



Skills Academy Newsletter

June 2014

Inspiring Teen

By Anthony Henman



Photo: Richard Wolkowicz / HHOF-IHF Images

Many young athletes would love to follow in the footsteps of Nathan MacKinnon. This 18 year old hockey phenom who plays for the Colorado Avalanche of The National Hockey League inspires even the oldest hockey fans with his speed and skill and brings excitement every time he steps on to the ice.

To have this ability at such an early age draws many comparisons to the likes of Sidney Crosby and other hockey greats but even with everything this young man has accomplished he continues to work hard to reach his next goal.

Motivation to accomplish these goals comes in many forms for Nathan. As a major junior hockey player entering into his National Hockey League Draft year, being picked as high as he can motivated him to continually work at becoming better.

Working hard is not a new habit for MacKinnon. Known for having an exceptional work ethic both on and off the ice, MacKinnon balances his daily routine between school and hockey.

Fitting in at least two hours a day improving on his stick handling and shooting pucks is what he credits to his development.

“Fundamental skills are something you can always get better at and are crucial the higher you go in hockey.” Says MacKinnon.

Developing his good work ethic at an early age can be attributed to many

of MacKinnon’s hockey coaches who helped him create a foundation for hard work and dedication. It is no wonder that his favorite hockey player is Pavel Datsyuk of the Detroit Red Wings. This hard working and skilled Russian possesses phenomenal puck handling skills and a lethal wrist shot, just like MacKinnon.

MacKinnon acknowledges that any young athlete who wants to excel in their sport must do so while balancing the rigors of achieving their education.

Spending two years, grades seven and eight at The Maritime Hockey Academy in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia gave Nathan the opportunity to get his education while gaining instruction from top level coaches every day. Coaches at this Hockey Canada Skills Academy would describe MacKinnon as having “Exceptional Personal Drive”. “Nathan didn’t need to have competition from other student athletes to become better. He just worked harder than everyone else and was determined to improve,” describes Jon Greenwood, the School’s Hockey Director and Junior High Teacher.

It didn’t take long before MacKinnon was attracting attention from Sports schools from all over North America. At the mere age of 14, MacKinnon would find himself moving away from Nova Scotia and his parents and heading to Minnesota to attend Shattuck St. Mary’s Preparatory School.

Shattuck has a reputation for developing young hockey players from around the world and this would prove to be an excellent fit for the young



MacKinnon. In moving away to Minnesota, Nathan would face many sacrifices to pursue his passion, including leaving his friends. Although these sacrifices would be hard for any teenager to do, he says that he ultimately has no regrets.

Like most Preparatory School in United States and Canada, Shattuck delivers a challenging curriculum that prepares students for advancement into high calibre University programs. MacKinnon, who enjoyed school and considers math his favorite subject says that although this type of school kept him busy from morning to night, he has met a lot of new friends and it gave him the opportunity to improve on his hockey skills by practicing every day.

After two successful years playing hockey at Shattuck St. Marys, Nathan would once again find himself changing addresses to pursue his advancement in hockey. At the age of 15, Nathan would hear his name called out first overall at the 2011 Quebec Major Junior Hockey League Draft.

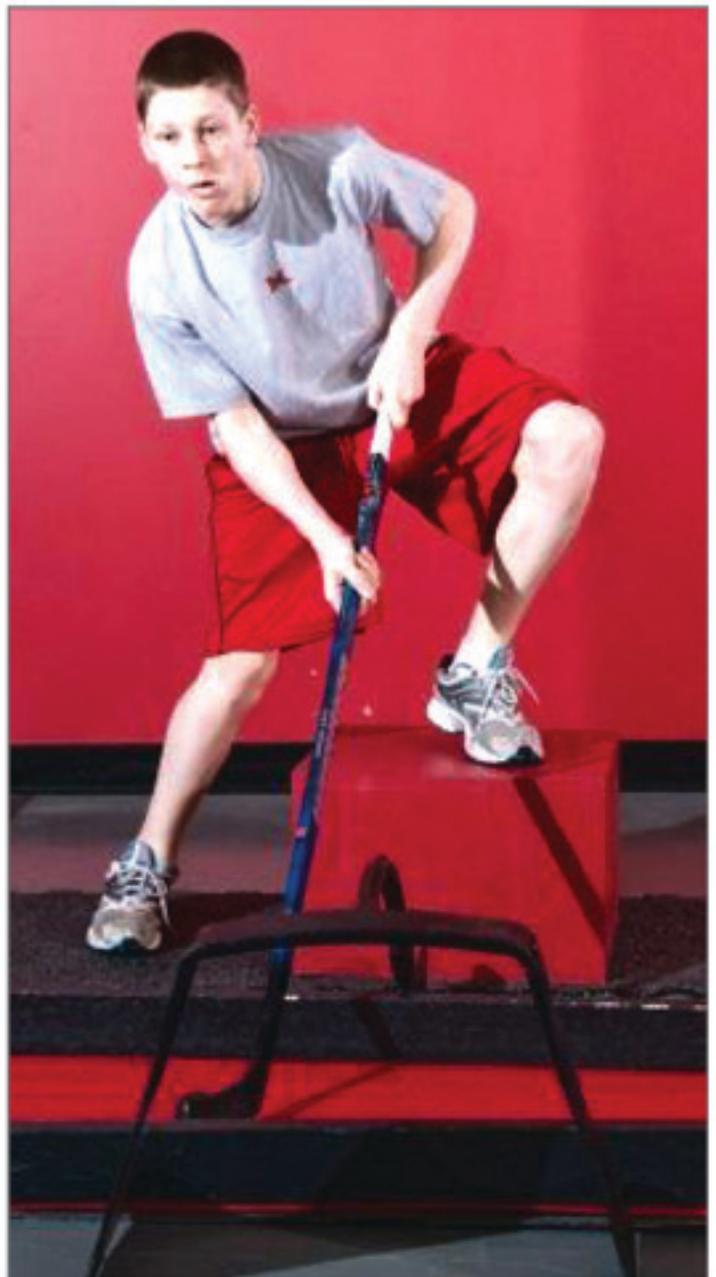
After many years of hard work and dedication to the sport he loves, MacKinnon would find himself the envy of teams looking to add an instant star player to their team. MacKinnon's favorite team, his hometown Halifax Mooseheads would pull off a trade to secure his services. Nathan would turn out to be an impact player in his rookie season and make MacKinnon

a household name throughout the homes of every young hockey player in Nova Scotia as he proved he was ready to make the move to Major Junior Hockey as a sixteen year old.

Nathan's success at such an early age hasn't changed his attitude or his love for the game. Just days after his first season in the Quebec League was over, Nathan could be found skating with the students at his former school The Maritime Hockey Academy, showing them that dedication and hard work does pay off.

MacKinnon's advice to younger students and hockey players would be to "prioritize your daily routine by focusing more on academics and hockey opposed to other distractions that could hurt you in pursuing these things. If you develop your skills in the classroom and in the rink it will open up many opportunities for you in the future."

Now, having completed his first professional hockey season with the Colorado Avalanche, Nathan MacKinnon's hockey future looks bright as one of the world's top hockey prospects. You won't find Nathan taking his success for granted as he is well aware of the effort and sacrifice that he has had to dedicate to getting better. Truly an inspiration.



Visit from a Gold Medalist

By Dan Ruggiero



Four time hockey gold medalist Jayna Hefford visited West Kelowna's Mount Boucherie Secondary School and spoke to students in both the current Mount Boucherie HCSA as well as some that will be in the Okanagan Mission Secondary School HCSA in Kelowna.

This presentation was set up by a former OKM HCSA student, Samantha LoCurto, currently a Senior Accounts Manager at RBC. Talk about giving back; Thanks Sam.

Most people don't know, but RBC sponsors many Olympians financially and provides them with employment that works around their vigorous training schedules.

Jayna's engaging presentation focused on her experience and what it takes to be successful in the Olympics and in life. She made a statement about her experience that particularly stood out among the young hockey players when she said...

"Never waste an ice time, no matter if it's a good or not so good practice, you can always pick something to work on...fast starts on every drill, or never miss a pass all practice"

After the presentation, Jayna spoke to several students and of course, passed the Sochi Gold Medal around the class, a very heavy medal for sure!



HCSA Summer Seminar

July 2-4, 2014 - Calgary, Alberta - Markin MacPhail Centre

Presenter Profiles

Bob Caldwell Transition Principles

Bob comes to the HCSA seminar with a wealth of teaching and hockey coaching experience. He was a teacher at Deloraine Collegiate for 35 years. During that time he has acquired various Hockey Coaching experience. This includes coaching all age levels from IP to AAA Midget, coaching the Polish U18 Team, coaching at Western Michigan University (Division 1 - NCAA). Bob is also a High Performance 1 facilitator and has been a mentor and consultant for the Virden Oilcaps in the MJHL, is a master mentor for Hockey Manitoba and has mentored several other organizations on both a domestic and international stage.

Richard Monette Physical Literacy

Richard Monette leads ActiveforLife.ca, an initiative dedicated to teaching parents about the importance of physical literacy - the foundation for success in sport and life. Richard is part of the leadership team of B2ten, a privately funded organization that supports elite Canadian athletes. He is also a sport psychology consultant to Olympic and professional athletes, and consults with business leaders on the value of being purposeful. Richard is married, lives in Banff and the proud Papa to two very active kids, as well as an avid minor hockey coach, golfer and hiker.

Corey McNabb Stick Handling Drills & Technology

Corey was born and raised in High Level, AB. He graduated from the University of Alberta with a Phys Ed. Major and a Business Minor. He has been the Sr. Manager of Coach and Player Development at Hockey Canada since 1999. His responsibilities include the NCCP Coaching Program, Skills Development Programs, Video Resources, Mentorship Program, Skills Testing program, Long Term Player Development Strategy and POE Curriculums. He has also played a key role in skills development at the National Junior Team and U18 Team level and has spent many years coaching all levels of hockey ranging from Novice to Midget AAA. Corey is also a coach mentor for the Bantam AA - Midget AAA NW Hockey Club in Calgary.

David Marcoux Goaltending

David Marcoux has been a career coach for over 25 years. While doing his Bachelor's degree in Physical Education at the U. of Sherbrooke & Masters degree in Science (U. of Montreal), David started coaching minor hockey teams & started developing goalies. After a successful 4 years with the Hull Olympiques in the QMJHL, he was hired by the Calgary Flames as goaltending-coach. During his 6 years tenure with the Flames, the team made the Stanley Cup Playoff each year. Under his tutelage, Miikka Kiprusoff became the winningest goalie in franchise history (also winning the Vezina & Jennings trophies in 2005-06) & made it to the Stanley Cup Finals in 2004 against Tampa Bay (Conference championship). David also coached the Moose Jaw Warriors' goalies in the WHL. He is now the proud owner of D.M.S.G. (David Marcoux's School of Goaltending, www.dmsg.ca) that runs camps across Canada & consults privately with Elite goalies in Calgary. David is also now a consultant for Hockey Canada & is a member of their Goaltending development advisory group.



Other topics to be presented
on at the 2014 HCSA Seminar:
Yoga & Nutrition

