

TIME



Canada's capital is getting

WIRED

**And pretty soon,
Ottawa will be wiring you**

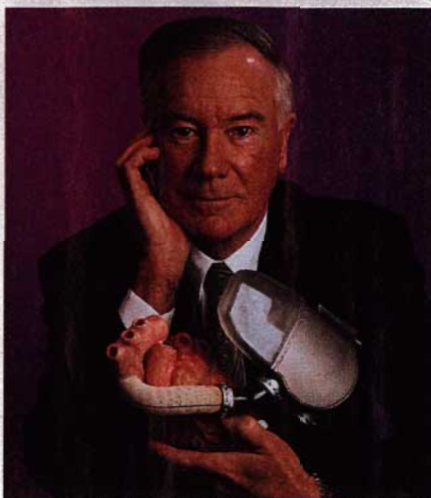


Rod Bryden

The owner of the Senators has his heart set on health

TO SPORTS FANS ACROSS CANADA, ROD Bryden is best known as the chiseled, graying owner of the Ottawa Senators, a genial presence in a private box in the upper reaches of the capital's Corel Centre—which he also owns. Those luxuries are worth some \$226 million. Bryden, 60, can almost afford it. But his place in the local pantheon is assured.

Bryden earned national headlines last year when he failed to persuade the Chretien government to pony up \$13 million in support of National Hockey League owners. He's now looking for partners to ease the burden of his sports empire, which lost \$4.5 million last year. He is the founder of a holding company, Kinburn, and co-founder of SHL Systemhouse, a firm that helped Bryden become one of Ottawa's early high-tech millionaires. As CEO since 1991 of SC Stormont, a financial-services and investment firm, Bryden has been one



of Ottawa's more important early venture capitalists.

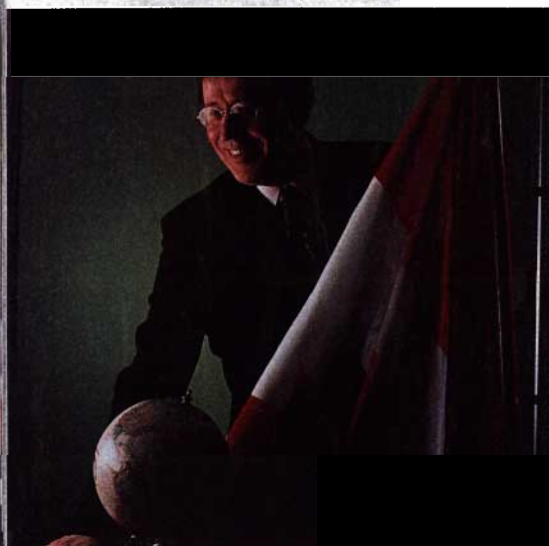
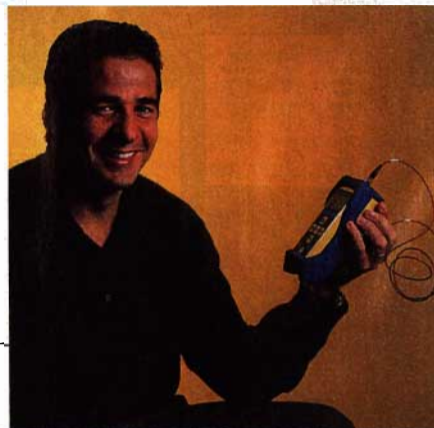
The climb from Port Elgin, N.B., farm boy to sports and technology mogul was a long journey that included a stint as federal deputy minister for regional economic expansion. Currently president and CEO of World Heart Corp., Bryden is nursing development of HeartSaver, a device that can be put in the chest cavity to help improve blood flow for people with a failing heart. ■

Omur Sezerman

The founder of OZ Optics is the next fiber-optics hotshot

IN OTTAWA'S HIGH-TECH HOTHOUSE, where firms expand and intertwine with freakish velocity, OZ Optics grew like a bonsai rather than a bamboo for more than a decade. CEO Omur Sezerman quietly built his company based on a device he had developed as a frugal graduate student in biomedical physics at Dalhousie University. That work now looks certain to make him a leader in the next generation of fiber-optics networks, due out in two or three years. OZ specializes in "polarization-maintaining components," simply put, gizmos that will minimize and eliminate distortions in fiber-optic transmission lines. "There are many optical-component companies in Ottawa," says John Wilson, chief technology analyst at RBC Dominion Securities in Toronto, "but there aren't any that are purely focused on this area."

Sezerman, 43, always knew he was nursing along a gold mine. With a seed-money infusion of \$25 million, OZ is on a major growth spurt. It has already upped its staff from 60 to 500 and increased the size of its production facilities more than tenfold. Just as important for Sezerman, work is under way on an outdoor soccer field to complement the indoor OZ Dome, where the Turkish-born soccer nut burns off steam. (The corporate colors, blue and gold, are borrowed from Sezerman's favorite Turkish soccer team, Fenerbahce.) There are also plans for a new headquarters building nearby. Until that's built, Sezerman intends to stay in his cluttered office next to the reception area in the outback of Carp, west of the city, where staff members like to drop in without knocking. ■



Michael Binder

A veteran civil servant is the feds' top hand on broadband

IT IS A TEAM EFFORT," SAYS MICHAEL Binder about his achievements in eight years as the federal government's top-ranking information-technology mandarin. "I could not do it all by myself." Modesty aside, Binder, an animated and sociable physicist, is the point man of the civil service when it comes to high tech. From such initiatives as establishing the agenda-setting federal Information Highway Advisory Council in 1994—the government's first ever foray into Internet policy—to creating a new registering agency for .ca Web addresses, Binder and his staff are the government's leading agents for carrying out high-tech change. The crucial jobs of implementing the recommendations of the National Broadband Task Force and juggling the interests of multiple levels of government and dozens of telecom companies will be his.

Binder has a mouthful of a title: Assistant Deputy Minister of Spectrum, Information Technologies and Telecommunications for Industry Canada. He plays with consummate skill the part of the invisible civil servant. "It's all very flattering for a bureaucrat to get recognition," he says, but he carefully gives the credit to his higher-ups, especially industry ministers past (John Manley) and present (Brian Tobin). ■