

# BRITISH COLUMBIANS ON THE VANCOUVER CANUCKS

*Interest in the Canucks Remains High*

*Todd Bertuzzi Remains the Fan Favourite*



Ipsos Reid

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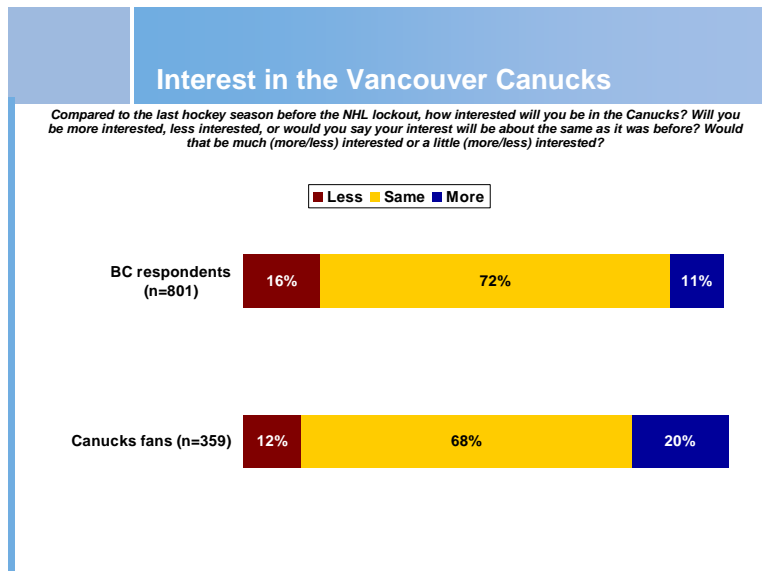
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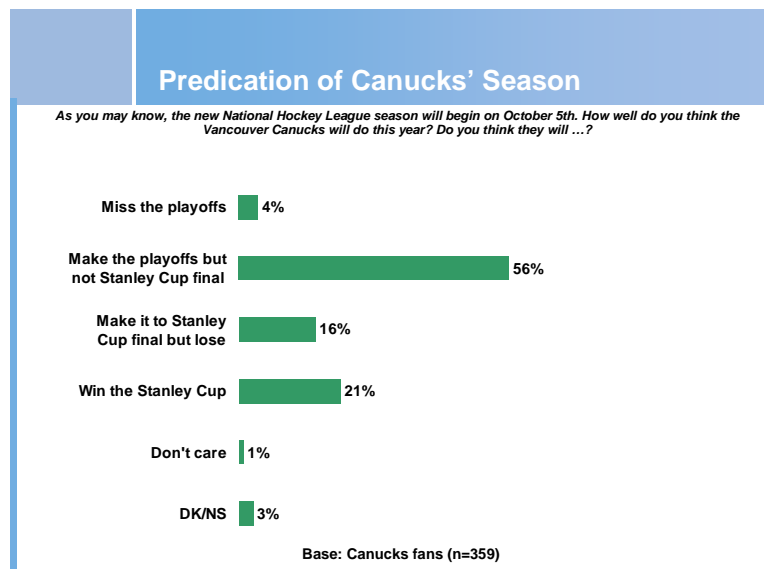
**Vancouver, BC**— A new BC Ipsos Reid survey shows that the year-long labour battle between the NHL and the NHLPA has had little impact on British Columbians' interest in the Vancouver Canucks. Seventy-two percent of British Columbians say they're as interested today as they were before the lockout, while 11% say they're even more interested than they were before. Only 16% of all British Columbians say that their interest in hockey has waned since before the NHL lockout.



British Columbians who identify themselves as Canucks fans are even less likely to have been turned off by the prolonged labour disruption. Only 12% say that they're less interested than they were before, while 88% say that their interest level has stayed the same (68%) or even increased (20%).

“People are very excited about the return of NHL hockey and the Canucks in particular,” says Rhys Gibb, Senior Research Manager with Ipsos Reid. “Whether it’s the new rules designed to stimulate offense, parity as a result of the salary cap, or that the year spent without NHL hockey has made people realize how much they really enjoy the game, there’s a real buzz about the return of the Canucks.”

Part of that excitement surrounding the Vancouver Canucks might be the optimism about the team’s chance for success this season. Ninety-three percent of Canucks fans expect the team to at least make the playoffs, while more than one-third (37%) expect the Canucks to make it all the way to the Stanley Cup finals. Indeed, 21% of all Canucks fans believe this will be the year the Canucks finally win the cup. However, the success of other Western Conference rivals such as Edmonton and Calgary in attracting big-name free agents may be impacting fans’ belief that the team will make it to the finals. Fifty-six percent of all Canucks fans feel that while the team will make the playoffs, they will lose in the playoffs before the finals.



Despite a year in which many say that Markus Naslund struggled while playing for MoDo of the Swedish Elite League, expectations for this season remain high for the Canucks’ captain. In fact, 43% of fans expect Naslund to be the most valuable Canucks this season. Todd Bertuzzi is the fans’ second choice for MVP for this coming season with 23% picking him. No other Canuck player is picked by more than 10% of Canucks’

fans as the team MVP. Former captain Trevor Linden is picked by 7% and goalie Dan Cloutier is picked by 3%. According to the vast majority of Canucks fans, it's Naslund and Bertuzzi on whom a successful season will depend.

Vancouver Canucks' MVP This Season	
Now, let's talk about the Vancouver Canucks players for a moment. Who do you think will be the Vancouver Canucks' most valuable player this season?	
	Canucks Fans (n=359) %
Markus Naslund	43
Todd Bertuzzi	23
Trevor Linden	7
Dan Cloutier	3
Brendan Morrison	1
Ed Jovanovski	1
No particular favourite	5
None, do not follow the game/Canucks	2
DK/NS	15

Canucks fans are ready to move forward, rather than dwell on the past. When asked to identify their favourite Canuck player, Todd Bertuzzi comes out as the fans' top choice. Almost one-quarter (24%) of all Canucks fans say that Todd Bertuzzi is their favourite Vancouver Canuck. This is almost exactly the same proportion that picked Bertuzzi as their favourite Canuck player when we asked this question in the spring of 2003 (23%). "Bertuzzi's popularity has remained steady," says Gibb. "Despite everything that's taken place over the past year-and-a-half, Canucks fans love what he brings to the team."

The favourite Canuck after Todd Bertuzzi is Trevor Linden at 19% (22% in 2003). Markus Naslund, despite being the team's leading scorer for each of the last six seasons, is the third most popular Canuck with 17% (unchanged from 2003) of fans picking him as their favourite player. Other favourite players include Ed Jovanovski (5%), Brendan Morrison (3%), Dan Cloutier (2%), Matt Cooke (2%), and Mattias Ohlund (2%).

## Favourite Vancouver Canucks Player

*Now, regardless of who has been the most valuable, who is your favourite current Canuck?*

	Canucks Fans (n=359) %
Todd Bertuzzi	24
Trevor Linden	19
Markus Naslund	17
Ed Jovanovski	5
Brendan Morrison	3
Dan Cloutier	2
Matt Cooke	2
Mattias Ohlund	2
Jarko Ruutu	1
No particular favourite	10
None, do not follow the game/Canucks	1
DK/NS	12

*These results are based on 800 telephone interviews from the BC Reid Express omnibus survey. Interviews were conducted between September 8 and 14, 2005 with residents from throughout British Columbia. These data are statistically weighted to reflect the actual age and gender of the British Columbia population and are balanced by region. Of the total sample of 800 British Columbians, 359 were identified as being Canucks fans.*

*With a provincial sample of 800, one can say with 95% certainty that the overall results are within  $\pm 3.5$  percentage points of what they would have been had the entire BC population been surveyed. The margin of error on 359 interviews is  $\pm 5.2\%$ . The margin of error will be larger for sub-groupings of the survey population.*

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