



# Skills Academy Newsletter

November 2014



## Olympic Gold Medallists Share Their Stories

By Laurence Heinen

Marie-Philip Poulin and Danielle Goyette enjoyed the opportunity to relive their gold-medal experiences at the 2014 Hockey Canada Skills Academy Summer Seminar.

Poulin and Goyette shared their personal stories with seminar attendees in Calgary at the Markin MacPhail Centre in early July.

"That was a great experience having them and sharing their stories," said attendee Peter Hay, who runs a Hockey Canada Skills Academy at the Mennonite Educational Institute in Abbotsford, B.C. "It really added with having the Canadian Olympic gold medals hanging around with us and around the room and also just having two icons of female hockey from the past, present and the future was kind of neat too."

Poulin has the unique distinction of having scored back-to-back Olympic game-winning goals in Vancouver in 2010 and again in Sochi in 2014.

"It's always amazing to express what happened," said Poulin, who scored with 54.6 seconds left in regulation and again during a four-on-three power play at 8:10 of overtime to lead

Canada to a 3-2 win over the United States in the women's gold-medal game in Sochi. "It puts me and it puts the team right back on cloud nine."

Admittedly shy, Poulin said she was nervous speaking in front of such a large crowd at the seminar. With Poulin's growing hockey resume, it's something that she'll have to get used to doing, pointed out Goyette.

"That's twice in two Olympics that she scored two goals in the final game and the winning goals," said Goyette, who also won a pair of Olympic gold medals with the Canadian women's team in Salt Lake City in 2002 and again in Turin, Italy in 2006. "She was talking about it and the impact that it had on people around her. As an athlete, sometimes you don't know the impact you have on people that are watching the game until you come back to your country and people are starting to talk to you about it everywhere you go."

And that's something that's happening to Poulin on a regular basis.

"Right now people are recognizing her," said Goyette, who serves as head coach of the University

of Calgary Dinos women's hockey team. "It's a change of status for her. She's going to have to get used to it because I think she's going to be more and more popular in the future."

In addition to reliving the past, both Poulin and Goyette enjoyed the opportunity to interact with all the seminar attendees from around Canada who are involved with running various Hockey Canada Skills Academies.

"It was fun to see the ambience there, to see all the coaches that come and share their experiences with the program," Poulin said.

Goyette couldn't believe how many schools there are across Canada that run programs.

"That was an eye-opener for me," she said. "It's a great opportunity for all the schools to be able to share their knowledge and grow their programs. It's such a great thing to have at schools. When I saw that, it inspired me to tell people to keep doing what they're doing, because the more active kids we have, the better it's going to be in the future."

Growing up in St-Nazaire, Que., as the seventh of eight children, Goyette didn't have the advantage of being able to attend a Hockey Canada Skills Academy.

"When I see all the schools having a good hockey program, it doesn't cost a fortune to be in these hockey programs," Goyette said. "It's an advantage for a lot more kids to be in hockey."

In addition to hearing Poulin and Goyette speak, Hay enjoyed the lineup of other speakers at the seminar, which included Bob Caldwell on transition principals, Richard Monette on physical literacy, David Marcoux on goaltending and Cory McNabb on stick handling drills and technology.

Hay especially enjoyed McNabb's session when he explained to coaches how they can use video to show their students National Hockey League players in action.

"It really motivates the kids when they can see an NHLer doing it and then them trying it in different ways," Hay said. "It makes it more fun." ■

**FUN FACT:** Shortly after the seminar, Marcoux was hired on as goaltending coach with the Carolina Hurricanes.



# Hockey Players Hit the Gym



The Windsor Hockey Skills Academy is sponsoring a new, innovative concept to create more athleticism for hockey players.

According to Cam Kerr, a combination of athletically gifted kids and an ability to perform hockey skills will raise the bar towards being better players.

"In my experience of observing Russian and Czech hockey players under the age of 12, I was pressed to look at ways we could inspire players to be better athletes, thus better players," said Kerr, who created the NC Hockey Group (which oversees the Windsor Hockey Skills Academy) along with Nancy Wilson after observing the results of the Molson Open Ice Summit in Toronto in June of 1999. "The European players saw limited ice time but spent time in the gyms performing gymnastics or body awareness activities. From the gym, they took their athleticism onto the ice where they performed their skills at a higher level."

Kerr believes that European players have shown higher skill levels compared to North American players at recent world tournaments due to the fact that their coaches spend more time working on basic skills to develop better athletes.

The Windsor Hockey Skills Academy introduced its first athletic sessions last May at the Flicka Gymnastics Club in North Vancouver.

"We introduced body movement exercises on the trampoline and 'fast track' plyometrics apparatus," said Kerr, while noting that it couldn't have been done without the help of Flicka Gymnastics Club coach Geoff Patterson.

After four successful sessions were conducted in May and June, Kerr and his staff decided to incorporate the program four times for each class into this year's calendar.

"The second session for each class was comprised of spins and body awareness once again," Kerr said. "The sessions were welcomed by the players as it was a new venture and amazingly important for hockey enthusiasts." ■



## Bringing Hockey into the Classroom

In early April of 2014, a group of six teachers from Calgary were brought together to share ideas and information about creating a hockey-based curriculum in celebration of Hockey Canada's 100th Anniversary. The Calgary Catholic School Board currently boasts 21 Hockey Canada Skills Academy programs throughout the district, representing the largest school district program in Canada. The Group from the CCSB can take credit for the wealth of lesson plans currently available on the Hockey Canada site.

According to project leader, Jan Carson, "the biggest challenge was to 'connect' curriculum outcomes with hockey events, players, skills, equipment, and themes". The lesson plans were developed in seven subject areas including: Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education, Art, and Music. "Our goal was to engage, enthuse, and enrich students in their knowledge and appreciation of the game of hockey".



Following a "soft launch" this past May, the Writers Group continued to submit innovative lessons populating a site for Grade levels K through 6 in all seven subject areas. The lessons include such titles as "Pep Talk" and "Hockey Homonyms" for L.A., "Hockey Store" and "Time 4 Hockey" for Math, "Greener Game" and "Light the Lamp" for Science, "Hockey Community Helpers" and "Relative Location Trivia" for Social Studies, along with several engaging P.E., Art, and Music lessons.

Currently there are over 260 lessons plans for teachers to access for free.

The upcoming November launch of lessons will highlight the 2015 World Junior Championships hosted in Toronto and Montreal this Christmas season. Another 35 lessons will bring the total number of lesson plans close to 300! All of the lessons are in English and French and are available on the Hockey Canada website at: [HockeyCanada.ca/schoolprogram](http://HockeyCanada.ca/schoolprogram) Teachers and parents are requested to register for the website before accessing the entire lesson plan collection free of charge. ■

