



Skills Academy Newsletter

June 2015



SportQual: A Great Way to Reflect

By Butch Rickeard

When Leamington District Secondary School started the Hockey Canada Skills Academy (HCSA) in 2007, we were the only ones within 300 kilometres in southern Ontario. The group saw early on the value of sharing ideas and getting feedback from Hockey Canada directly. I have taught the program for the past six years and have a highly supportive department head in physical education (and current instructor) and a principal excited to see the purpose of this program. It was perfect timing when the opportunity arose to make our program better through the SportQual review.

Pier-Alexandre Poulin, manager of the school programs for Hockey Canada, made the process insightful and a valuable tool to make our teaching practices more effective. With Pier-Alexandre's background and knowledge of all the academies, instructor Tony Nurse and I had the chance to have another set of eyes with a high level of expertise. With the many different instructional strategies there are across the country, he was able to provide suggestions and specific examples on what others do to make this course better. Given our geography, it was a chance to get someone to drop in who

understands the goals and purposes of the HCSA program. This had not happened in eight years. The experience was awesome!

The SportQual process starts with selecting a date that works for both groups. Pier-Alexandre was flexible with the dates that would work best around our needs. A fairly thorough review of our program was required on our end. We were to provide what we originally intended to do when we started (i.e., our original application) and an inventory of the training tools we have accumulated over the years. Even that review forced us to see if our program, now eight years old, was actually doing what we thought it would do.

Pier-Alexandre wanted to watch an on-ice lesson and an off-ice lesson the next day to look at facilities, interactions and tools used in the program. During his two-day visit, we had several opportunities to collaborate and exchange ideas. We met multiple times during his visit. (Of course, I also dragged him to the southernmost tip on mainland Canada at Point Pelee National Park.) Pier-Alexandre met with the school principal, Kyle Berard, and discussed the needs of the program from Hockey Canada's

perspective, as well as provided him with ideas from other academies. That significantly changed his opinion of the course and its value.

Since this meeting we have had 100 percent support for the program at both the administrative level and beyond (superintendents, trustees, director) and the encouragement to try new ideas to improve our product and enrolment. To be honest, I was never really sure that principals or other staff ever really knew what it was we were doing in this course (most think it's just scrimmaging). For the first time since it began, that has changed, and that is a direct and huge benefit of the SportQual assessment.

The students in the program, as well as their parents, also had a voice in the evaluation of the program. After the visit a survey was set up for students, parents and even us, the instructors. Despite the fact that I always had an anonymous course review at the end, it was never as thorough or relevant as the questions that were asked in the SportQual Assessment. When the results came back to Tony and me, we had the opportunity to see the strengths and weaknesses of the HCSA program at LDSS from everyone's perspective. This had us immediately adjust our



approach, which will improve communication with students and parents alike and would never have been possible if we had kept doing what “worked” in the past. It is easy to get into a habit of training in a certain way, but a process like this refreshed us and we’ve already made small changes that I’m convinced will make a big difference for next year’s students.

Overall it was an extremely positive experience that I’d highly recommend any HCSA to request. Not only did we improve our relationship with our school administration and staff, but also the communication with students and parents. We took the opportunity to make changes that will make us better as instructors and teachers, and Pier-Alexandre never made it feel like it was a pressure-filled evaluation. There was no doubt that he had been in the classroom before and that he understood this course; knowing that he has been a teacher and an instructor, not just someone

going through the motions, made the feedback real and useful.

This was also an opportunity for Pier-Alexandre to see what we do in the programs and hear from us what we, as instructors, need from Hockey Canada in our annual training. We discussed software, shared of ideas and talked about methods of how we fundraise and connect to elementary students in our program. We had a great discussion about where we fit in compared to other programs – with the perspective from a national coordinator. He even gained an understanding of just how valuable the game of floorball is to our program (a huge tip we received from Anthony Herrington and the guys at Sherwood Secondary when we started out), and this led Pier-Alexandre to have me complete an interview on TSN with Gino Reda about the merits of HCSA and the game of floorball – a fantastic opportunity!

Students loved the discussion Pier-Alexandre had with them and really enjoyed having a Hockey Canada representative at the school. This was something that they talked about with pride on Hockey Canada’s 100th anniversary in December 2014, when they watched Team Canada win the 2015 World Junior Championship and whenever anyone mentioned the Olympic Gold medallists, both men’s and women’s (women’s star Meghan Agosta is from our community) or the most recent world championship men’s team. Hockey Canada is doing a lot of things right, and this program is one of the greatest experiences for any student (or teacher) who has a true passion for the world’s greatest sport. The SportQual review is a great opportunity to remind you what the game is all about. ■



Jake Muzzin at the Woodstock HCSA program

Last April, the students of the Woodstock HCSA program had an unexpected pleasant surprise from a local superstar. Jake Muzzin, a defenceman for the LA Kings and Stanley Cup Champion, usually goes back to his hometown of Woodstock Ontario in the off season. While training for the World Championships where he

will represent Team Canada, Jerome Sirois, the head instructor of the HCSA program, spotted him in the hallways of the Woodstock Community Complex. He asked him if he could come meet some kids from their program, Jake accepted and signed some autographs with the young players. The next day, Jake found some

time to come on the ice with the second group for about ten minutes and take a group picture. The gesture was greatly appreciated by everyone in the class. Woodstock HCSA wants to give Jake Muzzin a big thank you – they will never forget this experience with a hometown NHL player! ■



HCSA Summer Seminar 2015

July 2-4, 2015 - Calgary, Alberta - Markin MacPhail Centre
Presenter Profiles

Joel Lenius – Skate Canada : Skating

Joel Lenius is the National Power Skating Coordinator for Skate Canada. His main role with the organization, is to lead the monitoring and revitalization of Skate Canada's Power Skating program. Joel played two years of professional hockey in Europe. He is also a skill development coach for numerous GTHL and OMHA teams, numerous individual competitive hockey players, and Junior and Professional players - specializing in skating development and correction. Joel believes that skating is the foundational skill for which all other hockey skills are developed.

Jeff Osadec – Canadian Sport Institute : Off-Ice training

Jeff Osadec has coached for the past 10 years working with athletes both young and national level. Jeff joined the Canadian Sport Institute full time in the fall of 2011 as a strength coach and physiologist. Jeff is certified as a physiologist from Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology and as a strength and conditioning coach through the National Strength and Conditioning Association. In hockey, he has been involved with the Hockey Canada Women's Program since 2010.

Maxime Provencher – Rimouski Oceanic : Injury prevention

Maxime Provencher is a former QMJHL player with Chicoutimi and PEI. Following his junior career, he graduated with a Masters in Physical Therapy at Laval University. He is now the physical therapist for the Rimouski Oceanic in the QMJHL and his main focus is injury prevention. Most recently, he founded SciencePerfo where he applies biomechanical techniques to hockey.

Domenic Pittis – Calgary Flames : On ice skills development

Domenic Pittis is a former professional hockey player. After playing junior hockey in the WHL, Domenic played in the NHL before going off to Europe to play in Switzerland. He also played for Team Canada in the 2007 Spengler Cup. He is currently employed by the Calgary Flames as their skills and conditioning coach.



SKATECANADA



Martin Gelinas – Calgary Flames : Keynote Speaker

Martin Gelinas is a former NHL player. After playing junior hockey in Quebec and being drafted first round by the LA Kings. Before he was able to play for the Kings Martin was part of the return that sent Wayne Gretzky to L.A in what is one of the biggest trades in sport history. This was the beginning of a 21 year playing career with stops in Edmonton, Quebec, Vancouver, Carolina, Calgary, Florida, and Nashville. Martin also spent the 03-04 lockout season playing in Morges in the Swiss B league, as well as in Bern in the Swiss A league during his final professional season. Martin reached the Stanley Cup finals with four different NHL teams, winning the cup in 1990 with the Edmonton Oilers. Following his professional hockey career, he turned to coaching and player development. He is currently employed as assistant coach with the Calgary Flames since 2012.

Bob Hartley – Calgary Flames : Keynote Speaker

Bob Hartley is the head coach for the Calgary Flames. He has never played a game in the NHL but has seen tremendous success in his coaching career. Bob started off coaching for the Junior A team in his hometown in Hawkesbury. He then moved up to the QMJHL with the Laval Titans and from there he went to the AHL. His NHL coaching career includes the Colorado Avalanche, the Atlanta Thrashers, and the Calgary Flames. His accomplishments are numerous and most notably include Championships with the Hershey Bears of the AHL, Zurich Lions of the Swiss A league, and leading the Colorado Avalanche to the Stanley Cup in 2001. Bob was hired as head coach with the Flames in 2012 where he led them to the second round of playoffs in 2015. Bob is a finalist for the 2014-15 Jack Adams Award, presented to the head coach who has "contributed the most to his team's success," that will be awarded on June 24th at the NHL Awards Gala in Las Vegas.

Other presentations will include:

- Floorball
- Small Area Games
- Session to exchange best drills
- NHL Future Goals Program
- Skills testing





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DrillHub**

ACCESS GREAT DRILLS AND PRACTICE PLANS ONLINE FOR FREE. Coming up with new drills and practice plans regularly requires a great deal of time and effort by coaches and instructors. Therefore, Hockey Canada has created the Hockey Canada Drill Hub powered by Samsung, which gives coaches the ability to download hundreds of drills and construct practice plans from their computers, tablets or mobile devices. By simply heading to Drill Hub, coaches can access drill diagrams, video clips and pre-made practice plans. Once coaches register for a free account at www.hockeycanada.ca/drillhub they will be able to create their own unique practice plans by using the search function, or by selecting from one of 15 categories, which includes skating, defence, puck control, shooting, scoring, goaltending, etc. Practice plans can be shared through email and social media or even saved on your mobile device to show your players directly on the ice or even with coaches so everyone is prepared for each practice or ice session. New drills are added often so make sure to visit the Hockey Canada Drill Hub frequently!

