

Discussing the Fehr Effect

Written by Matthew Collier
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During Donald Fehr's tenure as MLBPA head, the average player's salary went from \$330,000 to more than \$2 million. The minimum salary went from \$40,000 to \$200,000. According to Roger I. Abrams' *Legal Bases: Baseball and the Law*, it took more than 25 years of free agency for the players' percentage of baseball revenues to return to the amount they kept in the 1870s.

These types of accomplishments are exactly why the NHLPA has named Fehr as its new executive director, according to an [AOL Fanhouse report](#) (though the NHLPA has [yet to confirm](#)).

In late June,

[The Hockey News'](#)

Ken Campbell discussed the Fehr Effect , he wrote:

"First, he essentially had the agents eating out of his hand when he addressed them in March. Then he blew away the executive committee – which consists of each of the 30 player representatives and holds the balance of power – in urging the players to approve the five percent growth factor for next season's salary cap and to extend the current CBA to the summer of 2012. He was also on hand when the league's competition committee met recently to discuss head shots and was – to his credit – completely silent. One person who attended the meeting said it was the first time it seemed the players were free to speak in their own interests instead of acting as extensions of the NHLPA."

[NHL deputy commissioner](#) Bill Daly asks us to keep our eyes on the ultimate prize of avoiding a work stoppage,

"Look, I'm not looking forward to Armageddon, that's for sure," said Daly. "The sport will be well served by dealing with its issues in a reasonable, insightful way, through the negotiation process, and that's what we're looking to do."

Clearly, leadership is going to be an important step forward," said Daly. "They've been without a leader and working by committee for a year. Clearly, it's not as quick, efficient and effective as it otherwise might be. We're looking forward to that decision being made and that position being filled."

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Either way, a man as smart and talented as Fehr must understand the importance of avoiding a stoppage, we can only hope that all involved find a way. Biz of Hockey will be watching NHLPA developments closely as we approach the end of the CBA agreement in Sept. 2012.

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