



# SKILLS ACADEMY NEWSLETTER



November 2015



## East Wiltshire Hockey Canada Skills Academy **HOME OF THE WARRIORS**

Cornwall, Prince Edward Island

The East Wiltshire Hockey Canada Skills Academy has been operating for numerous years. Over that period of time we have adapted and evolved to the needs in our community and school. Our program now consists of almost 80 students at the Grade 7-9 level. Since the interest level is so high and we like to include as many students as possible, our program is split into one group of Grade 7 students, and another group of Grade 8 and 9 students.

We have no allotted time in our schedule for the Hockey Academy so one of our teachers and our youth worker run the program. Substitutes are required on the afternoons when we have the Academy. One group will run weekly ice sessions until the Christmas break which we run at a local arena. Following the break, this group turns its focus to off ice training which we run at Synergy Fitness and Nutrition in Charlottetown. Our second group is just a mirror of the first, running off ice training in the fall, and on ice sessions after Christmas.

The adjustments we have made over the years allow us to be as inclusive as possible and still offer a high quality program. We have female and male players, Grade 7 through 9 and range in ability from high end AAA caliber players to a number of students who are trying hockey for the first time and just learning to skate. This year we will likely have some of our experienced Grade 9 students come on the ice with the Grade 7 group as assistants and demonstrators.

We have found that our ice sessions have become more engaging for the players in the last number of years as we incorporate drills and ideas from the Hockey Canada Skills Academy Seminar held annually in July. We also refer regularly to the Hockey Canada Drop Box and DrillHub as a resource for developing specialized skills. The use of an iPad on the ice allows students to view proper techniques in videos, rather than relying on an out of shape coach to demonstrate! As well, students enjoy the opportunity to get immediate feedback of themselves as they are recorded performing certain drills and skills.

In an effort to give something to the students that they could take away from the program we ran a small but effective fundraiser this year. Over a two week span in September/October, students sold hockey pools. We were able to sell enough at \$10.00 per pool to pay out \$1000.00 at the end of the NHL regular season in prize money and use the extra money made to buy the Hockey Academy members some workout t-shirts. It's something simple for the students to do, allows them to work toward a goal together, and creates some excitement throughout the school year.

All in all, our program continues to grow in popularity each year and is widely supported by our administration and community. We are currently looking into possibilities in which our Hockey Academy members could get involved in helping out with minor hockey programs to get some volunteer hours and foster the culture of giving back to the hockey community in their area. ■



# 291

students are participating in the  
Hockey Canada Skills Program



HOCKEY NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO



Jumpstart



Keewatin  
Patricia  
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## KPDSB Hockey Canada Skills Academy up and running

With the 2015 - 2016 school year in full swing, students of the Keewatin Patricia District School Board located in Northwestern Ontario, are participating in a new, nationally accredited, Hockey Canada Skills Academy. 291 students are taking advantage of this unique program. As students participate in learning the game of hockey we look to aid in the development of essential life skills which are transferrable to the classroom and the workplace. Within our Academies it is our focus to combine academic and athletic outcomes that will have a positive impact on each and every student as they transition through school and into the work world.

With the help from Canadian Tire Jumpstart, Triple Play and many First Nation Communities, our HCSA programs have provided opportunities for many students who have not had access to the proper equipment. These two programs and communities have donated equipment and provided financial help for students to participate in the program. Without their support we would not be able to reach as many students as we do, and the effectiveness of the entire program would be severely diminished.

Most importantly, the students are buying into the system and enjoying the inclusive element that the academy provides. As one student stated, "I have enjoyed the fun environment and I have bonded with all the girls more than I ever would have elsewhere." Other students have enjoyed the added responsibility of "taking on a leadership role and helping friends." Guiding these students to become responsible individuals outside of the classroom and rink is paramount, so for one student to claim that the "Hockey Canada Skills Academy is an opportunity for us as students and players to better our hockey skills and also become a better overall person," speaks volumes for what we are trying to accomplish.

Thus far we have seen many students step on the ice for the very first time; we have seen students become more involved within the classroom and on the ice and we have seen many students become strong leaders. Within the KPDSB our aim is to create a safe and engaging learning environment where students come first. This program exemplifies this mission not only by having students play hockey but allowing them to develop confidence and essential life skills, as well as, building relationships with their peers outside a classroom setting. ■



# Instructors gain valuable knowledge at HSCA Summer Seminar

By Laurence Heinen



Marcel Landry made a great decision to attend the 2015 Hockey Canada Skills Academy Summer Seminar in early July.

As the lead instructor of the HCSA Program at Ecole Evangeline in Wellington, P.E.I., Landry believed that making the almost 5,000-km trek out west to Calgary would be beneficial.

"The fact that it's an expensive trip always made us hesitant towards that, but I discussed with the administrators at the school thinking maybe we should check it out," explained Landry, who received the green light to attend the seminar, which was held from July 2-4 at the Markin MacPhail Centre. "After going there my impression was that it was very, very worthwhile."

He especially enjoyed hearing from keynote speaker and Calgary Flames coach Bob Hartley, who had just been awarded the Jack Adams Award as the NHL's Coach of the Year a week earlier.

"That was pretty neat to have a speaker like that for the first night there," said Landry. "I'm getting there and I don't really

know what to expect and then all of a sudden we're sitting in Team Canada's dressing room with Bob Hartley talking to us, so that was a pretty neat experience. There's a quote that I remember he said, 'Talent is just potential; skills are developed through hard work.' That was something that really resonated with me."

Fellow seminar attendee Dan Ruggiero agreed with Landry's assessment of Hartley.

"It's pretty cool that he coached the Flames and he took them a long way," said Ruggiero, who's the coordinator of the School District 23 – Central Okanagan HCSA in B.C. "That's just sort of a culmination of what he's gone through in his life."

Kevin Hamlin, who runs a HCSA Program at the Brennan Centre of Excellence and Innovation for the Windsor-Essex Catholic District School Board, also enjoyed hearing from Hartley.

"He was an excellent speaker," said Hamlin. "His message was

engaging. I thought (Flames assistant coach) Marty Gelin as well as excellent. They worked really well together.”

Afterwards, Hartley and Gelin stuck around to talk with and answer questions from the seminar attendees from all across Canada.

“The nice thing about it is how approachable these guys are,” said Hamlin, who was attending the seminar for the second year in a row. “They hung out for a while. They weren’t looking to race out of there. That speaks to their integrity and honesty.”

“They certainly didn’t have to,” noted Ruggiero, who has attended the HCSA Summer Seminar in 11 of the past 12 years, “but they both stayed around and basically answered every single question and treated everybody with lots of respect, which was really nice of them because of their busy schedules.”

Other speakers at the seminar included Joel Lenius from Skate Canada on power skating, Jeff Osadec from the Canadian Sport Institute regarding off-ice training, Maxime Provencher from the QMJHL’s Rimouski Oceanic on injury prevention and Domenic Pittis from the Flames regarding on-ice skills development.

“They all bring something different,” said Ruggiero. “For us as teachers, any time you see somebody up there who’s trying to convey what they’ve learned in life, it’s pretty cool.”

The seminar also featured presentations about floorball, small area games, skills testing, the NHL Future Goals Program and a session for the more than 100 participants to exchange their best drills.

“It was a great opportunity for us to look at best practices – things that are happening around the country,” said Hamlin. “It gave us greater insight to the art of the possible back here in Windsor. I probably learned more from just the social conversations with colleagues around the country that are doing the same thing we are. I’d like to think we offered a thing or two as well.”

At the conclusion of the seminar, Landry made the long trip home armed with more information and tools to help him run his HCSA Program, which is now in its third year at Ecole Evangeline.

“Having people from all over Canada doing basically the same thing that you are but doing it in a completely different way, it’s really eye opening for someone like me,” said Hamlin. “The wealth of knowledge that you gain from that, it doesn’t really matter if it’s a few bucks to get there, but it’s worth it. It’s really, really worth it because it’s a hands-on approach that you take.” ■

