

Out with the black; in with the blue



GAZETTE PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

Mario Lemieux in red, white and blue.

With the return of World Cup of Hockey action to Montreal last night – and notwithstanding the one-time use of “antique gold” replica vintage jerseys – we would like to pose a question of a sartorial nature. What ever happened to the accent colour of blue, representative of Canada’s French-speaking component, that graced the Team Canada hockey uniform for parts of two decades before it was replaced as an accent colour by black in 1996?

This colour black has definitely got to go. It is representative of nothing in Canadian history or folklore, and its replacement of blue has always struck us as a disappointing metaphor for the slow but sure fading memory in English Canada of the political significance of Quebec, and all French-Canadians, to Confederation.

Red and white in union with blue, the primary colour on Quebec’s fleur-de-lisé flag, speaks to the founding of modern Canada as we know it. Red, white and blue also echoes back to Britain (Union Jack) and France (Tricolore).

So let us here in Montreal begin a campaign to repatriate blue, and retire black. To kick off this campaign, we offer the reader the adjacent Gazette photo-lab-doctored photograph of Team Canada captain Mario Lemieux, shown last week during exhibition action in Ottawa, with blue substituting for the black accents in his predominantly white jersey. Something to think about.