2019 which confirmed acts of genocide towards Indigenous communities in Canada.

"This genocide has been empowered by colonial structures, evidenced notably by the Indian Act, the '60s Scoop, residential schools and breaches of human and Indigenous rights," the report said.

No More Silence organizer Audrey Huntley said the acknowledgment and confirmation of genocide provides validation.

"I think that was the best thing to finally come out of that report,"

she said. "That they finally used that language, the appropriate language and made that official."

However, Huntley said more needs to be done to help Indigenous communities recover from the impact of violence. She said this starts with decolonization.

"I don't know if enough people make the connection between land and our safety," Huntley said. "So, we're not going to stop this violence unless we really decolonize, which means shifting the power relations, and it means giving the land back."

As the 18th Strawberry Ceremony concluded, Huntley said the ceremonies will continue for as long as the violence continues.

"We'll keep going back to police headquarters, you know, until the violence stops," she said.



TYREIKE REID

Protesters displayed a sign saying "No More Stolen Sisters" outside the Toronto Police Headquarters on Feb. 14.



# 'No one can influence the Fords': Doug



THE CANADIAN PRESS/SPENCER COLBY

Ontario Premier Doug Ford listened to members of the media on Feb. 7 during a press conference in Ottawa on the province's proposed health care deal with the federal government.

## Rheegan Goodale Culture Editor

Ford battled reporters Wednesday defending his daughter's stag-and-doe event and addressed questions about the event, specifically regarding why Greenbelt developers were in attendance.

The event took place last summer, but wasn't investigated by the Integrity Commissioner until January.

These investigations focus on the acceptance of gifts or personal benefits that is connected directly or indirectly with the performance of an MPP's duties.

Mike Schreiner, Ontario's Green Party leader, said these same developers are directly benefiting from key Greenbelt land deals.

"This whole issue around these key Greenbelt land deals don't pass the smell test," Schreiner said. "It just undermines trust in the government and I think the premier needs to be held accountable for that."

Ford called these allegations "absolutely ridiculous."

"No one can influence the Fords," Ford said. "No one."

Schreiner said the premier and

his housing minister have promised not to open the Greenbelt for development 18 times since 2018.

Contrary to those statements, Ford is now opening up 7,400 acres of Greenbelt land for development.

"It just raises significant questions about why land speculators would buy this land if it was not going to be available for development," Schreiner said. "Unless they had some sort of inside information that that land would be available at some time."

Schreiner made it clear that insider information has yet to be proven or documented at this point, but said this raises significant unanswered concerns.

That's why he wrote to the Integrity Commissioner and Auditor General asking them to look into key Greenbelt land deals.

In a statement, the Integrity Commissioner's Office explained the nature of these requests.

"It is important to note that a section 28 opinion is not a finding or the result of an investigation into a matter," the statement said.

"When a request for an opinion is made by an MPP, the Commissioner will assess the situation

using the information made available by the member to determine if a section or sections of the Members' Integrity Act applies."

The premier and his office staff provided information to the Integrity Commissioner in late January, in response to a media inquiry about developers' attendance at Ford's daughters' wedding and stag-and-doe party.

"The information provided to the Commissioner was that these guests, identified as developers in the media inquiry, are friends of the Ford family, and in some cases have been for decades," the Integrity Commissioner's office said.

"Based on the information provided to the Commissioner about the events, the Commissioner was of the opinion that there was nothing to indicate non-compliance with the Members' Integrity Act," it said.

Schreiner said most members seek guidance from the Integrity Commissioner's advice prior to the event.

"The premier did go to the Integrity Commissioner well after the events had already taken place and only after there was starting

to be media and rumours floating around," Schreiner said.

"It just raises some additional questions about why the premier didn't approach the integrity commissioner prior to these events," he said.

Conservative MPP Christine Hogarth was questioned on the subject, but refused to comment.

NDP leader Marit Stiles wrote the original investigative request regarding the Greenbelt plans to the Integrity Commissioner. She alleged Ford's close relationship with developers in a statement.

She said Ford crossed the line and she will work rigorously to get to the bottom of these new revelations.

"Ontarians deserve not just answers about Ford's conduct, but a government with integrity that always puts their interests first," Stiles said. "I am committed to making sure that they get both."

Stiles said she will submit another complaint with the Integrity Commissioner to ensure the facts are being considered comprehensively.

Specifically, she has questions about the event's fundraising.

Attendees paid \$150 per ticket,

and media reports have suggested guests were asked to provide gifts up to \$1,000.

But Ford said "the boys took care of" the event's fundraising.

In a statement, Stiles said these new revelations are raising further questions about who has access to and an influence on the premier.

She said Ford owes transparency to Ontarians, and should "put their interests over those of the highest bidder."

But Ford defended his family's privacy, and said the place was packed.

"My daughter is a private citizen, I don't know what you don't understand," Ford said. "We've known tens of thousands of people over the years, and I don't sit there with a checklist as they're coming through the door," Ford said.

Schreiner said the first step to restoring Ontario's trust would be for the premier to backtrack on opening the Greenbelt for development.

"I just think the best way for the premier to clear the air on this is to repeal Bill 23 and keep his promise not to open the Greenbelt for development," he said.



# Aviation in Canada is becoming 'unattractive'

**Tessa Bennett**  
Sports Editor

The aviation industry is having a hard time keeping up with demand, as more people are eager to travel as COVID-19 restrictions loosen.

The number of both domestic and international travellers to Canada has been surging since 2021, and that has been countered by labour shortages both on the ground and in the air, according to Statistics Canada.

Blake Puzon, an airline pilot in Winnipeg, said there are two glaring issues within the field creating this problem.

"The main barrier to people getting into this industry is the financial aspect," Puzon said.

The University of Waterloo's aviation program costs more than \$100,000, which finances the degree itself and the required flight training. This excludes additional costs like uniforms and transportation to and from Waterloo International Airport for flight lessons.

International students pay around \$70,000 more.

The second issue he cited is pilot salaries in Canada.

"In Canada, pilot pay is very substandard," he said. "When you



FOSS FOCUS / SAM FOSS

Strenuous piloting requirements have influenced the shortage in the piloting sector of Canada's workforce.

compare it to rates in the U.S., where pilots receive huge sign-on bonuses, it's not the same."

Puzon said when he calculates his pay based on in-flight hours, he makes less than minimum wage in his current position.

Obtaining a pilot license in Canada is also a lengthy process, one that can extend even longer based on the area of aviation someone pursues.

Puzon said to become a commercial pilot, there is a minimum of three licences required, accompanied by mandatory flight hours.

"That first pilot flight test is like the first mountain you have to climb, and you feel like you summit something, and then realize there's just taller mountains waiting for you," he said.

He said these factors have led to a decrease in frequency of flights within Canada and are impacting the entire travel process.

Zachary Baker, a former student of the University of Waterloo's geography and aviation program, said pilot training is both academically and logistically challenging.

"The flight centre at Waterloo

says that students should be booked for three flights a week, however that does not at all reflect the number of flights required to be successful at the program," he said.

Baker said Ontario weather is often a deterrent to students successfully completing flight hours, as poor conditions cause many cancellations.

Certain airlines, however, have said they are not experiencing issues recruiting pilots.

Bernard Côté, director of public relations and social media for Air-Transat, said that the only pilots they

need right now are for new aircraft models slated to come out this year.

He said that pilot applications to their airline remained steady.

While Puzon said the issue of pilot salary and entry expenses needs to be addressed soon or the aviation industry will continue this downward trajectory, some efforts have been made to improve conditions.

The Air Canada Pilots Association and the Air Line Pilots Association are in communication about merging their unions to combat staffing pressure post-pandemic.

This could create a larger pool of resources for airlines and pilots.

Puzon identified another potential solution for Canadian airlines and prospective pilots.

"In Europe and Asia, there are programs where you can apply to join an airline if you're a citizen when you're entering training, provided that you accept a job with the airline," he said.

He said that in these programs, the airlines will pay for the pilot's training which provides a more accessible entry point for those aspiring to enter the aviation industry.

"Something along those lines in Canada would be really cool to see, but nothing like that exists yet," Puzon said.

## Balancing work, studies struggle for international students

**Shradha Bhojane**  
Newsletter Editor

Simran Taurani, a full-time international Film and Multiplatform Storytelling student at Humber College's Lakeshore campus, was recently asked to leave her workplace because she was not available to work more than 24 hours per week.

Taurani said her employers compared her lack of availability to the rest of the part-time employees who were working about 40 hours every week.

"Everybody else had more time to work, and they could put aside their education and work for more hours," she said. "But I cared about my education more than the money."

She has been on a job hunt for the last four months now.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) announced on Oct. 7, 2022, that they would temporarily lift the 20-hour-per-week cap for international students to meet the labour shortage in the country.

A press release issued by IRCC said the measure would benefit international students "to

gain valuable work experience in Canada," and "will increase the availability of workers to sustain Canada's post-pandemic growth."

However, many international students like Taurani are finding it hard to juggle full-time jobs and their studies.

"I do not think the rule was coming out of a bad place," Taurani said. "But I think it was not very well thought of because if you are a full-time student, you cannot be a full-time worker."

Niagara College international student Vijay Pokhrel is working two jobs to manage his expenses.

He said he works around 40 hours per week but sometimes has to skip classes to do so.

"I, like other students, have no choice but to work two jobs to keep up with my monthly expenses," Pokhrel said.

He expressed difficulty managing his daily schedule and in-person classes as a result of the commitment towards his two jobs.

"Initially, I did feel like I was prioritizing work over my academics, but I knew I needed to work more to pay for my rent and groceries," Pokhrel said.

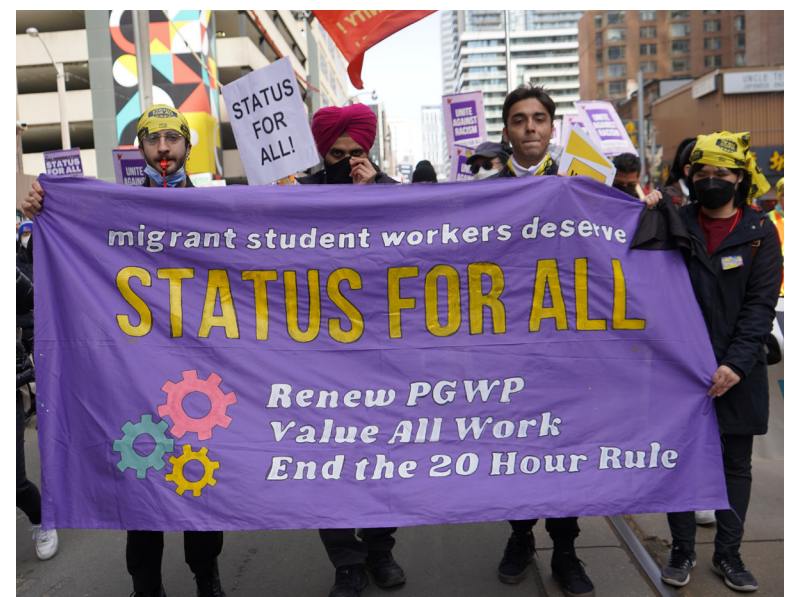
He said that sometimes the burnout affected his eating patterns, sleep cycle and his productivity altogether.

Sarom Rho, an organizer at the Migrant Workers Alliance for Change, said the removal of the 20-hour work limit is fundamentally about labour mobility and protection to enable international students to leave "bad jobs" and "to speak up when employers do not pay them their wages or treat them disrespectfully."

"Right now, everything is expensive," Rho said. "And on top of that, international tuition fees, which are already expensive, have been increasing and there is no real limit on how much they can increase."

"The issue here is that wages are so low that students have no choice but to work longer hours in order to be able to pay for expensive groceries, bills, rent, and of course the increase in tuition fees," she said.

Melany Palacios-Naranjo, a student advocate with Humber College's student union IGNITE, said international students have raised some concerns about rising tuition fees. IGNITE is collaborating with other institutions to provide



MIGRANT WORKERS ALLIANCE FOR CHANGE/SAROM RHO

International students across Canada are fighting for equal status.

financial aid options, such as more scholarships and bursaries, to assist in meeting their needs.

Rho said the new rule passed by Immigration Minister Sean Fraser is temporary because it excludes students who applied for a study permit after Oct. 8. It also excludes students who have already been, or are currently planning to come to Canada.

"Essentially we have a separation in the labour force," Rho said.

"Migrant students from across the country are continuing to take action for permanent solutions to ensure permanent resident status for all," she said. "So that all of us have the ability to not only speak up at work, but live here with dignity, and be able to be with our friends and our families."





U.S. FLEET FORCES TWITTER

The U.S. Navy recovered the debris of an alleged Chinese spy balloon shot down on Feb. 5, 2023, off the coast of Myrtle Beach, S.C. Canadian and U.S. authorities worked to gather debris from these downed objects to confirm exactly what they were. Ferris said he thinks NORAD will now try to destroy every balloon before it reaches North American airspace.

## Trudeau's handling of alleged spy balloon 'adequate'

**Philip Lau**  
Politics Editor

John R. Ferris from the University of Calgary said aerial surveillance is usual practice for major states and does not indicate provocation.

The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), the Canadian-U.S. organization for North American air defense, shot down three objects over Alaska, Yukon, and Lake Huron near the Canadian border.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Monday there was some sort of pattern behind the three flying objects spotted over North American airspace in the past week.

His statement came as Canadian and U.S. authorities worked to recover debris from these downed objects to confirm exactly what they were.

The operation reflected heightened scrutiny following an alleged Chinese spy balloon downed off the South Carolina coast on Feb. 4, said John Kirby, the U.S. National Security Council Coordinator for Strategic Communications.

John R. Ferris, a professor at the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary, said while the nature of the three subsequent objects remained unclear, there was nothing wrong

shooting them down.

"The one that was shot down over Yukon was actually flying in air space, which commercial aircrafts use," Ferris said. "And under those circumstances, destroying that airship is perfectly appropriate."

"The Americans shot one down over Alaska because, essentially they said, it's not ours, it's drifting into our territory, and we don't want it," he said.

Kirby said on Monday the United States would err on the side of safety when it comes to national security.

"Even though we had no indications that any of these three objects were surveilling, we couldn't rule that out," he said. Some have criticized the Canadian and U.S. governments for not acting as swiftly over the first alleged Chinese spy balloon that was detected. Opposition leader Pierre Poilievre said in a statement on Sunday the Trudeau government had failed to combat growing threats from Beijing.

Shooting down the balloons was the right thing to do, Poilievre said.

But Ferris said the Canadian government was likely on an equal footing with the U.S. regarding the first balloon, as command within NORAD is binational.

"My own guess is the Canadian authorities in NORAD understood

as much as the American ones did about what was going on," he said.

Ferris also said that although the U.S. became aware of a possible Chinese spy balloon program two years ago, it could be the first time it dealt with such a problem in its airspace.

"If you don't take the idea of a balloon as an intelligence platform seriously, you won't look for it," he said. "And if you won't look for it, you won't find evidence."

Kirby said small, slow-moving

objects at high altitudes like the alleged Chinese spy balloon are difficult to detect on radar. Even if these objects were spotted, deep examination had not been the government's usual practice, he said.

The incident represented a change as the United States took a more cautious approach towards potential Chinese aerial surveillance, Kirby said.

"We detected it. We tracked it. And we have been carefully studying it to learn as much as we

can," he said.

Ferris said not shooting down the first balloon until it reached the Atlantic coast was a rational and standard response.

"They wanted to recover the route. They wanted to find out what equipment was on the board," he said.

But Ferris said he doubted the United States will reveal "anything top secret" from the debris, as overhead collection is not something new.

"My guess would be they will be able to reconstruct the collection capabilities of the platform, which is what you want to do," he said.

Kirby said the United States believes spy balloons do not collect much more intelligence from China than other existing platforms.

"But in the future, if the PRC (People's Republic of China) continues to advance this technology, it certainly could become more valuable to them," he said.

Ferris said he thinks NORAD will now try to destroy every balloon before it reaches North American airspace.

"One single flight is unlikely to provide signals, intelligence or materials that are going to be world shaking," he said. "But nobody likes the idea of somebody intercepting their signals above their head."



PHILIP LAU

NORAD shot down four unidentified aerial objects located across the North American airspace between Feb. 4, 2023, and Feb. 12, 2023.





RODRIGO ABD

An anti-government protester challenges the police in Lima, Peru, on Feb. 9, 2023. Protesters are seeking immediate elections, the resignation of President Dina Boluarte, the release of former President Pedro Castillo, ousted and arrested for trying to dissolve Congress in December, and justice for protesters killed in clashes with police.

## Peru's protests menace Canadian-funded eco projects

**Antonio Peláez Barceló**  
*International News Editor*

Canadian Jana Bell went to Peru's monumental citadel Machu Picchu in 2011 to celebrate a friend's birthday.

"I saw we were next door to the Amazon rainforest," Bell said. "So, we spent three days and I just felt I had to go back."

Since that trip, she's become the founder and president of Amazon Rainforest Conservancy (ARC), a charity that protects Peruvian forests.

"Right now we have two projects, one in the lower Amazon and one in the cloud forest, the headwaters of the Amazon," Bell said.

One of the ARC offices is in Puerto Maldonado, capital of Madre de Dios province wedged between Brazil and Bolivia in southeast Peru. It has become a focal point of the conflict between Indigenous protesters and the government following the ouster of former President Pedro Castillo by the legislature.

"The protestors have put a blockade on the highway that connects it to the rest of the country," Bell said.

However, last December, she had to fly back to Canada because of the disorder that followed Castillo's failed self-coup attempt.

Professor of Sociology at Pontifical Catholic University of Peru (PUCP), Maritza Paredes, is the lead researcher in a project partially funded by the Canadian public corporation International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

The project documents the knowledge systems of Indigenous

peoples in Chile and Peru to provide justice-informed adaption to climate change.

She has to travel to Tarapoto, in the Peruvian Amazon, next March 2023, "but the future's so uncertain, I don't know what'll happen," she said.

Political protests are not new to Peru.

In a peer-reviewed study, Professor of the University of California Riverside David Pion-Berlin and an expert on defense and security at Tulane University Igor Acácio, analyzed protests in Latin American democracies.

They found that, according to official sources of Defensoría del Pueblo, 1,803 conflicts took place in Peru from 2012 to 2018. In them, 73 people died and at least 31 of those deaths were caused by the police.

Defensoría del Pueblo is an institution that also publishes the official tally of deaths since the protests that started last December and the latest tally shows 63 people have been killed in the current unrest.

On the other hand, the government said in a Jan. 30, 2023, statement that more than 850 police agents had been hurt and 43 police stations had been "affected" by the protests.

Pedro Castillo's presidency had not been quiet, with frequent changes in his cabinet.

"His speech is a coup, I don't know what he was thinking. In response, the Congress and the current female president take power," Paredes said.

What followed has been "an indiscriminate repression, which

repeats patterns of racism against Indigenous peoples who are equated to terrorists," he said.

Peru is a vast country, with a land mass of more than 1.29 million square kilometres. Maritza Paredes said that its geographical diversity, with dry Western coast, high mountains and humid forests, is part of the problem. The coastline is one area that receives greater benefits through economic policies while Indigenous southern areas don't.

There are two kinds of Indigenous peoples. Those who live in the mountains are numerous, especially in the Southern provinces, and have been traditionally fragmented and poorly organized.

They identified with Castillo, so they're the ones leading the protests, "but they don't have leaders, which makes it hard to specify their requests," Paredes said.

The government declared a state of emergency in six provinces in

the South on Feb. 6, where roads are still blocked.

Puerto Maldonado is the capital of one of the provinces.

"The protestors came [there] to the governor's house, threw rocks and broke windows," conservationist Jana Bell said. "The governor is shooting them with his rifle and asking for the army."

Behind the mountains, Paredes said "there are the Indigenous from the Amazon, where there hasn't been massive protests, until now."

But "there's illegal mining and coca cultivation, which is increasing a lot", she said.

Paredes has been doing research on mining, Indigenous politics and the environment since 2007, a year before she obtained her PhD at Oxford University. She said illegal activity is on the rise due to the lack of alternatives.

"There are huge investments in climate change by Norway, Denmark, or Germany that only think

about creating big conservancy parks," Paredes said. "They should be bargaining with the Peruvian government to promote a more competitive agriculture locally."

Paredes thinks that democracy in Peru is in danger.

"What scares me the most is that I think we are an unequal society, conservative and, overall, very racist," she said.

Bell, whose son Mac studies business at Humber College's Lakefront campus, said she's optimistic for the future.

"Illegal gold mining camps are turning the rainforest into a desert landscape because of ponds polluted with mercury," she said. "There're only an estimated figure of 15,000 jaguars left in the world, and their last refuge is the Amazon basin."

"Our future doesn't have to be a story of extinctions, pandemics and catastrophic weather events," Bell said. "But we need to act now and shift how we relate to nature."



AMAZON RAINFOREST CONSERVANCY

Canadian Jana Bell, founder of Amazon Rainforest Conservancy, with a monkey in the Peruvian Amazon forest.





AP PHOTO/BRUNA PRADO

Supporters of former President Jair Bolsonaro protest his defeat in the presidential runoff election, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Wednesday, Nov. 2, 2022. Thousands of supporters called on the military Wednesday to keep the far-right leader in power, even as his administration signaled a willingness to hand over the reins to his rival Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

## Brazil's soccer colours play role in election riots

**Nathan Abraha**  
Senior Reporter

Jair Bolsonaro's supporters stormed the national congress in Brasilia, Brazil's capital, on Jan. 8, destroying windows, raiding offices and chanting for military intervention against the winner of the recent election, leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

They did that while draped in an infamous symbol, the canarinho, the colours of Brazil's national soccer team.

The jersey has become part of the uniform for Bolsonaroistas, much like the red MAGA ball cap that is part of the garb for Trump supporters. Brazilian authorities moved swiftly to arrest top public officials and about 2,100 rioters were initially arrested.

Leonardo Coelho Assunção Santa Rita was only a child when Brazil, wearing the iconic yellow and green Canarinho jersey, won its record-setting fifth World Cup in 2002. A result that filled the country with the jubilant power of football to unite.

Santa Rita now sees a different and nefarious meaning behind the colours.

"Bolsonaro and his supporters absorbed all national symbols as fascists often do, they took the symbols for themselves," he said. "The national team jersey is one

of the things that's been co-opted."

"I know some people are now uncomfortable to be seen with the jersey because they don't want to be associated with Bolsonaro," Santa Rita said.

The Canarinho since its debut on the world stage at the 1950 World Cup, has been present alongside the country's hardships, including a military dictatorship in the 1970s and multiple periods of economic instability in the 1980s. Throughout it all, the yellow and green offered a rallying call for the country.

Once beautiful and apolitical, the jersey now serves as a sobering reminder of the country's fractured political climate.

Santa Rita, a lifelong football fan, is currently a master's student at the Pontifical University of Minas Gerais in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. Although a believer in the sport's ability to breathe life into Brazilian society, he also sees the ways football has been traditionally used as a tool to sway the public.

"Football here in Brazil turns political when the morale of the population is down," he said. "Football can mitigate, can elevate the population's spirit, affecting political outcomes, especially in elections."

Football has often been described as a 90-minute escape from all the inconveniences

of life. And no one has given the globe escapes like Brazil's 'Seleção'. Dazzled by legends such as Pele, Garrincha, Socrates, and Ronaldo, the nation is the undisputed king of the sport, all with a borderline defiant style of the jogo bonito, the beautiful game.

Yet, no matter the world's rose-tinted expectation of kids kicking the ball around the alleys of São Paulo or the beautiful beaches of Rio, the country's greatest sport has ties to darker times.

Santa Rita points towards a controversial figure of Brazil's past, Getúlio Vargas, the 14th and 17th president of Brazil as the starting block. Vargas came to power after the corrupt government of the 1920s. He created the Estado Novo, an authoritarian regime that puts a focus on nationalism to win support.

"Vargas wanted to create a national symbol for Brazil. Football and samba, various cultural symbols people took for granted, and Vargas' government used them well," Santa Rita said. "He was responsible for football being the national symbol for Brazil, he crafted it."

"They say that politics and football don't relate with each other but that's a great lie," Santa Rita said.

Currently, Maria Eduarda Azeredo, a 24-year-old Brazilian

international relations graduate, sees ultranationalism fuelled far-right conservatism as a key profiteer of football's importance to Brazil.

"What we have is the Bolsonaroista appropriation of the national team jersey, an ownership," Azeredo said. "This is pure integralism, psychological in nature and symbolic."

"And of course, we have football, the famous bread and circus, a huge event for Brazilians and they end up forgetting these fundamental issues to just enjoy the show," she said.

"It is not the first time that Brazil has had extreme right-wing politicians who claim this discourse," Azeredo said. "This discourse of family, god, and tradition is due to complex long-term cultural factors in Brazil."

It wasn't always like this. A brighter yesterday harbours in Azeredo's memories.

"The most striking memory was of fraternization and unity, everyone was there to cheer for the team and the country," she said. "The schools and streets in the neighbourhood were always decorated with the colours of the national flag. We felt a union, passion, and fun."

Meg Stalcup, associate professor of anthropology at Ottawa University, never watched sports

while growing up. That all changed after travelling to Brazil for a World Cup.

"The whole country stopped for the World Cup. I was with a caravan of Brazilian friends driving through the interior of the country for the final," Stalcup said. "We stopped in a very small town. People put TVs in the windows and turned them to the streets so that everyone could watch."

Stalcup, who received a master's degree in biological sciences at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, believes the sport's greatest quality was and remains its genuine appeal, regardless of which forces wielded it.

"Football is a real, shared heritage in Brazil, and a success that for many years the country could feel was theirs," she said. "The kind of football that Pelé made famous came to represent something the nation could hold its head high."

Stalcup is unsure whether the Canarinho can ever return to its former status of just being the jersey of Brazil's team.

"The camisa da seleção, the flag, even wearing the colours of the flag, is now something a segment of the population will avoid to not be mistaken for supporters of Bolsonaro," she said. "There have been efforts to reclaim it but it remains to be seen if these will be successful."





CANADIAN PRESS/RICK RYCROFT

Canada's Adriana Leon celebrates with her teammates after scoring her team's second goal during a friendly soccer international between Canada and Australia in Sydney, Australia, in 2022. The women's team is locked in a dispute with Soccer Canada right now regarding lack of equality and fairness. The team is on its way to the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup.

## EDITORIAL: 'We are at our wit's end': women's soccer team fights for equity

After hearing that their own federation had cut funding less than six months away from the biggest tournament of their lives, the players with the Canadian Women's National Soccer Team (CANWNT) had enough.

CANWNT took action by not showing up to training on Feb. 10 as an act of protest against Canada Soccer's recent budget cuts.

"It's time to take a stand," Canada's national soccer team captain Christine Sinclair said. "We're preparing for the biggest tournament of our lives and don't feel fully equipped to do so."

And they're right. It's possible that this dispute over transparency, equality and fairness could affect Canada's ability to remain competitive on the world stage. It could do harm to the team's ability to compete.

The team received news from Canada Soccer while training in Orlando, Fla., for the SheBelieves Cup that's set to take place later in the month.

Feeling outraged was an understatement, Janine Beckie said, a forward for the team.

"There's not really words to describe how it feels to be here in camp with the national team and know we're not being given the same resources that our men's team was given last year to prepare for their World Cup," Beckie said.

As a result of the funding cuts, there's been a shortage of staff at

training camps, lack of players being brought in for training, as well as significant cuts to youth programs.

CANWNT sent Canada Soccer a list of demands they need accommodated in order to return to training.

The list included their team having the same budget that the men's team received for their World Cup preparation, transparency in regards to the men's National Team budget, and a home game before their FIFA World Cup in Australia and New Zealand.

In return, Canada Soccer sent them litigative threats, both against the team and individual players.

According to Canadian and provincial labour laws, employees working with a valid collective bargaining agreement and walking off the job, known as a wildcat strike, are illegal.

Besides the strike's unlawful nature, the players said they simply couldn't afford to pay millions to a federation that hasn't paid them in the first place.

"As individual players who have received no compensation yet for any of our work for Canada Soccer in 2022, we cannot afford the risks that personal action against us by Canada Soccer will create," CANWNT said in a statement posted to Twitter.

The women's team reluctantly returned to the field on Feb. 12.

In alliance with the women's team's demands, the Canadian Men's National Soccer Team expressed their frustrations with Canada Soccer in a statement posted to Twitter.

The team denounced Canada Soccer's leadership and alleged mismanagement of its budgets, pointing towards its lack of transparency of financial records.

"How Canada Soccer is allocating or using funds is unclear and cloaked in secrecy," the men's National Team said.

The team also mentioned Canada Soccer's partnership with Canada Soccer Business (CSB) and how the 2018 agreement between the two sits at the core of the organization's testy relationships with its players.

"It has been reported that the agreement was never properly approved, and that despite having an opportunity to annul or terminate the agreement when its terms were breached by Canada Soccer Business, Canada Soccer did not do so," the men's National Team said.

In 2018, CSB struck an eight-year deal with Canada Soccer that was set to last from 2019 to 2027.

The contract outlined that starting Jan. 1, 2019, CSB was to pay Canada Soccer a guaranteed fee each year that starts at \$3 million and climbs annually to top out at \$3.5 million by 2027. In exchange, Canada Soccer would

provide CSB with all broadcasting and sponsorship rights for both national teams.

In Rick Westhead's article published July 13, 2022, multiple Canada Soccer board members said the contract was not approved by the board.

"Every time we have asked for information about Canada Soccer Business, the board has been shut down," former Canada Soccer board member Ryan Fequet said. "The board absolutely did not approve this contract."

Fequet pointed to the opportunity that Canada Soccer had to end its contract with CSB when they didn't pay them the agreed upon \$3.05 million during 2020, despite the COVID-19 pandemic cancelling many games and events that year.

CSB however, only gave \$1.2 million.

This is not the first time that Canada Soccer had neglected due process, having to do with governance and board-level decisions.

Leanne Nicolle, a former Canada Soccer board member, said she learned of Bev Priestman's hiring through the media in October 2020.

Originally, Rhian Wilkinson was set to replace former national women's team coach Kenneth Heiner-Møller. However, her contract soon became null after she inquired about available budgets for assistant coaches and other staff.

"Hiring a national team coach is a big decision," Nicolle said. "When people ask for transparency, there is a complete absence."

As for the remainder of the national women's season this year, Sinclair said that after the World Cup and an Olympic playoff later on in the year, they've been told that's all the budget has in store for their team.

The budget cuts will also affect the youth program for the 2023 season, which Beckie said would materialize later on as problems for the future of the women's team.

"The reality is there's not enough talent coming through the system to help older players move on," Beckie said.

Sinclair also wanted to make it clear during a call with the media that player compensation for games is a very small part of the changes they're seeking.

"It runs much deeper than what players make per game," she said. "It's time we are treated like the men."

It's safe to say the time is now for women's soccer players to be given equitable opportunities as their male counterparts.

If their teams, both youth and adults, aren't given the chance to make a name for themselves within the soccer world, who knows where the future of Canadian women's soccer lies. Indeed, where Canada's soccer is at now threatens its future chance of remaining a world power.



# OPINION: Ottawa shouldn't rush to reform bail laws



**Philip Lau**  
Political Editor

The recent increase in violent crime has sparked calls for bail reforms, but changes in laws should be based on evidence, not mere perception.

Federal opposition parties, as well as provincial and territorial leaders, have all pointed their fingers towards bail laws, saying they were too lenient.

Federal Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre is using the phrase “catch and release” to attack existing bail policies, which he said put dangerous re-offenders back on the streets.

In a letter sent to Justin Trudeau in January, leaders from all 13 provinces and territories made it clear they feel now is the time for bail reforms.

In the letter, they said the reverse onus principle, which requires the accused and not the prosecution to show why bail should be granted, should extend to those charged with possessing loaded firearms.

Jon Reid, president of the Toronto Police Association, also said in January that existing laws attach too much weight to the rights of an accused.

Part of the law attracting criticism is the principle of restraint, which urges judges to release the accused as early as possible with the least stringent bail conditions.

Liberals introduced the principle to the Criminal Code in 2019 during the Bill C-75 justice reform.

But these attacks overlook the fact that the current bail regime reflects long-standing legal principles.

The principle of restraint had been reaffirmed by the Supreme Court in *R. v. Antic* before the Bill C-75 reform, the Canadian Bar Association said in September 2018.

Chief Justice Richard Wagner said in *Antic* that the right to bail flows from the presumption of innocence, a fundamental principle enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, in particular Sec. 11 (e), which states an accused cannot “be denied reasonable bail without just cause.”



DAVID LAMETTI TWITTER

Minister of Justice and Attorney General David Lametti discussed threats posed by repeat offenders with police associations on a video conference call on Feb. 9. Police associations have called for reforms of bail laws following the murder of OPP Const. Grzegorz Pierzchala.

The Supreme Court did not neglect the need to balance individual rights and public safety.

One example is the *R. v. Morales* ruling in 1992, which affirmed that the reverse onus principle was constitutional.

But Chief Justice Antonio Lamer said part of the task for the bail system was to stop criminal behaviour.

Lamer said it was necessary to place more burden on an accused with a substantial likelihood of endangering public safety upon interim release.

But he also said this burden should only occur in a narrow set of circumstances.

While recent violence deserves public attention, the big picture is that the bail system is already quite risk-averse.

According to Statistics Canada, between 2020 and 2021, approximately 77 per cent of people staying behind bars in Ontario had yet to be found guilty.

That is why some experts say calls for bail reform are misplaced.

Stricter bail laws would only put a halt to more people's lives, even if these suspects may have done nothing wrong.

Laura MacDiarmid, an assistant professor of justice studies at the University of Guelph-Humber, said the negative impact of bail denials on the accused should not be understated.

MacDiarmid said lengthy detention before trial could force the

accused to plead guilty and disrupt their work and family lives.

And in any event, existing laws already have a response to violent criminals that critics are targeting.

Those who allegedly attacked others using firearms will be caught by the reverse onus regime under the Criminal Code.

The same regime covers those accused of committing another offence while on bail.

The Criminal Code also requires judges to consider previous crim-

inal convictions of an accused before making a bail decision.

And in the case of Randall McKenzie, the accused in the killing of OPP Const. Grzegorz Pierzchala in December while on bail, McKenzie is also alleged to have been in breach of bail conditions for failing to appear before court in August.

McKenzie was not re-arrested before the murder occurred. One could ask whether it is the court's or the police's problem for not making an arrest.

MacDiarmid said putting more funding into bail supervision programs could help ensure those with higher risks comply with bail conditions.

She also said there should be a more systematic collection of bail statistics so reforms can be more evidence-based.

Calling for more people to be put behind bars in the name of public safety is easy. But, as legal experts rightly point out, there are better solutions.



ONTARIO PROVINCIAL POLICE TWITTER

OPP Const. Grzegorz Pierzchala was murdered Dec. 27, 2022. Randall McKenzie was allegedly involved with the murder while he was on bail. McKenzie also allegedly faced bail violations for failing to appear before Court.



# X Games champ Megan Oldham makes history in women's skiing



X GAMES TWITTER

Megan Oldham (middle) earned her gold in X Games Women's Ski Slopestyle on Jan. 29, 2023.

## Krystal Yeung Sports Editor

Canadian Olympian Megan Oldham went to the X Games starting gate without ever landing a triple cork on snow before.

She only practiced the trick on airbags, and not even with her normal gear.

But she rose to the challenge.

"The only thing I wanted to do going to X Games was to land that trick," Oldham said. "I really had

like no medals in my mind."

Oldham landed the first triple cork in women's skiing history, gaining 50 points and a gold medal in the Ski Big Air competition at the X Games in Aspen.

"I'm like way more proud of landing that trick than I am, even like getting the gold," she said.

It was not easy for her to ski on a path no one ever has before.

Skiing can be dangerous because of its impact and the force involved. Skiers practiced

their tricks on airbags because they gave them soft land, so they didn't have to worry about critical injuries caused by improper landing, she said.

Oldham said she flew halfway around the world to Australia to train because they had a newer and larger airbag.

"I flew there like just after Christmas and trained there for like 10 days," she said. "I did the same trick over and over and over and over again just so that I knew

the feeling of the takeoff, spot in air and sort of stuff."

She said she hadn't landed the triple cork on snow until the first jump in the X Games.

"I didn't want to risk falling," Oldham said. "I was really scared for sure."

She said despite completing the trick, there were some setbacks on her way to the triple cork.

Her luggage containing equipment never arrived in Australia, and she had to find new ski gear to replace the wayward gear, she said.

Oldham said it made her nervous, especially since she is very specific about her equipment.

She said her normal ski boots are 95 flex, which refers to how easily the boot arches forward, but could only find 60 flex boots while training abroad.

"I don't know if things are going to feel different, or if I'm going to have more power, less power, like all this kind of stuff," Oldham said.

Oldham was up for the challenge, however, because she wanted to show people what women could accomplish.

"Women are like at the same level, or if not, like really close to the same level as the boys are," she said.

Her brother, Bruce Oldham, a professional skier and coach to Megan, said this historical moment left him full of joy.

"Megan has wanted to make

history in women's freestyle skiing ever since she began," he said. "To see it come around in such a full circle is just amazing."

Bruce said he was worried about his sister taking up such a big challenge.

"Not that I didn't think she was capable of it, more so that she just wasn't quite prepared," he said.

"We took a trip to Australia just before the X Games to make practice and I was immediately set at ease," Bruce said. "Watching Megan train and prepare sent all my worries away, I knew she had it."

Megan Oldham expressed gratitude to her brother, family, and her boyfriend.

"I told them about this idea to train for the triple," she said. "They all kind of just dropped everything they were doing and either like travelled with me or helped me train or just gave me really good advice."

Oldham said she hoped to make progress every year and to continue attempting unaccomplished tricks in the next Olympic quadrennial.

She said she was happy to see women's skiing receive some much deserved attention, and that reading the messages kids have been sending in is a source of motivation.

"Keep pushing and believing in your dream, because eventually it'll, it will happen," she said.

# Humber's curling star wins CCAA Athlete of the Week

## Nicole Fernandes Senior Reporter

The Humber women's curling team won the OCAA provincial championship for the fourth time, defeating the Niagara Knights 8-6 in a closely contested match.

Meaghan Mallett, a student in Humber North Campus' social science program, has proven herself to be a rising star in the world of curling.

The championship game was evenly matched throughout, and Mallett's impressive shots helped secure the victory.

She was named MVP by the Ontario Colleges Athletic Association (OCAA) and Athlete of the Week by the Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA).

Mallett has been turning heads with her exceptional skills on the sheet and her latest accolades are a testament to her hard work and dedication.

Originally from Waterloo, Ont., she has been an integral part of the Humber Hawks women's curling team's success.

Her leadership and determination have won the team numerous games and tournaments, including the 2022 Women's Curling Championship.

"Getting named Humber Athlete of the Week is always a really special achievement," Mallett said. "Our school has a very strong depth of athleticism across many sports so it is very special to be named at the top."

She put on a clinic in the championship game, leading her team to victory.

She made several crucial plays and took many successful shots, which earned her the MVP award by the OCAA.

"This is my second time winning the award, and it feels just as special this time around," she said.

Mallett credits her success to her teammates and coaches for their support and guidance.

"My teammates inspire me every time we step on the ice, whether it be for practice or in a game," she said. "We constantly remind each other that we put everything we have into our sport for each other."



HUMBER HAWKS

Meaghan Mallett at the 2022 Women's Curling Championship. Mallett was named Athlete of the Week by the CCAA.



# Maple Leafs 'feel part of the community' at outdoor practice

**Isabelle Ferrante**  
News Editor

The February sun shone onto a fresh sheet of ice at Nathan Phillips Square as the Toronto Maple Leafs held their annual outdoor practice for the first time since 2020.

Thousands of fans from all over the GTA braved the early morning breeze to get a good spot to catch a glimpse of the team in action in front of Toronto's city hall.

Die-hard Leafs fan Hannah Domaoa said seeing the team live isn't something that happens very often, making events like these special.

"Obviously tickets are super expensive so getting to watch games isn't very easy, but the fact that this is a free event is really awesome and it's a blast to be able to experience live Leafs hockey, even if it's just practice," she said.

The players were just as happy to mix outdoors again because for captain John Tavares it was a reminder of what makes the organization great: its fan base.

"With these events, you are really able to connect with the fans and share the love and support they give us and give it back to them," he said.

Toronto came off a 4-3 loss to the Columbus Blue Jackets the night before, but that didn't stop them from having fun on a sunny February Sunday.

Head coach Sheldon Keefe said this was a picture-perfect day despite the emotions from the night before.

"If you're going to come in after a loss like last night, this is as good a way to do it," said Keefe. "Beautiful day. Unbelievable turnout."

While early risers were in the square enjoying the Professional Women's Hockey Players Association (PWHPA) skills competition, the TTC Sunday morning commuters had the surprise of a lifetime.

Just like in 2020, the team made the trip to City Hall via the subway from Union Station to Queen.

Keefe said taking the TTC was not only unique for the team but for the members of the community to experience.

"It's a great way to move about the city and to do it for practice and have the guys in full gear and such it is pretty cool to see how people react, especially those that weren't expecting," he said.

A sea of blue and white met them when they arrived at the outdoor rink. Players posed for pictures and signed autographs as they made their way to the ice

Defenceman Morgan Rielly, a veteran of the city since being drafted in 2012, said he knows how passionate the fans are, and every chance he gets to meet them, it's a lot of fun.

"We wish we had more time that we could spend and do autographs for everybody, but our turnout is huge and we're very thankful to our fans for all the support," he said.

The "practice" was a 3-on-3 tournament. The players were separated into three groups: Team Europe, Team North America and Team Ontario.

Member of Team North America, Rielly, feels like it is a fun distraction from the ups and downs of playing in the NHL.

"It's just a change of pace during a long season and you know we get to come out and have a scrimmage, play three on three, whatever it is we get to enjoy it and have fun and be a part of the community," he said

Team Ontario came out as champions of the day, beating Team Europe in the final.

Mitch Marner grew up in Markham as a Leafs fan so he knows what events like this mean to him now as a player.

"Now playing here, I've been loved by so many, so for me, it's about trying to give back as much as you can and trying to make a difference in the world," he said.



ISABELLE FERRANTE

Head coach Sheldon Keefe skates on the ice at Nathan Phillips Square for the Maple Leafs outdoor practice.



ISABELLE FERRANTE

Forward William Nylander on the ice warming up for the Leafs outdoor practice 3-on-3 scrimmage at Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto.



## LEAFS TAKE PRACTICE OUTSIDE



ISABELLE FERRANTE

Maple Leafs defenceman Morgan Rielly at Nathan Phillips Square for the first annual outdoor Leafs practice since 2020. Rielly said "We're very thankful to our fans for all the support."

**CANADIAN  
OLYMPIAN TAKES  
HOME DOUBLE  
GOLD AT X GAMES  
P. 12**



**HAWKS CURLING  
STAR NAMED  
CCAA ATHLETE  
OF THE WEEK  
P. 12**

