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## Aquilini Being Conference Coached

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This was recorded on Nov.11 2004, six days before Aquilini announced he had bought half of the team. How can a guy who needs help getting through a press conference decide what is right for a hockey team?

Aquilini in his own words

By Sun Media

Justice Catherine Wedge refused a media application to release Vancouver Canucks and General Motors Place owner Francesco Aquilini's Nov. 11, 2004 media training video - recorded six days before he announced he bought half of the National Hockey League franchise and its arena. Aquilini bought the remainder from reclusive billionaire John McCaw last November.

Tom Gaglardi and Ryan Beedie accuse ex-partner Aquilini in a British Columbia Supreme Court lawsuit of using insider information to derail their offer to buy the Canucks and GM Place. Gaglardi and Beedie want Wedge to void Aquilini's purchase and give them another chance to buy the enterprise.

Wedge agreed with lawyers for defendant Aquilini that he owned the video's copyright.

Wedge, however, did allow for media viewing at the courthouse and also released a transcript of the video, which was shown June 28 in British Columbia Supreme Court.

Following is the transcript of Pace Group's Fred Cawsey and Norman Stowe practicing a news conference with Aquilini.

FRED CAWSEY: So was it more or less than that?

FRANCESCO AQUILINI: Again, you know, I'm not - this is a private transac - this is a private deal. We're a private company and we're not at liberty to disclose that.

CAWSEY: So you're not denying that it was 238 million?

AQUILINI: Again, this is a private transaction we - this is -

CAWSEY: Can we take it as a yes then, it was 238 million? I'm a bit dyslexic, could it be 283 million?

AQUILINI: It's between 100 and 300. (laughter)

NORMAN STOWE: Don't let him - don't let him phase you.

AQUILINI: Yeah, I know, yeah.

STOWE: Your answer to the question is we're not going to comment because it's a private deal but what I can tell you -

AQUILINI: Right.

STOWE: And you want to give them the rest of that.

CAWSEY: We've done a due diligence. We're really happy with the way McCaw has hung in there. We love the team, you know, I really do feel like a kid at Christmas.

AQUILINI: Yeah.

CAWSEY: You know, right away the minute you put the funny at the end, you blow them away.

AQUILINI: Yeah. That's right.

STOWE: So your deal today took us by surprise, Mr. Aquilini. We were thinking that today we were going to see Mr. Gaglardi up there. What happened?

AQUILINI: I - you know, all I can tell you is the -- discuss the transaction that we're doing with John. Other than that I really don't have any other comment on that question.

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CAWSEY: But weren't you involved in the Gaglardi deal and then backed out?

AQUILINI: You know, again today is - all I can tell you today is, you know, what my transaction is with John.

CAWSEY: Now the Gaglardis are saying, you know, privately that they feel like they've been stabbed in the back by you, that you were sort of along for the ride with them and then you kind of struck out on your own.

AQUILINI: Again, I don't have any comment on that. What I can tell you is that we are very excited about this deal. You know, this is a good business opportunity for us. The business of hockey is one that means a lot to the people in Vancouver and we - you know, we're excited about this.

CAWSEY: I've been working on this deal for three years.

AQUILINI: I've been working on this deal for three years.

STOWE: Okay. Mr. Bertuzzi, what do you think is going to happen to him and do you expect him back on the team?

AQUILINI: Yeah, I wish it didn't but it did and I'm sure that Todd Bertuzzi wished - you know, he probably wished it didn't happen and it's in front of the league now and the league will make their decision and that's all I can say about that.

CAWSEY: But don't you think the - the courts have gone over the top, you know, charging a guy in a hockey game for, you know - if there hadn't been a broken neck, it just would have been another hit. Don't you think emotion has taken over and Todd has really suffered and the game is really suffering because of this really hysteria about it?

AQUILINI: You know, again - you know, Todd - I think Todd is a good guy and -

CAWSEY: Try another tack. I want to stick with what I said in my opening statement that if you want to talk about management issues and things like that -

AQUILINI: That's right.

CAWSEY: I really can't talk about it because we're an investor.

AQUILINI: Yeah. So to answer your question, I really want to stick to my - to my statement that I really don't want to talk about management issues.

CAWSEY: But -

AQUILINI: But that's right. I really -

CAWSEY: But we're sorry it happened.

AQUILINI: That's right.

CAWSEY: I'm sure Todd -

STOWE: I wish it hadn't happened. I am sure Todd wishes it hadn't happened. I think he's a good guy and he's been a good asset for the team. It's not before the NHL and they have to resolve it and we'll wait for some decisions and beyond that I really can't comment.

AQUILINI: Yeah.

CAWSEY: As I said in my statement, I don't want to get into management issues but.

F But.

CAWSEY: Okay. So Todd Bertuzzi. I mean, isn't it just ridiculous that he's being charged like this?

AQUILINI: I would like to stick with my opening statement that I really don't want to get involved with management issues but what I can say is I wished it didn't happen. I'm sure that Todd wished it didn't happen and it's in front of the NHL and they'll make their decision as to what they're going to do and that's all I can really say about that.

STOWE: Okay. The deal itself, how much did you pay for half of the share of the Vancouver Canucks?

AQUILINI: Again, that information is confidential and we're not at liberty to disclose that - that information, so all I can tell

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you is that -

CAWSEY: Can you confirm that tit was 238 million?

AQUILINI: Again, you know, I - I -

STOWE: I can confirm it's a fair deal.

AQUILINI: I can confirm it's a fair deal. I can confirm it's a fair deal.

CAWSEY: So that's a yes to the 238?

AQUILINI: I can confirm that we've got a great - I think this is a good deal for both parties. That's what I can confirm.

STOWE: But the specific numbers I'm not going to get into. This is a private deal. What I can tell you is we're excited about joining the tam. It's fifty-fifty, and I'm looking forward to being John's partner. I think we'll work well together.

You want - do you want to just yes/no the answers. You always want to go back to some little commercial from your script that you want to give here so that no matter where they pull stuff out -

AQUILINI: Yeah, because they're looking for things to pull out; right?

CAWSEY: They're just looking for a clip.

AQUILINI: Looking for a clip. How can I get a clip out of this guy.

STOWE: So, Mr. Aquilini, how much did you pay for half of the Vancouver Canucks?

AQUILINI: All I - that information is private.

CAWSEY: Start over. Be clear. Don't go ah, eh, ah.

STOWE: How much have you paid for the Vancouver Canucks?

AQUILINI: Well, that information is private. We're both confidential ---- we're both private companies and we're not at liberty to disclose that information.

You know, we purchased a 50 percent share of the team and that's just fine with us. I think it reflects the fact that John has a strong interest in Vancouver and this team, and quite frankly, I think that's terrific.

STOWE: We've heard that it's 238 million. Can you confirm that?

AQUILINI: You know again for the third time, you're asking me the same question, but I - the terms of the deal are confidential and I'm not at liberty to disclose. However, you know -- you know we think that we got a fair deal.

CAWSEY: Okay. When that happened, what you said 'for a third time.' Nice. Right?

AQUILINI: Yeah.

CAWSEY: Now you say, can we have a question about - after you finished your comment.

AQUILINI: That's right.

CAWSEY: Can we have a question about something else.

AQUILINI: That's right. Okay. Can we have a question -

CAWSEY: Because we're not going to talk about -

AQUILINI: That's right. Can we have a question about something else. Okay--

STOWE: We were surprised to see you today. We were expecting the Gaglardi family to be up there. What happened with their deal?

AQUILINI: I really don't have any comment on that. I could just tell you our deal with John and, you know, at this point I

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don't have anything to say about that.

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