

HOW CANADIAN IS THAT?!

When people think of our country, these are some of the things they picture. (You can read about other official symbols in the rest of the magazine.) We asked some young people which ones they liked best, and what symbol they would add if they could. What do you think?

CANUCK COLOURS

In wars going back more than 1,000 years, the French used red crosses on their clothes, while the English carried a white cross. In 1921 when Canada's coat of arms was approved, red and white became our two official colours to honour the two European countries.



"When I think of Canada I think of hockey because it is a well-known sport in Canada. I also think of it because I like the sport and I play it."

—Rihanna, 13, Stoney Nakoda First Nation, Alta.

"If there was one national symbol I would add, it is the First Nations bear. I believe in the current days where we struggle to push for First Nations' rights, this would make a great symbol. This symbol shows the strength and personalities of Canadian people, and adds a diverse piece of culture." —Shuyou, 12, Vancouver, B.C.



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TREE-MENDOUS

Of course the maple is our national tree, right? Yes, but it may surprise you to learn that it didn't become official until 1996!



BUSY AS A...

Europeans who explored west and north throughout Canada weren't doing it for fun. They were looking for beavers, whose pelts were snapped up for fashionable fur hats in Europe in the 1600s and early 1700s. The beaver became an official symbol of our country in 1975.



"I think I would add a symbol to represent the people of colour living in Canada. As a person of colour, I believe that since Canada is known as such a diverse country, we should add some sort of symbol to represent what people of colour have contributed to Canada and to acknowledge what they have gone through." –Tahrema, 15, Toronto, Ont.



Ronald Marino rides his Canadian horse in a 2019 parade.



GIDDY-UP!

Once you know we have a national horse, its name won't surprise you: the Canadian. This breed goes back to the horses the King of France sent from the royal stables to his colonies in New France in 1665. The Canadian horse is strong, tough and good-natured. Parliament declared it our national horse in 2002.

Glad to be Plaid

In 2011, the lovely Maple Leaf tartan became an official emblem of Canada. Its colours are based on the changing hues of a maple leaf throughout the year. It was designed in 1964 to be ready for the 100th anniversary of Confederation, in 1967.



Ronald Marino, Flickr Commons; Justin Bailey

“If I were to add a symbol it would be a coat of arms showing Canada's diversity. It would have trees, mountains and plains. It would also have cities and factories. But most importantly, it would have people, animals and rivers. It would represent peace because everything would be in perfect harmony.” —*Oliver, 11, Calgary, Alta.*



A GREAT HONOUR

The Order of Canada was set up in 1967 to celebrate Canada's 100th birthday. It has three levels — member, officer and companion. It is given to artists, political leaders, volunteers and many others who have done great things here and abroad. Recipients include Jean Béliveau, Roberta Bondar, Céline Dion and Terry Fox.



“When I think of Canada I think of the moose. I hunt with my dad and my four uncles and we use the hide to make drums. We use the drums for ceremonies. The women in my house cut up the meat.”
— *Quinton, 13, Stoney Nakoda First Nation, Alta.*



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“I believe poutine should be a provincial symbol because this dish is a classic of Quebec cuisine. We're pretty much the only ones who know how to make really great poutine! Fries, *squik-squik* cheese and brown gravy.”
— *Élyanne, 15, Rimouski, Que.*

“I think of the pure white snow that comes in the winter that you can sleigh down hills on or make snowmen with. Sometimes the snow turns into slush and it's annoying at times.”
— *Jordan, 13, Stoney Nakoda First Nation, Alta.*



“I personally would add a three-headed maple leaf, representing the three pillars of Canadian identity, unity through nationality and democracy, justice for all in the courts, and free and fair thought.” — *Aarav, 11, Calgary, Alta.*





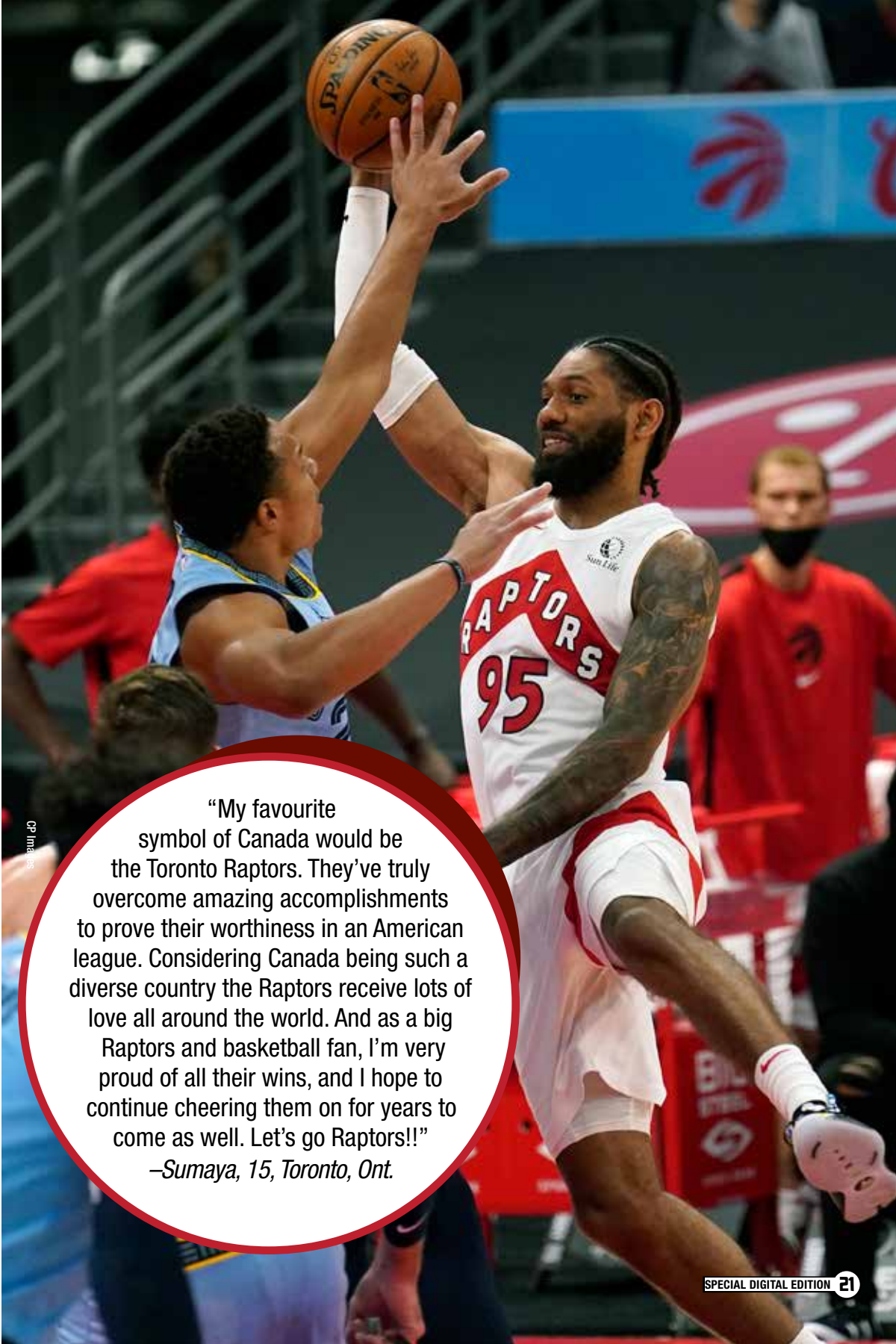
TWO FOR ONE

For a long time Canada didn't have a national sport. Many people insisted we did, and that it was lacrosse. That's a game that has been played by Indigenous people, particularly the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) for thousands of years under other names. Games took place on fields that could be a kilometre long and involve hundreds of players. They taught it to settlers, who picked it up, especially in Ontario and Quebec. The first lacrosse club formed in Montreal in 1856. A man there set rules for the modern game and said the government had named it our national sport, although there's no record of that. Members of

parliament tried to have hockey declared Canada's national sport in 1964 and again in 1965, which infuriated lacrosse supporters. Finally, in 1994, Parliament passed the *National Sports of Canada Act*. It was two sentences long.

The important part was the second sentence: "The game commonly known as ice hockey is hereby recognized and declared to be the national winter sport of Canada and the game commonly known as lacrosse is hereby recognized and declared to be the national summer sport of Canada." So there you have it — two national sports!





CP Images

“My favourite symbol of Canada would be the Toronto Raptors. They’ve truly overcome amazing accomplishments to prove their worthiness in an American league. Considering Canada being such a diverse country the Raptors receive lots of love all around the world. And as a big Raptors and basketball fan, I’m very proud of all their wins, and I hope to continue cheering them on for years to come as well. Let’s go Raptors!!”

–Sumaya, 15, Toronto, Ont.