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MAGAZINE

Winter 2012

**CALGARY
PUTS ON A
GOLD MEDAL
PERFORMANCE
AT THE WJC**



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Cover Photo by J.C. Pinheiro / HHOF - IIHF Images
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Pre-game ritual.



PUBLISHER'S MESSAGE

Welcome to our Winter Edition of the Hockey Magazine!

In this issue, we celebrate the WJC's which took place in Alberta recently. It was a great collaboration between two cities – Calgary and Edmonton – for one of the biggest hockey events in the world.

While it's true that our beloved juniors did not win the gold, our team battled hard, and we should be proud of how they represented our country! We won our 14th medal in a row, and we still have more gold medals than any other hockey nation!

And to the organizers and volunteers (from both cities), they deserve a gold medal for their efforts! For two cities who enjoy a bit of a rivalry, it was great to see the collaborative efforts which made the World Junior Championships such a success!

Way to go Calgary for your proud showing!



Sincerely,

Rob Suggitt
Publisher,
HOCKEY MAGAZINE CALGARY



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The Hockey Magazine is a product of
Playhouse Publications Ltd., an affiliate of Suggitt Group Ltd.

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Printed by: R.R. Donnelley



DO YOU HAVE A MINOR HOCKEY STORY TO TELL?

We are always open to suggestions for articles and stories, and in particular, at the minor hockey level. If you have a suggestion for a story, please pass it along to publisher@hockeymagazine.net.

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HOCKEY CALGARY



ALBERTA'S GOLD MEDAL PERFORMANCE.

By Jon Hagan

Photos by Andy Devlin, Francois Laplante / HHOF-IIHF Images





Francois Laplante / IHHOF-IIHF Images

Despite team Canada not winning the gold medal, everything went according to plan for the organizers of the 2012 World Junior Championships as they put together and executed a first-class event. Led by co-chairs Jim Peplinski from Calgary and Lyle Best from Edmonton, the tournament team built on experiences gained from previous years, set records in doing so, and as a result, raised the bar high for all future events.

Bob Nicholson, president of Hockey Canada, announced that 571,000 tickets were sold for the 2012 event, smashing the previous best, established by Ottawa in 2009, by more than 100,000 tickets. Total attendance was also up by close to the same number and estimated to be 444,718.

And the excitement wasn't relegated to only the Canadian games.

Nicholson was quoted as saying that the numbers for other games were close to 14,000 to 15,000 people in attendance.

"The feedback from all the teams has been tremendous!" Nicholson told the media at a press conference before the gold medal game.

"It really was a lot of fun," said Best as the question arose whether or not Alberta would be hosting the event again. "If the bid process is within the next 18 months, which it probably will be, most of our team has said yes that they want to be together to do it again."



2012

**WORLD JUNIOR
CHAMPIONSHIP**

CANADA

Alberta

Talk of doing it again even before the smoke clears is not only a good indicator of how well Best, Peplinski et al must have worked together as a unit, but how successful the tournament was for the province as a whole. In a 2008 interview with Hockey Edmonton magazine,

executive committee member for the 2012 WJCs, Nick Wilson, conservatively pegged the economic spin-off for Calgary and Edmonton

to be in the \$45 million to \$50 million range.

The initial numbers coming out are suggesting that those were conservative figures. "Those numbers are low actually," said Best. "They'll be a post-tournament analysis, but

economic development in Edmonton and Calgary tourism have figured it out to be north of \$80 million."

And the money raised for Hockey Canada, which will in part directly impact Hockey Alberta and two of its biggest associations, Hockey Calgary and Hockey Edmonton, is in the \$18 million to \$20 million range. Hockey Canada is also doing its part to raise the profile of the junior tournament in Europe and Russia, the hosts of the next two

tournaments. "For the first time, Hockey Canada and its foundation is actually taking some of the money it has made from this tournament and investing it in other countries to help them with their programs," said Best. "For the next year in Ufa, Russia, Hockey Canada has bought the rink board rights to help support the event."

Support like this ultimately makes the game better and more entertaining as the level of competition increases. Granted, competition has been stiff for years, but Canada has nevertheless managed to dominate. And the silver lining behind Canada's most recent loss will no doubt result in a renewed focus on exacting some sort of revenge for the Canadians on Russian or European soil.

"When Canada came up short against the Russians, you could feel the air come out of the building," said Best of that fateful semi-final game at the Saddledome. "There was a lot of sadness. To that point, the first time Calgarians had seen Team Canada really was in that game. The building was so full of anticipation. When the team skated out onto the ice, the roars were deafening."

But don't be fooled into thinking that Edmonton fans necessarily got the better part of the deal because they got to see the majority of Canada's success. "In Calgary they saw some incredible hockey games," added Best. "The calibre of play was huge. In fact, Lanny MacDonald thought that that last game (Sweden versus Russia) was one of the best games he's ever seen."

From the ticket buyers and the fans at the games to the brass at the International Ice Hockey Federation and Hockey Canada, it's hard to imagine anyone walking away from this event unimpressed. "The people from Hockey Canada and the IIHF said they'd never seen a tournament like this where the buildings were full for virtually every game," Best said. Ensuring that the maximum number of seats

were filled was obviously a labour of love, as tournament organizers provided a unique way for ticket holders to move tickets if they were unable to attend. Each ticket package included information that outlined a process for people to donate or sell their tickets online if there was a game that they couldn't go to. "As we got closer to the event, and we saw that someone's tickets weren't selling online, we would call them and ask if they wanted to donate them." People stepped up. "In Calgary, we had thousands of kids just sort of waiting on stand-by to see if they were going to get a ticket for a game through Calgary minor hockey. In the end, we gave away over 30,000 tickets."

"The Building was so full of anticipation. When the team skated out onto the ice, the roars were deafening."

A recent article on the IIHF website describes how between 500,000 and one million Swedes stayed up late night to watch the gold medal game. That kind of advertising doesn't come easily. But with the Saddledome packed as it was for the Swedish/Russian final, Calgarians can rest assured that they spoke volumes for all of Alberta that evening.

What if team Alberta is given the chance to host the event again? "It sounds arrogant," said Best, "but every plan that we had and every promise that we made, we delivered on. So, really I don't think there's much we would do differently."

It's this confidence, the execution and the effort of all of those involved from the organizers and sponsors to the fans and the teams that made the 2012 World Junior Championships a real gold medal performance for Alberta.



SKATE BUYING TIPS

Here are some pointers from hockey skating coach Steffany Hanlen on buying and fitting skates:

- Buy the best pair of skates you can, and don't be afraid to buy used. Someone else has grown out of them, and broken them in for you. At the same time, most expensive does not necessarily mean it's the best.
- Buy skates that fit today, not a year from now. "It drives me crazy that people still buy skates that you have to grow in to. It can completely incapacitate their performance." Runners would never buy shoes two sizes too big, and it's even more important with skates.
- If you haven't bought skates in years, be prepared to see some changes in blades. Every manufacturer makes different blades, and they are so different they can actually change how someone skates until they get used to it. People are still "rockering" the blades (shaving off the toe and the heel), which is a no-no with the new blades.
- Take your time when fitting skates. Give yourself 20-30 minutes of wearing them in the store to allow your body heat to soften the boot.
- Don't assume that one size 6 is the same as another size 6. Every manufacturer is different.
- You can tell that the skate is too big if the lace pattern is too narrow, or if the heel lifts out of the boot, or moves back and forth.

And if it looks too big, it probably is.

- It shouldn't hurt to skate. Nothing will detract more from a player's enjoyment from a game if his or her feet hurt.



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FLAMES FOUNDATION FOR LIFE

By Jeremy Freeborn

Performing at a high level on the ice is important for every player of the Calgary Flames hockey club. Players performance off the ice also matters significantly. Through the Flames Foundation for Life, the organization and its players have made a positive impact to the city of Calgary through a variety of volunteer charitable initiatives, fundraising activities and community outreach programs.

Giving back to Calgarians who are in need is at the core of the foundation. The primary focus is in the areas of health, medical research, education, and amateur hockey.

The Rotary Flames House opened in 2009 across from the Alberta Children's Hospital. The Flames, teamed with the Rotary Clubs of Calgary, directed \$2.5 million towards a hospice for children. It is one of only six free-standing buildings of its kind in North America where the major intention is to support families of children who are going through life-limiting illnesses. Outside the Rotary Flames House is the Rotary/Flames Park where children can play basketball and access a playground via a wheelchair.

The Flames Foundation for Life has donated \$10 million to the local medical community through a program called REACH! The Southern Alberta Institute of Urology, the Alberta Bone and Joint Institute Tissue Engineering Lab, and the Libin Cardiovascular Institute, among others, have greatly benefited from the Flames' generous financial support.

At the educational level, the Harley Hotchkiss Scholarship is awarded to nine students, three each from the University of Calgary, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology and Mount Royal University that excel both in the classroom and as hockey players. Hotchkiss, a former Flames owner who passed away in June, was one of Calgary's top philanthropists and founder of the Hotchkiss Brain Institute.

At the amateur hockey level, the Flames donate funds to junior hockey teams, post-secondary hockey teams, and have helped construct refrigerated ice rinks. They have developed an EvenStrength Program, with the major initiative of helping to ensure that all youth in Calgary have the opportunity to play hockey. In 2010, the Flames, together with Hockey Calgary, Hockey Alberta and Hockey Canada,

provided 50 local hockey players with registration fees.

The Flames Foundation for Life is also active in a number of other charitable endeavours. In 2010, additional

donations were raised for Haiti Relief, the Kids Cancer Care Foundation of Alberta, Hockey Fights Cancer, and the Calgary Homeless Foundation. Close to \$200,000 was raised for these important programs.

"It's fascinating when you look at all of the foundation's impact," said Candice Goudie, executive director of the Flames Foundation for Life. "We try to have as broad of a reach as we can. The foundation is a massive body that does a lot of distribution. A lot of our fundraising efforts are actually distributed to a lot of organizations. We have a wonderful relationship with a variety of charities."

The Flames Foundation for Life has significant meaning for every owner of the hockey club. Since the inception of the hockey team in 1980, the owners have stressed the importance of the foundation to everyone within the organization.

Giving back to Calgarians who are in need is at the core of the foundation. The primary focus is in the areas of health, medical research, education, and amateur hockey.

"As soon as players come to the city, the foundation is something they see right away," said Goudie. "It is very visible. We also have many that assist in our fundraising efforts. We have a group called the Flames Ambassadors, which is a group of local businessmen who assist in local fundraising projects. Whether it is generating awareness or sponsorship, they do a lot for our foundation."

The bottom line though is that the foundation would not work without the support of the players. According to Goudie, the majority of the players are involved in their own charity initiatives, which is strongly encouraged by the foundation. Jarome Iginla, for example, has donated \$550,000 to KidSport Calgary. Matt Stajan is a spokesperson for the Alberta Children's Hospital and Curtis Glencross is significantly involved with Special Olympics Calgary and the Gord Bamford Foundation, which assists underprivileged youth in single parent families.

One of the more high profile events is an annual wheelchair floor hockey game at the Alberta Children's Hospital between students of the Gordon Townsend School and players of the Calgary Flames. "We just played our 30th game at



the hospital," said Goudie. "Most of our players attend. It's fun. The guys love it and the kids love it."

"We try to have as broad of a reach as we can. The foundation is a massive body that does a lot of distribution."

From a financial perspective, the Flames Foundation generates revenue in a variety of creative ways. In addition to a poker tournament, celebrity roast and a golf tournament, where the players

get involved, the wives and girlfriends of the Flames are active in the Calgary Flames Better Halves Community Initiatives. Here, they participate in an annual fashion show and in a festive endeavour during the Christmas season. In the past, the wives and girlfriends of the Calgary Flames have sold exclusive Calgary Flames ornaments that are signed by the players and raffle off a festive tree. This past December, they decided to do something different and sell cook books. The other area where the Flames generate significant amount of income is the 50/50 raffles that occur during the hockey games.





The Calgary Flames Alumni Association and players of the Calgary Hitmen, the Western Hockey League franchise owned by the Calgary Flames, are also active in the Calgary community with a variety of charitable endeavours.

According to the Calgary Flames Hockey Club, 120 members of the Flames Alumni Association now live in Calgary, and remain active through the city and beyond, through a variety of initiatives. Past projects include participating in a charity golf tournament and a charity hockey game to raise funds for a rink development in Okotoks.

The Hitmen meanwhile have been successful over the years with their annual Petro-Canada Teddy Bear Toss Game. Each December, fans have the opportunity to throw teddy bears on to the ice, which are then donated to local charities. This past December 25, 303 teddy bears were thrown on the ice by passionate Hitmen fans.

The Calgary Flames Foundation for Life is proud to announce it is in the process of unveiling an exciting, new initiative in 2012. The Flames organization is doing its part in making a positive impact to the city of Calgary and making a difference to our youth.



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Dispelling the *myths* of Girls Hockey



By Cathy Sandau

A young girl walks into an arena in Calgary with a hockey stick and bag slung over her shoulder. Chances are she is there to play or practice with a girls hockey team. Some people may be surprised to learn that the majority of girls who play hockey from novice to midget in Calgary play for Girls Hockey Calgary (GHC). There are many myths that persist about girls playing girls hockey. Let's deal with these myths one-by-one and dispel them with facts instead of perpetuating them with opinion.

Myth #1: My elite daughter should play mainstream hockey.

Only to a point, says Wally Kozak, former head scout for the National Women's hockey program. By the second year of peewee, mainstream hockey becomes more hit-focused and less puck-focused. In female hockey, there is contact and players learn to check properly, focusing on puck possession. The difference is significant and many girls may not develop their skills and hockey-sense continuing to play mainstream hockey.

Myth #3: Coaching girls is the same as coaching boys.

Nothing could be farther from the truth, said Bruce Parent, head coach of the GHC Midget A Titans. "Male and female athletes are motivated by different strategies," said Parent. Having coached both his son and daughter for a total of 17 years, Parent has experienced coaches in mainstream hockey who motivate their players using fear and intimidation. "Female hockey players respond better to positive reinforcement. They have to be coached to take chances and not be

As parents, what we want out of hockey is no different whether we have daughters or sons. We want our children to stay active, learn skills, meet new friends and push themselves to be the best player possible.

In addition, girls who aspire to play high-level hockey won't be identified and scouted on mainstream teams, according to Kozak. They also may not develop the skills they need to excel at the female game. "I would recommend that all girls in Calgary would benefit more from playing girls hockey than boys at the bantam age level (and above)," said Kozak.

Myth #2: The coaching is better in mainstream hockey.

The overwhelming majority of coaches in both mainstream and girls hockey are parents. Regardless of whether they are coaching their daughter or son, they are held to the same high standards of coaching certification and training. There are coaches on both sides whose children no longer play hockey who continue to volunteer for the love of the game. At the elite level, GHC is fortunate to have highly qualified and experienced coaches, whose resumes would easily match those of their counterparts in mainstream hockey. For example, Derek Loomer is an assistant coach with the GHC Midget AAA Chaos. His coaching experience spans over 20 years in community and elite levels, including the AJHL. He is currently completing his High Performance 1 certification through the National Coaching Certification Program. At the community level, teams have the benefit of countless years of combined coaching experience.

afraid to make mistakes. When mistakes are made, girls need to be given the tools to manage their response." The other main difference is that females tend to be more focused on the team's success whereas males are typically more individualistic. "Sometimes, a girl needs to be coached to carry the puck and score the goal." Being on a mainstream team, a female hockey player may be subjected to a style of coaching that does not suit her natural disposition.



Photo courtesy of Cathy Sandau

Myth #4: My daughter will have the same hockey experience playing on a mainstream team.

Who would know better how to dispel this myth than a girl who has played on both sides? Madison Haller, daughter of former NHLer Kevin Haller, played mainstream hockey for five years. She echoes what Wally Kozak said about the right time to switch to girls. "In second year peewee," said Maddi, "the game was no longer fun. In fact, it was quite lonely." Switching over to girls hockey in her first year of bantam, Madison was fortunate to arrive for the inaugural year of the Alberta Major Bantam Female Hockey League (AMBFHL). The league consists of 10 teams from all over the province. Playing on the AAA Outlaws, Maddi found the level of hockey to be equivalent to what she was used to, in addition to "feeling quite welcome and having fun." Madison played for two years on the Outlaws, both years winning the provincial title. Maddi continues to play elite hockey with GHC, as a defenceman with the Midget AAA Bruins. She was also chosen as one of three 15 year olds to play on the Team Alberta U18 team which competed at nationals this past November. Those who might continue to believe that prospects for elite female athletes are better if they play mainstream hockey should look at the facts.

Girls who are not at the elite level should also be playing girls hockey. If players do not make the top level mainstream teams, according to Kozak, they should play girls hockey sooner rather than later. Girls will develop and enjoy girls hockey. They will develop their individual offensive skills more and be able to adapt better to the competitive female game as they continue to play. The bottom line is, without the hitting, girls hockey is a different game. It is more team oriented and focused on passing and playmaking. It also has a faster pace, something that girls will need to adjust to if they stay in mainstream too long.

In addition to the AAA programs for girls at bantam and midget, female community teams from atom to midget play in the Rocky Mountain

Myth #5: The level of competition is better in mainstream than in girls hockey.

Female Hockey League (RMFHL). Formed in 2008 and expanding with new teams each year, the RMFHL allows Calgary teams to compete in Tier 1 and 2 divisions against teams from surrounding communities such as Banff, Cochrane, Strathmore and Okotoks. According to RMFHL President and GHC Bantam A Head Coach Greg Sokolik, "One of the reasons the league was created was to provide an opportunity for Calgary teams to expand the competition they see in the regular season. The rural teams are the ones we will eventually play at provincials, so that alone raises the level of the game." It must be working, with two GHC teams making it to the provincial finals in 2011. The Atom Red Hot Chili Peppers placed second and the Bantam A Spartans finished first.

As parents, what we want out of hockey is no different whether we have daughters or sons. We want our children to stay active, learn skills, meet



Photo courtesy of Cathy Sandau

Myth #6: The expectations for girls playing hockey is different than for boys.

new friends and push themselves to be the best player possible. Due to the fact that boys and girls mature at different rates, it makes sense that girls playing mainstream hockey from peewee age and up feel isolated. Boys at this age have different priorities than girls, and value different things. Perhaps as parents of daughters, we do have one other worry. On a mainstream team, at peewee and above, girls can be made targets for the boys. Depending on a girl's teammates or the competition, she may be singled out for crushing hits or she may not be given the opportunity to participate in offensive plays. In fact, many girls who play on mainstream teams are asked to play defence positions and are not expected to participate in the offense. They never get the opportunity to develop puck control skills, such as carrying and play making. Girls want to be pushed to succeed. High expectations are as much a part of the girls game as it is in mainstream hockey. The opportunity to demonstrate their talents should be a priority for girls as much as boys.

Next season, Girls Hockey Calgary will be celebrating 25 years of providing an exceptional hockey program. From humble beginnings of one team to the current 33 teams from novice to midget AAA, GHC has become the association of choice for girls playing hockey in Calgary. We would encourage all parents whose daughters are interested in playing hockey to learn the facts and make an informed choice.



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nsa HOCKEY NATIONAL SPORT ACADEMY

*how do you make hockey the
favourite class of your school day?*

By Terry Wolfe

Alexander is in grade seven and attends the National Sport Academy Hockey Program at RT Alderman School. Alexander will tell you that hockey is his favourite class of the school day the same way he tells his National Sport Academy coaches every morning. After every training session, Alexander firmly shakes his coach's hand, looks him straight in the eye and says, "This is my best class, Coach. I had so much fun today."

Alexander is part of a proven hockey teaching environment that, for the past 16 years, has been teaching hundreds of aspiring young players the elements

required to support their dreams, goals and passions. Alexander is not aware that he is being taught "decision making skills" by learning how to read and react on the ice or "lifetime health and fitness habits" by training hockey smart in the gym. He could probably not tell you that he is "being taught the latest advanced hockey skills and tactics" or that he is learning how to "fail forward" by taking risks and learning from his mistakes. What he will tell you is - he is having fun. He loves to come to school and hockey is definitely his favourite class of the day.

The National Sport Academy Hockey Program inspires young hockey student athletes in grades 7-12 by using their passion for the game of hockey to develop both their hockey skills and personal character on and off the ice. Through sport specific training sessions, strength and conditioning training sessions, cross training sessions, and coaching and leadership training sessions, the National Sport Academy coaches

encourage student athletes to understand exactly what is required to live the lifestyle of a successful high performance student athlete. It is not enough just to have the dream; student athletes are shown how to achieve their dream.

Over the past 16 years, hundreds of aspiring young hockey players, just like Alexander, have attended the National Sport Academy Hockey Program in grade seven and have continued on to graduate from the National Sport Academy Program in grade 12. The training environment and lifestyle management provided at the National Sport Academy has proven to be complimentary to the community and AA/AAA hockey programs as evidenced by the success of the National Sport Academy alumni - hundreds of character young men and women who have gone

on to play, coach and inspire passion for the game they love.

The National Sport Academy Hockey Program is available at RT Alderman School (grades 7 - 9), Senator Patrick Burns School (grades 7 - 9) and Central Memorial High School (grades 10 - 12). On-ice sport specific sessions are held September to late March, high performance strength and conditioning training takes place from April - June and coaching and leadership is a year round program element that is taught both formally in a classroom and informally every day and in every National Sport

Academy training environment.

It is refreshing to see the excitement that Alexander displays as he gets ready for school every day and it is truly

inspiring to see him genuinely having fun while he is learning at school. Alexander is living the life of a high performance young student athlete in training and is a true testament to the National Sport Academy mission statement, "To inspire passion for the game of hockey while developing character for the game of life!"

For more information on the National Sport Academy Hockey Program please see the back cover of this publication or visit

www.nationalsportacademy.com 2012-2013 Information Meetings commence in January.



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| 12. 1304 - 17th Ave. SW | 245-0252 |
| 13. 1720 - 37th St. SW | 246-0065 |
| 14. 5929 Signal Hill Ctr. SW | 246-2846 |
| 15. 111 - 5th Ave. SW(Petro Can) | 290-0489 |
| 16. 424, 1st St. SW(Esso) | 264-7809 |
| 17. 401 - 9th Ave. SW(Gulf) | 266-3855 |
| 18. 410, 303 Shawville Blvd. SE | 254-4540 |
| 19. 444 - 58th Ave. SE | 259-5668 |
| 20. 240 Midpark Way SE | 254-5120 |
| 21. 8911 Bonaventure Dr. SE | 252-5494 |
| 22. 4307 - 130th Ave. SE | 257-3719 |
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| 24. 4605 - 25th St. SE | 272-7333 |
| 25. #2, 5 Heritage Gate SE | 258-2570 |

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| 26. 180 East Lake Cres. NE | 948-2108 |
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Northeast Sportsplex - West
5206 68 St. NE |
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Crowchild - Red
185 Scenic Acres Dr. NW | 22. Oakridge
9504 Oakfield Dr. SW |
| 7. Crowfoot
8080 John Laurie Blvd. NW | 23. Rose Kohn
Jimmie Condon
502 Heritage Dr. SW |
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299 Erinwoods Dr. SE | 24. Sarcee Seven Chiefs
3700 Anderson Rd. SW |
| 9. Ed Whalen
Joe Kryczka
2000 Southland Dr. SW | 25. Shouldice
1515 Home Rd. NW |
| 10. Ernie Starr
4808 14 Ave. SE | 26. South Fish Creek - North
South Fish Creek - South
100, 333 Shawville Blvd. SE |
| 11. Family Leisure Centre
11150 Bonaventure Dr. SE | 27. Stu Peppard
5300 19 St. SW |
| 12. Father David Bauer
Norma Bush
2424 University Dr. NW | 28. Thorncliffe / Greenvue
5600 Centre St. N |
| 13. Frank McCool
1900 Lake Bonavista Dr. SE | 29. Triwood
2244 Chicoutimi Dr. NW |
| 14. George Blundun
Optimist
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In most sports, athletes don't usually have both feet in contact with the ground at the same time. And in hockey, players are on one leg about 80 per cent of the time. It's for this reason that single-leg strength training needs to be a focal point of a hockey strength program.

Developing single-leg strength is the essence of functional lower body training, former Boston Bruins strength and conditioning coach Michael

Boyle outlines in his book *Functional Training for Sports*. Traditional two-leg lower body exercises such as the squat or leg press are still very important and beneficial in a strength program. In fact, they're the foundation for a lot of single-leg exercises. Generally though, working on one leg tends to get overlooked in training programs. And when you look at all the single-leg demands in the game of hockey, it's easy to see that's a training mistake.

Boyle writes that single-leg strength is specific and cannot be developed through double-leg exercises, (*Functional Training for Sports*, 2004). "The actions of the pelvic stabilizers are different

in a single-leg stance than in a double-leg stance. Single-leg exercises force the gluteus medius (a muscle in the buttocks) and quadratus lumborum (a low-back muscle) to operate as stabilizers, which are critical in sports skills." Single-leg strength is also now recognized as a key in injury reduction and has become a main component of many reconditioning programs and knee injury prevention programs, he notes.

The following are a series of functional low body exercises that should be incorporated into a hockey strength training program. Weight, sets, repetitions and frequency will vary depending if an athlete is off-season, in-season or preseason.

1 SQUAT (body-weight or weighted barbell)

Body-weight squat: Begin by standing with feet about shoulder-width apart, feet pointed straight ahead or slightly outward (10-15 degrees). Extend both arms out in front of the body with the hands at shoulder height. Initiate the movement by bringing the glutes/hips back (like you're sitting in a chair behind you), placing the body weight on the heels. Lower down until the tops of the thighs are parallel to the floor. Knees should stay over the toes, but not beyond. Squatting to the proper depth (full range of motion) is key. If flexibility is a problem, take a wider foot stance to reach this position. For weighted barbell squat, place barbell on back (avoid neck), and follow same lower body movement pattern for body-weight squat. (*Functional Training for Sports*, Boyle; 2004)



2 LATERAL SQUAT

This exercise targets the adductors of the inner thigh as well as dynamic flexibility. Begin by standing with your feet about four feet apart or wider depending on your height (wider is better). Squat by shifting body weight to one side. Keep the weight on the heel as you sit and keep the knee over the toe. Alternate from side to side with each squat or focus on one side for a set and then work the other for 8 - 12 reps. A weighted barbell can be added for extra resistance. (*Functional Training for Sports*, Boyle; 2004)



3 LATERAL STEP-UP

This movement places a greater emphasis on the adductor muscles of the inner thigh. Standing at the side of a step-up platform or box, fully step on to the platform with the inside leg and extend the leg so you are standing completely upright on the one leg. Lower the free leg back to the ground and then repeat movement. After completing a set with one leg, repeat with the other for 8 - 12 reps. (*Functional Training for Sports*, 2004)

4 ONE-LEG BENCH SQUAT

Align yourself into a long lunge position with the back foot placed on top of a bench. Keeping the chest lifted and looking straight ahead, lower yourself until the front thigh is parallel to the floor and the back knee is nearly touching the floor. The front knee should remain in line with the ankle. Repeat for 8-12 reps with body weight or add dumbbells or a barbell for added resistance. This exercise is great for developing single-leg strength and improving dynamic flexibility of the hip flexor muscles. (Functional Training for Sports, 2004)

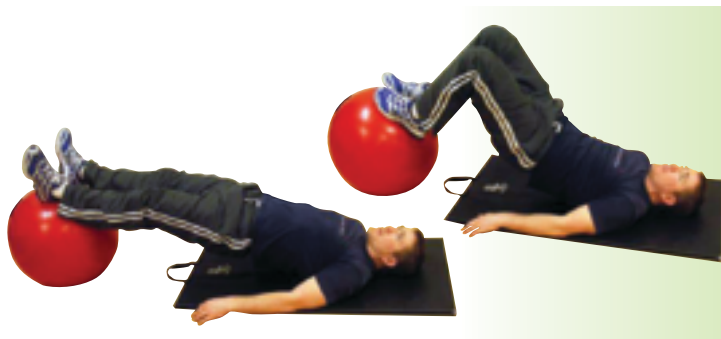


5 ONE-LEG BOX SQUAT

This is a superb exercise for single leg strength, balance and flexibility. Begin by standing on a box with a five-pound set of dumbbells and then attempt to squat with a single leg so that the thigh is parallel to the floor. Initiate the squat by bringing the glutes back and ensure the knee does not move beyond the big toe as you come down. Keep your weight on the heel to minimize movement of the ankle. As you begin to squat, raise the dumbbells to shoulder height to counterbalance the shift in weight behind you. Return to start position and then repeat for three sets of five reps. Increase reps or weight as you become more proficient. (Functional Training for Sports, 2004)

6 SLIDE BACK LUNGE

This is another exercise that develops single-leg strength, dynamic flexibility and stabilization. Stand with feet hip-width apart and one foot placed on a towel. Slide that foot back in a back lunge position keeping the chest and chin lifted. The back foot slides forward and back while the front foot performs a single-leg squat. Ensure the front knee stays in line with the ankle. Hands can be placed behind the head. (Functional Training for Sports, 2004)



7 STABILITY BALL LEG CURL

This is a great exercise for hamstring strength that also incorporates the glutes and spinal erectors to stabilize the body. Lie on the floor and place your heels on top of a stability ball. Raise the glutes/hips off the floor and then roll the ball in towards the body. Repeat movement and keep hips off the floor for the entire duration of the set (8-12 reps). For an advanced exercise, perform the movement with only one leg and keep the other one off the ball. (Strength Ball Training, Twist and Goldenberg, 2002)

8 LUNGE JUMPS

This is a power-based movement for developing explosiveness, quickness and speed in the legs. Begin by assuming a lunge position with one leg fully extended back and one leg forward. Using the forward leg, drive the body up into the air and switch the leg position so that the leg that was in front is now extended behind the body. Come back down into a lunge position with the front thigh parallel to the floor and then explode back up again. Keep hands behind the head with chest lifted and eyes focused straight ahead. Perform for 8-12 reps on each leg for 1-3 sets. (NOTE: Athletes unable to perform a correct lunge or squat should avoid this exercise.) (High Powered Plyometrics, Radcliffe and Farentinos, 1999)





Kieran Block's Career-Making Injury

How a shattered leg led to a new hockey career and a new outlook on life.

By Maurice Tougas

Photos courtesy of David Block

Four years after a devastating accident left Kieran Block without the ability to play high-level hockey, he looked at his accident as resulting in a career-ending injury.

But after discovering sledge hockey — and encountering other injured athletes who didn't let their disabilities stop them from playing hockey — Block now sees what happened to him as a “career-starting” injury.

From lying at the bottom of a Jasper canyon with a horrifically shattered leg to playing for your country around the world four years later — if ever there was a silver-lining story, this is it.

Block, 26, began playing hockey at age five, starting as a goalie, then moving to defence before settling in over time as a forward. He played for CAC, then four seasons for the Medicine Hat Tigers, winning a Western Hockey League championship in his second year. Like most juniors, he had hopes of playing pro. But he opted to take advantage of scholarship opportunities offered by the WHL, and enrolled at the University of Alberta, eventually entering the faculty of education.

While attending the U of A, he made the Golden Bears. Technically, he was a member of the team for four years, but only played one (missing out on their national championship season) before his life took an almost catastrophic turn.

Four years ago, Block went cliff diving with friends at Horseshoe Lake in Jasper. They found a spot from about 30 feet up, and successfully completed an exhilarating dive. He clambered up the cliff for his second jump, thinking he was in the same place as before.

He thought wrong.

Block took a running start for his dive, and only realized when it was too late that he was not over water after all.

“I started running ... and I pushed off. All I saw was rocks,” he recalls.

“It was maybe a two or three second fall to the ground, but it felt like two or three hours. I knew I was falling into rocks, and there was no way around it.

“When I hit the rocks, I thought I was probably going to die.”

When his three-second fall was over, he found himself with a grotesquely broken right leg (people nearby heard the pop of the breaking bone), and a broken left foot and heel. Luckily, he hit his head on a log instead of rock, sparing him a concussion, or worse. It took three hours for Block to be rescued by helicopter, which gave him plenty of time to wonder if he would ever play hockey again, or even walk. Within hours, he was back in Edmonton undergoing the first of four surgeries he would have over the next four years.

He was in hospital for a month, and bedridden at home for another two. It was six months before he could even put pressure on the leg. Hockey, of course, was out of the question for that year, but he expected to be able to play for the Bears again. He had no way of knowing that his competitive hockey career was over.

“When I hit the rocks, I thought I was probably going to die.”

A year after the accident, Block put on skates for the first time. He soon realized that his mobility was gone, and that he couldn't come

close to the speed required for competitive hockey. Another year later, after intensive therapy from the U of A athletic staff, he went to Bears training camp with full intentions of making the team. Again, he couldn't keep up. The coaching staff let him stay on the team and practice, but ultimately he came to the grim realization that he would never play hockey at a high level again. It was crushing.

“I love being on the ice. I love hockey. It was so hard when it was all taken away.”

But then Matt Cook re-entered his life.

Cook was a promising minor hockey player from Edmonton who, in 2006, contracted a rare form of cancer (the same cancer that afflicted Terry Fox) that resulted in leg amputation. Cook turned his energies towards sledge hockey, which is played by disabled athletes on sled-like devices. The players sit in the sledge, and propel themselves with mini-hockey sticks.



Block knew Cook in their younger years, and reconnected at the urging of friends. It was a big step towards helping Block come to a realization that he was trying to avoid — that he was now a disabled athlete.

"After hanging around Matt and talking to him about his disability and what it was like, it started to make me feel a little more normal, to be around somebody who had gone through such adversity and had such a life-changing circumstance."

Cook was an inspiration. He had survived amputation and heart surgery, and was still playing sledge hockey. Block realized that he was feeling sorry for himself.

"All that happened to me was that I broke my leg. I thought, here's a guy that you would never know was a disabled person. To me, he was a regular, ordinary guy. I followed his lead and his leadership. He was a role model for me, and inspiration.

"He was always smiling, always happy. He took the positives out of everything. I thought if he could turn that around, I had better be able to turn my life around. I was choosing to be miserable about my life. I was so down, but I realized that I wanted to be like him."

Cook introduced Block to sledge hockey, a sport Block was almost entirely clueless about. It wasn't love at first sight; Block was still telling himself that he could get back to playing elite level hockey.

It wasn't until after Cook passed away that Block started to look seriously at sledge hockey. He was approached by the national sledge hockey team, and tried out the game with the Edmonton Impact team. It was a revelation.

"There were able-bodied people, and disabled people, people with mental disabilities — everything. At first I was caught off guard, thinking, whoa, this is a crazy universe.

"But after a while I realized that in every way I was just like those guys. For me, it was a support group.

"They started making my life a lot easier. I realized that, yeah, my life has changed, but life goes on and I can still enjoy my life. I might not be able to play stand-up hockey at the level that I could, but I could be competitive with sledge hockey.

"Once I started playing the game, I fell in love with it. In every aspect of the game, it is hockey — just sitting down."

Sledge hockey gave him an outlet for his competitive energies. He caught the attention of the national team, and was sent to Moncton for training camp last July. He was invited to the national team tryout camp, making the team and getting the honour of pulling on the maple leaf.

In November, Team Canada defeated the U.S. at a major tournament in Calgary, a thrill that Block says was on par with winning the WHL championship. But that was just "the start of something great;" the team is going to Japan in January, Buffalo N.Y. in February, and the world championships in March in Norway.

It's no exaggeration to say that sledge hockey changed — and maybe even saved — Kieran Block's life.

After the accident, he was angry and depressed that he would have to live the rest of his life with a disability.

"I hated it. I was depressed."

"I look back on it now, and I can't believe I ever thought like that. I look at the opportunities I have to get to wear a Canadian jersey, to travel all over the world, to go back to school ..."

"I look at it now not as a career-ending injury, but a career-starting injury. It changed my life, but it changed it in a positive way."



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THE ORIGIN OF THE CURVED STICK



Folklore tells us that the curved hockey stick was accidentally “discovered” by two members of the Chicago Black Hawks in the early 60’s. Depending on who you believe, it was either Stan Makita or Bobby Hull who “invented” the curved hockey stick.

One of these players caught his stick blade in one of the doors in the boards, and the stick was bent in the process. The two players took turns trying out the bent stick, and realized that the puck’s flight was affected, resulting in a shot with greater velocity. Shortly thereafter, both players began using curved sticks, and most players followed.

Other players (and from earlier times) claim to have invented (or used) a curved stick. Andy Bathgate grew up in the 1940’s, and played for four different teams in the NHL, and here’s what he had to say about using a curved stick.

“Back in Winnipeg, where I grew up, my brother Frank and I used to curve our sticks. We’d get them wet and give them a nice bend. It helped us raise the puck. I used them all the time, even when I got to junior in Guelph. When I got to the Rangers, my coach, Alf Pike, would go around stepping on the blades to break them. ‘You can’t use those in a game,’ he’d say. When he was gone and Phil Watson came in, I started curving them a little more.”

Another player, Bert Olmstead, claims to have used curved sticks while playing hockey in his youth in Alberta in the 1930’s. “Oh we used to curve them all the time. That’s how we lifted the puck. They were so whippy that when we got them wet, it was easy to curve the blade.” Olmstead says he and other NHL players put slight curves in their blades when the vigilant eyes of their bosses were trained elsewhere.

So whether curved sticks were “discovered in the 30’s or 60’s is dispute, there’s no dispute about the fact that every hockey player (from minor hockey to NHL) now plays with a curved stick.

More Stick Facts

62.6% of NHL players shoot left. Canadian-born players fit in this realm (at 61.4%), but U.S. players are split about 50/50. (51% of the 192 American-born players shoot left.)

Seventeen out the 22 (or 77.2%) Russian-born players shoot left, and out of nine Slovakian-born players, only one (Milan Jurcina – NYI) shoots right.

There are more players from the Czech Republic than Russia in the NHL today (38), and 26 of these players (68.4%) shoot left.

Joining the European trend with a high percentage of left shooters are Sweden and Finland, with 80% of their NHL players shooting left. (16 out of 20 for Finland, and 46 out of 58 for Sweden.) There are only six Danish-born players in the NHL, and all but two shoot left.

One of the greatest NHL teams in history had only a handful of players who shot right. The 1975-76 Montreal Canadiens (who went on to win four Stanley Cups in a row) listed only two regular players (Guy Lafleur and Mario Tremblay) who were right-handed shots. Maybe this gave the Habs (and Lafleur) a bit of an advantage?

When you’re playing a team full of left-handed shooters, facing a shot from the right a right-handed stick may have caused some confusion? It certainly didn’t hinder Guy Lafleur’s performance!

And as it relates to the greatest players of all time, most were left shooters.

According to Hockey News, the following are the top players of all time (and in order): Wayne Gretzky, Bobby Orr, Gordie Howe, Mario Lemieux, Maurice Richard, Doug Harvey, Jean Beliveau, Bobby Hull, Terry Sawchuk and Eddie Shore.

Only three of these players (Howe, Shore and Lemieux) shot right, and in Wikipedia, Gordie Howe is listed as “ambidextrous.” It’s true that Howe could shoot both ways, but he played the game with a right-handed stick throughout his career. In the early part of his career, Howe’s stick had little or no curve, which allowed him to play the puck from both body side positions, something he did from time to time to fool the opposition, or to get a better angle on a shot.

Wooden Sticks: Only a handful of NHL players use wooden sticks. Paul Stastny, Adrian Aucoin, Fredrik Modin, Michael Nylander and Jason Spezza use wooden sticks, at least the last time we saw them play.

MENTALLY PREPARING for playoffs

By Steffany Hanlen



Playoffs are a time where your skills, team play, fitness and motivation are challenged at a new level. Because the season can seem so long, playoffs give the sense of a fresh start. Preparing wisely can give a much needed mental boost.

The regular season is over and regardless if you placed 1st or 8th you head in to playoffs with a renewed sense of optimism. It is as if one chapter closes and another begins. It is anyone's game and the thought of having another chance to play and win is exciting.

The hard work, stress, drama, politics of the regular season seem to slip away as players and teams ramp up their energy to engage for another level of intensity and exposure. When this happens many coaches and players tend to forget the steps that got them there. If a team makes it to playoffs, chances are there was a plan in place to do so. Good coaches can assist their team in executing a winning plan, period by period and game by game during playoffs exactly the same way.

Some coaches tend to change their plan when it comes to playoffs. Their strategies start changing depending on the type of series and team they meet in each round. This is a reactive pattern, not a winning pattern. Knowing your opponent is important but sticking to YOUR plan and playing YOUR game is what can link a successful regular season to a successful playoff run.

Here are few tips for entering the playoff season that can help players, coaches and parents prepare.

PLAYERS: Focus on the process of how you get ready for each game. If you have a routine that works for you, stick to it. Focus on the things you can control like eating right, getting enough rest, staying positive and being well organized pre-game. Don't focus on the things you can't control like winning or what other teams are thinking or doing. In reality you have absolutely no idea. It is a waste of time and energy trying to figure it out. Make a habit of not listening to others, the news or any other source about how or what your opponents are doing. It has nothing to do with you and becomes a distraction. If you concentrate your thoughts on beating someone else or HAVING to win it sets you up for a 50/50 chance of losing instead of looking at what you can control and setting yourself up for the 50/50 chance at winning. If you focus only on winning and then lose a game, you can experience disappointment. That deep feeling lingers and begins to build fear and doubt for the next game. By focusing on the process of what YOU need to do in order to win gives your mind something to focus on. For example, determine one or two action words or statements that you can repeat to yourself over and over. Words like STRONG, CALM, FOCUSED, do your job, finish each shift strong, keep feet moving or whatever fits for you, in the moment. Take full responsibility for your environment, your energy, your equipment, your words and your actions. Be ready for any opportunity by being aware of where you are and what you are doing. All of your emotions and feelings are real and valid. If you

start to feel nervous, then focus on your breathing. Take three deep breaths and say the words that make you calm down. Once you feel your nerves subside they may continue to come back in waves until the game starts. It may sound odd, but stay with the feeling. It helps keep you sharp and your attention activated. Don't try to push the feelings of fear down or out of your body. Those kinds of feelings show up when there is something important or on the line in sport or life. Use this time to mentally focus your thoughts and draw strength and energy from it. I always say to my athlete clients, "Just put those butterflies in formation and use the fear as fuel to focus on what's going on- right here, right now!" W.I.N- What's Important Now!

COACHES: Create a theme for the playoffs that your team can rally around. This is something you may see national or pro-teams doing when they have a variety of strong players that don't know each other well. Play for something bigger than the win; let them come up with a mantra or an inspirational line that everyone can believe in. When players have a bigger purpose or a common motivator it can galvanize them as a unit quickly. A good team is made of many talented individuals (yes, coach, there is an 'I' in team) but if you can find something they can all care about and can play FOR then the pressure to win becomes a true shared experience. This shift of focus is similar to what happens when players from different teams come together to play for their country. Together you can create a theme that matters to you. Make it relevant, powerful and motivating to them for this time in their lives.

PARENTS: You are the key that can unlock or shut down the mental capacity of your player. You are a component of the team that the coach and teammates cannot influence or circumvent. You are extremely important to the mindset of your son or daughter. Not only are you their biggest fan, you are the chef, chauffeur, bank, and even third coach. What you do and say matters. Regardless if you have played pro-hockey or are an armchair coach, this is not about you and what you know or even what you think. I have heard coaches call some parents 'wildcards.' As players play on higher tiers or get to more challenging levels of competition, the role you take on makes a difference. Ask yourself, are you more passionate, more nervous or more concerned about the outcome of a game than your child, who is the one on the ice? If it seems so, then you may be in the way of allowing your child to have his or her own full experience and you then decrease their personal learning. This well-meaning interference can delay growth of positive self-esteem and hinder confidence. When you care so deeply that your child has a positive outcome, is on a winning team, has a good game and gets seen by the right people, it can take away the important intensity for them and places it directly on you, where it can do absolutely no good. I remember being on the ice with a pro team early in my NHL career and asking some of the players if they remembered or even heard their parents screaming in the stands when they were playing minor hockey. All but one said no. The only one that said yes was a player whose father stood directly behind the opposing goaltender and screamed obscenities.

This guy told me he was so embarrassed he almost quit the game he loved. Parental influence can take many forms. The most powerful tool is support. Not coaching in the van on the way to the rink, nor challenging coaches nor comparing teammates. Support is listening, letting your child listen to their MP3 with headphones, or find their own zone as best they can. If they want to talk to you or do ask you for your advice, say, 'What do you think?' or 'How would you handle that?' Sometimes they just need you to nod your head, and make the right sounds, 'Hmmm, uh huh...ahhh... Good job, nice work, what did you learn?'

Playoffs are a test of the preparation and a bonus to be enjoyed and should be entered as a challenge of character as well as skill. Working together, players, coaches and parents can share an experience that can build memories, values and qualities that crossover into life, business and, most of all, a successful hockey playing journey.



Thoughts from Steffany:

Successful does not always mean winning every game. Success can take the form of personal growth, being better each shift, being coachable and exercising leadership and class on and off the ice.

Changing strategies, team philosophies or shortening the bench is not always a good idea going into playoffs. Players become reliant on and trusting of a plan that works. They gain insights into each other and build a culture that can support them through making errors and putting in corrections. If all of a sudden a brand new plan or strategy gets tossed in the room, there is a loss of continuity and learning curves spike. You don't need NEW lessons during playoffs. Decide what worked during the season and do more of that...better!

Many teams begin the year with a Team Vision. The coaches and players sit down together and decide WHO they want to be as a team, WHAT they want to accomplish and HOW they are going to accomplish their goal. The successful teams also know WHY!

Steffany Hanlen worked with the Edmonton Oilers from 1991-2000 and the St Louis Blues 2000-2005. In 2006 she was at the Winter Olympic Games as a fully accredited coach for our five-time Canadian Champion ice dancers, Dubreuil/Lauzon. Hanlen is the creator of Quantum Speed High Performance Skating Systems and presents Performance Excellence Seminars across North America for Quantum Speed and also to Champion Athletes, successful business owners and entrepreneurs as well as parents, players and coaches in many sports.

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WHAT'S IN

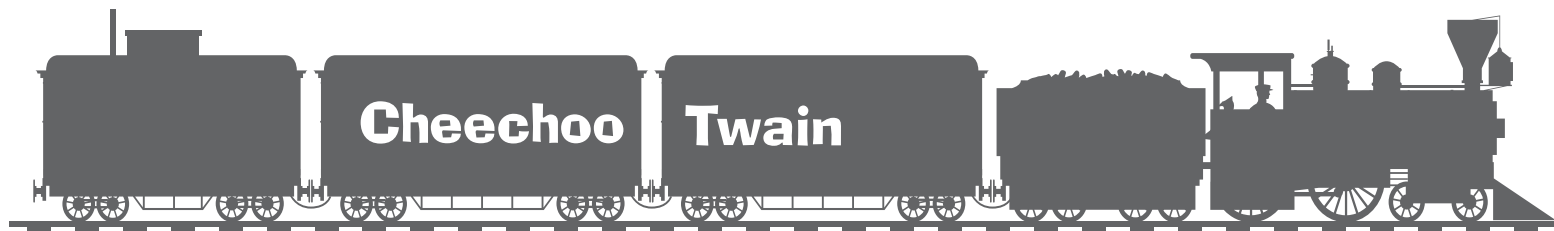
While there are always trade rumours going on, we thought it would be interesting to come up with a list of players whose namesake would make them ideal to play for certain teams, and from there, we started to have some fun with players' namesakes.



For example, **Martin St. Louis** would be perfect for the St. Louis Blues, and **Michael Nylander** would fit in nicely with the Islanders. **Mike York**, when he was playing in the NHL, would have been a nice fit with one of the New York teams, while **Miroslav Satan** would be ideal to suit up for the Devils! **Paul Ranger** (Tampa) would fit in well with the Blueshirts.



Rick Nash is aptly named to play for Nashville. Speaking of Nash, if you put him with **Sidney Crosby** and **Cory Stillman**, you would have **Crosby**, "**Stills**" and **Nash**. (Kind of reminds us of that famous rock 'n roll combination of **Hull** and **Oates**!)



If you wanted to make play-by-play announcers jobs a bit more challenging, it would be fun to put the following three players together: **Cheechoo** (Jonathan), **Tootoo** (Jordin) and **Ruutu** (Jarkko or Tuomo). (Just imagine if Jonathon Cheechoo were to ever marry Shania Twain - their kids last name would be Cheechoo Twain!)

Another tongue-twister would be to put **Ricci**, **Recchi** and **Ritchie** together, and maybe throw in **Rucchin** for good measure!

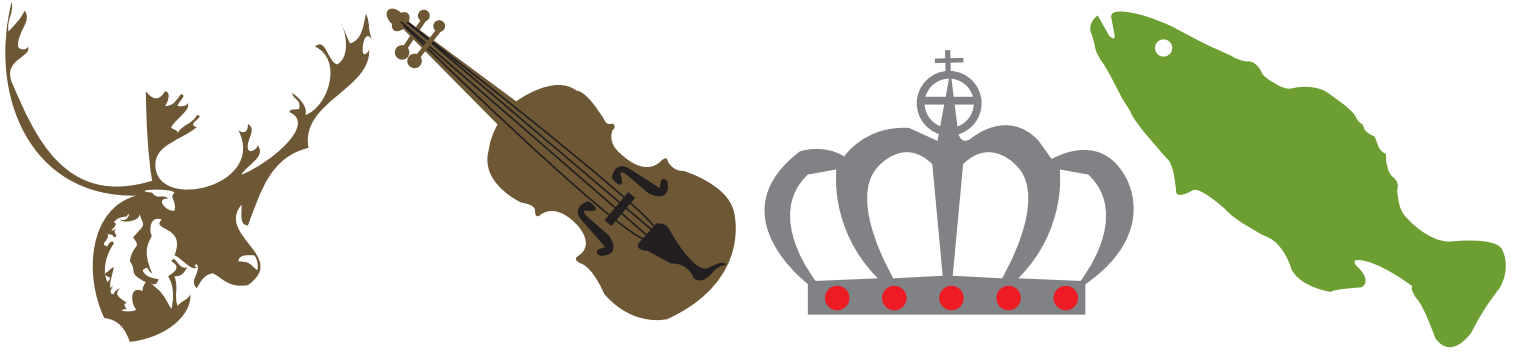


Players with names related to spirits would include: **Beers**, **Miller**, **Smironov** and **Druken**.



Calder (Kyle), and **Campbell** (Brian, or Gregory) have names with deep historical attachment to the NHL, both having trophies with their namesake.

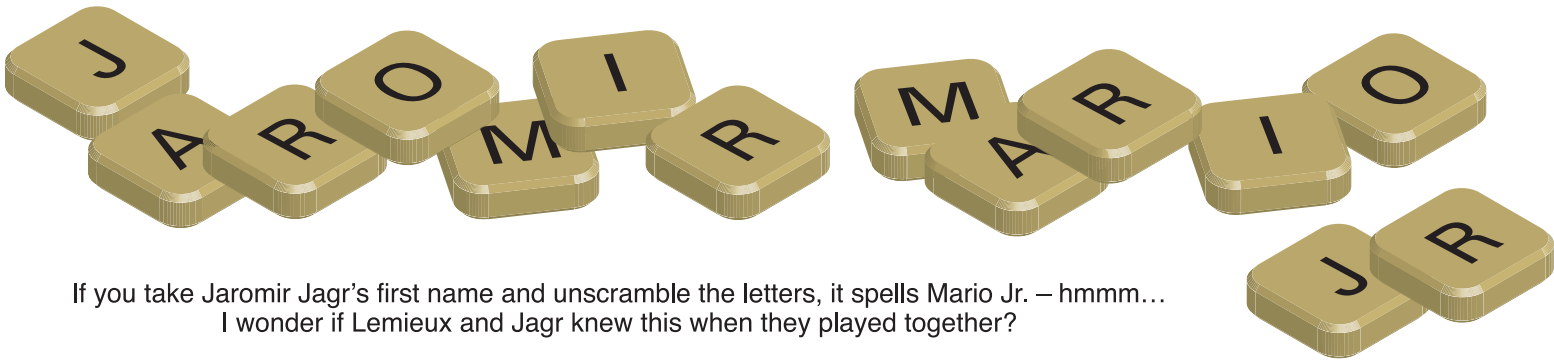
A NAME?



How about players with last names as occupations: **Fiddler, King, Marshall. Mike Fisher, Hal Gill and Trent Hunter** would make a great sportsmen's line.

When **Vernon Fiddler** puts the puck upstairs, does the play-by-play announcer say "**Fiddler Roofs It**"?

There are a number of players with colourful names: **Brown** (Curtis or Dustin), **Green** (Josh, Mike, or Travis), **White** (Colin, Ian, or Ryan), but thankfully no Fuscia.



If you take Jaromir Jagr's first name and unscramble the letters, it spells Mario Jr. – hmmm...
I wonder if Lemieux and Jagr knew this when they played together?



Here's some dynamic duos:

Boyle and Burns, Coffey and Brewer, Friesen and Franzen
Rolston and Kabina (Didn't they use to own the St. Louis Blues or was that Ralston Purina?)
How about putting **Jarome Iginla, J.S. Giguere and Zigmund Palffy** on the same team.
You would then have **lggy, Jiggy and Ziggy** in your line-up!

Lastly, if you are **Eager** to get your **Foote** in the door, you have to answer the **Belle**, carry **Moore Weight** and always **Playfair**!

Did you know that Sidney Crosby (jersey #87) was born on 8/7/87? And that his salary is \$8.7 million per year.



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NHL PLAYERS: they come in all SHAPES and SIZES

The NHL features players as tall as 6'9" and as short as 5'5", a difference of almost a foot and a half. (16" actually.) There is also a similar wide range in the weight of players on the ice. Blackhawks defenseman John Scott (at 6'8" and 270 lbs.) weighs almost twice as much as Flames centreman Paul Byron, who barely tips the scales at 153 lbs.

The Buffalo Sabres have players from different spectrums in size. Sabres defenseman Tyler Myers is towering at 6'8" (just one inch shorter than the tallest player in the NHL – Zdeno Chara), while Nathan Gerbe is the league's shortest player at 5'5". Sabres centreman Tyler Ennis is listed as 157 lbs., and like Byron, he measures 5'9" in height.

Byron, Ennis and Gerbe are all forwards, and one might say that size is less important at this position.

Size doesn't seem to make a difference to a few diminutive defensemen. Francis Bouillion is the shortest defenseman in the NHL (at 5'8"), but he weighs 198 lbs. Marc-Andre Bergeron also weighs 198 lbs., but he is an inch taller at 5'9".

The smallest defensemen in the NHL (from the standpoint of weight) is Kris Russell from the St. Louis Blues. He stands 5'10", but he weighs only 172 lbs., which is not a lot for a defenseman.

NHL goalies average 6'2", but Jhonas Enroth (another Sabre) stands 5'10", and weighs only 166 lbs.

At the other end of the spectrum is Phoenix goalie Jason Labarbera, who stands 6'5" and weighs 234 lbs. Would Milan Lucic or Jordan Tootoo run this goalie?

Labarbera is not quite the tallest netminder though. Three Swedish goalies have that honour: Henrik Karlsson (Calgary), Jacob Markstrom (Florida), and Anders Lindback (Nashville). Each goalie stands 6'6" tall.

And who is the tallest player in the NHL? That would be Zdeno Chara, who stands on top of the heap at 6'9" (7 feet in skates.)

So no matter what your shape and size, you can make it as an NHL player. There are definitely jockeys taller than a few of the NHL's shorter players, and there are a number of NHL players who look more like basketball players.



10 Annoying Things Fans Do

Hockey is a great spectator sport, and there's no better way to experience the game than seeing it in person. It's great to be part of the fan action, and for the most part, fans enhance the live experience.

It's great to see fans get into the game, whether it's cheering or waving a banner. No one (fan or player) likes a quiet arena.

Sometimes fans cross the line though, and here is our Top 10 list of the Most Annoying Things "fans" do.

1. Fans who bang on the glass. (What's the purpose behind doing this?)
2. Fans who turn around and wave when the television camera is at their end of the ice. (Looking for "15 seconds of fame?")
3. Fans who talk on their cell phones during play, or who stand up and wave to say "look at me."
4. Fans who yap too much during play, especially non-hockey related.
5. Fans who "cross the line" with players, coaches or team personnel. Years ago, an obnoxious fan poured a drink onto the head of Flames assistant coach Guy Lapointe. That fan was banished from the arena for life.
6. Fans who spill their drinks on you as they make their way to their seats or when seated behind you.
7. Fans who use abusive language, especially when there are kids around.
8. Fans who cheer for the other team.
9. Fans who leave their seats in the middle of the play. Or fans who lean so far forward, fans behind them or beside them can't see the game.
10. Fans who throw things on the ice. It shouldn't happen, unless you're one of the original octopus tossers from Detroit.





The Things Thrown On The Ice

The octopus-toss started nearly 60 years ago in the 1952 playoffs. Back then, a team only needed to win eight games (two best of seven series) to win the Stanley Cup, so eight was the lucky number, and an octopus just happened to have eight arms. Two storeowner brothers from Detroit decided to toss an octopus on the ice at the beginning of the first playoff game between the Red Wings and Toronto Maple Leafs. Detroit went on to sweep the series, and they also swept the Montreal Canadiens in the next series to win the Stanley Cup. The tradition was born, and despite the fact a team now needs twice as many wins to hoist the cup, it remains part of hockey folklore and tradition for 60 years.

Fans in other cities have paid a certain homage to this tradition in recent years, the following is a short list of the most unusual things thrown on the ice:

1995: A Boston fan threw a lobster onto the ice, inspired probably from the lobster harvests which take place in the New England area.

1996: Florida Panthers fans (thousands of them) threw toy rats onto the ice after they heard about Scott Mellanby's "rat-trick." (Mellanby killed a rat in the dressing room that playoff year, which inspired this brief tradition.) Because of the delays which took place (sweeping up hundreds and hundreds of toy



rats), the league implemented a new rule which provided for a two-minute minor penalty to the home team for any objects thrown onto the ice.

2002: A Nashville Predators fan threw a catfish on the ice at a regular season game between the Predators and Red Wings. The "tradition" continued during the 2008 quarterfinal series between the two teams.

2006: During Edmonton's amazing playoff run, a couple of local fans threw meat (Alberta beef) onto the ice before games at various times throughout the playoffs. Some of these fans were tossed from games (one was arrested) when they repeated the beef toss in the away-cities.

2007: A San Jose Sharks fan threw a four-foot leopard shark onto the ice in a series against the octopus-tossing Red Wings.

2010: A Phoenix Coyote fan threw a rubber snake onto the ice in a quarterfinal series between the Coyotes and Red Wings.

2011: In the most recent playoffs, a number of Vancouver fans threw salmon on the ice, and not unlike the salmon, the Canucks went (swam?) the wrong direction in the Stanley Cup finals, losing a close seven-game series to the Boston Bruins.

Calling All Gold Medal Winners!

If your child won a gold medal at the 2012 ESSO Minor Hockey Week, we want to hear from you! Please complete the following questionnaire and send it in by February 15th, 2012. Your child could be featured in our 2012 - 2013 Yearbook edition of the Hockey Magazine. Send completed entries along with a photograph (preferably in a hockey uniform) to Hockey Magazine #950, Bell Tower, 10104 - 103 Ave., Edmonton, AB T5J 0H8

(If you enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope, we will gladly return your photo.) or E-Mail to publisher@hockeymagazine.net

Name: _____

Current Team: _____

Age: _____ School Grade: _____

Number of Years You've Played Hockey: _____

Usual Position: _____

Favourite Hockey Team: _____

Favourite Hockey Player: _____

Who is Your Role Model?: _____

Other Sports/Interests: _____

Favourite Hockey Memory: _____

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