

## VINIK GETS SHOW OF LOCAL SUPPORT

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### Document Text

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In late 2007, Tom Scarritt and fellow Tampa attorney Steve Burton tried, but failed, to form an investment group to buy the Lightning from Palace Sports & Entertainment.

Though Scarritt said he has concerns about the lack of local ownership after OK Hockey this month sold the team to Boston hedge fund manager Jeff Vinik, he believes the bay area business community is behind Vinik.

"After two years of financial irresponsibility, management dysfunction and poor choices, I believe the business community, as well as the Tampa Bay community in general, are delighted to have Mr. Vinik buy the team," Scarritt wrote in an e-mail.

"He has a reputation for being a risk-taker, and he has certainly taken one here. However, he also has a reputation for letting his managers manage and coaches coach, which will be a refreshing and much-needed change."

Scarritt, 53, was the attorney for Doug MacLean and Jeff Sherrin, who in November 2007 sued Oren Koules, their former partner in Absolute Hockey Enterprises, for \$50 million after a failed attempt to buy the team. The suit was settled out of court.

Scarritt said he and Burton then were facilitators in an attempt to bring together local businessmen and some out-of-towners to buy the team that eventually went to Koules, Len Barrie and six minor investors.

"There is some concern about the lack of local ownership now," Scarritt wrote. "Local investors with whom we spoke had an interest in participating, which decreases the chances of the team being moved to some other city. Otherwise, I believe the business community embraces Mr. Vinik."

Vinik has said moving the team isn't "on my radar."

**OHLUND, MALONE OUT:** D Mattias Ohlund and LW Ryan Malone sat out Friday vs. the Capitals. Ohlund sustained a lower-body injury, perhaps to an ankle, Thursday in the third period against the Maple Leafs when he hit the boards with Christian Hanson. Malone played against Toronto after missing one game with what he called a minor upper-body injury. No word on his prognosis. D Matt Smaby, a healthy scratch for three games, was in the lineup.

**STAMKOS SIGHTING:** Timing kept C Steven Stamkos off the ice during the final sequence of Thursday's overtime loss. Taking a breather after a 50-second shift, the Lightning was so dominant territorially leading to Toronto's winner, Stamkos couldn't get back on the ice.

"Trust me, he was going back out there," coach Rick Tocchet said. "Try to pump some oxygen in him. I'll give him mouth-to-mouth to get him out there."

Said Capitals coach Bruce Boudreau: "He's going to be a bona fide superstar that is going to challenge Alex (Ovechkin) for these goals and awards, along with Sidney (Crosby) in the not too distant future."

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ODDS AND ENDS: LW Todd Fedoruk's first-period assist was his first point since Oct. 29. ... A sale of game-used Lightning equipment is 2-5 p.m. Sunday at the St. Pete Times Forum before the Penguins game.

Credit: Times Staff Writer

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**Abstract** (Document Summary)

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