

## B's look into new concussion therapy

By **Stephen Harris** / Bruins Notebook | Wednesday, February 6, 2008 | <http://www.bostonherald.com> | **Boston Bruins**

For most NHL players who have suffered a major concussion and post-concussion syndrome, defined as symptoms like dizziness, nausea and headaches that persist more than six weeks, the extent of treatment has been to rest and do nothing.

Many players have waited years for the symptoms to go away. But now there is a more aggressive alternative that actually treats post-concussion syndrome, and is or will be employed by injured **Bruins** [team stats] Andrew Alberts and Patrice Bergeron.

It's a program designed by researchers at the University of Buffalo, who helped Sabres center Tim Connolly recover from his second major concussion during the 2006 playoffs. The program entails controlled exercise at a level of stress that does not trigger the symptoms. Its effect is to correct imbalances in brain mechanism brought on by the initial blow, which cause the illness and headaches.

"There isn't anything else available to athletes and others who suffer from post-concussion syndrome," one of the researchers, Barry Willer, told U-Buffer's Web site. "The standard (old) protocol is rest and anti-depressants if the symptoms remain. What kind of treatment is that? We offer hope to people suffering from these symptoms."

B's general manager **Peter Chiarelli** sounds optimistic about Alberts (out 21 games) returning this season, and isn't counting out Bergeron (out 43 games).

"Albie is going to Buffalo to see this group there that kind of pushes the threshold on the physical activity that an athlete can do," said Chiarelli. "Bergy will go there at some point."

The GM won't say Bergeron, who has lost some 20 pounds, can't return this season.

"Not yet," he said. "It's getting there, but not yet. He actually is coming along a little. And Albie is turning the corner. I'd say in a best-case scenario, in 10 days to two weeks he could be back on the ice, and maybe a week after that play."

### Tough game

Maybe Dennis Wideman didn't get the memo about how the modern pro athlete should handle things: Never take blame, always duck criticism or make excuses.

"I was terrible," said the defenseman of his minus-3 in the 4-2 loss to the Sabres last night. "I could have stopped two of their goals. It's unacceptable at this time of year. Just a bad night."

Said B's coach Claude Julien: "I'd rather see a player hard on himself than have a guy say, 'Well, I thought it was OK.' Dennis has played very well for us this year. There were certain parts of his game (last night) that weren't as good as we've seen. Just a couple of decisions have come back, things that we tried to correct at the beginning of the year. He'll get himself back on track."

### Murray gets close



Photo by Lisa Hornak

Winger Glen Murray, who missed his 19th game with a strained hip flexor, continued to progress and a return Friday in Buffalo appears quite possible.

"We're just waiting, waiting, waiting to make sure when I go back out there I don't feel anything," he said. "If you feel anything at all in practice, there's no way you can get up to game speed. You see the game, you see how quickly things develop, how quick things happen. You don't want to be in the situation in a game where you can't get where you have to be."

Defenseman Bobby Allen (back spasms) also is close to returning. . . . Shawn Thornton got the decision in a nice first-period fight with big Andrew Peters.

### Scouts-eye

The TD **Banknorth Garden** press box was brimming with NHL scouts, perhaps on hand to watch Sabres defenseman Brian Campbell, the 28-year-old rising star who is heading to unrestricted free agency this summer if he isn't re-signed. Or he could be traded before the Feb. 26 deadline.

Reportedly, Campbell, who has 4-31-35 totals in 52 games and just six penalty minutes, has turned down a Buffalo offer worth \$5 million a year.

"If he's a UFA, I'd like to be his representative," joked Bruins defenseman Aaron Ward. "He reminds me of a (Tampa Bay's) Danny Boyle-type of guy, an offensive defenseman who also has great defensive skills. He possesses all the talents required of a prototypical offensive defenseman." . . .

The Waltham Fire Dept. honor guard of Ray LeBlanc, Mark Johnson, Brendan Barry, Scott Perry and Matt Kiernan took the ice for the national anthem.

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