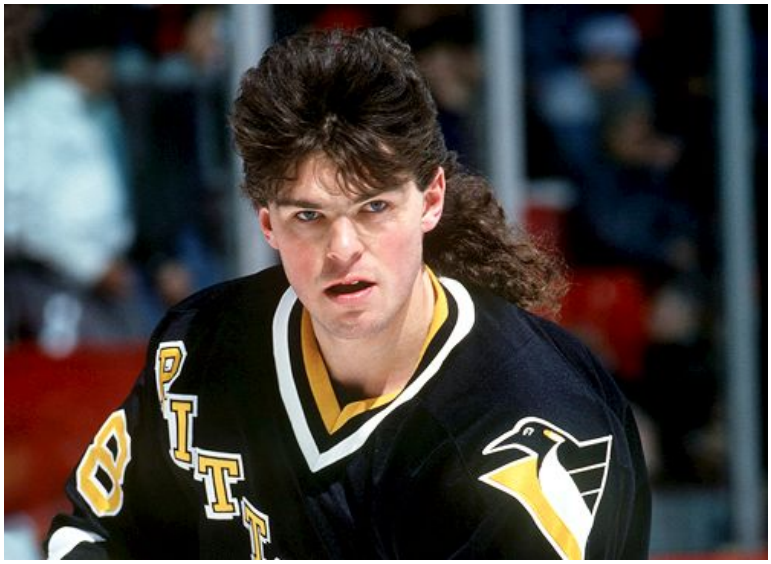

The puck will be dropped on men's hockey at the 2010 Olympics in a little over 24 hours from now. The city of Vancouver is abuzz with Team Canada talk. Who will be the starting goalie? Who will Sidney Crosby play with? Where is Mike Green? These questions, along with countless more, have been filling local radio shows, the local newspapers, and the mouths of hockey fans everywhere. These kinds of questions are not exclusively Canadian, as I am sure there are Swedish hockey fans wondering how Peter Forsberg will hold up, and Russian hockey fans wondering who will get to play with Alex Ovechkin. I have a few questions and thoughts of my own, so read on to find out my list of the top 10 things to watch for during the 2010 Olympics!

10. The Russian power play. You have Sergei Gonchar rushing the puck up the ice. Across from him on the other point is Ilya Kovalchuk, perhaps the most deadly power play specialist in the world right now. Below him, along the half boards, is Pavel Datsyuk, who may be the most crafty and creative offensive talent in the game today. Below the net you have Evgeni Malkin, who uses his size along the boards well and can do just about anything he wants with the puck. Does it sound scary enough yet? Throw in Alex Ovechkin, steaming around the offensive zone

like a heat seeking missile. Let's just say, teams would be smart to try and avoid taking penalties against the Russians this year.

9. Luongo or Brodeur? Both Canadian goaltenders are coming in to the games after getting yanked (Brodeur on Saturday night, Luongo on Sunday afternoon). Brodeur has struggled a bit lately, but has a wealth of experience in big game situations. Luongo has thrived internationally as well, but he lacks Brodeur's resume. Look for Marty to get the start on Tuesday against Norway, but don't expect his leash to be very long if he falters, even a tiny bit.

8. Slovak train derailed? Many were looking forward to a potential top line of Marian Gaborik, Pavol Demitra, and Marian Hossa at the games this year. However, both of the Marians are currently battling injury, and there is no word on whether they will be ready to go on Wednesday against the Czech Republic. Demitra on his own is about a decade removed from striking fear into the opposition, so this could be a quick exit for them. Unless...

7. Goaltenders stealing the show. Neither of the Swiss or Slovakian teams are supposed to

compete for a medal at the games this year, but both countries boast elite goaltenders, with Jonas Hiller and Jaroslav Halak, respectively. Both Halak and Hiller have the ability to steal a game, and in a short tournament that is a huge wildcard. Canada or Russia may be able to fire 50 shots against either of these goalies and come away with only a goal or two. Both countries are dark horses because of their strength between the pipes.

6. Youth being served. The American team will live and die with its young talent. Zach Parise, Paul Stastny, Phil Kessel, Patrck Kane, and Bobby Ryan are all under the age of 25. On defense, the Americans have a single player over the age of 30 (Brian Rafalski). They are far and away the youngest of the teams expected to contend for medals in 2010. Can their young player rise to the challenge presented by the other more experienced countries? It remains to be seen, but so much good, young talent is going to ensure that American hockey is in capable hands for a long, long time.

5. The third Sedin will be....? Who will play with the Sedin twins? Will it be Johan Franzen, one of the most dangerous goal scorers in the world? Will it be Henrik Zetterberg, who plays a very similar style to Daniel and Henrik? Will it be the fiery sparkplug Patric Hornqvist? Or will it be their former linemate in junior hockey, and current KHL star, Mattias Weinhandl?

4. Peter Forsberg returns! It will be extremely interesting to see how big of a role Forsberg is given with this Swedish club. He has battled foot injuries over the past few years, and is just recovering from a broken finger. If nothing else, this may fire up some more Forsberg rumours, since we can never get enough of those!

3. A passing of the Finnish torch. From Saku to Mikko, this will be the Olympics where the younger Koivu becomes firmly entrenched as the backbone of the country. Koivu the younger is one of the best two-way forwards in the world, and his gritty, tenacious style is going to push him to the limelight at the highest stage. There aren't many who compete harder than him.

2. Sidney Crosby playing with talent. Sid the Kid has taken it upon himself this season to score goals instead of setting them up, as his linemates have been less than stellar at finding the back of the net. Bill Guerin is so far over the hill he can't even see it anymore, and Chris Kunitz isn't exactly on the same level as Rick Nash or Eric Staal. Look for Sid to thrive playing with players who will be able to handle his behind-the-back-no-look-spinorama-saucer passes right on the tape.

And the number one reason I am looking forward to Olympic hockey, the return of the single greatest force seen in the NHL in the past 25 years...

1. Jaromir Jagr's mullet! It's back, baby!