

**ONTARIO
SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE**

B E T W E E N:

SAMUEL BERG

Plaintiff

- and -

CANADIAN HOCKEY LEAGUE, ONTARIO MAJOR JUNIOR HOCKEY LEAGUE, ONTARIO HOCKEY LEAGUE, WESTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE, QUEBEC MAJOR JUNIOR HOCKEY LEAGUE INC., WINDSOR SPITFIRES INC., LONDON KNIGHTS HOCKEY INC., BARRIE COLTS JUNIOR HOCKEY LTD., BELLEVILLE SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT CORP., ERIE HOCKEY CLUB LIMITED, GUELPH STORM LIMITED, KINGSTON FRONTENAC HOCKEY LTD., 2325224 ONTARIO INC., NIAGARA ICEDOGS HOCKEY CLUB INC., BRAMPTON BATTALION HOCKEY CLUB LTD., GENERALS HOCKEY INC., OTTAWA 67'S LIMITED PARTNERSHIP, THE OWEN SOUND ATTACK INC., PETERBOROUGH PETES LIMITED, COMPUWARE SPORTS CORPORATION, SAGINAW HOCKEY CLUB, L.L.C., 649643 ONTARIO INC c.o.b. as SARNIA STING, SOO GREYHOUNDS INC., McCRIMMON HOLDINGS, LTD. AND 32155 MANITOBA LTD., A PARTNERSHIP c.o.b. as BRANDON WHEAT KINGS., 1056648 ONTARIO INC., REXALL SPORTS CORP., EHT, INC., KAMLOOPS BLAZERS HOCKEY CLUB, INC., KELOWNA ROCKET'S HOCKEY ENTERPRISES LTD., HURRICANES HOCKEY LIMITED PARTNERSHIP, PRINCE ALBERT RAIDERS HOCKEY CLUB INC., BRODSKY WEST HOLDINGS LTD., REBELS SPORTS LTD., QUEEN CITY SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT GROUP LTD., SASKATOON BLADES HOCKEY CLUB LTD., VANCOUVER JUNIOR HOCKEY LIMITED PARTNERSHIP, 8487693 CANADA INC., CLUB DE HOCKEY JUNIOR MAJEUR DE BAIE-COMEAU INC., CLUB DE HOCKEY DRUMMOND INC., CAPE BRETON MAJOR JUNIOR HOCKEY CLUB LIMITED, LES OLYMPIQUES DE GATINEAU INC., HALIFAX MOOSEHEADS HOCKEY CLUB INC., CLUB HOCKEY LES REMPARTS DE QUEBEC INC., LE CLUB DE HOCKEY JUNIOR ARMADA INC., MONCTON WILDCATS HOCKEY CLUB LIMITED, LE CLUB DE HOCKEY L'OCEANIC DE RIMOUSKI INC., LES HUSKIES DE ROUYN-NORANDA INC., 8515182 CANADA INC. c.o.b. as CHARLOTTETOWN ISLANDERS, LES TIGRES DE VICTORIAVILLE (1991) INC., SAINT JOHN MAJOR JUNIOR HOCKEY CLUB LIMITED, CLUB DE HOCKEY SHAWINIGAN INC., and CLUB DE HOCKEY JUNIOR MAJEUR VAL D'OR INC.

Defendants

Proceeding under the *Class Proceedings Act, 1992*, S.O. 1992, C.6

AFFIDAVIT OF VICTORIA GRYGAR

Sworn June 11, 2016
(Motion for Certification)

I, VICTORIA GRYGAR, of the City of St. Catharines, in the Province of Ontario, make oath and say:

1. I have personal knowledge of the facts hereinafter deposed. Where my knowledge is based on information obtained from others, I have so indicated and believe that information to be true.

2. I am a law clerk at Saad Law Professional Corporation in Mississauga, Ontario. I have completed three years towards my PhD at the University of Toronto in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Physical Education

3. As a Czech-Canadian, the cultural significance of hockey in both nations has engrained the sport into my life. I have followed major junior hockey for many years. I developed a passion for players' rights because I felt like there were problems in the way the Canadian Hockey League ("**the CHL**") was run.

4. Some of these problems were made clear to me through personal experiences involving a young family friend, Milan Doczy, who emigrated from the Czech Republic to play in the Ontario Hockey League ("**the OHL**"). After playing three seasons in the league, Milan wished to pursue an education and requested the same standard education package that is offered to all Canadian and American OHL players. He was told that European players are ineligible for the education package. My family and I advocated on Milan's behalf for over one year through correspondence with the OHL. Milan's fight for his education package was widely reported in the media. Attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "A"** is an article published by the *Toronto Star*, entitled *Former OHLer Milan Doczy denied educational scholarship funding*, dated December 26, 2012.

5. I completed my Master of Arts degree in health and physical education at the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences at Brock University. My master's thesis, entitled *A Struggle Against the Odds: Understanding the Lived Experiences of Canadian Hockey League (CHL) Players*, is attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "B"**. I later presented my research and findings at numerous speaking events including the Muhammad Ali Center Athletes & Social Change Educational Forum. The abstract from my talk is attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "C"**.

6. My thesis research explored the power relations between players and CHL hockey authorities and the disciplinary processes used within the CHL. In simple terms, I concluded that the potential for harassment, abuse, and exploitative practices are heightened in an organization such as the CHL where profits are extracted from the labour of youth.

7. My research was supervised by Dr. Cathy van Ingen, Associate Professor of Kinesiology at Brock University, whose primary area of expertise is cultural studies of sport. Dr. van Ingen scrutinized the methodologies used in my research to ensure rigorous compliance with standard scientific and academic practices. These methodologies included: participant selection and sampling; recruiting strategies; data collection processes; document analysis; reflective journaling; data analysis; reflexivity; trustworthiness; and ethical considerations. I presented my methodologies at the University's Research Ethics Review Board, which were approved for compliance with Research Ethics Board Guidelines prior to beginning my research.

8. As part of my thesis research, I interviewed eleven players who completed at least one full year in the CHL, ten of whom played in the OHL, and one of whom played in the

Western Hockey League (“WHL”). Their experiences playing in the league were as follows:

Name	CHL League	Birth Year	Seasons Played in the CHL (years)	Total Years Played in the CHL (Number of Years)	Draft to NHL
Aaron	OHL	1988	2005-2008	3	No
Petr	WHL	1988	2006-2009	3	No
Neil	OHL	1989	2006-2009	3	No
Dan	OHL	1985	2001-2006	5	Yes
Adam	OHL	1988	2005-2007	2	No
Vince	OHL	1990	2007-2009	1	No
Steve	OHL	1989	2005-2009	4	No
Jaime	OHL	1990	2007-2011	4	No
Blair	OHL	1987	2004-2008	4	No
Tyler	OHL	1989	2006-2010	4	No
Calum	OHL	1995	2011-current	2 (current)	Yes

9. I recruited the participants by word-of-mouth through personal connections. I also contacted a hockey coach at a private academy who put me in touch with former CHL players.

10. Attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit “D”** are transcripts of my interviews with all eleven participants. I have retained audio recordings of five of the eleven participant interviews. The tapes contain information that could identify the players. I have provided the tapes to Charney Lawyers on the condition that they not be given to the defence.

11. All eleven players made clear to me that they would not participate in the interviews unless their identities remained anonymous because they did not wish for their

clubs or leagues to learn that they were participating in academic research which might be critical of major junior hockey. They expressed fear of repercussions from their clubs, the league, and the wider hockey establishment. They agreed to have me interview them on the condition that their identities remained completely anonymous. As verified by Dr. van Ingen's supervision, I used methodologies that met strict scientific and academic standards while ensuring the players' anonymity.

12. As can be seen in the transcripts, I did not influence the participants' responses. My questions were developed according to scientific and academic methodologies to specifically avoid influencing the participants' responses.

13. My objective was to determine from each player what their experiences were playing in the OHL or WHL.

14. Most of the interviews took place in person at Brock University. Two took place in public places, a coffee shop and a restaurant, and two took place via Skype. Participation was voluntary and the participants were not compensated. The players knew they were being recorded.

15. Shortly after each interview, I prepared the transcripts myself. The transcript accurately reflects the questions I put to the players and the answers I received from the players. I redacted anything that might identify the players. I then sent each transcript to the players and asked them to review it for anything they wished to have removed or corrected. None of the players required any changes.

16. During the course of each interview, I was advised by each player of the answers that are set out in the transcripts and I do verily believe their answers to be true.

17. In or around February 2016, Samantha Schreiber, a former associate with Charney Lawyers PC, contacted me through LinkedIn to express an interest in my research. I had not previously been in contact with Charney Lawyers, Sam Berg or Lukas Walter, nor was I aware of the class action during the course of my research and interviews.

18. Samantha indicated that Theodore Charney, a partner with Charney Lawyers PC, had discovered an open letter to David Branch that I had posted online. I later spoke with Mr. Charney on the telephone. He explained the nature of this action and the companion proposed class actions in Alberta and Quebec, and indicated that he wished to submit my research as evidence in this action. I strongly support this action and I agreed.

19. I am a contributor to a website called Hockey and Society: Exploring Critical Social Issues in Hockey, which can be viewed at www.hockeyinsociety.com. On March 18, 2015, I posted an open letter to David Branch, the Commissioner of the OHL, on that website, entitled *What the %&! is going on with major junior hockey?: An open letter to David Branch*. A copy of that letter is attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "E"**.

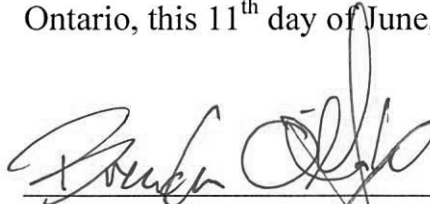
20. I have provided to Charney Lawyers additional documents that I collected in the course of my research. Attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "F"** is the Niagara IceDogs Corporate Partnership Available Inventory document for the 2013/14 season. Attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "G"** is a document from the Niagara IceDogs entitled *Allocation of Revenue Between Parties*. Attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "H"** is an unsigned agreement between a player and his club in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League. This document has been redacted for identifying information. Attached hereto and marked as **Exhibit "I"** is a revised and signed version of the agreement between the same player and his club. This document has been redacted for identifying information.

21. I make this affidavit in support of the motion for certification and for no improper purpose.

SWORN BEFORE ME at the)
)
City of Toronto, in the Province of)
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Ontario, this 11th day of June, 2016)
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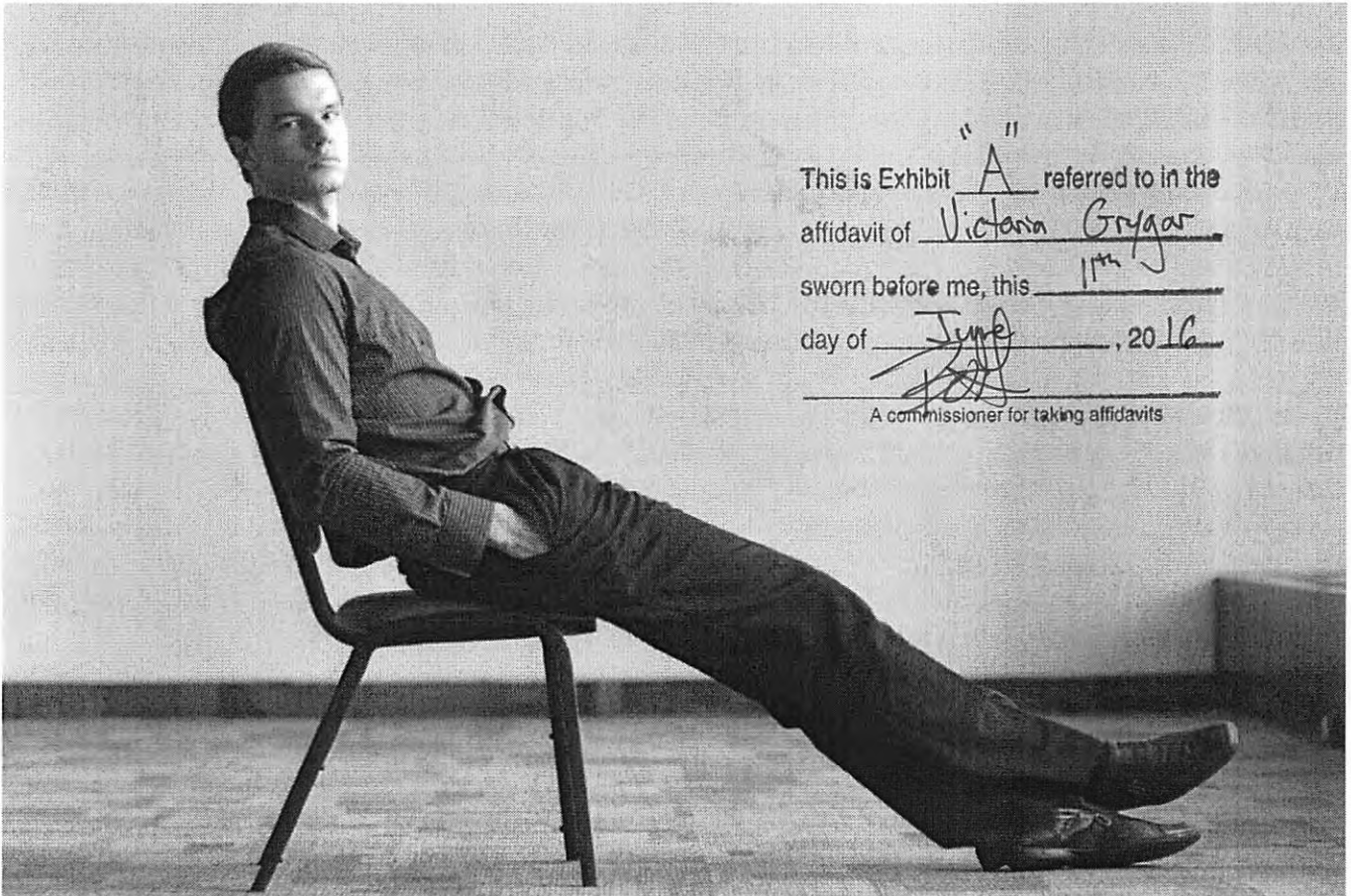
VICTORIA GRYGAR



(A Commissioner, etc.)
Brandon O'Grady
66419D

Former OHLer Milan Doczy denied educational scholarship funding

After three OHL seasons, Czech Milan Doczy found out the hard way that the contract he signed as a 17-year-old didn't include educational scholarship funding.



Ian Doczy is a former OHL hockey player from the Czech Republic who was denied access to the league's educational scholarship funding. The denial illustrates the need for a strong union representing young players, he says. (CARLOS OSORIO / TORONTO STAR) | ORDER THIS PHOTO

By **ROBERT CRIBB** Foreign, Investigations
Wed., Dec. 26, 2012

The moment Milan Doczy placed a pen on the contract that would make him an Ontario Hockey League player at 17 years of age remains frozen in his mind.

He'd just arrived in Ontario after a tearful goodbye with family and friends in his native Czech Republic.

It was his first trip outside his country. He spoke and read no English. His parents were thousands of kilometres away. There was no interpreter to help him understand the document laying before him.

He recalls the yellow and red stickers placed next to each line on the contract where his signature was required.

"Sign here," he was told one morning before practice at the Bayshore arena in Owen Sound. "And here."

That contract, signed Sept. 12, 2010, awarded him \$65 a week as a player with the Owen Sound Attack (increasing to \$150 a week in his final year).

He didn't know much else.

Unlike contracts signed by Canadian players, his says nothing about the league's educational scholarship program for former players — money he says has been unfairly denied to him.

"In the hockey business, they say they'll help you. But they never do," said Doczy, now living in St. Catharines. "They said they'd pay. They didn't."

OHL commissioner David Branch said the scholarship program wasn't made available to Europeans until this past June when Doczy's appeal for funding reached the league's attention.

The league quietly changed the policy to include Europeans.

But no one told Doczy.

"Based on his profile as I know it, he will be eligible under the scholarship program," said Branch. "What's right is right and that's what we're trying to do here."

Ted Baker, vice-president of the OHL, originally spoke with Doczy a year ago about the player's request for scholarship funding.

It was a unique case — very few Europeans apply for the scholarship funding after their playing days in Ontario, he says. And the rule in place at the time made Doczy ineligible.

"Bottom line, there wasn't a scholarship available to him. That has been adjusted and rightly so."

Owen Sound GM Dale DeGray said Doczy was the first European to ever request educational funding in his six years with the team.

"It was uncharted waters. He's the pioneer. If there's loopholes or a crack, if it comes to light and you don't try to make good, you're doomed for failure."

It's all news to Doczy who has been struggling financially without the funding he thought he'd earned.

"This would be life changing," he said Friday after being told of the league's response. "Let's hope its going to work out. Maybe because (the Star) got involved they changed their minds. I'm sure I wouldn't get the money on my own."

In the aftermath of a scandalized collapse last week of a union drive to represent the league's 1,300 players, Doczy says his case is testament to how vulnerable young players need strong advocacy.

And it needs to start from the moment they sign their contracts, he says.

While the "Standard Player Agreement Form" Doczy signed warned prospective players to seek legal advice before signing, that never happened for him.

Instead, his signature appears beneath a "waiver" that reads: "The Player has decided not to obtain (independent legal) advice."

"I don't remember being told that and I wouldn't have understood it anyway," says Doczy. "I was showed a contract and told, 'You've got to sign this to play.' So I did. It was the only way to play in the league and get drafted into the NHL."

The names of his mother and father are handwritten into the contract to indicate they understand and acknowledged the terms and conditions. But they were a continent away.

Doczy wrote the two names into the document himself, he says.

The Attack's DeGray said the club generally deals with player agents and that Doczy had an agent at the time he signed the deal.

"If he didn't know it's because it was lost in translation with his agent."

Doczy says his Los Angeles-based agent said nothing about a contract to him, never reviewed it or offered him advice.

But at the time, none of that seemed consequential.

This was his big moment.

He stood in the promised land of the game he fell in love with as a 6-year-old. In Canada, he would make his name. He would seek a destiny that now seemed within reach: Being drafted into the NHL.

"You're in a bubble. Everybody thinks they're going to make it."

In his first year, his coaches and agent said he'd be drafted "for sure in the first three rounds," he says.

It didn't happen.

Five years later, the broad-chested, 6-foot-5 defenceman resents the fact that his contract was missing the promise of educational scholarship funding after his playing days were over.

The OHL has long offered educational financial support to North American players who want to transition to college or university.

To be eligible, they must enroll in a program within 18 months of leaving the OHL, study full-time and continue to meet academic requirements.

After three seasons with the Owen Sound Attack — 2007 to 2010 — Doczy decided to return to the Czech Republic and play one more season of hockey. It didn't go well.

After a few exhibition games with the Trinec Ocelari, he was cut and turned his attention to education.

He returned to Owen Sound at the urging of his billet family.

"We gave him credit for having the courage to come back here," says Tracy Walker, who, along with husband Sean, billeted Doczy in their home for three seasons.

"We're so proud of him because he really works hard and appreciates the education system here."

He thought he had an advantage in Canada: a scholarship program that many of his teammates were using to fund their educations.

It was money he'd earned, he thought.

So as he was completing his high school equivalency credits in Owen Sound, he contacted his former team and the OHL to ask for the funding to begin a university or college business program.

He applied for the money within the eligibility period.

Promises were made, he says. Then, his calls went unreturned.

When word of a Canadian Hockey League Players' Association — a proposed union to represent CHL players — emerged this fall, Doczy approached them for help with the help of his friend Vicky Grygar.

"They told me Milan is entitled to receive this money because he signed that contract as a 17-year-old minor with no witness present, no lawyer present and he didn't understand the language," says Grygar, a Masters student at Brock University writing her thesis on the rights of CHL players.

Hope of a union-backed bid for the funding disintegrated last week when the proposed union collapsed.

"It's really funny that (the OHL) offers this now after two years," she said Friday. "I've never heard this response until (the Star) got a hold of it."

Doczy wants to become a Canadian citizen. Study business. Start a company. Contribute.

After being denied the educational funding, he was desperate to remain in Canada.

His parents back home wanted to help. But with modest Czech incomes, there's no money to spare.

Others came forward to help. Grygar's parents offered free room and board in their St. Catharines home.

They aren't well off themselves. But they know his story well.

The couple immigrated to Canada from the Czech Republic in 1987 with a single suitcase in hand. They came for the same reasons Doczy now wants to stay.

"We try to help," says Richard Grygar, a welder who has put in overtime to pay the extra expenses. "He eats like a horse. But who is going to help this guy? Nobody."

Brock University pitched in by waiving the hefty tuition fees he would normally have to pay as an international student.

For now, he's playing hockey with Brock, taking three classes and maintaining the 70s average he needs to earn a \$4,000 scholarship.

It's not nearly enough, of course. And the delicate financial balance may not have held out for four years of education, Doczy said.

While the 18-month window for claiming its educational scholarship expired for him months ago, Branch said that restriction can be overlooked in this case.

And the OHL's Baker said that if Doczy is approved for the scholarship funding, the league would include retroactive payments for his Brock fees.

Doczy's view on the game he once loved — the game that drew him to Canada — has changed over his time here. He doesn't watch hockey on television anymore.

He doesn't want to be involved at all when his playing days at Brock are over.

"I hate the business part of it. They don't treat you as a person. It's just not right."

A Struggle Against the Odds:
Understanding the Lived Experiences of Canadian Hockey League (CHL) Players

Victoria L. Grygar, B.S.M (Honours)

This is Exhibit B referred to in the
affidavit of Victoria Grygar
sworn before me, this 11th
day of June, 2016

A commissioner for taking affidavits

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Applied Health Sciences
(Health and Physical Education)

Supervisor: Dr. Cathy van Ingen

Faculty of Applied Health Sciences
Brock University
St. Catharines, Ontario

Victoria L. Grygar © August 2013

A STRUGGLE AGAINST THE ODDS

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to examine the experiences of Canadian Hockey League (CHL) players using a Foucauldian theory-based analysis. Specifically, this thesis contends that power relations between players and CHL hockey authorities need to be critically assessed. The CHL is the world's leading developmental junior ice hockey league. Comprised of 1,400 hockey players, aged 15–21 years old on 60 teams through three divisions, the CHL is a primary supplier of talent for the National Hockey League. In the last year, several issues surrounding unjust practices within the CHL have been brought to the forefront, indicating that the potential for harassment, abuse, and exploitative practices are heightened in an organization such as the CHL, where profits are extracted from the labour of youth. Ultimately, this study is designed to contribute to both scholarly and public audiences, providing a critical analysis of the welfare of youth in the CHL.

A STRUGGLE AGAINST THE ODDS

Acknowledgements

In the past two years of my life I have walked an incredibly challenging journey. Writing this thesis presented obstacles I could not have predicted, and obstacles I could not have overcome without the help of others.

I must first thank all of the current and former hockey players who shared their stories with me. Thank you for trusting me, confiding in me, and supporting me. Your experiences are what make these pages come to life.

When I first met Dr. Cathy van Ingen I was overwhelmed by the grace she exudes. It was with this grace that she accepted, guided, and changed me. She revealed to me the beauty that words have to offer, and the ability of writing as a form of art. Cathy's dedication to social change breaks academic boundaries, and I admire her passion for humanitarian justice. Throughout this research journey, I became lost multiple times. Cathy helped me find my way and transformed these feelings of being lost into spaces where my research transpired and evolved; I am no longer frightened of being lost. I am extremely grateful for her ongoing help, support, and mentorship. Above all though, it is her grace that moved me.

I would also like to thank Dr. Lucie Thibault for the continuous guidance she affords me. Her support has made me a better academic. It is difficult to describe how grateful I am for the time you have invested in me over the past 2 years. Your generosity has profoundly impacted my life, and for that I thank you.

I must also acknowledge Dr. Trent Newmeyer for agreeing to serve on my committee. This study needed, and is better due to, his theoretical expertise. You provided me with valuable insight throughout this process.

A STRUGGLE AGAINST THE ODDS

I am also indebted to Dr. Thomas Dunk for serving as my external examiner. In addition to this role, it was his teachings that allowed me to confirm my place in academia. After I completed his graduate course in labour and social justice studies, the path I was on became clearer.

I am also grateful for the constant support given to me by Dr. Cheri Bradish. Thank you for caring about me and inviting me into your life.

Charlene MacLellan your motherly presence provided me with a warm comfort. You are a wonderful person and I genuinely thank you for all of your help.

To my colleagues in the program, thank you for listening to me, and most of all for challenging me. The journey we have travelled in the past 2 years is hard to describe, and I know you understand this. Abbi, you are an amazing person and friend. You shared your strength with me in times of need, and I am thankful to have you in my life.

Lastly, to my family, the center of my heart. There exist no words capable of explaining the depths of my love for you. The support my parents have given me over the past 25 years is immeasurable. Mom and Dad, growing older has allowed me to better understand the sacrifices you have made for our family. You are both so brave. Rick and I are better people because of you. I love you.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Background

The foundation beneath the Canadian Hockey League (CHL), the world's best developmental major junior ice hockey league, is currently undergoing a monumental shift. A proposed union representing CHL players, called the Canadian Hockey League Players' Association (CHLPA), was introduced in the summer of 2012. The union initiated legal proceedings against the CHL regarding the "blatant disregard for the bare minimum working standards" for its employees (Mirtle, 2012, para. 13). One of the primary foci of the CHLPA, in addition to increased wages, was reforming the education scholarship packages offered to players during and after their junior hockey careers.

Unfortunately, the hope of a union for 1,400 CHL hockey players, aged 16-21 years old, on 60 CHL teams disintegrated quickly (Whamsby, 2012). The CHLPA unravelled within a few months under pressure from the CHL who worked to delegitimize the union before it was established based on the missteps of its organizers. Despite the collapse of the union, issues surrounding the unjust practices occurring in the CHL have been brought to the forefront. Additionally, individuals involved with the CHLPA initiatives are seeking alternatives to ensure the realization of the CHLPA objectives.

The personal connection I share with this issue was formed many years ago and is the underlying reason why I decided to address the unjust practices of the CHL in my graduate research. The following narrative explains how my passion for this study developed.

A STRUGGLE AGAINST THE ODDS

My immediate family is comprised of my mother, father and brother. Aside from me, the rest of my family was born and raised in the Czech Republic, formerly known as Czechoslovakia. In 1986, 2 years before my birth, my parents and brother fled from Czechoslovakia, which was under communist reign within the Eastern Bloc of Europe. After two years of moving from country to country, my family settled and made a new home in Canada. I was born soon after and both my brother and I were raised with as much Czech tradition as my parents could integrate into our new North American way of life. One of these traditions was keeping our fandom in allegiance to the Czech football and ice hockey clubs. To this day, there are jerseys, banners and posters displaying the beloved Czech athletic clubs and players of our hometown, Ostrava.

I met Peter¹ in 2007. He came to Canada from the Czech Republic to play hockey in the Ontario Hockey League (OHL), one of the three sister leagues forming the Canadian Hockey League (CHL), when he was 17 years of age. Peter could barely speak a word of English and found it difficult to fit in amongst his teammates. His OHL team was located in a remote area of Canada, and he was finding it difficult to adapt to the North American culture. I formed a close bond with Peter, and alongside his supportive billet family I did everything I could to help him adjust to his new life. My family would have Peter over for traditional Czech holidays to allow him to feel like he was “back home.” He quickly became an important part of my family’s life.

Peter came to Canada for the same reason many young European hockey players do, to chase the “dream.” This dream is the opportunity to one-day play in the National Hockey League (NHL). Peter’s hockey skills were evident to anyone who watched him

¹ Pseudonym used to protect the identity of the individual.

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play. He was a big-bodied player who had the ability to skate effortlessly along the ice surface. After his first season, Peter began to adapt to life in Canada and funnelled all his effort into his hockey career. Problems began to arise when he realized his style of play was not aggressive enough for the North American game. Peter did not participate in one fight during his three seasons in the OHL, a total of 184 games. European hockey had left a mark on Peter. He valued skill over aggression. Peter's lack of aggression caused his coach to become frustrated with his game, and many times Peter would come home after practice and desperately confide in his billet mother, telling her how his hockey dream was crumbling. In 2008, Peter was eligible to be drafted into the NHL. He was ranked 179th out of 210 players in the NHL's Central Scouting report prior to the draft. After the seventh and final round, Peter's name was not called by any franchise in the NHL. He was devastated.

Peter contemplated returning to the Czech Republic, however his coach promised him that if he remained in the OHL he would be drafted in 2009. That summer he was offered a try-out contract with an NHL franchise and took part in a week long training camp. This time he was told by NHL coaches to work on his aggression and was subsequently released from the camp. He entered the 2009 OHL hockey season with a vengeance knowing this was the last year he had to prove his worth. At the conclusion of the final round of 2009 NHL draft, his name was not called. Peter's hockey career, his opportunity to chase the dream, came to an abrupt end.

After contemplating whether to continue his pursuit of a hockey career in a European league or focus on his education, Peter decided to dedicate himself to his studies. The CHL offers an educational scholarship package to each player who does not

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sign a professional hockey contract. Under the program, players are entitled to a scholarship of tuition, textbooks, and compulsory fees for each year they played in the CHL. Peter realized that unlike contracts signed by Canadian and American born players, his made no mention of the education program. He contacted the OHL to ask for his funding and was told that the scholarship program was not available to European players.

Many people came forward to help Peter, including a Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) institution that waived the international tuition fees he would normally be obligated to pay. Others offered Peter free room and board. It still was not enough, without funding, Peter was not able to afford four years of undergraduate education. Peter's negative hockey experience in the CHL is what led me to question if there were other players who also encountered unjust treatment within the major junior hockey system.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to conduct a Foucauldian theory-based analysis into the experiences of current and former CHL players. Ultimately, this study is an examination of power relationships within the Canadian junior ice hockey system. The following research questions guide this investigation:

1. What kind of power relations impact athletes in the CHL?
2. How are disciplinary processes used within the CHL?

Underlying Assumptions

van Manen (1990) argues that it is important for researchers to reveal their personal biases and motivations when undertaking research. His central argument holds that a researcher must identify her background, assumptions, and values in order to

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understand how these may impact the overall research. More importantly, by identifying underlying values, the researcher provides the reader with greater clarity in understanding the research process.

It is thus important for me to clearly state my interest in advocating for major junior hockey players who often lack resources to challenge inequitable power relations. I am deeply committed to increasing the fairness with which young hockey players are treated in the early stages of their careers. These values moved to the forefront of my life and to the heart of this research after I had the opportunity to be employed by a CHL franchise. Although players do receive support through multiple avenues, numerous issues remain and players, including those who do not sign with NHL teams, are often treated unjustly.

Outline of Chapters

Chapter Two is a literature review that addresses four thematic areas: physical cultural studies, Foucault's retheorization of the concept of power, child sport injustices, and future directions for child sport injustice research. This chapter will also address gaps in hockey related research. Chapter Three provides a detailed discussion of the methodology that was utilized in this study. The basis of inquiry includes 11 unstructured interviews, supplemented with investigative documents. In Chapter Four, I provide an analysis of four central themes embedded within relations of power including: player contracts, the CHL stipend, training, and violence. Lastly, Chapter Five includes a discussion complemented by my concluding remarks.

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Chapter Two: Review of Literature

This review of literature is focused on four thematic areas: physical cultural studies (PCS), Foucault's conception of power, children sport injustices, and future directions for child sport injustice research. The literature review concludes by addressing gaps in hockey related research.

Physical Cultural Studies (PCS)

The Rise of Physical Cultural Studies (PCS)

The term sport no longer effectively captures the range of work produced within sport sociology. Poststructuralists would agree that the term sport is an empty signifier and has become imprecise in framing areas of study (Andrews, 2008). To this end, physical cultural studies (PCS) developed to enable a more comprehensive analysis of physical culture in all of its forms, not just sport (Andrews & Silk, 2011). Andrews (2008) defines PCS as being "dedicated to the contextually based understanding of the corporeal practices, discourses, and subjectivities through which active bodies become organized, represented, and experienced in relation to the operations of social power" (p. 54).

One of the objectives of PCS is to include intellectual projects that are not adequately captured in its parent disciplines: sociology of sport and cultural studies. Empirically speaking, the differentiation between the sociology of sport and PCS is perhaps the most fundamental. While sport sociology is concerned with paying close attention to its object of analysis: sport, PCS draws from a number of empirical sites such as fitness, dance, recreation, daily living, and work-related activities. PCS is also

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informed by cultural studies, which as a field encourages critical awareness of culture's role in the formation and experience of an environment immersed in power (Grossberg, 1997). Building on this concern, PCS examines how active bodies are affected, organized, and represented in conjunction with the workings of social power.

Furthermore, PCS combines the use of a myriad of theoretical and methodological approaches to aid in understanding the social relations that are produced by, and in turn produce, the active body. Through this understanding and knowledge, PCS scholars attempt to confront unjust social relations (Andrews, 2006, 2008). This means that PCS is useful when engaged in research projects that challenge the status quo. However, the newly emerged field does not arrive without its own challenges. As with any young project, the boundaries of PCS are continually being adapted and formed. These boundaries will prevent the field from becoming too broad or over specialized (Friedman & van Ingen, 2011). Thus, while PCS continues to flourish in its early stage of growth, its meaning and definition are still being negotiated by various researchers.

The Purpose of PCS

PCS scholars, Giardina and Newman (2011), propose that the "field" emerged as an "intellectual meeting point" (p. 39). Giardina and Newman (2011) state the justification of PCS as a new field lies in the unique epistemological orientations and practical opportunities that transcend the boundaries of sport sociology and other disciplines. In particular, within PCS, the body's emancipatory potential is emphasized. This emancipatory potential is displayed by the body through participation in human activity (Giardina & Newman, 2011).

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In a more practical sense, the purpose of research produced within PCS is worth extending upon. Researchers using PCS acknowledge the ways in which their subjectivity may influence the research project. Furthermore, PCS researchers take part in meaningful research with a direct purpose. Although the purpose of each research project may take on various forms, PCS researchers believe that each project should remain meaningful and address relevant social issues. In order to further promote research that matters, Markula and Silk (2011) describe three different types of meaningful qualitative research within physical cultural studies: mapping, critique, and social change. Mapping involves research studies that aspire to provide an overview of certain behaviour, phenomenon, or practices of physical culture. Mapping is useful when little is known about a topic. The process of mapping involves the researcher developing an overview of the phenomenon and describing the linkages between different aspects of this phenomenon. Mapping is often a necessity in physical culture projects, before an in-depth critique or call for change can be made (Markula & Silk, 2011). Critiquing refers to studies where the researcher has identified a problem with a phenomenon or practice of physical culture. The researcher will then offer a critique of the issue, which outlines why the issue is occurring. It is important to mention that while critiquing does examine problematic areas, it does not necessarily lead to change (Markula & Silk, 2011). Social change is the third purpose for physical cultural research outlined by Markula and Silk (2011). Research projects that create and sustain social change can only be engaged in if the researcher has mapped the phenomenon and is familiar with previous research as well as previous critiques. Social change research is more attainable when mapping and critique-

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based research has been undertaken. It is important to note, that projects containing any of the three outlined purposes do not exist in isolation from one another.

Theoretical Orientation Within PCS

Researchers engaging in PCS research contend that, within society, there are fundamental divisions along hierarchical lines including, but not limited to, class, ethnicity, gender, and race. These divisions, which are realized through the operation of power, are imposed social divisions that are identified and contested through PCS. A motivation behind PCS is the need to understand injustices resulting from power relations that impact physical cultural contexts. The focus on power relations is central for researchers who work towards social change and wish to make a difference in the broader social world.

With such an explicit focus on social change within PCS, the field has an “unpredictable” relationship with theory. Wright (2001) states that cultural theorizing is “never about finding ‘the right theory’” (p. 134). Rather, PCS strives to locate theories that enable the project and help the researcher understand the phenomenon (Wright, 2001). As a field, PCS encourages scholars to liberate themselves from the rigidity of theoretical work, and rather use theory in a meaningful way by addressing urgent social issues (Giroux, 2001).

Despite PCS being a relatively new addition to the scholarly community, the values and agendas of PCS researchers are bold. PCS scholars dedicate their research to serve as an emancipating tool against the injustices of society (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005). Researchers should approach their projects with concern regarding the ways in which social institutions and cultural dynamics fuse to generate social injustice.

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Foucault's View on Power Relations

In the following section, I will outline the ways in which Foucault retheorized the concept of power. I begin with a focus on 'discourse', which is a key term in Foucault's critical theoretical work. Pringle (2007) explains that discourse can be best understood as "a relatively consistent set of ideas that people use to navigate social life and make sense of their experiences" (p. 387). More simply stated, discourse accounts for unwritten rules that govern social practices, control the production of statements, and form what has the potential to be understood and perceived (Johns & Johns, 2000). According to Pringle (2007), discourses such as "sport participation is good for health" remains unchallenged and are considered to be a discursive 'truth.'

Foucault highlighted that power circulates within discourses. He was interested in exploring how specific discourses have the ability to produce advantages or disadvantages for both individuals and groups (Denison & Scott-Thomas, 2011). Foucault's (1972) work gave rise to the word 'discursive practices' which is used to describe the established order of truth, or what is accepted as 'reality' in society. In addition, Foucault believed that discursive practices give rise to what can be called 'knowledge.' In his own words, "there is no knowledge without discursive practices; and any discursive practice may be defined by the knowledge that it forms" (Foucault, 1972, p. 183). Ultimately, Foucault was interested in learning how discourse and knowledge produce particular social practices through the working of power relations (Markula & Pringle, 2006).

Foucault's writings on power reveal the "essential link between power relations and their capacity to 'produce' the truths we live by" (McHoul & Grace, 1993, p. 58).

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Foucault (1978) asserts that power is not a possession, and that it cannot be “acquired, seized, or shared” (p. 94). Therefore, although dominant groups are traditionally viewed as holding power, they represent “only the terminal forms power takes” (Foucault, 1978, p. 92). It was not Foucault’s objective to undermine the importance of dominant groups as it was to understand how these groups exercised power (Markula & Pringle, 2006).

Foucault disregards questions such as “Who has power?” and “What is the intention of someone with power?” The answers to these questions were believed by Foucault (1980) to follow a circular path that led back to focus on the law and economy. Conceiving power in this way, either based in law or economic terms, was problematic to Foucault as he argues that power is not “answerable to, the economy” (Foucault, 1980, p. 89). Rather Foucault’s focus turned to an examination of how power is *exercised*, and how power produces knowledge. Power, Foucault believes, “is dispersed throughout social relations, that it produces possible forms of behaviour as well as restricting behaviour” (Mills, 2004, p. 17).

From a Foucauldian perspective, power refers to the relations between people, and is understood as a relationship where one person helps direct the actions of another person (Foucault, 1983). Markula and Pringle (2006) add that Foucault’s understanding of power relations does not imply that actions are determined within this relationship, rather they are guided. This can be observed between a coach and athlete, where a specific power relation exists that involves the coach guiding the performance of the athlete. Although the coach possesses the autonomy to direct the actions of the athlete, the athlete remains free to choose his or her responses. Thus, the actions of the athlete can reciprocally affect the actions of the coach. Despite the unbalanced nature of the

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coach/athlete relationship, they can still be considered as existing within a particular power relation (Markula & Pringle, 2006).

Disciplinary Power

By viewing power as relational, it is possible for multiple forms of power to exist. One of these forms is known as 'disciplinary power,' which is concerned with the control and normalization of individuals. Disciplinary power materialized in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and was linked with the emergence of the capitalist state (Markula & Pringle, 2006). Through the process of being "subjected, used, transformed, and improved" (Foucault, 1975, p. 136), discipline allows for the production of docile bodies. Foucault (1991) further explains the production of docile bodies through disciplinary processes in the following way:

One may have a hold over others' bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines. Thus discipline produces subjected and practised bodies. (pp. 137-138)

Disciplinary practices have the ability to mould athletes into what Foucault believed to be 'bodies of knowledge.' This is achieved through "meticulous observation of detail...[involving] a whole set of techniques, a whole corpus of methods and knowledge, descriptions, plans, data" (Foucault, 1975, p. 9). Understanding disciplinary power as both an exercise of control and subject matter leads to what Foucault termed as 'power-knowledge.' Linking knowledge with power suggests that both concepts imply one another. Foucault (1979) believed that power relations cannot exist without the corresponding field of knowledge, and vice versa. Due to the large role that the power-

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knowledge concept holds in this study, it is important to further discuss its formation.

Shogan (1999) explains that “as the subject matter of a discipline develops so do practices of controlling bodies” (p. 11). However, clarification must be made here as the practice of control is not limiting, rather it is productive due to the formation of ‘knowing’ bodies that obtain skill and ability. When related back to the sporting arena, this concept is reflected through the discourses that circulate within high-performance sport. Foucault (1980) states that disciplinary power can only exist with “the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse” (p. 93). Coaches employ these discourses through their coaching practices to produce docile bodies — highly skilled and trained hockey players.

For Foucault, the phrase ‘docile bodies’ does not mean passive bodies. Docile bodies are productive bodies that possess the ability to perform highly rarefied skills. Nonetheless, a certain sense of ambiguity revolves around the use of the word ‘docility’ to characterize highly skilled, disciplined bodies. With respect to movement, athletes remain productive and active, yet they often become passive in the decision making needed for the acquisition of skills (Shogan, 1999). Thus, athletes will conform and submit themselves to a disciplinary power that enables them to participate in sport at an elite level, which ultimately leads to greater recognition rewards (Fiske, 1993).

Panopticism

Disciplinary power, as described above, relies on varying disciplinary techniques to produce docile bodies. A disciplinary technique that is central to this study is surveillance through a panoptic gaze. Panopticism is a notion Foucault derived from an architectural design for a prison, the panopticon, invented by philosopher Jeremy

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Bentham. The panopticon consisted of a central tower with windows facing a building of cells. Each prisoner was thus seen by the supervisor in the tower, however in return was prevented from seeing the supervisor along with the other inmates. Being seen yet not being able to see caused prisoners to have a constant feeling of surveillance. The awareness of potentially being watched leads to an internalization of the gaze and the regulation of one's own behaviour (Shogan, 1999).

Surveillance in high-performance sport can be seen occurring quite frequently, especially during training sessions. Training is tactfully organized by coaches to allow them to see all athletes. Since athletes are unaware of when they are or are not being watched they are constantly engaged in intense activity. Anything less than high intensity often leads to punishment. Through this process, athletes are taught that training with intensity is in their best interests. In addition, by self-policing their own behaviours, athletes have displayed the technologies and values of docility (Shogan, 1999).

Resistance

The power relationship between a coach and athlete is not an equal one. However, this does not mean that the athlete is completely powerless. Foucault believes that embedded within power relations are points of resistance (Markula & Pringle, 2006). The athlete thus exercises his/her own form of power by resisting his/her coaches. This form of resistance can be best observed in instances where the athlete will refuse a coach's instructions, make gestures behind the coach's back, or by discussing the methods of the coach with teammates or friends (Shogan, 1999). Foucault (1982) believes that these forms of resistance occur when an individual is searching for the oppositionary effect of power. Despite not inherently obvious, athletes are always in possession of some form of

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power in their relationship with coaches, which often manifests itself through the act of resistance (Markula & Pringle, 2006).

Foucault's retheorizing of power implies that individuals are not just recipients of power, but rather can be seen as a 'place' where power can be both enacted and resisted. Consequently, although repressed individuals can be widely viewed as being subjected to power, they also play a vital role in how power is negotiated within a relationship. Foucault argues that the productive characteristic of power gives rise to alternative forms of behaviour, rather than merely constraining (Mills, 2003). In order to conduct a thorough Foucauldian theory-based analysis, it is imperative to examine the total relations of power, including when individuals are with their equals and how they behave in the public sphere (Kendall & Wickham, 1999). As such, Robinson (1998) argues that in the social context of junior ice hockey, players recognize being treated as objects, and in turn use their own form of power to objectify others. The highly masculine and sex-segregated culture of hockey produces a dangerously hostile defiance towards women. This alternative form of power that is enacted by players can be linked to the loss of control players experience while being bought, sold, and traded by adults. Furthermore, their sexual and social identities are constructed by the ideals of hockey's culture. This culture is one that deems violence and aggression as positive signs of masculinity. In turn, players identify that these are the characteristics needed to exert their own form of power.

Robinson (1998) maintains that a player's lack of power in his own identity construction is the catalyst behind the violent and coercive manner in which players treat young women. Additionally, a player may also exert power over his teammates. Despite

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the loyalty players are assumed to have amongst teammates, a player's true loyalty is to himself and his career aspirations first and foremost. From this perspective, one may conclude that the values within hockey are in need of a rigorous examination (Robinson, 1998).

Child Sport Injustices

This section focuses on the recent emergence of research relating to maltreatment of athletes, specifically maltreatment of children in sport. Current literature pertaining to athlete maltreatment will be outlined, along with recommendations for future research conducted in this area.

The maltreatment of athletes is a growing concern within competitive sport. Critical sport theorists such as Donnelly (1997a, 1997b, 2008), Donnelly and Sparks (1997), Coakley (1993a), and Shogan (1999) question the treatment of athletes, and the long-term impact sport has on competitive athletes. These accounts have led to the promotion of both athlete and child protection initiatives by sport institutions around the globe (Stirling, 2009).

According to the United Nations Convention, a child is anyone under the age of 18 years (United Nations, 1989). Furthermore, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) holds that the elite child athlete is "one who has superior athletic talent, undergoes specialised training, receives expert coaching and is exposed to early competition" (Mountjoy et al., 2007, p. 163). Elite child athletes form a distinct population who experience high levels of training and competition, and are thus exposed to certain risks (Oliver, Lloyd, & Meyers, 2011). It is therefore important for sport organizations to protect the welfare and well-being of elite child athletes by implementing policies that

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acknowledge the vulnerability of children (Stirling, 2009).

There is limited research on the maltreatment of children in sport. There is also a lack of consistency in the terms used to address the maltreatment of young athletes. Terms such as harassment, abuse, and bullying are used interchangeably and comprise subcategories of maltreatment in sport. However, there are many abusive behaviours that are not adequately captured within youth sport literature. To ensure the transferability of research, it is paramount that there is consistency of terminology pertaining to the maltreatment of young athletes. Definitions are provided below.

Maltreatment in Sport

Crooks and Wolfe (2007) refer to maltreatment as “volitional acts that result in or have the potential to result in physical injuries and/or psychological harm” (p. 3). In the athletic environment, young athletes may experience maltreatment in a multitude of forms by coaches, parents, administrators, and officials. These forms can be categorized as relational or non-relational maltreatment, a distinction that depends on the nature of the relationship in which the behaviour occurs. However, it is important to mention that all maltreatment, whether relational or non-relational, occurs within relationships of differential power (Stirling, 2009).

Relational Maltreatment

Relational maltreatment consists of four major forms that include: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect (Crooks & Wolfe, 2007). These forms of maltreatment are considered relational due to the fact they occur in the context of a critical relationship (Stirling, 2009). A critical relationship is one that holds substantial influence over an individual, and consequently their sense of safety, fulfillment of needs,

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and trust (Crooks & Wolfe, 2007). Sport relationships of these kinds include athletes' relationships with constituents of a mentoring role such as parents, coaches, and teammates (Stirling, 2009). This proposed research study on CHL athletes will concentrate on the experiences of emotional abuse and not physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect.

Emotional abuse.

To date, research pertaining to abuse within children and youth sport has predominantly focused on sexual abuse, leaving emotional abuse to garner significantly less attention. The term "emotional abuse" is also referred to as "psychological abuse." It is important to note that while these two terms are similar, they are not parallel (O'Hagan, 1995). The American Humane Association (AHA) (1980) defines emotional maltreatment/abuse as "active, intentional, berating, disparaging or other abusive behaviour toward the child, which impacts upon the emotional well-being of the child" (as cited in Stirling, 2009, p. 1092). Thus, in order for behaviour to be categorized as emotionally abusive, a pattern of potential harmful non-contact behaviours occurring in a critical relationship must be present.

Within sport, emotional abusive behaviour has been distinguished into two types: verbal emotional abuse and non-verbal emotional abuse. However, research pertaining to athletes' experiences with either types of emotional abuse has been limited (Stirling & Kerr, 2008). In the mid-1990s, Gravely and Cochran (1995) conducted a preliminary exploration of emotional abuse in a broader study focused on sexual abuse in sport. The researchers conducted two separate surveys in 1994 and 1995 amongst US student-athletes. The results of the study indicated that 22% of respondents experienced some

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form of emotional abuse in regards to coaching techniques (Gravely & Cochran, 1995). A study by Gervis and Dunn (2004) specifically addressed emotional abuse of elite child athletes by their coaches. The results showed that all 12 participants had experienced some form of emotional abuse, and further indicated that the abuse served as a threat to the psychological well-being of the young athletes (Gervis & Dunn, 2004). Given the reported prevalence of emotional abuse experienced by athletes, much more research is needed in this area.

Non-Relational Maltreatment

Maltreatment that does not occur in the context of a critical relationship is referred to as non-relational. These forms of maltreatment include, but are not limited to, bullying, harassment, exploitation, and child labour, which are committed by persons who are not in a close relationship with the athlete. Despite the fact that non-relational maltreatment occurs within a distant relationship, this does not exclude relationships with coaches, teammates, or the sport organization itself (Stirling, 2009). I focus here on child labour as a form of non-relational maltreatment.

Child sport labour.

In the 1950s, North America witnessed the birth of community and club sport programs designed specifically for children. Some 20 years later, sport sociologists and psychologists began to express concern regarding these programs, such that children were suffering from stress, anxiety, increased aggression levels, pressure from parents, and high drop out rates. After the late 1980s, and despite the increasingly negative experiences of children involved in high-performance sport, Coakley (1993a, 1993b) and Donnelly (1993a, 1997a, 1997b, 2008) are among very few researchers who have

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conducted studies on the non-relational form of abuse known as child sport labour.

Donnelly's (1997a) research is founded upon the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that indicates that due to their vulnerability, children require special care and protection. Furthermore, Donnelly (1997a) seeks to protect the youth athlete under child labour laws by connecting the global issue of child labour to the experiences of children in high-performance sport.

Donnelly (1997a) forewarns that the intention of drawing parallels between child labour and sport is not to compare the "young carpet-weavers in Pakistan, or the young prostitutes in Thailand, and the talented young athletes who may be found in the high-performance sport systems of many developed and some rapidly developing nations" (p. 393). Rather, the parallels aim to shed light on the work-like atmosphere of sport and help identify sport as a type of work. Children in sport have been exposed to work-like activity as the growing opportunities for lucrative careers in professional sport have emerged. Some parents are tempted by this possibility, and encourage the heavy involvement of their children in high-performance sport at early ages. Governments of various countries have also begun to value international success in sport events and have dedicated funding to elite participation, as well as the development of programs that seek early identification of athletic talent (Donnelly, 1997a).

Perhaps the most significant parallel with child labour is when young athletes are financially compensated for their sport involvement. Despite the fact that it is possible for children to be employees of professional sport, they fall into a unique legal loophole. Elite athletic children are allegedly protected by laws that protect all children. These laws include areas such as compulsory education and occupational health and safety.

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However, the discrepancy lies in the fact that the legal system has been slow to respond to rapid changes occurring in sport (Donnelly, 1997a), as well as changes in acting, music, and the arts.

Future Directions for Child Sport Injustice Research

It is only within the last two decades that negative experiences of athletes have been labelled with terms such as maltreatment, abuse, or sport labour (Donnelly, 1997; Donnelly & Petherick, 2004). The research conducted in this area proves that injustices occurring in child sport are not isolated incidents (Stirling, 2009). In order to challenge and shed light on these issues, further investigation is needed, which will also identify the extent of the problem and identify possible solutions. One such solution is the development of prevention and intervention initiatives (Stirling, 2009). Guterman (2004) suggests that research involving prevention initiatives should address five consecutive stages: 1) identify the nature of the problem; 2) clarify risk and protective factors; 3) design and pilot test initiatives; 4) conduct clinical trials to evaluate intervention; and 5) facilitate large-scale implementation. This model can be used as a guide for future research regarding maltreatment in sport. In addition to Guterman's (2004) model, future research on maltreatment should involve collaborative methods in order to produce the best prevention, intervention, and treatment techniques (Stirling, 2009).

The major junior hockey world changed forever after former players, Theo Fleury and Sheldon Kennedy, revealed the sexual abuse they were subjected to by their coach, Graham James. Following both of these testaments, more players came forward with strikingly similar allegations against James. Investigative researcher, Laura Robinson (1998), thoroughly examines the world of junior hockey to uncover the abuse that has

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tainted Canada's favourite game. Robinson (1998) reveals the multiple forms of sexual abuse occurring in the NHL's breeding ground, and the damaging effects it leaves on individuals both within and outside junior hockey's institutions. Aside from Robinson (1998), there is limited research involving the abuse of young athletes, specifically with regards to emotional maltreatment. The following section will outline the most relevant hockey related literature, and reveal the gaps in research associated with emotional abuse in the sport.

Relevant Hockey Literature

Hockey has long been romanticized as Canada's wonderful, traditional game. It has only been in recent years that scholarly literature has highlighted problematic areas within the sport. Research relating to on-ice violence and hegemonic masculinity comprises a large portion of this literature. Subsequently, there remain significant gaps for scholars to address within the hockey research and literature.

Violence in Youth Hockey

The issue of violence in hockey continues to be prevalent at numerous levels including youth and professional leagues. Within major junior hockey, the CHL has made efforts to adopt more severe sanctions for displays of violence. However, the league continues to expect its athletes to play a style of hockey that makes them ideal prospects for the NHL (Maki & Shoalts, 2012). As such, violent and aggressive behaviour is seen as a positive asset in a player's game. At the highest level of hockey in North America, aggression has always been valued (Klein, 1993), and this value has seeped down into younger hockey subcultures.

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The NHL, CHL, as well as the minor league affiliates of the NHL all have dedicated roster positions for the team's "enforcer." The enforcer possesses an aggressive and violent persona that is used by coaches to heighten the intensity of the team, or give teammates a boost of motivation. Enforcers are typically not the best skaters, nor do they usually have an abundance of skills, instead these players seek to intimidate their opponents through the use of violent acts of aggression. The NHL attempts to convince fans that enforcers make the game safer through the league's self-policing approach (Atkinson, 2010). For instance, the NHL argues that enforcers have the "ability to throttle an opponent" into playing a more responsible style of hockey (Proteau, 2011, p. 28). Ironically enough, these 'policemen' type of players end up breaking the laws of the game just as much as other players. According to Proteau (2011), enforcers follow a "twisted code" (p. 23) that both stains and deprives the game of its precious talents. Furthermore, Proteau (2011) believes these "well-liked players...are in the spotlight for the wrong reasons" (p. 25). Ultimately, the issue of fighting remains as an inherent risk players must willingly accept on the ice.

The safety of players has become a serious concern for the well-being of athletes. Although the NHL prides itself in making safety their ultimate priority, the focus of the league is debatable. Gary Bettman, commissioner of the NHL, positions the issue of violence in favour of the traditionalists of the game by stating "fighting is part of our game and it always has been" (Proteau, 2011, p. 32). Regardless of what the gatekeepers claim to be true, hockey continues to promote, sell, and teach a violent type of game.

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Hegemonic Masculinity

Expressions of gender are generated in specific ways within the ice hockey realm. Elite-level men's hockey favours hegemonic masculinity, which is defined by Connell (1990) as "the culturally idealized form of masculine character" (p. 83). In his extensive ethnography of an AHL team, Robidoux (2001) explains that the professional hockey community forms a "family" in which team goals and commitments are shared. Furthermore, a collective, narrow, and restricted worldview is adopted, which results in a shared identity "informed by a physically dominant, white, heterosexual male model" (Robidoux, 2001, p. 127). Physical dominance becomes the most valued form of masculinity and one that players learn to adopt. Robidoux (2001) warns that such a narrow construction of masculinity that is produced within an institution can have detrimental effects on the personal development of players, as it is a falsely formed identity. Consequently, young hockey players are members of a "homogenized workforce achieved at the expense of the individual" (Robidoux, 2001, p. 128).

Hegemonic masculinity includes traits such as "respect, honour, courage, loyalty, aggressiveness, dominance, independence, occupational achievement, risk-taking, assertiveness and competitiveness" (Weinstein, Smith, & Wiesenthal, 1995, p. 837). The hockey arena allows players to express these traits in a very literal way, such as demonstrating their aggressiveness via physical confrontations. More importantly is how the hockey arena acts as a secluded area of the hockey subculture. Robidoux (2001) described the hegemonic masculine forces operating in a "closed society" (p. 126) that is purposefully gender segregated. By participating in this subculture, players learn to adopt an ideological outlook that is centred upon masculine attributes (Allain, 2008). This

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approach to hockey causes an ongoing problem of isolation and loneliness for players who fail to integrate into this closed-off subculture (Allain, 2008). Robinson (1998) expresses similar views in her work on violence and sexual abuse in hockey when she describes the competitive hockey culture as an all-encompassing institution that makes the process of socialization difficult.

The majority of literature that is focused on masculinity within the game of hockey draws attention to the fact that the lives of young elite hockey players is unique in that they are often separated from their families at a young age. When players move to new cities to play in the CHL they often tend to group together, which allows them to feel a sense of communion (Robinson, 1998). Players live with billet families, who are often pre-selected for the player by hockey operations staff. The role of a billet family is to provide room and board for the player. Despite how well-intentioned the billet family is, one cannot expect them to act as surrogate parents. What would normally be the responsibility of parents, such as making sure the player goes to school, does his homework, eats properly, and associates with the right individuals becomes the sole responsibility of the young player himself (Roy, 2007). These players enter into a subculture that revolves around being bought, sold, and traded by adults, which causes them to lose control over large portions of their lives. Furthermore, hockey at the highest level has always valued aggression and physical dominance as the ideal traits of masculinity (Robinson, 1998). The hockey community becomes a place where the performance of masculinity is expected, including physical confrontations by players on the ice. These notions of masculinity are then reinforced by the media through the celebrations of violence (Allain, 2008).

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A review of sociological hockey literature reveals a significant gap in research on the lived experiences of CHL hockey players. To date, there have been very few detailed examinations of the CHL (Vaz, 1982; Kirke, 1997; Robinson, 1998). Furthermore, these examinations did not assess the power relations between players and coaches. As the primary developmental league for the NHL, it is imperative that further research be conducted in regards to the CHL and its impact on the lives of young athletes.

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Chapter Three: Methodology

Chapter Three outlines the theoretical perspective used in the study, the methods used for data collection and data analysis, as well as the ethical considerations undertaken in this research. The purpose of this research is to conduct a Foucauldian theory-based analysis into the experiences of CHL players who do not get recruited to the NHL. Ultimately, this study is an examination of power relationships within the Canadian junior ice hockey system. The following research questions guide this investigation:

1. What kind of power relations impact athletes in the CHL?
2. How are disciplinary processes used in the CHL?

Methods

By considering how this study is methodologically framed, one can better understand the purpose and results of this research project. The following section details Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA), which was chosen as the method for this research project. The section will also outline data collection procedures including participant selection/sampling, recruiting participants, the role of the researcher, data collection and analysis, followed by trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

Foucault's Theory of Discourse

Before expanding on the methodology, it is important to define key terms, specifically 'discourse.' The term 'discourse' has an array of meanings across multiple disciplines. The complex history of the term makes it difficult to locate one meaning, as 'discourse' is used in a variety of ways by different, or even the same, theorist(s). Accordingly, this study will primarily focus on Foucault's conception of discourse.

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One key distinction of Foucault's understanding of discourse from other explanations is that unlike other theorists who limit the concept of discourse to language and linguistic systems of grammar, Foucault understands discourse in terms of bodies of knowledge (McHoul & Grace, 1993).

Foucault (1972) uses the concept of discourse in the following ways:

Instead of gradually reducing the fluctuating meaning of the word 'discourse', I believe I have in fact added to its meaning: treating it sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements.

(p. 80)

Three definitions of discourse can be extracted from the above quotation. The first is the broadest: "the general domain of all statements." This includes all texts and utterances that have both meaning and effect in the world. Foucault use this wide definition in his earlier work, where discourse is framed at a theoretical level (Mills, 2004). Foucault uses the second definition, "an individualizable group of statements," more commonly, and specifically when examining certain structures within discourse. This second definition is concerned with identifying discourses, in the form of utterances, that are coherent, regulated, and that contain commonality. Consequently, certain discourses will emerge such as a discourse of femininity, a discourse of racism, and so on. The third and final definition of discourse Foucault provides, "a regulated practice which accounts for a number of statements," carries the most resonance with theorists. Mills (2004) believes that, with this definition, Foucault is less concerned with the texts and utterances produced than he is with the structures and rules that produce those texts and utterances.

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As Mills (2004) explains, “it is this rule-governed nature of discourse that is of primary importance within this definition” (p. 6). Foucault’s definitions of discourse not only reflect that the term and its meanings are interchangeable, but that discourses reflect how knowledge and social practices are formed.

Participant Selection/Sampling

The selection of participants was based on a purposeful sampling strategy using criterion and snowball sampling methods. The logic behind purposeful sampling lies in the selection of information-rich cases. Information-rich cases allow the researcher to select participants who can add a great deal to the purpose of the study (Patton, 2002).

Creswell (2007) explains that criterion sampling is a technique where the researcher has a predetermined set of criteria for selecting participants. In other words, participants are chosen based on particular attributes, features, characteristics, or experiences (Pitney & Parker, 2009). Furthermore, Patton (2002) asserts that the main point of criterion sampling is to understand information-rich cases which can help reveal major system weaknesses that ultimately become the researcher’s opportunity for improvement.

This study utilized the following three criterion for participant selection:

1. The individual must have played in one of the following 3 sister CHL leagues: Ontario Hockey League (OHL), Western Hockey League (WHL), or Québec Major Junior Hockey League (QMJHL).
2. The individual must have played in one of the above-mentioned leagues for one or more full seasons.

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3. The individual must have participated in the CHL as a youth under the age of 18 years.

A snowball sampling strategy was also used in conjunction with criterion sampling. Snowball sampling is an alternative method in locating information-rich informants (Patton, 2002). The method is largely used to study rare groups of people who are scattered, yet remain in correspondence with one another. Snowballing sampling involves identifying subjects in their current sample by the use of referrals. This design is particularly useful when studying secluded groups (Corbetta, 2003).

Sampling Procedures

According to Patton (2002) there are no specific rules pertaining to sample size in a qualitative study. Patton (2002) asserts that a sample size should reflect the purpose of the study and coincide with what time and resources are available to the researcher. For the purposes of this study, 11 research participants were selected and interviewed. Pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of all informants, unless requested otherwise. Table 1 provides a list and profile of the 11 participants. Additionally, it was my intention to include participants across all three sister CHL leagues to seek geographical variation in the interview data.

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Table 1 — *List of Participants*

Name	CHL League	Birth Year	Seasons Played in CHL (Years)	Total Years Played in CHL (Number of Years)	Drafted to NHL
Aaron	OHL	1988	2005-2008	3	No
Petr	WHL	1988	2006-2009	3	No
Neil	OHL	1989	2006-2009	3	No
Dan	OHL	1985	2001-2006	5	Yes
Adam	OHL	1988	2005-2007	2	No
Vince	OHL	1990	2007-2009	1	No
Steve	OHL	1989	2005-2009	4	No
Jamie	OHL	1990	2007-2011	4	No
Blair	OHL	1987	2004-2008	4	No
Tyler	OHL	1989	2006-2010	4	No
Calum	OHL	1995	2011-current	2 (current)	Yes

Recruiting Strategies

Recruiting participants for this study involved the use of personal connections I had established with players. Consequently, through word-of-mouth, I extended my sample to include additional participants. These sampling techniques assisted in connecting with individuals who have played in all three sister CHL leagues. This is an important aspect of the study as experiences are bound to differ from individual to individual, and more importantly, from league to league. In addition to personal connections, I contacted the head hockey coach from a Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) institution who expressed interest in my research and offered to put me in contact with players on the team's roster who met my above mentioned criteria.

Informants were contacted by telephone using a script (see Appendix A), and also through e-mail (see Appendix B). In both scripts, I explained the purpose and nature of the study. I also outlined the criteria for the study and what was involved. Participants

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were fully aware that participation was voluntary, and that there was no pressure or obligation associated with taking part in the research study as explained in the consent form (see Appendix C).

Data Collection Process

This study relied on three forms of data collection: interviews, document analysis, and a reflexive journal. In order to understand another person's perspective, Patton (2002) suggests the use of in-depth interviews as a data collection method for qualitative studies. Selecting the type of interview that will produce the most useful information to address the research questions is crucial (Creswell, 2007). This study used both face-to-face interviews and telephone/Skype interviews. While face-to-face interviews held preference, Skype and telephone interviews were conducted when geography did not allow me to meet the participants in person. These interview methods were selected due to the rich descriptive experiences they can garner for a qualitative inquiry (Creswell, 2007).

It is also important to note that interviews can vary in form. Two primary methods a researcher may choose from include structured or unstructured interviews. Structured interviews are rigidly designed and include precise questions developed by the researcher. Conversely, unstructured interviews are more exploratory as questions are formulated during the interview process (Gay & Airasian, 2003). I chose to utilize a semi-structured interview process for this study. Semi-structured interviews include a list of questions, but account for the fact additional questions may be developed as needed throughout the interview (Creswell, 2007). The semi-structured interview process allows

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the researcher to guide the interview, and grants her the autonomy to probe deeper into the issues as they occur (Glesne, 1999).

The semi-structured interview guide that was used in this study consisted of three interrelated themes: personal sport histories; CHL hockey experiences; and understandings of power relations within the CHL. The first theme was used to identify discourses in the informants' hockey background. As the researcher, I was interested in learning about the early beginnings of the participants' hockey career and the role of their family. The second theme specifically addressed the participants' lived experiences while playing in the CHL. Here I was interested in learning about the players' experiences, emotions, and thoughts on playing in the CHL. The last theme addressed power relations within the CHL and examined if and how the participants understood them. This theme helped to determine the extent to which the players were conscious of power relationships and what strategies the players employed to deal with, or resist, the impact of power relations as players in the CHL.

A researcher should strive for the flow of the interview to be conversational in nature. To achieve this, I followed the advice of Gay and Airasian (2003) and Creswell (2007) by becoming familiar with the research questions and memorizing them prior to the interview. The interview guide for this study was organized according to themes and major topics in the order that they were asked during the interview. More specifically, the questions asked participants to reflect on their lived experiences in regards to their hockey careers. Following a semi-structured interview format allowed me to address particular themes, while simultaneously provided the informant with freedom to express

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their experience. A list of sample questions can be found in Appendix D, along with a full transcript from a selected interview in Appendix E.

Digital Recording

All interviews were recorded digitally. Patton (2002) states that there is no substitution for the actual words of the individual being interviewed, as these words act as the “prize sought by the qualitative inquirer” (p. 380). Recording interviews allowed the participants to fully concentrate on the flow of the interview, and more importantly, fully captured their responses (Glesne, 1999). Prior to recording, participants were informed that all audio material would be strictly used for data collection and analysis and would be deleted once the study is completed.

Transcribing

Although the activity of transcription can prove to be a tedious and time consuming, personally transcribing audio material allows the researcher to become better familiarized with the data (Glesne, 1999). Interviews were transcribed verbatim and a ‘clean’ copy was provided to participants for member checking. The revised or ‘clean’ copy provided to the participants was more readable as utterances such as ‘uh’ and ‘ah’ were removed to make a more comprehensible document for participants to read. Further steps that were taken to familiarize myself with the data and to validate its accuracy included re-listening to the recordings while reading through transcripts. Reviewing the interviews also allowed me to begin identifying emerging themes as a preliminary stage of data analysis. Participants also had the opportunity to clarify or add corrections to the transcript.

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Storing of Data

In accordance with the Brock University Research Ethics Board guidelines, raw interview data were securely stored and eventually destroyed in an appropriate manner following completion of the research.

Document Analysis

In addition to interviews, other documents were analyzed for information pertaining to data collection. These documents included investigative work through the form of books and newspaper articles, as well as player contracts and CHL policy reports. The purpose of including investigative pieces was to collect additional writings on the experiences of present and past CHL hockey players. In addition, the player contracts and CHL policy reports gauged the accountability of the league.

Reflective Journal

Patton (2002) asserts that “reflection and introspection are important parts of field research” (p. 264). As such, the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of the researcher should be considered vital components of data collection (Patton, 2002). Keeping a reflective journal throughout the research process helped record methodological notes, observations, and preliminary analysis. Particular moments occurring in the interview, as well as participant characteristics, were noted to aid in data analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). Additionally, the reflective journal included personal reflections that were used as data. After the conclusion of each interview, additional time was scheduled to journal and reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the interview. This time also allowed me to reflect on my own thoughts, feelings, and experiences about the interviews in order to make any needed improvements.

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Data Analysis

Despite the fact that the qualitative researcher is constantly in the process of interpreting collected data, the systematic analysis process begins after the transcription of interviews. Data analysis is regarded as a crucial aspect in the research process as it essentially determines the quality of results (Markula & Silk, 2011). In terms of qualitative research, there are several techniques that can be used to analyze data. Like other areas of qualitative research, data analysis is dependent upon the paradigmatic views of the researcher. The following will address theory-based analysis as it pertains to this study.

Discourse and Theory-based Analysis

Researchers working within a poststructuralist or postmodern paradigm put great emphasis on the meanings individuals make within various contexts, such as social, political, and economic. Consequently, the researcher is required to conduct a thorough analysis that will strengthen interpretation and enhance the final analysis (Markula & Silk, 2011). The analysis process for a poststructuralist researcher entails working within a distinct theoretical framework when interpreting information from interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2007). Therefore, it is important for the researcher to reveal how he/she will analyze data through their own particular theoretical lens. This study analyzed data using a general pattern for analysis borrowed from Markula and Silk (2007, p. 109), which is outlined below:

- Identification of themes
- Analysis of the themes:
 - Intersections with themes;

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- Discrepancies with themes;
- New themes;
- Connection with power relations, theory and previous literature.

Foucault's (1978) 'cautionary prescriptions' for understanding the work of discourses was used as a guide for the interview analysis. Foucault (1978) warns that locating specific discourses is not a trivial task, as discourses are challenging to decipher due to the various discursive elements that can come into play. Therefore, the researcher should attempt to uncover "numerous and even contradictory discourses" that "govern the interviewees' perceptions" (Markula & Pringle, 2006, p. 106).

Thematic Coding and Analysis

Upon first review of the data, 20 emergent themes were identified. These themes can be found in Table 2. The themes are reflective of the dominant discourses of power that frame how players come to know, and understand, the game of hockey. Foucault (1978) warns that the task of identifying and dividing discourses is not in itself simple, and that recurring and contradicting discourses that shape the perception of the interviewee should be targeted. Following Foucault's strategies, the 20 themes were subjected to a secondary analysis where periodic and repetitive discourses of power were grouped as intersections, and consequently themes were merged and combined. As a result of the secondary analysis, 4 major themes were created that frame the results of this study.

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Table 2 — *List of Themes*

Preliminary Analysis Emergent Themes
Admiration of Hockey Players
Agents
Billets
CHL Contract
Education Package
Emotions for the Game
European Transition
Fighting
Goalie Position
Hockey as a Relationship
Hockey as Labour
Hockey Identity
Hockey Injuries
Moving On
NCAA Eligibility
NHL Dream
Parental Involvement
Promises
School Grades
Stipend

Reflexivity

The growth of qualitative research has emphasized the role of reflexivity.

Reflexivity allows the researcher to achieve a state of self-awareness by disclosing underlying assumptions and beliefs related to the research project (Laverty, 2003; Patton, 2002). It is important to examine how my personal perspective has influenced my role as a researcher within this study. The following section will outline the reflexive process used in the project.

Put simply, reflexivity is the art of reflecting on the actions of the researcher (Willis, 2007). In order to practice reflexivity, the researcher must seek to understand her biases and identify the consequences these biases may have on the data (Fontana & Frey,

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2005). Research notes were kept throughout the research process, which allowed me to be as attentive as possible and “to undertake an ongoing examination of *what I know* and *how I know it*,” (Patton, 2002, p. 64, italics in original). Review of these research notes aided in data analysis by separating my own perspective from the perspective of the participants. Furthermore, Patton (2002) suggests that owning our own perspective allows the researcher to take seriously the responsibility of authentically communicating the perspectives of those we interview.

Trustworthiness

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) assert that establishing trustworthiness is essential to the validity of findings in qualitative research. Historically speaking, lack of rigour and validity have been targeted as weaknesses within qualitative studies (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and it is for this reason that this study attempted to showcase approaches to establish rigour and trustworthiness. In its simplest form, trustworthiness asks, “How can the inquirer persuade his or her audience that the findings of the inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 291)? Lincoln and Guba (1985) present four criteria in answering this question: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility

In order for findings to be deemed credible, the research must present data in an authentic fashion that are provided to them by the participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Furthermore, the validation of a research project should be confirmed throughout the whole of the study and not be considered as a separate entity. To this end, this study incorporated the use of member checking in order to enable participants to confirm that

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their experiences are accurately portrayed through the data (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

In addition, the interview process asked participants to explain responses and ask clarifying questions when necessary. The conclusion of each interview also allotted time for participants to add any remaining thoughts to the experiences they divulged. Finally, transcripts from interviews were sent to each respected participant for review to rule out misinterpretation and attain respondent validation (Patton, 2002).

Transferability

The second criterion for establishing trustworthiness presented by Lincoln and Guba (1985) is transferability. Transferability is defined as “a direct function of the *similarity* between the two contexts, what we shall call *fittingness*,” (Lincoln & Guba, p. 124, italics in original). In other words, it is left to the reader to decide whether or not findings from the study are transferable to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, it is imperative for the researcher to express their findings using thick descriptions. Patton (2002) explains that rich descriptions take the reader into the experience and setting depicted, and allows him/her to determine the “fittingness” of the study’s results.

Dependability

The third criterion of trustworthiness is dependability, which measures if the findings are consistent and could be repeated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). With regards to addressing dependability, this study relied on an audit of my research methods by a thesis committee. The purpose of an audit is to validate the rigour of my data, as well as the data’s confirmability, which will minimize the potential of bias and maximize the accuracy of the study (Patton, 2002).

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Confirmability

The last criterion of establishing trustworthiness is confirmability, which mirrors what post-positivist researchers refer to as objectivity. Meanings that surface from data derived from post-positivist research are valued for their objectivity, so that two independent researchers could agree on the meanings gathered from the data (Gillis & Jackson, 2002). Within qualitative inquiry, confirmability is established through the incorporation of an audit trail and increases the study's trustworthiness. An audit trail allows for conclusions, recommendations, and interpretations to be retraced by an external auditor, who then concludes whether or not the inquiry has been conducted in a sufficient manner (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993).

Ethical Considerations

Patton (2002) states that it is important for qualitative research to address ethical considerations due to the fact qualitative methods are highly personal. Qualitative researchers travel into the experiences of others, and are taken inside of the lives of participants. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) present four central ethical issues in qualitative research, including: informed consent, confidentiality, consequences, and the role of the researcher. The consent form located in Appendix C addressed all of these issues to the research participant prior to participation.

Informed Consent

Informed consent provides participants with information prior to the beginning of each interview. This information includes items such as the purpose of collecting the information, for whom is the information, what questions will be asked in the interview, and what the risks/benefits are for the participant (Patton, 2002). The consent form, as

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well as the information sheet explaining the study, addressed these issues to participants. In addition, participants had full knowledge of the research questions prior to the onset of the interview. This gave the participants the chance to be in the best position possible to answer questions in a meaningful fashion (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Confidentiality

In order to protect confidentiality, researchers are advised to change the name of their participants by attributing pseudonyms to protect their identities (Patton, 2002). The notion of identity protection was adhered to throughout the study, unless requested otherwise by participants. Patton (2002) mentions that informants may challenge the protection of privacy by insisting on “owning their own stories” (p. 411). Consequently, participants may feel empowered through the delivery of their own stories and request the use of their real names. This study embraced the fact that informants felt a sense of attachment to their stories, and therefore, when requested, used their real names as a way to deliver empowerment, healing, and pride (Patton, 2002).

Consequences

The consequences of a study involve the ethical considerations of assessing potential risks involved with the project. The main point to consider is if potential risks outweigh the importance of gained knowledge (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The purpose of this study did not involve great risk to the participant.

Role of the Researcher

It is important for researchers to define their role to participants. As such, I explained to my research participants that I wanted to know about them, and their life, in

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order to understand their experiences better and to advocate for social change. It was my hope that by disclosing an advocacy role, a mutual reciprocity was established and accepted by participants (Patton, 2002).

Concluding Remarks

The purpose of Chapter Three was to outline this study's theoretical perspective, research methods, and ethical consideration. By illustrating the research process with clarity, it is my intent to better prepare the reader to understand the research data, as well as the final results. Chapter Four of the study will report on the findings from the research data.

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Chapter Four: The Workings of Power in Chasing the Dream

Statement from CHL President David Branch:

We are of the opinion that no junior hockey league in the world has made more changes to support the best interest of its players both on and off the ice as the CHL.

(CHL, 2012, para. 4)

Tyler: It's like child slavery down there. It's a joke...50 dollars a week? But as a kid, I made the team, I was just trying to fly under the radar. You're not going to say shit. Now that I'm older, I realize that was bullshit.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine power relations within the CHL and to understand the workings of power, as well as its effects on individuals. In this study, I understand and utilize the term 'power' using a Foucauldian perspective, in that power is "produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather every relation from one point to another" (Foucault, 1978, p. 93). Through this perspective, Foucault (1978) theorized power as a network that "ends by forming a dense web that passes through apparatuses and institutions, without being exactly localized in them" (p. 96). To this end, I explore the mutually existent instances of submission and resistance occurring in the practice of power within players' relationships. By analyzing these relations of power, I can position the bodies of CHL players to be productive, rather than serving as passive dupes.

Four themes involving the practices of the CHL will be addressed in this chapter including: player contracts, the stipend received by players, training, and aggression. These themes have been selected based on the prevalence with which submission and resistance simultaneously unfold within them.

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When we say “the dream”, what exactly do we mean?

The CHL has established itself as one of the world’s best developmental hockey leagues in the world. Countless high caliber players, now displaying their talent professionally around the world, are products of the CHL. With the ways in which the league trains and teaches its players, the game of hockey remains unmatched. However, reaching the ranks of professional positions players against difficult odds. Campbell (2013) quantified the number of players who have gone through the junior system and found that of all the boys enrolled in hockey, and born in Ontario in 1985, 0.04% have gone on to play in the NHL. Despite these vividly telling numbers, young hockey hopefuls remain transfixed with ambition and desperately hold on to what is better known as ‘the dream.’

To understand relations of power in the CHL requires that lived experiences be explored, and that players’ memories are critically examined. This chapter focuses on the Foucauldian concepts of docility and resistance, how these aspects work with one another, in opposition to one another, and how they blossom in singularity. Understanding how these concepts form, and exist, allows power to be understood as being “employed and exercised through a netlike organisation” which positions individuals as “the vehicles of power, not its point of application” (Foucault, 1980, p. 98).

This journey has allowed me to navigate through the lived experiences of 11 current and former CHL players. Over the span of two months, I explored the stories of these players in a completely raw and uninterrupted form. Each story revealed a strikingly new narrative, consumed with each participant’s own unique experience. In a paradoxical fashion however, as the experiences of participants began to interweave in

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my mind, what I once thought to be unique, evolved into multiple and distinct resemblances. The resemblances to which I am referring lie in the manifold power relations between CHL players and the hockey institution. This study sought to critically examine and challenge these relationships of power.

In his work, Foucault rejected the notion that power was a possession an individual, group, or institution could acquire. For Foucault, power resembles a verb, something that can be performed, and which does not need to be solely repressive in nature. This study moves beyond seeing power as only repressive, leaving individuals powerless, and instead considers the operation of power in the everyday relationships between players and the hockey institution (Mills, 2003).

Before diving into a critical assessment of the power relations in the CHL, it is important to reflect on the meaning of hockey to players, and the role of the game in their individual lives. I asked players to narrate the goals and desires they once had, or still have, in relation to the sport in order to establish a sense of the true value hockey held, or still holds, for them:

Steve: *When I was playing in the [CHL], my goal was going to the NHL, just like every friggin' player [who]'s playing. Fucking going to play in the NHL and make millions.*

Tyler: *I wanted to make [hockey] my life.*

Jamie: *The NHL was mainly my goal, to go and play pro hockey.*

Neil: *When I was playing minor hockey all I thought was that I would one day be playing in the NHL. Not making it wasn't even a consideration. I was just trying to pick what team I wanted to be on.*

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The four preceding excerpts establish the absolute singular focus players have and further reveals the desires of young hockey hopefuls. These narratives also emphasize that the singular, ideal result for hockey players playing in the CHL is to go on and play professional hockey in the NHL.

Signing Their Bodies Away

Given this mindset, of playing professional hockey at all costs, young boys with the talent required to play in the CHL will enter into a contract negotiation process with the organization that owns their hockey playing rights. A CHL contract is composed of various important articles including an education scholarship, a bi-weekly salary referred to as a stipend, and the conditions a player must follow in order to receive these aforementioned benefits. As the participants reflected on the day they signed their contracts, it is easy to recognize patterns of docility. Foucault (1991) explained docile bodies are a production of disciplinary techniques that subject and transform bodies to operate as one wishes. This aforementioned docility is outlined in the passages below:

Neil: *We just signed it right there. I didn't read it, didn't know anything about it, I just knew that as soon as I signed it I would be playing in the CHL. I didn't care what it said really.*

Brandon: *That's all it really is...they say, "sign here" and then they just don't care. As soon as you sign you can play and that's all they really care about because you're 16 years old. The thought of being a CHL hockey player is a lot more than what are you going to do after this.*

Given the players' focus on the NHL, not enough consideration is given to the contracts on the players' own admission. Players, some of whom are underage and without the

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accompaniment of a parent or guardian, are signing legally binding documents without proper overview or lawful advice. Although the consequences of signing a contract are not immediately evident, they will affect the player later, particularly if they do not make the NHL. To that end, players who are fortunate in having parents or guardians knowledgeably informed in contractual procedures may hire legal counsel to aid with the negotiation process. I asked Aaron, a participant in this study, why his parents sought the advice of a lawyer when negotiating with a league that publicly prides itself in honouring the well-being of its players both on and off the ice. Aaron slightly smirked at my inquiry, identifying that I had much to learn about the operations of the CHL. He continued to explain that his father was concerned with the possibility of loopholes in the contract, mainly in regards to the education package being offered to his son, and for that reason he was adamant in having a lawyer review the contract. Aaron recalls that after the lawyer had assessed the contract, he addressed the concerns he had to him and his father. Despite Aaron being preoccupied with distractions of playing in the CHL instead of the present moment, after all he had much greater concerns, such as what number he would have sewn on his new CHL jersey, he does remember the lawyer issuing a warning when he said, *"I know these are standard contracts, but they are very slanted towards the team."* The lawyer Aaron's family selected was familiar with contracts presented by the CHL, as he had seen them before in instances when he advised numerous other players, just like Aaron, about what the contract obligated the players to do and what it prohibited. As such, on that day for the first time, Aaron gained a momentary appreciation of the significance of the contract and its impact on his experiences in the CHL and beyond.

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However, after a few seconds he continued debating whether the number 12 or 6 would look better on the back on his jersey.

In order to demonstrate how uninformed many players are when entering into a legal agreement with the CHL, the experience of Adam, a participant in this study, is revealing. Adam grew up in a hockey family. His father had a lengthy playing career in the NHL, and chose to play his last few years of hockey in a European league located in Austria before he retired. Adam was still very young when his family lived in Austria, and it is there that he first learned how to skate. He recalled being in Europe, and the cultural contrasts it presented in relation to living in North America. Growing up watching his father play hockey at the professional level, and later coach in both the CHL and NHL, engrained the sport into the forefront of his life and dreams. Adam reminisced on being given permission by his father to explore the dressing rooms of the teams he coached before and after practices. He remembered looking up to the players his father coached and described them possessing a god-like persona. From a very early age, hockey consumed Adam's life, and there was no other way of life for him. During my interview with Adam, I asked him if he always wanted to play hockey. He processed my inquiry as comical, laughed, and then answered, *"That's all I wanted to do, that's it."* The tunnel vision Adam had acquired and spoke about is embedded within most hockey players. Simply put, the game must occupy the forefront of their lives if they ever wish to compete at a professional level. Later in the interview, when I asked Adam about the time he signed his CHL contract, he confirmed he paid little attention to, nor was he concerned with, the agreement details. He simply wanted to play and make the NHL.

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Adam: *It didn't even matter what was on that sheet. It could have been anything, it could have said that they could have done whatever they wanted to my body, or sell it. I didn't care, I just wanted to play.*

Adam's disinterest during the contractual negotiation was a behaviour he had learned through his hockey-centred upbringing. The moment he signed his CHL contract signified a step closer in following in his father's footsteps. Similarly, the determination he had to make his father proud prevented any doubts of whether or not the CHL did indeed have his best interests at heart.

The beneficiaries of a hockey player's determination extend far beyond the individuals he seeks to make proud, and even extend past his own personal satisfaction. This determination is what in fact allows the CHL to operate as a multi-million dollar organization that profits off the talent of its adolescent players. The singular focus of one day playing professional hockey motivates young hockey hopefuls to navigate their lives towards playing in the CHL, and often harvests a sense of trust within them that the CHL will provide for them. While determination is unarguably an attribute that any parent would wish their child to possess, it is a characteristic that the CHL uses to derive profits while hiding the reality that the majority of its players will never step foot on NHL ice.

Through a Foucauldian lens, Adam's comments can be regarded as docile behaviour formed through disciplinary power enacted by the CHL. While Foucault would argue that Adam does in fact exercise his own form of power, he is foremost engaged with the immediate outcome of playing in the CHL rather than reflecting on how his contract may put him at a disadvantage. Disciplinary power enacted by the CHL reflects what Foucault (1980) refers to as the 'normalization of subjects' so that they are

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“destined to a certain mode of living or dying” (p. 94). Many modern sport theorists agree that sporting bodies often become docile through disciplinary processes, which are then used to perpetuate existing power relations (Andrews, 2000; Chase, 2006; Markula & Pringle, 2006; Pringle & Markula, 2005; Shogan, 1999). While Adam reflected on his frame of mind when signing his CHL contract, it became evident that this is a place where power is enacted by the league and embodied by the players. The CHL system is one instance where his focus on becoming a professional hockey player was rewarded.

Adam was not alone in this type of susceptibility to oppressive power relations during contract negotiations. Petr, a former European CHL player, spoke to the engrained thought process hockey players use when signing their contracts. He went as far as suggesting that the contract was something players were expected to ignore.

Petr: The contract was nothing I would think about, it wasn't something you should pay attention to. I was just happy to be there, I was happy someone picked me up, I would literally sign anything.

From the interview data collected, player vulnerability was commonly identified through CHL contract negotiations. Along these lines, Foucault argued that where there is power, there is always resistance. More specifically, resistance is “formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised” (Foucault, 1980, p. 134). Foucault maintained that power relations, even at the point of most constraint, are productive in the way they allow new behaviours to emerge. CHL contract negotiations are a place where power was noted to not only be enacted, but also resisted. Here, players participated in an active role in the formation of their relations with members of the hockey institution.

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Take for instance Tyler's contract experience. Tyler was not selected in the CHL draft, however he was offered a try-out position with a CHL franchise. The try-out occurred during the club's camp that was scheduled at a time when Tyler's parents were going on vacation. Luckily, a close friend of Tyler's was expected to report to the same camp, and as such his friend's parents agreed to act as Tyler's guardians throughout the event. Before Tyler's parents left on vacation, they voiced several worries they had regarding the CHL camp. His mother was specifically concerned with her son's National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) eligibility. From the moment a player signs a CHL contract, or plays a game, he is deemed no longer eligible to receive an NCAA scholarship as he is now classified by the NCAA as a professional athlete. NCAA bylaws consider CHL players as professional for two reasons; the first being that players receive a stipend that is beyond actual and necessary expenses, and secondly that Hockey Canada classifies CHL players as being 'major junior,' terminology they believe to be linked to athletic professionalism. Since the NCAA is an amateur-centred sport organization, CHL players are prohibited from competing for institutions within its membership. The NCAA does however allow players to participate in a 48-hour camp with CHL organizations. If a player does not participate in an exhibition, regular season, or playoff game, and if he does not sign a contract or accept any gifts from the organization, he maintains his NCAA eligibility. Tyler recalled his mother being aware of these somewhat complicated restrictions, "*My mom would always do her research, and she's the one who found out about playing and losing your scholarship to the NCAA.*" Consequently, Tyler's mother instructed her son to refuse to play any games for the franchise unless he was presented with a contract that contained an education package of equivalent benefit to an NCAA

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scholarship². Tyler noted that this was the promise he made to his parents. After a successful 48-hour camp with the CHL club, Tyler was approached by the general manager of the organization who requested that Tyler play in a scheduled exhibition game the next day. Knowing that if he stayed past the already accumulated 48-hours, and played in a game for the club, he would lose his NCAA eligibility, Tyler declined the general manager's (GM) offer. He described the moment in the following passage:

Tyler: So then after training camp was done we had our exhibition game against [OHL Team] and [GM name] didn't want to sign me, he wanted to see how I did in the exhibition game first. So I said, "Well I can't do it, I promised my parents that if I came here the only way I would play is if I got a school package. I promised them that so I can't do it."

After the meeting Tyler went back to the hotel where he was staying to pack his things before his departure back home in the morning. He felt that he had performed the best way he could during the camp, and that there was nothing more he had to offer to convince the club of his talent. Although his refusal to play in the exhibition game resulted in a sense of regret, he was diligent in maintaining the promise he had made to his parents. He went to sleep that night thinking about what he would do the next day back at home. The news he woke up to however was unexpected.

Tyler: The next morning when we woke up, they wanted to sign me to a contract and stuff. So I said I'll sign and then played that next day.

Vicky: So then the GM gave you a contract...

Tyler: Ya. [laughs]

² The specific benefits and rewards issued by the CHL will be discussed in more detail later in this study.

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The promise Tyler made to his parents served more purposes than he originally knew. His refusal to play in the exhibition game indicated to the franchise that he was a confident player aware of his abilities, and that he expected adequate compensation through an education package. Tyler essentially conveyed that if the organization was not interested in offering him a position on the team, another one would be. Tyler's experience was constructed through a sense of autonomy in which he felt free to make a decision. Markula and Pringle (2006) explain that an athlete's personal decisions have the ability to "reciprocally influence the actions of the coach" (p. 35). This was evident in the above passage as Tyler's refusal to play in the exhibition game resulted in him receiving a CHL contract with an educational clause. In Tyler's case, although his relationship of power with the GM was unbalanced, Tyler still exercised power. This example also serves to reveal Foucault's (1982) understanding of power and that "power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free" (p. 221). For Foucault, freedom is a precondition for any relationship of power and is viewed as being mutually exclusive to any form of power.

Pulling Teeth: Receiving a CHL Education Package

Presently, when a player signs a CHL contract they are awarded a post-secondary scholarship, better known as an education package. The education package includes the full cost of tuition and book fees for each year of service the player provides to his respected CHL organization. In the past, negotiations between the CHL and players resulted in vastly different education packages. The more skill a player possessed and the stronger negotiation tactics used resulted in a higher amount of money awarded to him in his education package. This process has since been changed to reflect a more

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standardized education package distributed to players. Although it is unclear as to when this method of allotting players' education packages was standardized across the league, the 11 interviews conducted in this study revealed that the shift occurred in or around 2010. This study includes interviews with players who underwent contract negotiations prior to 2010, and reveals additional instances of players exercising their own power. Below is an excerpt that alludes to the autonomy with which Blair entered his contract negotiation process.

Vicky: *Do you remember if the team said anything to you about the education package?*

Blair: *That was totally on my mind. I mean that was all that we were really negotiating. [OHL Team] traditionally...they didn't have a whole lot of money at the time so the packages weren't too extensive. So for us it was trying to negotiate that.*

Vicky: *So you got a certain amount of money for each year?*

Blair: *Yep, for every year I played in the league I was given 5,250 dollars.*

Consequently, the CHL contract process that occurred before 2010 forced players, such as Blair, to pay particular attention to the relation of power existing between them and the CHL organization. This means that there was a possibility of players exercising resistance to offers made to them by the club, emphasizing that the athlete is still relatively free within the relationship (Markula & Pringle, 2006).

Regardless of when a player signed his contract, or which method was used to award the player his education package, much ambiguity remains in terms of the monetary value of the scholarship. In the passage above, Blair signed his CHL contract

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after a negotiation process, however another participant of this study who also signed his contract prior to 2010 was not subject to such arbitration.

Dan was a first round CHL pick in his designated draft year. Due to his exceptional talent and superior hockey skills, the CHL team that had selected him presented Dan with a meticulously crafted contract. In order to protect Dan's best interests, his parents had entered into a relationship with a hockey agent who vowed to professionally represent their son in any negotiations. The agent had forewarned Dan and his family of what the CHL team would potentially offer in the proposed contract. Although Dan signed his contract before 2010, the CHL franchise crafted a contract that specifically reflected his talent level. Thus, unlike Blair, Dan was given a full education package for each year he played on the team. I asked Dan to explain the process he experienced.

Vicky: *Was there anything about an education package in the contract?*

Dan: *Ya, I had a full education package.*

Vicky: *Did they mention that to you?*

Dan: *My agent told us all about the education aspect. I think before I even got drafted he was telling us what to expect because I knew I was going to get drafted, probably in the first or second round. So he told my parents, "This is what a contract will look like, this is what he wants to go after." I remember him telling my dad about the education package and how it works. My dad, he has no education, he got his high school diploma and that was it. So the education thing was so big for him, he said, "That better be in there, it better be this amount of dollars, it better say this, this, and this," and I remember my dad being a real stickler on that. But, I mean, if I didn't have a good agent and didn't have a dad*

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who was so involved, and my mom was the same way too, but I mean if I didn't have them I would have no knowledge of that, right? But if you don't have anyone to tell you that stuff who says the team couldn't slip it out of that contract? You may never know if it's there.

Not only does Dan's narrative expose the fluctuation in value of the education package he received compared to Blair, it also depicts a sense of hesitancy from CHL organizations to reveal vital information to players and their parents. Retrospectively, Dan identified the significance of having a well-informed group of individuals supporting his best interests.

Like Dan, Calum is another participant of this study who was drafted in the first two rounds of the CHL draft. A major difference between the two players is that their contracts were signed a decade apart, and Calum remains as a current CHL player who was drafted in the first round of the 2013 NHL draft. My interview with Calum was unique, in that I had the opportunity to speak with both him and his mother. Playing the role of a typical 17 year-old star hockey player, Calum's responses were often programmed, I had the sense that he had done this numerous times before. When it came time in the interview to explore the details of his CHL contract; Calum would often look to his mother to provide answers. I made a note of explaining that, in the past, players underwent negotiations to secure an education package, and that the dollar amount varied for each individual. Although this is not the case today, Calum's mother alluded to the fact that negotiations still exist for additional benefits that complement tuition fees.

Below is the exchange from this interview:

Vicky: *You used to have to negotiate your education package.*

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Calum's Mother: *There still is negotiating. Not everyone gets the full package.*

Some people get the residence, the books and tuition, some get books and tuition.

Some guys get the 4 years guaranteed right away with everything. Some guys it's year to year. It all depends what he's negotiated with the manager.

Vicky: *Is his guaranteed?*

Calum's Mother: *[smiles and nods yes]*

Vicky: *Not that you'll need it. [Participant is a top rated NHL prospect]*

Calum: *Hopefully.*

My interview with Calum revealed that although the CHL has standardized the tuition benefits in the education package, further benefits such as residence fees and book fees are still open to negotiation, but are not readily available to players unless their skills warrant greater incentive to sign with the franchise. Additionally, Calum's narrative reiterates how talent level and parental advocacy are key factors in determining what a player's education package will contain, factors also noted in Blair's experience. By relating the theoretical aspect of power relations to the above two scenarios, talent level and parental or agent advocacy can be seen as aspects contributing to a player's point of resistance against the workings of power. This point of resistance is garnered through the "questioning, refusal and creation" of the contract by players and their representatives (Shogan, 1999, p. 87). Thus, when viewed through a post-structuralist lens, CHL contract negotiations are a space where dominant power relations are produced, and where resistance to this power and its effects takes place (Andrews, 2000; Chase, 2006; Markula, 2003).

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To further highlight the pattern of discrepancies in education packages and resistance to what is being offered by the franchise, Appendix F provides an agreement presented to a player by his CHL organization. This agreement is separate from the player's contract and serves to expose the abundance of added benefits the CHL is prepared to offer when signing a top-level prospect. The education package offered in this agreement totals an amount of 95,000 dollars US, a figure unprecedented in comparison to what is offered to other players. Additional benefits include a personal laptop, 3,000 dollars in travelling costs for the player's parents, and 2,500 dollars for off-season conditioning. Reflective of the player's talents, this lucrative³ agreement represents what is offered to an individual the organization is eager to sign. Furthermore, a highly skilled player is in a better position to resist what he deems as an unfair contract.

Unfortunately, there exist instances in which players do not have well-intentioned agents or support from parental figures. This allows the CHL to utilize disciplinary technologies, which in turn result in a player being constrained in his actions (Shogan, 1999). Such was the case with former CHL player, Milan Doczy. Milan, a European player from the Czech Republic who came to North America to pursue a hockey career in the CHL. Unable to speak English, and with no access to either his parents or an agent, Milan signed his CHL contract with the understanding that he would not be allowed to play in a game unless done otherwise. Moreover, due to the language barrier he faced upon his arrival to North America, the GM of his CHL club conveniently positioned yellow arrowed stickers on the contract that directed Milan where to place his signature. He knew nothing of an education package that was awarded to all CHL players, a

³ I use the term "lucrative" to emphasize that this agreement is relative to what is offered to other CHL players.

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package that was entirely missing from his contract. Years later, when Milan decided to retire from hockey and embark on an academic career, he was denied his education package based on the explanation that there was no precedent for a European player redeeming the scholarship money from the league. After countless efforts made to further probe the issue with the CHL, Milan's story was published as an article in *The Toronto Star*, a nation-wide read newspaper. The media attention on the issue forced the CHL to act and grant Milan his rightfully deserved education package (Cribb, 2012a, 2012b). Milan's hardship uncovers the problematic nature of docility in the training of athletes, particularly when supported through institutions such as the CHL. Furthermore, the disciplined behaviour of high-performance athletes is reflected in adherence to militaristic instruction. Shogan (1999) holds that the conformity of sporting bodies results in individuals having little control. This was reflected in the ultimatum Milan's GM issued when presenting him with the contract, an ultimatum that threatened he would not be allowed to play unless he signed the contract.

CHL players and prospects are under constant surveillance and regulation in ways that are both subtle and obvious, leading to the normalization and acceptance of such systems in their lives. These docile hockey bodies can appear to have a diminished sense of control and to be highly disadvantaged. This holds true with Adam's experience in obtaining his education package. Adam signed a CHL contract that designated him with 6,000 dollars per year for the three years he provided service to the organization. After graduating from the CHL and not being drafted into the NHL, Adam decided to play in a semi-professional hockey league. Unfortunately, this endeavour did not appeal to Adam for long, and after a few months he retired from the game and applied to university. As

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the academic year had already commenced at the institution to which he was accepted, Adam began attending courses as a part-time student during the University's second semester. As such, his tuition fees totalled an amount of 1,700 dollars, a cost quite less than the full year's worth of courses. Given that his education package contained 6,000 dollars a year, Adam continued his education with the impression that the remainder of the money he had not used his first year, a total of 4,300 dollars, would be carried over and made available to him. This however, was not the case. Adam explained the exchange he had with the CHL when he inquired about the remaining money he had not used in his first semester at University.

Adam: This year I called the guy from the OHL and I was like, "Well, what the hell is going on here? Do I have money? I have a full course load." And they're like, "Well no, you spent it, here's year one here's year two and there's the third year." And I said, "Well, that's kinda bullshit, no one advised me about anything like that." So this year it had to come out of my pocket. Technically I used 1,700 bucks the first year, so I lost the other 4,300 dollars, it went down the drain, and they told me that afterwards, that it doesn't roll over.

It is important to note that discipline used to produce high-performance athletes should not be wholly criticized. For without discipline athletes would lack the necessary skills and abilities required to perform. However, questions centred upon the ethics and values used in enacting disciplinary technologies require further examination (Shogan, 1999). As per Adam's case, it is evident that the authorities of the CHL took advantage of his disciplined body, along with his desire to play professional hockey, and withheld information from him. Fiske (1993) asserts that a disciplined athlete is someone who acts

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with submission “to the power of a particular way knowing/behaving in order to participate in that power” (p. 64). Fiske’s (1993) statement can be used to conclude that Adam’s desire to play hockey in the CHL caused him to comply with passivity during his playing career. It was only after Adam was removed from the league, at a point when his hockey dream had evaporated, that he began to become aware of, and discontent with, the details and loopholes in his education package. Aaron, who experienced a strikingly similar situation, also mirrored this kind of discontentment.

Aaron: *I was actually lied to...well not lied to, I just think he didn't know, he was a rookie GM at the time. I was under the impression that that money could carry over but it ended up being...*

Vicky: *Carry over, what do you mean by that?*

Aaron: *So let's say my tuition and my books cost 6,000 dollars in year one of school, I was under the impression that \$1,500 would carry over [player's package was 7,500 dollars per year]*

Vicky: *Right, and you thought that you would get that ...*

Aaron: *It doesn't happen.*

In this passage, Aaron is cautious in describing the actions of his GM. Although he expressed feelings of being misled, Aaron was quick in correcting himself and re-crafted his words to insinuate that rather than lying to Aaron, the GM simply did not know the correct procedure with which the education package was distributed. This reveals that despite dissatisfaction at the end of their CHL careers, former players still behave with the discipline to which they complied while active in the league. Consequently, docility remains deeply embedded in some retired CHL players who indicate the strong

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magnetism of disciplinary technologies and their lasting effects.

After completing the interviews for this study, it was evident that the education package rewarded by the CHL is a significant asset for a player's future. As Campbell (2013) reveals, only 0.04% of the 67,715 boys born in 1985 who were enrolled in hockey in Ontario played at least one game in the NHL. This further illustrates the value of the education package in the lives of CHL players. Campbell (2013) further illustrates the odds of a player making it to the NHL by asking readers to consider the bench of a CHL hockey team during a game, and envision that only one or two of those players will have a sustainable career at the professional level. This highlights that the odds of a CHL player playing even a single game in the NHL are against him. Many participants of this study accepted this reality and indicated how important the education package was given their potential failure to realize their hockey dream. Jamie and Vince, players who are both a few years removed from the league, reflected on the impact of their education packages below:

Jamie: *Obviously I'm glad to get the package that I did because now I don't have to pay for school, right? I mean you look at something so small and now I'm glad I had a father who was aware of it, and my agent who was very well aware about the situation.*

Vince: *Getting your OHL package is awesome, I think I have 20,000 dollars' worth of money, which is awesome, that's huge.*

Although the education package serves as a financial relief for many players, it is not always enough to fully cover the expenses of attending a post-secondary institution.

Many packages fall short of the additional tuition and living costs. What began to surface

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during these conversations was the issue of the stipend allocated to players during their CHL player careers, a stipend that is not considered to be reflective of their expended time and effort.

The CHL Stipend: A Salary or Pocket Change?

Under the current policies of the league, CHL players receive a bi-weekly stipend that ranges from 50-200 dollars, depending on the player's seniority and skill level. In today's economy, the value of the stipend can be considered as a relatively modest earning. This represents approximately 900-3,600 dollars a year, although food and shelter are covered by the billet family, Statistics Canada assesses the 2012 low income cut off for singles living in urban areas to be 16,537 dollars a year (Statistics Canada, 2013). From the league's perspective, the stipend is viewed as an allowance rather than a salary. To further justify this classification, the league argues that their players have no expenses while playing in the CHL, since all living and housing needs are met through the accommodation of billet families. Nonetheless, when seen through a modern economic perspective, the stipend is not a sufficient compensation for players' labour.

Appendices G and H include an appeal from a Manitoba court ruling in 2000 that determined that CHL players were involved in insurable and pensionable employment. The appeal contains a testimony from the owner of the Brandon Wheat Kings (WHL) organization, Kelly McCrimmon. McCrimmon noted that the stipend received by players had only increased by 20 dollars from the time he himself played in the CHL 20 years prior. By incorporating an investigative approach, this study included the examination of several documents, such as this court case. However, despite an in-depth analysis of the aforementioned legal document, little is known about the ramifications and impact of this

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ruling. Nonetheless, several players interviewed for the study voiced their concerns regarding the disparity of salaries they earned.

Neil: I'm pretty sure I've read that players [who] were playing in the 70s were making 50 bucks a week, you'd figured with the amount of increase in desire, and the popularity of the CHL that they would increase the paycheck with that.

Steve: 50 bucks a week didn't get me shit. I had to ask my parents for money. You can't really live off that, \$50 a week. I was going through it pretty quick.

Jamie: I knew a player whose dad played in the CHL years and years ago, probably 20 or so years ago, and he was receiving 50 dollars a week 20 years ago. And the economy now is ridiculously growing, so the players should receive a lot more money.

Adam, whose story was discussed earlier, mirrored McCrimmon's testimony by confirming the similar value of the stipend to what his father was receiving from the CHL 30 so years ago.

Adam: Players get the same as my Dad did when he played. How does that work? I think they take advantage of kids. I don't complain, I don't ever say, "Oh man, it was a grind." I had the most fun in my life, but you take advantage of kids who would sell their soul to play on that team, and you pay him 50 bucks a week? It doesn't buy you a lunch.

Neil, a participant in this study who played his last CHL game in 2009, is now in his third year at a post-secondary CIS institution. Having had an average major junior career, Neil decided to utilize his education package that is worth four years of tuition fees. The game of hockey remains at the forefront in his life, and he continues to play for

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the CIS team that recruited him following his days in the CHL. Adjusting to life after the CHL has not been a simple transition, however Neil noted that he feels his identity is now moving closer towards being a student, rather than what he has always been, a hockey player. The evolution of becoming a student has been gradual for Neil, but he maintains that hockey will forever be entangled within his persona. With the personal transition came numerous adaptations to the daily necessities of a young adult life, and its accompanied financial responsibility. Though his tuition is covered by the CHL, money remains difficult to come by when faced with a full course load. Neil reflected on the stipend he once received from the CHL, and how the modest amount of his paychecks did in fact seem like an allowance rather than a salary:

Neil: I mean you got by with it, but the money would go towards spending. I didn't have to buy food or anything like that, right? So you would use it to spend on whatever. But you buy one thing and your money is gone for the week, and you have no money left.

An immense sense of regret emerged when Neil recalled the money he had earned, and how it quickly dissipated. Although it may not have been a fulfilling income, the money would undoubtedly aid him in his life now. One of the new necessities to which Neil referred was transportation means and his desire to purchase his own vehicle.

Neil: When I look back on it, because I'm looking at getting a car now and I need to move out on my own and get my own place, and now when I look back on it, I had all that money and it would have been nice if I had someone around, someone part of the organization, part of the CHL who would have been like, "Listen you can't just go out and spend all this, you need to start saving, you need to start

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putting some aside." That would be a big help to a lot of kids, because I know every year I left the CHL for the summer, I left with no money, I left with 0 dollars.

The regulation of the stipend occurs within an interesting power dynamic between hockey operations and players. Due to the system used to operate the CHL, authorities within the organization exercise power in a way that enables them to minimally compensate players. Keeping in mind that Foucault (1978) rejected the notion of power being centrally located, dispersion of power is evidenced by the shifting power relation occurring in the allocation of the modest stipend. Once the player is in possession of his stipend, he is now free to use it on his own accord and acts in a newly formed relation of power. Neil noted that the freedom, or power, he exercised in spending his stipend was irresponsible and resulted in impulse purchases. He mentioned that many of his teammates faced the same financial reality. What this phenomenon illustrates is that despite participants displaying resistance to the value of the stipend, a longing for an authoritative figure to enact power and financially advise players exists. In other words, the league can be considered as robbing its players of imperative financial skills by not providing them with guidance. Power relations within the allocation of the stipend coincide with how Foucault conceptualized power as a capillary-like network in which points of resistance can be found embedded (Markula & Pringle, 2006). Furthermore, disciplinary processes used to normalize the behaviour of players during contract negotiations can be seen resurfacing in the desire for control to be enacted on them. In the passage above Neil alluded to a desire of having an individual within the CHL responsible for financially advising players. He noted that he may have been in a better

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financial situation had there been someone encouraging him to save his stipend. Even though Neil resents how much he was paid, he indicates a yearning for more control in his life. This exposes the contradictions and tensions within a disciplined athletic body that help the CHL maintain its cultural dominance. Foucault (1975) asserts that once an individual is subjected to discipline's "field of visibility," he "assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribed in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he comes the principle of his own subjection" (p. 76). Thus, through a Foucauldian lens, CHL players eventually subject themselves to the same discipline initially enacted upon them, which allows the league to uphold its supremacy.

Concerns with the stipend were highly prevalent among the players interviewed for this study, and as such deserve to be further addressed. Blair, a participant now five years removed from the league, embarked on an educational pathway upon graduating from the CHL. After having completed his undergraduate degree, Blair pursued a Master's degree and is now employed with a marketing corporation based out of the Toronto area. Having little to no attachment to the game in his current life allowed for a distinctly critical perspective on the issue of the CHL stipend.

Vicky: *The other thing I wanted to know is what the amount of money you got, it was 50 dollars?*

Blair: *Yep, 44 dollars, \$88 bi-weekly.*

Vicky: *Do you think that should be changed?*

Blair: *Yep. That's the same amount of money they were making in the 1950s.*

Factor in inflation, the road trips, and hours at the rink, it's bizarre to me. And I

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agree with the point that 50 dollars is actually enough to survive on, because you're literally not buying anything, right? But just because you can survive off that doesn't mean it's right. We can say professional athletes can survive on a fraction of what they're making. But, if the demand is there to pay players, if people are going to watch them, then they deserved to be paid that much. Same reason a lawyer and an accountant deserve to make more than everyone else. It's just the demand for their services, and they have unique skills. I'm not suggesting you go out and that those players need to be making 1,000 dollars a week, but I'm saying it should go up at least 2.5% a year, like the average inflation rate. Which it literally has not budged in 40 years, that's absolutely insane. And I guess the teams will argue that the education packages have gone up. Ya, I'll give them that. They have. But they didn't from the 1950s until 2010, right?

The high degree of resistance evidenced by Blair's commentary exists in tandem with the relation of power with which the stipend is delivered by hockey authorities. Shogan (1999) holds that resistance occurring in response to disciplinary power has little leverage in changing the totalizing effects of the discipline. Consequently, Blair's critique of the economically deficient stipend does little to challenge the control of the CHL. The relation of power in which the CHL financially operates presents a vast spectrum that appears to be laden with excess authority and influence at the organization's end, leaving players disadvantaged.

The child sport injustice literature argues that instances of maltreatment, a term used by sport theorists such as Donnelly (1997a, 1997b, 2008), Donnelly and Sparks (1997), Coakley (1993a), Stirling and Kerr (2008) and Stirling (2009), are rampant in an

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organization such as the CHL. A specific form of maltreatment, known as child sport labour, is of particular interest in this study. Child sport labour draws parallels between sport and a work-like atmosphere, with the intention to uncover how children in high-performance sport can be better protected by the law (Donnelly, 1997a). The United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) suggests that children require heightened protection due to their vulnerability. Below, Article 32 of the CRC specifically addresses economic protection of children, shedding light on the realities of CHL players:

Article 32

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.
2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:
 - (a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;
 - (b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;
 - (c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

(United Nations General Assembly, 1989, pp. 9-10)

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Article 1 posits that children deserve the right to be protected from economic exploitation. As seen in many of the excerpts above, CHL players are receiving a stipend for their athletic services that has ignored the economic reality of inflation, as well as the increased profit generated by the CHL in the past 30 years. This leads to question, if CHL players are not receiving a portion of these increasing profits made by the CHL, who in the organization is? Coakley (2006) indirectly addresses this question by noting that high-performance sport often witnesses the financial livelihood of adults, such as coaches, trainers, and managers, being dependent upon child performers. Furthermore, unlike areas of the entertainment industry such as film, the financial gain of adults from children in elite sports is not regulated. CHL players dedicate countless hours training, playing, and travelling week after week and although delegating these hours into a traditional work schedule would be unrealistic, their efforts deserve to be properly compensated. This study holds that the issue of challenging the economic welfare of elite child athletes needs to be met with human rights legislation, such as the CRC. Donnelly (2008) states that abiding by the CRC recognizes child athletes in “a period of growth and development,” and that the conditions in which they train, compete, and are bought and sold should be regulated by governments. Thus, as human rights continue to be routinely violated in the sporting realm, it is imperative that the welfare of high-performance child athletes becomes a future international foreign policy initiative (Donnelly, 2008).

When considering the CHL stipend through a researcher’s perspective, it becomes clear that players are being exploited by the league. Participants who are now retired from the league support this claim, which was demonstrated through the data excerpts

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disclosed within this section. To that end, additional questions regarding the financial marketability of players revolved around how current CHL players view the league's financial priorities. In my interview with Calum, he alluded to seeing pictures of his teammates and himself displayed around the city where his CHL organization is located. Billboards, magazines, hockey cards, and apparel are stamped with his face and name. He noted the abundance of fans in the arena who purchase tickets to watch the club play games throughout the season, along with countless jersey auctions and special events. A steady stream of money flowing in, money that he contributed in generating and ironically, money to which he will never have access. Calum further alluded to this realization in the passage below:

Calum: I mean there's a lot of sacrifice that we have to take. Also with everything that we do, we put a lot of time and effort into hockey and we play for the coaches and the organization. They're making lots of money. Maybe it would be nice for us to get a little extra. We're trying to represent them, you know? It could be like a little thank you.

Given Calum's age, and the fact he was drafted into the NHL this spring, I was surprised by his awareness of the marketing strategies employed by the CHL franchise. Despite the fact his hockey career is being projected to evolve past the major junior level, Calum's vision remained unclouded when he voiced his support for players to receive a larger stipend. His perspective, coupled with the normalizing behaviour he has been taught by the CHL, gives rise to a rather subdued form of advocacy for a higher stipend, in his own words, "*it could be like a little thank you.*" While it may be subdued, Calum's support

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for a more fair stipend certainly exists and he is not alone, as the aforementioned participants also spoke to the economic injustice they have faced.

Unlike the variation of benefits found occurring in education packages of players based on their skill levels, this study found that the CHL stipend is relatively similar in value from player to player. Furthermore, skill level and player age, characteristics taken into account when rewarding education packages, were found to have little to no influence on the bi-weekly compensation rate of players, aside from an increase of 50-70 dollars, a 20 year-old player receives. In this study, the analysis of the CHL stipend perhaps yields more questions than answers. Questions such as: How is the CHL held accountable? Why is the CHL exempt from adhering to child labour laws? To what extent are adults profiting off of the efforts and skills of children? And most importantly, why has the stipend received by CHL players not been adjusted to reflect the changing economy over the last 30 years?

Training the Troops

Andrews (2000) states that sport “is implicated as an optic of modern disciplinary power: a mechanism of surveillance which renders visible and intelligible the normal body, and the abnormal body against which the norm is constituted” (p. 124). Elite sport, therefore, functions both to normalize athletically differentiated bodies and to further differentiate bodies that do not adequately pass as athletically fit. The CHL has adopted many normalizing and differentiating technologies that are exercised through in-season and off-season training. For example, CHL players are disciplined by the rules of hockey training, rules that Shogan (1999) feels “prescribe certain actions, proscribe other actions, and describe boundaries or contexts within which these actions make sense” (p. 4).

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Players who are disciplined into following these rules do so to avoid potential negative consequences, such as getting cut from the roster or a decrease in ice time. Similarly, training rules are followed for the potential of positive rewards including an increase in ice time and participation on special teams, such as penalty kills or power plays. Andrews (2000) suggests that surveillance is utilized so that coaches may better implement “regimes of measured, corrective and continuous corporal training, designed to facilitate the controlled manufacturing of suitably docile bodies” (p. 122). The findings of this study indicate that technologies of surveillance have extended beyond the ice surface and have become embedded in the bodies, psyches, and daily lives of CHL players. The authority of training experts causes players to internalize training regimes and recognize that one’s body and behaviour are continuously under surveillance by coaches, trainers, and other decision-making actors (Andrews, 2000; Markula & Pringle, 2006). Neil, a former CHL player, speaks to the internal forces of surveillance to which he once adhered.

Vicky: It seems that hockey players now have to do that extra training to get to a high level.

Neil: Oh ya...I lost a lot of friends, going through this and my first stages of junior because I put so much time into it. I said, “I want to do this, I want to be a hockey player.” That was my life, just working out. So when all of my friends were like, “Come hang out” I was like, “I seriously can’t, because I got to be at the gym.”

The self-surveillance that Neil used to navigate his training works within a relation of power that comes at minimal cost to the CHL (Markula & Pringle, 2006). Issuing an

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inspecting gaze is all that is required by the league, a gaze that then internally influences players to act in accordance with discipline. It is because of this effortless gaze that Foucault (1980b) regarded self-surveillance as a “superb formula” that allows the continual exercise of power over individuals at a minimal expenditure (p. 155). Foucault (1980b) further defined the notion of an inspecting gaze as “a gaze which each individual under its weight will end up interiorising to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against himself” (p. 155). Although internalized and silent, self-surveillance permeates within players of the CHL, and is a silent tactic used for the submission of individuals to comply with a coercive relation of power.

Hockey though, did not always bring with it an inspecting gaze, and it is only within the last decade that players began dedicating an abundance of off-season time to advanced training. Dan, one of the eldest participant of this study, played his last CHL game seven years ago and has been witness to the changing disciplinary methods of the game.

Dan: The summer going into my draft year I was 15, and it's funny because I was still playing lacrosse up to that point. I remember talking to my dad and he asked, "Are you sure you want to play lacrosse? What if you get hurt? You have a big year coming up, your draft year." There was a lot of anticipation for my draft year, so I stopped playing lacrosse and focused on hockey. That was the first year I focused on off-season training. I remember going to a personal trainer, getting an education on how to train, how to get stronger. I'm a 1985 birthday and it was unheard of for me at 14, 13, 12 years old to go train in a gym. We played soccer,

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baseball, and lacrosse in the summer. You didn't talk about hockey, you didn't train for hockey, you just played sports and I think that it's moved away from that. I always see young kids training now and I think it's crazy. There's been a shift from kids going home to play baseball and soccer and now they just train for hockey. It's such a bad thing to do, you've got to refresh your mind. It's scary that you have to do that at 15 or 14 years old now.

Dan's narrative identifies changes to the game of hockey that have infiltrated new disciplinary techniques used to increase performance demands. These novel training methods encourage players to train hard at an early age if their desire is to play in the CHL. More alarming however, is that the relations of power used by the CHL to operate its league have now extended above and beyond to minor hockey players who may very well not even have the opportunity to touch CHL ice. A participant from this study, named Aaron, also reflected on this transformation in hockey, and how early training has become a necessary mandate of the sport.

Aaron: *My generation, and by my generation I mean players born in 1988 and older, didn't have training that started early on. I started working out in high school for hockey, where now you'll see kids who are in grades 5, 6, 7, 8 doing resistance training. So it was different in the sense that I didn't have to do that training. Now it almost seems like if you want to play hockey you have to do that.*

When analyzed through a Foucauldian perspective, these observations give rise to a measure of conformity amongst athletic bodies. More specifically, CHL players and CHL hopefuls seek to reach an athletic level that is held as the accepted norm. If the player 's

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fitness drops below this norm, he engages in training that disciplines his body back to the league's preferred athletic level.

In addition to players measuring the ability of their own bodies, CHL organizations hold yearly fitness camps attended by the current players of the respected organization, yearly draft picks, and players who remain in the system after not having previously made the roster. Here, at the fitness camps, players become objects of disciplinary power as they are compared, rated, and judged by experts within the organization who note any abnormalities in fitness level. Having attended this form of camp not even one year ago, I asked Calum to reminisce on that experience.

Vicky: *You went to camp that year?*

Calum: *Ya, I went to camp.*

Vicky: *How was that?*

Calum: *[pauses] ...Scary.*

Vicky: *Scary?*

Calum: *Scary. I was out there with guys [who] were a lot bigger than me, and a lot stronger than me.*

What Calum witnessed at the organization's fitness camp were players highly trained and disciplined. The fitness level of players performing in the CHL is testament to not only the training they must endure to remain competitive in the league, but the prerequisite training required from young players hopeful to one day play major junior hockey.

Preparing for Battle

Violence in North American ice hockey has triggered a recent surge of concern over player safety and well-being. Injuries involving the head, neck, and spine have been

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avidly studied due to their frequent occurrences in the game (Carli, De Jesus, & Martineau, 2012; Winder, Brett, & Hurlbert, 2011; Wennberg & Tator, 2008; Tator, Provvidenza, & Cassidy, 2005; Asplund, Bettcher, & Borchers, 2003; Benson, Rose, Meeuwisse, Kissick, & Roberts, 2002; and Biasca, Wirth, & Tegner, 2002). In addition, the mental health of players has become an issue in need of examination following the sudden deaths of former NHLers Rick Rypien and Derek Boogaard (Johnson, 2011). While mainly seen occurring at the professional level, violence has had a trickle down effect dissipating into junior and even minor hockey. As the main feeder system for the NHL, the CHL is perhaps most influenced by violent behaviour in professional hockey, and has integrated violence as a crucial skill in the development of its players. An offshoot of violence that occurs most prevalently in the CHL is on-ice fighting, a skill required of players hoping to maintain a roster position and reach the ranks of professionalism. As I moved deeper into the data analysis phase of this study, fighting emerged as a substantial theme that was entangled in power relations, as well as a pivotal aspect into the lived experiences of participants.

Blair was drafted in the mid-round of the CHL selection draft; he was not the most talented hockey player and this was something he quickly realized after acquiring a position on the team's roster. Realizing he needed to make an impact on the coaches and management of the team, Blair was forced to alter his game to adhere to the heightened level of violence in the CHL. Below is a passage where Blair remarks on his first year.

Vicky: *How was your first year with the team?*

Blair: *First year was okay. I was a fourth line player, small guy [who] had some skill but I only played half the games, I was a healthy scratch the other half. I had*

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to fight and do things that weren't really part of my game to stay there, so it was rough but I was just happy to be there.

In addition to Blair, Neil also reflected on enhancing his position on the team through the addition of violence to his game:

Neil: *That summer there was just a lot of training to get ready for the next year. I had kind of taken on a role of a fighter at that point.*

Vicky: *That was the year you decided to be a fighter?*

Neil: *I decided probably half way through my first year, because that's how I was going to be able to play. The team didn't really have a fighter, so I figured if I took on that role it would give me the chance to dress more and play more.*

Both of these passages suggest that the tendency to perform in a violent manner is a learned behaviour not an initial feature of a player's game. According to Smith (1979) and Vaz (1980), the formation of violence into a learned behaviour is the amalgamation of two factors: violent patterns of athletic role models and the rewards violence garner from coaches, teammates, and the community. These factors combined to form a context in which the utilization of violence is deemed as normative behaviour. In Blair and Neil's case, adopting fighting as a mechanism of their game was believed to be a rewarded action warranting them a secure roster position.

In general, hockey seems to operate within a relation of power that supports and encourages fighting. Even though excessive violence is largely contested in most sports, it is a widely supported behaviour by hockey insiders. Coaches, management, and community members are all key actors who encourage players to participate in violent behaviour. Although many submit to the pressures of violence, a sense of resistance in

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the form of reluctance was noted appearing in the experiences of players who had participated in fighting.

Vicky: *Did you like fighting?*

Neil: *At the end, I loved it.*

Vicky: *Do you remember your very first fight?*

Neil: *I remember being so terrified because I had asked for a trade at this point and I was starting to fight a little bit more. I figured in order for me to get some real credibility as a fighter, and to get interest in teams, I had to fight the league tough guy. The guy beat me up pretty good and I remember going into the fight shaking because I did not want to do it, but I knew that I had to. I actually called my Mom the night before and told her not to come to the game because I was planning on fighting him [laughs].*

Neil's hesitancy in the narrative above is evidenced through multiple feelings. One of these feelings includes denial, where he stated, "*I did not want to do it...*" He also displayed signs of nervousness leading into the fight when he recalled "*going into the fight shaking.*" In addition, he issued a warning to his mother to prevent her from attending the game; "*I actually called my mom the night before and told her not to come to the game because I was planning on fighting...*" However, despite his uneasiness, the social environment of his hockey club had designated Neil with the role of being a fighter. Messner (1990) writes that individual roles within an athletic context are determined through a hierarchical system governed by clearly defined rules. These rules are generally respected by players, who use them to negotiate and renegotiate their

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relationships. In the passage below, Neil describes rules he was issued by his teammates and coach that assigned him with an aggressor-type role.

Neil: *The coach had said something beforehand too. He said “Well, these guys [opposing team] only have 5 defensemen...if we can get this guy out for 5 minutes for fighting one of you guys that will help our team out because then their other defenseman will be tired.” So then everyone looked at me because they knew I started taking on that role. I remember going across the ice and hitting the guy, I was way out of position just to hit him and he looked at me and just took his helmet off.*

Vicky: *Did he say anything?*

Neil: *No, he didn't say anything at all, he just looked at me and knew that's what I was trying to do, so he took his helmet off, dropped his gloves. So I was thinking, “Oh great” and I took my helmet off, dropped my gloves, and kept backing up farther and farther from him. Eventually the refs stepped in and broke up the fight so we each just got 10 minutes [penalty] but we didn't have to fight, so I was like “Thank God.” I actually thanked the refs for saving my life [laughs] because this guy would have killed me.*

Through a Foucauldian lens, Neil would still be regarded as being relatively free to decide his response of whether or not to accept the fighting role. However, the internal fear through which he navigates during the confrontation signifies the imbalanced relationship of power existing between him and his team. To better understand this imbalance, it is helpful to hypothetically reverse Neil's situation. If Neil had refused to adopt the role of a fighter, his actions would have reciprocal effects on the coach and his

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teammates. Included amongst these effects, is the possibility of Neil's actions inducing the coach to exercise discipline in decreasing his ice time, and his teammates losing respect for Neil due to his refusal in accepting and performing his designated role on the team. Foucault's (1983) definition of a relationship of power implies that the action of one person directs the "possible field of action of others" (p. 221). This definition can thus be paralleled to Neil's situation with much relevancy, as the consequences of not fighting would affect the behaviour and actions of his coach and teammates.

Brothers at War

To that end, it is important to address the masculinity promoted through hockey's distinct aggressiveness. Allain (2008) holds that the CHL is a space where hegemonic masculinity serves as a privileged expression. Defined by a pioneer in the field of masculinity, Connell (1990) classifies hegemonic masculinity as "the culturally idealized form of masculine character" (p. 83). Normative traits of masculinity such as dominance, aggression, courage, and loyalty are celebrated in elite and professional North American hockey, making the CHL a unique site in which these attributes can be performed literally (Allain, 2008). By providing players a space to fulfill their masculinity, the CHL gains the ability in also enforcing this identity through violent play. Consequently, a masculine social context creates "clear-cut boundaries" for the relationships between players that allows them to experience closeness within their teammates in a strictly platonic fashion (Messner, 1990, p. 290).

Tyler, a participant previously referred to in this study, was readily known around the CHL as a "tough guy," who flaunted his dominating masculine identity. In my interview with Tyler, much mention was given to a former teammate named Kyle with

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whom he had developed a strong camaraderie. The two had known each other long before making their debuts in the CHL, however their friendship was forever solidified after incidents of a particular game.

Vicky: *Do you remember your first fight?*

Tyler: *Yes. I fought [player name].*

Vicky: *How'd it go?*

Tyler: *It went well. I cut him open over his right eye. It was Kyle's first fight too. He did really well against [player name].*

Vicky: *Really?*

Tyler: *Ya, I think then and there it kind of established our friendship. We were already pretty close, but when we fought...we had something. I would get him going, and when he would fight it would get me going, you know? We both just fed off each other.*

To Tyler and Kyle, fighting in hockey is the ultimate test of courage an individual can demonstrate in the game. Meanings attributed to these masculine performances result in a high degree of respect amongst teammates, and between players and coaches. Not only did displaying aggression heighten his worth as a player, but it also allowed Tyler to form a meaningful relationship with his fellow teammate. Eventually, Tyler went on to play four seasons in the CHL, carrying with him the reputation as an enforcer acknowledged throughout the league. Showcasing strength, resiliency, and force from the outside, was not however indicative of how Tyler felt internally within his own body.

Bruised, Bloody and Broken: The Aftermath

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Given the demanding nature of hockey it is inevitable that the bodies of players become drained and injured. Training, playing games, and fighting are amongst the causes attributed to players' bodily decline. Throughout his four seasons as an enforcer in the league, Tyler experienced detrimental physical consequences, some of which he still suffers with today. When I asked Tyler to reflect on his second season in the CHL, it was not the wins, losses, or points he scored that first came to mind, rather it was the moments of physical pain he had absorbed that had left an imprint on his memory.

Vicky: *How did that second year go?*

Tyler: *It went well, but by the end of it I was having some hip issues. I'd get up in the morning, and I lived in the basement of the billet house and I'd barely be able to walk up the steps. I had really bad hip issues, so I was getting therapy and stuff, but I just played out the year. It got the point where I'd come off the ice during intermission and sit down to rest, and it'd be hard to just get up off my stall and get it going again.*

Adopting the role of a fighter early on forced Tyler to move through the rest of his career with 'the enforcer' as his single identity, and the hip issue he faced in his second year would only be the beginning of an endless list of injuries. Consequently, by his fourth and final year in the league Tyler's dominant masculine identity was evaporating, as his body was no longer capable of performing at a high level of physicality. The intimidating status he held within the league and the community, along with the rewards he once reaped from his coaches for his displays of violence, were benefits he could no longer use to explain why he had decided to subject his body to such damage. Tyler's downfall were accompanied with what he could best describe as feelings of depression.

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Tyler: That injury ended my season. I thought I hit rock bottom there. Two surgeries and now I messed up my hand. It was the worst year of my life. I was so messed up mentally. I was definitely depressed and after that it only got worse because my shoulder was already messed up.

In short, Tyler's story is a reflection of the heavy personal costs that must be paid by participants in violence. Although many argue it is part of the game, the consequences of fighting and violence damage players beyond physical and emotional repair.

Fighting however does not stand alone in its potency. Training for hockey, and playing the game itself are physical endeavours that do not discriminate when delivering injuries, and plague even those who avoid partaking in additional violent acts such as fighting. A vicious cycle begins to emerge where players are seen as submitting to a form of disciplinary power, that permanently injures their bodies. Messner (1990) contends that athletes who are viewed as being in excellent physical condition are in fact prone to a high incidence of injuries. In addition, normalizing players to behave with docility has been noted to result in harmful effects. Messner (1990) explains that the reciprocal results of high-performance athletic training occurring when "the instrumental rationality which teaches athletes to view their own bodies as machines... ultimately comes back upon the athlete as an alien force: the body-as-a-weapon ultimately results in violence against one's own body" (p. 211). To illustrate the frequency of injuries caused by hockey, the results of this study noted instances of injury across the experiences of all 11 participants. I acknowledge that this sample size is not indicative of the CHL as a whole, however I simultaneously contend that a commonality amongst 11 individuals cannot be simply

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classified as coincidence. Select narratives concerned with player injuries will now be further explored.

Aaron was not projected to be drafted into the NHL, but in no way did that dissolve his hope, hope that the hockey gods would grant him his long-standing childhood wish of becoming a professional player. Two months prior to the NHL entry draft, Aaron was playing in a regular season game for his CHL organization when the unimaginable happened, an incident not even the hockey gods could prevent. During the first period of the game, a play was directed towards the net where an entanglement of bodies quickly ensued. Among the bodies was Aaron, who happened to lose his balance and fall to the ice. To the fans watching that night, the fall appeared as nothing out of the ordinary, and so they patiently waited for Aaron to get back up. However, after a few extended moments Aaron was not moving from the position where he had fallen, and after hearing a frightening popping sound come from his knee he realized that he could not stand. With the help of his teammates and trainer, Aaron was escorted off the ice and into the dressing room. As he sat waiting for the team doctor to arrive, negative premonitions swirled through his mind about the extent of his injury. More importantly was the thought of the NHL entry draft occurring in two months' time, and how this injury would impact his chances. When the doctor arrived he conducted a series of tests on Aaron's knee.

***Aaron:** The doctor did the ACL test, and then he did the MCL test and said, "I think you tore your MCL and ACL." That was when I just sank. I didn't cry from the injury, I cried because I realized that holy shit this is huge. And I would say that that injury was the beginning of the end of my hockey career.*

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After not being selected in the NHL entry draft, and following countless months of rehabilitation, Aaron was finally ready to step back on the ice. As exciting as it was for him to return to practicing with his team, Aaron had prepared himself to face an inevitable reality, in which his body would be unable to recover back to a fully healthy state. Unfortunately, hockey does not pause and wait for the return of the injured. Instead, games come and go, and players continue training with vigorous tenacity in hopes of reaching the dream. When Aaron returned from his injury almost half a year later, the season had progressed, and players he had once competed against were much faster and stronger than he had remembered. In a rather unrequited fashion, it seemed as if hockey had moved on and forgotten about Aaron.

This study reveals an immediate parallel between players submitting to, and resisting, relations of power. Subsequently, injury experiences provide a platform where submission and resistance are manifold in expression. Petr, the former European CHL player, spoke to his experience with hockey and how he continuously faced various physically hindering barriers. Submitting his body to constant training was a practice normalized in Petr's mind, an essential activity to be performed in his quest to attain the dream. And as such, when injuries began to emerge, Petr pushed on by denying the requests from his body to rest. By resisting the physical breakdown of his body, Petr continued training and playing games. Although his perseverance to remain an active player resulted in further injuries, his coaches and trainers made no protest. Instead, the all-knowing hockey authorities continued watching from the sidelines, and witnessed the inevitable collapse of their player. Below is an account of the resistance demonstrated by Petr in response to the plague of injuries he faced.

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Vicky: *How did you feel when you were injured?*

Petr: *It was just super frustrating. I've always had minor injuries during my CHL career. I actually never really had a full season without injuries. In my second year, I was just pissed off, I wanted to finish the season. I broke my hand and played 13 days later, then I broke my foot. I decided to have a screw put in it so I could play as soon as possible, and came back two or three weeks later. So I played with a screw in my foot and a broken hand. I had a cast on my hand playing hockey, I had a screw in my foot playing hockey and I already knew that my wrist was messed up and needed surgery. So I was just a mess, just trying to grind it out, but I obviously couldn't perform as well as I used to and I knew that.*

Shogan (1999), who borrows from Foucault in examining high-performance athletes, explains that the constant observing and judging of players by coaches produces standards of the athletes' performances. These standards can demonstrate whether players perform above or below expectations. Correct training, according to Shogan (1999), involves coaches working to close existing gaps in performance in order for athletes to perform at a desired level. The gap in performance experienced by Petr however, went unaddressed. Accordingly, the power relation between Petr and his coaches displays a substantial imbalance that functioned in oppressing his well-being. As in Aaron's experience, and regardless of Petr's perpetuating resistance to the circumstances, the game of hockey quickly fled from his life.

Parting Ways, Moving on, and Letting Go

Parting ways with a sport that consumed the majority of their lives was not by any means trivial for the participants in this study. Of the 11 players interviewed, only two

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continue to be significantly active with the game. Calum, the current CHL player, appears to have a promising hockey career ahead of him, and Tyler, who played his last CHL season in 2010, has spent the last three years playing for affiliate NHL farm team organizations. The remaining nine participants however, have all, in their own way, begun to prioritize their lives differently. Hockey will always remain part of their lives, and while some of them continue playing for CIS institutions or participate in coaching, they recognize the importance of re-establishing their identities. Paradoxically, the injuries have somewhat aided in their personal reconstruction. The following narratives articulate Aaron and Petr's acceptance of moving on from hockey from their experiences of physical discomfort.

Petr: *There's a lot of politics, a lot of injuries and a lot of luck that you have to input into a hockey career. If I didn't have any injuries and made it [to the NHL], I might have looked at it differently, but I know how I was doing my last year playing junior, and I know how quickly it changed. In a matter of weeks I broke my hand, or I broke my foot, and you know you can't control that.*

Aaron: *I loved playing, so I wasn't going to stop practicing, but I was also really hurting so I wasn't asking for more playing time either. It was a gradual thing, but it was more like reacting to my body kind of thing. The team had asked me to come back and to try and play for my over age year but I said, "No, I can't."*

In addition to these narratives, Tyler's experience deserves to be further addressed. Although he now plays professional hockey, his retirement from the CHL made him question the worth of continued participation in the sport. Tyler's first injury occurred in

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his rookie season in the CHL, and what began as an irritation in his hip area, transpired into countless surgeries along with lengthy time spent in rehabilitation during his four years in the league. At the conclusion of his CHL career, all the inner turmoil he experienced from the constant breakdown of his body erupted, and the feelings of depression he faced consumed his thoughts regarding his future. Consequently, Tyler decided to take a leave from hockey and allow his mind to heal. I asked Tyler to explain what he was thinking during this break, and what he learned through his period of personal reflection.

Tyler: I was just in another world. I was still mentally screwed up. I just said, "Fuck it" I just wanted to get out of town, just leave everything and just find myself, just to see what happens. After all that stuff I was thinking something is telling me I shouldn't be doing this with my life. I was in another place. I'd wake up every morning and start crying and I didn't know why. I learned a lot about myself. I think if none of that stuff ever happened to me I wouldn't be playing hockey right now.

Fortunately for Tyler, time spent away from the game allowed him to realize he never wanted to be without it. He does not recall one day going by without his mind being completely immersed in thoughts of hockey. As such, Tyler continues to submit himself to the same disciplinary technologies that once destroyed his health, the same power relations that burdened his mental health and the same power relations that regarded his body as a machine.

Continuous exposure to disciplinary technologies is the very essence that allows players to perform with the necessary skill set required in the CHL. Likewise, these same

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disciplinary technologies are what allow athletes to 'choose' how they athletically perform (Shogan, 1999). In some cases, these choices involve playing through injuries, in others, they include deciding to retire from a game engrained within their lives.

Regardless of players submitting to, or resisting, the violence and injuries sustained through hockey, many of their CHL endings seem to unravel in similar fashion. Finally, there comes a point where they all abandon the dream they once so adamantly chased.

This study explores the workings of power within the CHL by examining how players function in various power relations. Instances of players subjected to oppression and conversely, privilege, within specific relations of power were illustrated through the study's findings. Using a Foucauldian framework to understand how power operates, allowed for power to be regarded as something that circulates, rather than as a possession. Furthermore, this theoretical framework permitted the relationships CHL players have with authoritative figures to be critically examined and positioned on a wide spectrum of power relations. Four specific themes in which power relations were prevalently identified, including player contracts, issuing of the stipend, and the consequences of both excessive training and violence. Results of the data analysis suggest that the CHL serves as a site where hockey authorities are given endless opportunity to unethically utilize positions of privilege. To that end, while players were noted to exercise their own form of power, these instances occurred either seldomly or in discrete fashion.

The CHL is an environment where individuals with similar desires and motivations come together in attempting to reach the professional ranks that hockey offers. Situating these players and their degree of talent together creates an atmosphere where distractions are infrequent, and the best in young hockey players emerges.

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Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, and Whalen (1993) examined the role of social environments in the development of young persons' talents and reported that adolescence is a time that introduces probable conflict between the required conditions for talent development and preserving sustainable peer relationships. To summarize, I hold that the CHL is an environment that allows players to focus on their athletic commitment without having to experience a disparity between their hockey development and their need for peer relationships. Nick Bollettieri, founder of the world famous Nick Bollettieri Tennis Academy located in Bradenton, Florida, has been witness to the positive effects of placing like-minded young people in the same environment, and maintains that the motivation garnered amongst them is the most prominent factor of an adolescent's success. The roster of champion tennis players to come out of the Bollettieri academy speaks to the effectiveness of this formula (Campbell, 2013). In addition, as a developmental hockey league, the CHL produces more NHL calibre players than any other league in the world. Although the odds of a player going on to play professional hockey are similar to the odds of winning a nation-wide lottery, the CHL remains as the best and fastest route.

Despite its ability to develop hockey players, I argue that the monopolistic nature of the CHL provides its authoritative figures with power that may have detrimental effects on players. The results further reveal that the privileged position authoritative figures of the CHL have in the lives of players allows power to be often enacted unethically. These unethical practices were evidenced in the four themes discussed in the chapter, and can be seen to take on various forms, some more noticeably harmful than others. In the remaining chapter, a summary, conclusion, and recommendations will be

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provided. I also examine results of the study that left a profound impact on me, as the researcher, but that did not align with the intended purpose of this project. As well, suggestions for future research directions are made.

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Chapter Five: Concluding Remarks

Vicky: So it looks like we've covered everything.

Steve: That's it? You got me all going here, you got me all fired up. This was like free therapy.

This thesis originated in a personal quest to deliver social justice to athletes affected by the imbalance of power relations in specific sporting environments. What began as advocacy for a single CHL player, grew into a project that attempted to reveal instances of injustice within the wider borders of the league. In this final chapter, I want to conclude by offering a summary of the theoretical framework underpinning the roots of the research questions, as well as incorporating aspects of the research that left a substantial impact on myself as the researcher. In addition, limitations of the study are addressed, and suggestions for future research pertaining to the lived experiences of CHL players are made.

Foucault and the Workings of Power

This research began with asking two interrelated questions: 1) What kind of power relations impact athletes in the CHL? and 2) How are disciplinary processes used within the CHL? Both of these questions can be best understood by using Foucault's comprehension of the workings of power. For Foucault (1978), clarifying what he meant by the term "power" was essential, as he recognized the common use of the word led to misinterpretation. In his understanding, Foucault asserted that power was not a possession that could be seized, but rather an omnipresent embodied phenomenon (Markula & Pringle, 2006). The focus of Foucault's work was concerned with examining how power operates and the results of its occurrence. Furthermore, he recognized that

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power was reflected in the everyday relations between people or groups, and defined a relationship of power as “an action by one person to help guide another’s conduct” (Foucault, 1982, p. 221). A precondition Foucault emphasized as essential in any relationship of power was that subjects must be free, and it is this freedom that gives rise to resistance. Without the possibility of resistance, Foucault (1982) asserted that relations of power would simply not exist. Consequently, the focus on individual relations, and his later work on bodies as the target of disciplinary power, makes Foucauldian theory a useful framework for understanding the lived experiences of athletes (Foucault, 1991). Shogan (1999) gives further merit to synthesizing Foucauldian concepts as they relate to sport, and states that “the components of modern power as it emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, read like a ‘how to’ manual for coaches two hundred years later” (p. 9).

Recent studies in sport and exercise have been dominated by a Foucauldian-influenced form of structuralism (Andrews, 2000; Chapman, 1997; Cole, 1993; Haber, 1996; Heikkala, 1993; Johns & Johns, 2000; Light & Kirk, 2000; Markula, 1995; Markula & Silk, 2011; Shogan, 1999; Star 1999; Theberge, 1991; Tomlinson, 1998; Young & White, 1995). The benefits of utilizing a Foucauldian perspective when navigating through this study included the various details of CHL players’ relations to be exposed. For example, the completion of a preliminary data analysis resulted in the emergence of over 20 themes where power was noted to be evident. To that end, a secondary objective of this thesis was to unmask the value in understanding the social impact of sport through a Foucauldian lens.

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Unexpected Emergent Themes

As a young researcher, it became clear to me that remaining engrossed in the original questions that guided this project was imperative in achieving fluid progression. Moving through this journey however, involved the emergence of unexpected themes that were impossible for me to defer. One such theme embraced the emotional impact lived experiences in the CHL left on participants. The CHL is a closed community where hegemonic masculinity is the privileged, and encouraged, form of expression. Faulkner (1974) found that a “moral code” players follow links masculine forms of behaviour to elite men’s ice hockey (p. 288). He further interpreted the normalization of proactive aggression and violence in the hockey environment, and how this concerns player identity. The results of this study indicate that the consequences of overt aggression in both violence and training come in the form of injuries, which not only weaken a player’s body, but also contribute to the deterioration of a player’s psyche. In addition to injuries, expressions of masculinity allow players to adopt a specific identity while playing in the CHL, an identity that is no longer evident following the end of their career in the league. Prioritizing hockey at a lower level of importance in their lives was seen to produce instances of a personal identity crisis in participants whose hockey careers concluded at the CHL level.

Petr’s experience of moving on from the game reveals the personal conflict he battled in terms of grasping a newly formed identity. From an early age, Petr had aspirations to play professional hockey. His desire to become the best was in fact so strong, that he moved away from his family in Europe in order to chase the dream in North America, home of the NHL. During his four years in the CHL, all of Petr’s energy

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and efforts were directed towards becoming a better hockey player. However, just like countless other players, his dream ended there. Petr began attending a CIS University, and although not at the level to which he was once accustomed, he continued to play hockey for the institution. I was interested in understanding how Petr's personal identity evolved after playing in the CHL.

Vicky: *Was hockey a large part of your identity when you played in the CHL?*

Petr: *Ya.*

Vicky: *And now?*

Petr: *I don't even want to be a hockey player. Ever since I went to [CIS university] I've made more friends outside of the team, I never wanted to be known as the hockey player here. Sometimes you mention that you're an athlete, but if I'm having a normal conversation, I don't even mention it anymore. After so many years, you don't just want to be known as that, because you don't want to be put in a box, 'a dumb hockey'. Unless I have my tracksuit on, nobody really knows I'm a hockey player.*

In the above exchange I had with Petr, I sensed a degree of resentment towards a game for which he had once longed, and an identity by which he used to swear is the same identity he now attempts to erase. In Petr's mind, there are negative connotations with being identified as a hockey player later in life, and he remarked on the purposeful intention he uses to mask his former self.

Rebranding former hockey identities prevailed as a repetitive theme across the data. Leaving the game presented a stark void in the lives of participants, and Petr was

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not alone in his quest to erase his past persona. I asked Blair to address his first year removed from the CHL, when he began attending a CIS institution as a student-athlete.

Vicky: *So at that point if someone asked you what you were, would you say you were a student or a hockey player?*

Blair: *At that point I intentionally tried to brand myself just as a student. Hockey had done everything for me up to that point. Now I had to get good grades, I worked my ass off out of fear really, and then I ended up on the Dean's list and whatnot. But, it was out of fear. I tried to brand myself [pauses] I would always be an athlete, everyone [who] knows me knows I'm an athlete, but for me it was intentionally trying to say I'm a student.*

An interesting aspect to draw out from the passage above is the fear Blair alluded to in knowing that hockey would no longer be of primary importance. He goes on to state that this fear was the driving factor behind his academic success, and it was in fact the fear of no longer having a hockey identity that allowed him to thrive in his new environment.

At a particular point in the research process I came to the realization that my role as a researcher extended far beyond collecting data for this thesis. Due to the masculine disposition of the CHL, many of its players are not afforded the opportunity to express their feelings. Consequently, as I steered through this journey I became a therapeutic resource for participants in whom they felt comfortable to confide. At times, I was forced to set my research questions aside and simply listen to experiences unfold. My interview with Vince left a profound impact on my understanding of young hockey players. As a goalie, Vince was cast at a distinct disadvantage. Unlike players, who compete to earn one of approximately 22 roster positions on a given CHL team, Vince was battling to

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earn one of two, as hockey clubs normally only have two goalie spots. His entire CHL career came accompanied with feelings of insecurity regarding his value to the team. In the narrative below, Vince reminisces on a time in his career when he felt confident in his abilities and performance, yet was not given the opportunity to play.

Vicky: *So how did that year go with hockey?*

Vince: *Hockey, it could have gone better. I definitely played well when I got in, but again being back-up goalie and having [coach name] as the coach, he just didn't like me and I don't know why. I did everything he told me to do, I never gave him attitude or anything, I always worked hard for him. I couldn't wrap anything around that because growing up I was always told by my coaches and my parents to listen to your coach and always work hard. So when you're put into that situation and you're working hard, you're playing well and you're listening to your coach and you're not giving him attitude, and he still doesn't like you and he still won't play you it's just so degrading. It's something you want to do so bad and you'll do anything at the time to pursue it and for it to work, and it's just not happening. You know if I'm not playing well and you don't like me that's fine, send me home, don't play me, but if I'm playing well and I'm working hard for you, don't drag me along, tell me straight up, tell me to go home and play for a different team.*

Vicky: *That's what you wanted to say to him?*

Vince: *Ya and [pauses] ...this is weird because it's the first time I've opened up about this.*

Vicky: *It's okay.*

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Vince: *It was definitely degrading.*

Vicky: *It was all you probably thought about...*

Vince: *Ya. I mean going home every night, I wasn't happy. I wanted to be happy, because I wanted to play, you know? And I just couldn't. I just wasn't happy. And people wonder why players just hang up the skates, well there you go, you know?*

Despite his efforts to adhere to a strict regime within the sport, Vince's efforts were not sufficient to earn him a chance to compete. This passage reflects the confusion Vince was faced with in understanding why submitting to his coach did not warrant him the rewards other players received. More importantly, Vince's experience exposes the significant emotional impact power relations have on individuals, where they feel belittled, insignificant, and helpless. The advocacy for player equality with which I had entered this project was further engraved into my future research aspirations through this specific interview.

Limitations

A significant limitation of this study stemmed from the geographic boundaries that defined the breadth of this study. Given the time frame I was afforded for the completion of this project, I was limited in the participant recruitment which was not entirely reflective of the broad scope of the CHL. For that reason, ten of the 11 participants I interviewed were all former, or current players, of the OHL, one participant was a former WHL player, and no players from the QMJHL were interviewed. Although there are many similarities in the way the three sister leagues of the CHL operate, it would be naïve to discredit the importance of existing differences. For instance Petr, the former WHL player in this study, noted that obtaining his education package was a

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relatively smooth process. He even remarked on how officials from the WHL were proactive in contacting him to explain how his education package would be delivered, and offered him additional guidance upon request.

Discussion

I should be clear that my intention is not to characterize the CHL as an exclusively oppressive hockey league. The organization offers players a glimpse of how professional hockey operates, and most participants were grateful for the years they were afforded playing in the league. Moreover, the CHL has made significant strides in delivering education opportunities to active players, and extends these opportunities following their participation through the funding of education packages. My objective through this study is to emphasize, that despite the league's recent reformatations, changes reflecting the welfare of players have taken decades to implement, and crucial areas in need of revision still remain. Standardized education packages were seen emerging around 2010, and although standardization increases the equality in value of the package, negotiating for additional benefits is still occurring with players who are exceptionally skilled. Moreover, the majority of participants in this study alluded to the difficulty in obtaining their education packages, and how communication with the league regarding this matter is at times problematic.

In addition to education packages, I hold that the stipend CHL players receive is not reflective of their employment arrangement with the league. The number of hours players devote in terms of training, games played, travel, and community service events extend beyond 60 hours per week while in-season. Although I understand the difficulty in compensating players for each hour they provide to their franchises, I strongly assert the

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need to incorporate minimum wage standards in allocation of the stipend. Moreover, the current 50-120 dollar bi-weekly stipend should financially reflect modern economy and as such increase in value.

While this study was taking place, a union aimed to represent CHL players, called the Canadian Hockey League Players' Association (CHLPA), was being formed. Items on the agenda of the CHLPA included increasing wages and reforming education packages. In response to the emergence of the union, the CHL worked to delegitimize the organization by imposing pressure on its organizers to abolish their efforts. Following the relentless determination of the CHLPA, the CHL hired a private investigator to reveal the somewhat scandalous past of one of the union's co-founders. The investigator exposed that the co-founder is involved in a lawsuit with Hockey Canada, in which he is being accused of committing fraud against the sport governing body (Whamsby, 2012). Withholding much of the backstory, and the fact the co-founder claims he is innocent of the charges, the CHL held the interest of media that published versions of the story leading to the collapse of the CHLPA.

During the interviews for this study, I made a point to ask participants to share their perspectives regarding the possibility of a CHL players' union. The responses to my inquiry were surprising, in that the viewpoints of participants seemed to be unaffected by the scandals surrounding the proposed union. Below I draw from my interview with Blair, and include his response to the proposition of a CHL players' union:

Vicky: Looking back on it now, do you think players need some sort of unionization in the CHL?

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Blair: *Totally. I was a big advocate of it when I played. There were talks of it. I think the issue is that essentially your career is two and a half or three years if you're lucky in the CHL. So it's really just a transition league, it's a stepping stone and the players [who] really matter, the superstars, they're only there for two, maybe three years, and they're going on to big money. Then you've got the fringe players who are just happy to be there. And then you've got the other people in the middle who actually play three or four years. No one steps up to make that call, no one has really put it forward. Although there was a small attempt there a few months ago, but that was a big fail.*

What Blair conveys in the passage above is that there are, what he believes, three kinds of players in the CHL. The first type of players is the superstars, who remain in the league for two to three years before moving on to play professional hockey. The second type is the players who did not expect to play hockey at the CHL level, and are too thankful to protest their circumstances. The third type is composed of the majority of the players in the CHL, and will not go on to play hockey past the major junior level. According to Blair, these players are the individuals who spend the most time in the league, and due to their playing duration deserve to have their best interests protected by a union. Thus, despite the failure of the CHLPA, Blair is adamant for the prospective re-emergence of a union, one that will ensure protection over the majority of players in the league, the type of player he himself once was.

Listed below are additional participant excerpts that address thoughts on a potential CHL union.

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Vince: *I definitely, definitely, definitely think it should be done.*

Aaron: *I think you could do it and I'm sure it will come up again, if not sooner rather than later. I'd be curious to see how the CHL responds. They're making money off the backs of children and that's kind of odd to see.*

Adam: *Yeah, I think so. For sure. There's a lot of stuff, even with injuries where you play a few years and get hurt for life, you know what I mean? My first year in the CHL I broke my hand and now it's deformed and I can't close it. So little things like that, and I got nothing for that, I just did it for them in their packed arenas and they make money and none of the kids make money.*

Petr: *It should be pretty easy to form a group of people who could take charge of that, and maybe make sure that new players, especially the ones from Europe coming into the league, get everything explained to them. Because really, I had no idea about the league, I didn't know how many teams were there, I didn't know anything about the contracts or education package, nothing.*

The results of this study indicate that participants support the formation of a union for CHL players. Conversations centred upon player protection transpired into reflections of moments where participants felt they could have benefited from the support of a union. In particular, Adam spoke to an injury he experienced in his first year playing in the CHL. Despite the fact he is currently four years removed from the league, the damage he encountered to his hand that first year has continued to affect him. Adam expressed that the bodily sacrifice he made to his franchise, a sacrifice that continues to hinder the ability of his hand to function, was uncompensated. Considering the profit he helped to generate for the team by showcasing his talent to an arena filled with thousands of

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spectators, he feels his efforts were severely underappreciated. Like Adam, Petr also drew from personal experience when addressing his support for a union. Due to his inexperience with North American hockey, coming to the CHL as a European positioned him as “automatically disadvantaged in the league” (Allain, 2008). Both Allain (2008) and Robidoux (2001) address the exclusiveness of North American hockey as an ongoing problem for European players, who find it difficult to adjust to its norms. Lacking the knowledge of the North American style and operation of the game, Petr signed a CHL contract unaware of the elements it addressed, such as the education package. For Petr, a union would have allowed him to better understand the league’s procedures, as well as aid him in adapting to new surroundings.

In her investigative book, titled *Crossing the Line: Violence and Sexual Assault in Canada’s National Sport*, Robinson (1998) exposes the abuse occurring in the CHL and makes a call to action by advocating for a critical examination of the game. Robinson further addresses the monopolistic dominance of the CHL and how this position allows the league’s gatekeepers to often behave with a blatant disregard for basic moral principles. The problematic environment of the CHL is explained by Robinson (1998) below:

Total institutions, if they are strong enough, can ignore all the major issues of our time, including human rights, globalization, workers’ rights, free enterprise, the rise of liberal democracy, and the rise of the ethic of care in sport. It is only when complaints reach the public and are too serious or too numerous to be ‘buried’ that total institutions are forced to examine their fundamental practices. (p. 58)

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Robinson (1998) recognizes that as a powerful institution, the CHL comes under scrutiny only when the severity of the issue is too grave to ignore. Take for example Milan's story, a former CHL player who struggled financially for two years until finally a newspaper article prompted the league to award him his rightfully deserved education package. Perhaps the most telling experiences are those of Theo Fleury and Sheldon Kennedy, players who felt trapped in silence for 21 years before they confessed to being sexually abused by their CHL coach, Graham James. Major junior hockey is a system that is under the complete control of tradition-bound men whose actions are held unaccountable and unchecked. The establishment of a union would allow young CHL players to reclaim the ownership of their destinies, and most importantly, provide a standard of accountability for hockey authorities.

The CHL remains a significantly under-researched area in hockey-related scholarly literature. It is imperative for a league that employs children, as per the UN categorization of a child, to come under critical examination for the purpose of protecting the well-being and interests of its players. We must move away from viewing the CHL as a dominating institution exempt from adhering to "the major issues of our time" (Robinson, 1998, p. 58) and instil measures that hold its organizers accountable. Conducting research motivated by social justice is a step forward in eliminating powerful institutional values that foster commodification over the welfare of its members, employees, and consumers, and can aid in creating a healthy, child-centred system.

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Appendix A

Telephone Script

For Skype/telephone interviews the following opening dialogue will be presented before any of the above questions are asked of the participants:

Researcher: “Before we begin, I would like to reiterate the process of consent related to your participation in this study.

I am referring to an email to which you replied, which states the interview process, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality procedures and data publication methods. Do you remember replying to this email to me as the lead researcher on this study and do you still feel comfortable with giving your consent to participate in this study?”

If subject answers “yes”:

Researcher: “Wonderful, I will keep the email in my records and before we begin I will remind you that if you for any reason begin to feel uncomfortable with the questions being asked of you in this interview, please feel free to cease your involvement at any time.”

If subject answers “no”:

Researcher: “I will re-send you the email consent form and will you please read it and reply to the email before we begin the interview”. (At this point, the researcher will politely hang up the telephone and recommence the interview when the participant has read and agreed to the terms outlined in the email consent form).

For face-to-face interviews, the researcher will bring in a hard copy of the email the participant previously consented to and opening dialogue will go as follows:

Researcher: Before we begin, I would like to reiterate the process of consent related to your participation in this study. I am referring to an email in which you replied, which states the interview process, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality procedures and data publication methods. Do you remember returning this email to me as the lead researcher on this study and do you still feel comfortable with giving your consent to participate in this interview?”

If subject answers “yes”:

Researcher: “Wonderful, I will keep the email in my records and before we begin I will remind you that if you for any reason begin to feel uncomfortable with the questions being asked of you in this interview, please feel free to cease your involvement at any time.”

If subject answers “no”:

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Researcher: “Alright, well I am going to leave the room and allow you to read over the document and please let me know when you are finished doing so. If you do not want to participate in this study then I will not proceed with the interview.”

If subject agrees to give consent, interview will go on as follows:

Researcher: “Great, I will keep this document in my records and before we begin I will remind you that if you for any reason begin to feel uncomfortable with the questions being asked of you in this interview, please feel free to cease your involvement at any time.”

If subject does not give consent interview will not proceed.

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Appendix B

E-mail Transcript for Telephone and Face-to-Face Interview

Dear [Participant name],

My name is Vicky Grygar and I am a Graduate student in the Faculty of Applied Health Sciences at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario. I am conducting research for my Masters thesis entitled

The purpose of this e-mail is to inquire if you would be interested in participating in an interview regarding your experience playing in the Canadian Hockey League (CHL).

The intent of the study is to understand player experiences in the CHL in order to identify any areas the league could improve in. These areas could include, but are not limited to, education policies, financial compensation and the overall quality of player life. This one-on-one interview will require approximately 60 minutes to complete. Participation is voluntary, and as such, you reserve the right to decline in answering any question. If you choose to terminate your participation in the interview at any time please know there will be no negative consequences. Pseudonyms will be used to protect your name, franchise affiliation, names of coaches, and any other information you deem private.

If you would be interested in participating please indicate when a convenient time would be, along with location. In addition, a letter of invitation outlining the process of the study will be e-mailed to you immediately. If no, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to read this.

If you have any questions prior to our interview, please do not hesitate in contacting me through e-mail at [vg08wb@brocku.ca]. Any additional comments, questions, or concerns may be directed to the faculty supervisor of this study, Dr. Cathy van Ingen (Department of Kinesiology, Faculty of Applied Health Sciences, Brock University) by email at cvaningen@brocku.ca.

This study has been reviewed and has received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board (REB) at Brock University (file # ____). The Research Ethics Board Officer may be contacted by e-mail at reb@brocku.ca or by telephone at 905-688-5550 ext 3035.

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you

Sincerely,

Vicky Grygar
Graduate Student
Department of Health and Physical Education
Brock University

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Appendix C

Letter of Consent Form

Date:

Project Title: A Struggle Against the Odds: Understanding the Lived Experiences of Canadian Hockey League (CHL) Players

Principal Student Investigator:
Vicky Grygar,
Graduate Student
Department of Health and Physical Education
Brock University
(905) 359-8874
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Faculty Supervisor
Dr. Cathy van Ingen,
Associate Professor
Department of Kinesiology
Brock University
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INVITATION

You are invited to participate in a study that involves research. The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of former Canadian Hockey League (CHL) players.

WHAT IS INVOLVED

As a participant, you will be asked to participate in a single interview with the researcher. Participation will take approximately one hour of your time. The interview will take place face-to-face, via Skype, or the telephone, which will be chosen as preference to you.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS

Potential benefits of participation include the opportunity to reflect on past experiences in the CHL and offer insight into areas of improvement for the league. There are no known or anticipated risks associated with your participation in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Data collected during this study will be stored on the researcher's personal laptop computer, which requires a password for access. The data from the interviews will be transcribed verbatim and the audio recordings and transcriptions of the interviews will be stored in a locked filing cabinet at the researcher's home office. Data will be kept for four years after which time the data will be shredded and recycled. Access to these data will be restricted to Vicky Grygar (Researcher), and Dr. Cathy van Ingen (Supervisor). Participant names and organizational affiliations will be replaced with assigned pseudonyms for publication purposes and never disclosed in written or oral presentations of the study.

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VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you wish, you may decline to answer any or all questions asked throughout the duration of the interview. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Results of this study may be published in professional and academic journals and presented at conferences. Feedback about this study will be available from Vicky Grygar via e-mail once the study has been completed.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact the Principal Student Investigator or the Faculty Supervisor using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University (file # _____). If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 Ext. 3035, reb@brocku.ca.

Thank you for your assistance in this project. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I want about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time. By replying to this e-mail I acknowledge that I am participating in this study and that I am providing informed consent.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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Appendix D

Sample Interview Questions

1. Where did you grow up?
2. At what age did you first begin to play hockey?
3. At what age did you first begin to play organized hockey?
4. Describe the role of your parents during the beginning of your hockey career.
5. At what age did you begin to take hockey in a more serious manner?
6. At what age did you seek an agent?
7. Describe the feeling of being drafted into the [WHL, OHL, QMJHL] of the Canadian Hockey League.
8. Take me through the process of signing your CHL contract.
9. Describe your feelings about moving away from home to play for [team].
10. How would you describe the relationship you had with your coach, teammates and billet family?
11. Describe an average day for you while playing in the CHL.
12. Describe your level of satisfaction with how you were financially compensated by your team.
13. What kind of educational support did you receive from the [franchise name]?
14. What were your goals in regards to your hockey career at this stage in your life?
15. At what point did you know that you would not continue on playing in the National Hockey League (NHL)?
16. What kind of educational support did you receive following the end of your CHL career from the [franchise name]?
17. How would you describe your overall experience playing in the CHL? Are there any areas in which you feel the league could make improvements?

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Appendix E

Participant #10: Tyler
Skype Interview
March 14, 2013

I: What is your earliest memory of skating or playing hockey?

P: My dad was actually my coach in house league in [city]. He used to run skating lessons and I would always go out with him and do it. [arena] in [city]...Saturday morning practices at 6am, I remember getting changed at home into my equipment, and he would fire up the car and warm it up and then we'd be at the rink by 5:30am.

I: Did you want to play or did your parents put you into it?

P: I'm pretty sure I wanted to play, but you don't really know that when you're a young kid. Obviously my parents got me started with it.

I: Was there a point where you realized your talent was different from other people?

P: Not really [laughs]. I played my first year in house league 2 years up because my older brothers an [year of birth] and I'm an [year of birth] so to make life easier on my parents I just played with my brother and then the following year I went down and played with my own age group and actually started playing and stuff. I played on a team called [team name] and we ended up winning all of Ontario and stuff against 9 year olds. That was kind of a cool year.

I: Did you play triple A after?

P: Ya, my dad was actually offered a coaching job with [team name] and so I went to those try outs because obviously life would be easier if I was playing where my dad was coaching, I went to those try outs and they said I was too advanced for everyone there, so then before the season even started with them I went and started playing with the [team name].

I: Did you like your dad as a coach?

P: No, I hated it. He was really hard on me and he has a temper. He's a screamer, he yells, but he always took it harder on me and my brothers.

I: Would he talk about it at home at stuff after?

P: More like on the bench and in front of the other teammates, I guess he didn't want to show he was taking it lighter on me because I was his kid. Sometimes we would talk at home. If I did something stupid, or if I got too many penalties or something he wouldn't

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even talk to me, he would give me the silent treatment. I would get in the car and he'd be waiting outside and we wouldn't talk for a week.

I: Was your goal the OHL?

P: I don't know if I really had a goal when I was younger. I was just playing because it was fun, and then once it got more competitive and serious the older you got, then I actually realized...I don't know. My mom was born in [European country] and my dad was born in [European country] and none of them really played sports. My dad just kind of picked up hockey to learn it so we could get into it, and I mean anyone can really teach first timers to start skating, you don't really need to know much. So I didn't really know too much about it, but eventually as the years went on, got older, I wanted that, ya, for sure.

I: Did you have an agent before the draft?

P: No.

I: Do you remember the day of the draft?

P: Ya. I didn't even get drafted. The night before [OHL Team] called me and said they would take me within the [round #s] and then the next day came and I was at a practice for the [team name] the junior A team. The draft kept going on and people kept getting updates, I eventually got off the ice and I still wasn't drafted and it was the 10th round already so I was pretty rattled. And then the draft ended up finishing and I didn't end up getting drafted.

I: How'd you feel?

P: I was pretty upset.

I: Did you go home?

P: Oh ya. Of course I did. I went straight home, I was pretty upset because I was expecting something, you know?

I: Ya, for sure. It's funny I talked to some guys and one guy told me he locked himself in the shower and started crying...

P: Oh ya.

I: ...because he thought he was going to go higher.

P: I definitely started crying because I thought I was going to get drafted, and I didn't even get drafted. I thought my world was over.

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I: So what happened after that?

P: After that I just ended up playing...the 15 year old year that was my draft year I was playing for the [team name] a junior A team and I actually got hit behind the net and was knocked out cold and ended up missing the rest of that year with a concussion. And then the following year I played my midget year with the [team name] and then after that year was up I got a try out with the [OHL Team] the following training camp.

I: So you were 16 or 17?

P: I was 16 turning 17 that year.

I: Do you remember going to camp? Were you nervous?

P: Ya I actually went with my buddy [player name] and I went with him and his mom to camp, because I knew him and had grown up playing with him, went to school with him in [school name]. We grew up going to school together and became really good buddies so I got a try out with him, with [OHL Team] so my parents were actually on a cruise at the time. So he offered to take me down with his mom.

I: Was he already on the team?

P: No he was drafted by them but didn't play his first year.

I: How did the camp go?

P: Went well. I was actually a defenseman at that point still. My whole life I was a defenseman up until that point. I went to camp as a D-man. I don't know, I had a good camp, I just kind of had to...I said to myself I had to do something to set myself apart from their draft picks and someone asked me to fight my first inter-squad game and I did. I beat him up, did pretty well.

I: Was that one of your first fights?

P: Ya, actually it was [laughs]. Obviously in minor hockey you can't fight and in junior A you get suspended for it so they don't really condone it.

I: Were you fired up?

P: Ya I was [laughs]. I kind of felt bad for the guy because he was older than me and he was trying to make a name for himself too and make the team. By the time we got up to eat our meal his face was pretty messed up.

I: Did you decide going in that you needed to fight to make this team?

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P: No, it kind of just happened. I was always kind of a blue collar guy, I always had to work for everything and I'm pretty intense and competitive. I like hitting and everything, I was just hitting out there and playing my game and then someone asked me to fight off the draw and I was like "ya sure" and then it ended up working out well for me. I don't know, my whole life has kind of been lucky like that, with opportunities like that and I've just done well with them.

I: So then you made the roster?

P: Ya. By the end of training camp, my parents were still on the cruise so I couldn't really get a hold of them. My one deal with them was that if I went to camp I wouldn't play in a game unless I was signed and got a school package because obviously you give up your scholarship rights after right?

I: Your parents told you to do that?

P: Ya, so then after training camp was done we had our exhibition game against [OHL Team] and [GM name] didn't want to sign me, he wanted to see how I did in the exhibition game first. So I said "well I can't do it, I promised my parents that if I came here the only way I would play is if I got a school package. I promised them that so I can't do it."

I: What did he say?

P: He said "alright, I understand" and I ended up leaving that meeting and I went back to the camp to pack my bags and I was going to leave that next morning. The next morning when we woke up they wanted to sign me to a contract and stuff. So I said I'll sign and then played that next day.

I: So then he gave you a contract...

P: Ya [laughs]

I: Did he tell you what you would get for school?

P: \$5 grand a year.

I: That's what he said? \$5 grand?

P: Ya.

I: Did he say anything about books?

P: Nope. He just told me that it's a pretty good deal for a free agent. I didn't have an agent, [player name]'s Dad came in with me because my parents weren't there either. So he came in with me as my representative [laughs] and he agreed because I think [player

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name] got \$5500 and I mean he was drafted and stuff and I wasn't drafted so \$5 thousand I thought was a fair deal.

I: What year was this?

P: 2006-07 season.

I: Now it's like for every year you play you get it covered, full tuition and books.

P: Holy shit, that would be nice.

I: Do you remember your first regular season game?

P: Yeah. Actually no I don't. I don't remember if we were home or away. I remember my first exhibition game we went to [city] for training camp and we played the [OHL Team] and I got an assist my first game so I was pretty pumped about that.

I: Do you remember your first fight?

P: Yes. It was at home in [OHL Team] we were playing [OHL Team] and I fought [player name]. I fought him 6 times that year too.

I: How'd it go?

P: It went well. I cut him open over his right eye. It was [player name friend on team]'s first fight too. He did really well against [player name].

I: Really?

P: Ya, I think then and there it kind of established...me and [player name friend on team] were already pretty close, but when...we had something. I would get him going and when he would fight it would get me going, you know? We both just fed off each other.

I: Did you live with billets?

P: Me and [player name friend on team] lived together.

I: With a family?

P: Ya.

I: Was that good?

P: Ya, it was great. I had a couple different billet families. My first year they were kind of struggling with billets so I was with [player name friend on team] temporarily they said, because his billet only wanted one player. But it ended up being February and I was still there. And then obviously as the trade deadline comes and they start moving guys they

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had more space, so then I went to another place and I didn't like these billets. The following year I came I didn't want to live with them because they were just in your face, as soon as I got home they would be like "oh so what happened at the rink today? I heard this, I heard that" like...just shut up. I just wanted to eat dinner. All they wanted to do was gossip. I moved out of that place and moved into another place and they were awesome. But then the following year I came back and they were having financial issues as a family, obviously they don't get paid enough, the billet families, so it's not like they were breaking even, or even making money with me. I mean they struggled to tell me but it was in the summer one time when I was going by, they told me to come by and the mom talked to me and stuff. They were so upset about it, but I mean obviously I wasn't mad about it. Then I ended up moving in with [player name one team], [player name], [player name], we had a 4 man billet house with grandparents. It was awesome.

I: How did your first year go?

P: Ya. I mean...I had to learn everything. As I said, I didn't get drafted. My parents didn't really have the best background with hockey. My mom would always do her research, she's the one who found out about playing and losing your scholarship to the NCAA, so they were pretty smart about that. But I didn't know the hockey side of it, you know?

I: Ya, for sure.

P: It was a learning experience for me the whole year.

I: It was different from what you were used to...

P: Ya, well I also, I went there and I went to [high school name in hometown] so when I went there to [OHL Team] they had actually 2 schools. They had a private school, just like [high school name in hometown] and a school just like everyone else went to. In order for me to graduate, because I had one more year left at [high school name in hometown] because I was going there since I was in grade 7, so my parents wanted me to go to the private school and take all their courses and then I could transfer back here to [high school name in hometown] and graduate. So that's what I did.

I: What were you thinking at this point? What did you want to do with hockey?

P: I wanted to make it my life. I mean I was a good student, I love school, I could go back to school anytime I wanted, I really enjoyed it but I wanted to make hockey my life.

I: So then you came back for a second year?

P: Yep. Quarter way through the second year we were losing to [OHL Team] one game and the coaches put me on forward for a shift and I ended up scoring a goal, ever since then I stuck forward. So it was a new learning curve for me. I had to learn a new position that I never played before in my life, so it was like I was a rookie all over again.

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I: Was your role the fighter at that point?

P: Ya. Like I said, when I made the team I fit myself into that by mistake, by chance. You know the guys on the other team that you're potentially going to fight, you know? But it's not really staged where you go and ask them during warm up. I mean even here [professional league name] and my first game here we were playing [team name] and I went over in warm up and asked him if he would give me a go just because it was my first game, you know? Just give me a chance. And we ended up getting at it, but usually it doesn't really happen like that.

I: How did the rest of that second year go?

P: It went well, but by the end of it I was having some hip issues. I'd get up in the morning, and I lived in the basement of the billet house and I'd barely be able to walk up the steps. I had really bad hip issues, so I was getting therapy and stuff, but I just played out the year. It got to the point where I'd just come off and it would be the intermission and we were sitting down and it'd be hard to just get up off my stall and get it going again. That summer I ended up having hip surgery at [hospital name] and by the time training camp rolled around again we were in [city] and we were doing a bag skate, at the end I was on all fours in the corner because I couldn't skate. My hip was messed up still. I ended up going home for therapy for 4 weeks and then I tried a cortisone shot a couple times, and it would be good for a week and then I wouldn't be able to walk again. I ended up having another surgery, the hip is a new thing in the last 10 years, so there's only a handful of really good surgeons. This one [doctor name] who is the [NFL team] team doctor, he's a hip guru in North America, he's the one who teaches everyone about it. He was coming to [OHL Team] to the [hospital name] to do a hip scope seminar. He was doing 3 surgeries and I had did a lot of, me and [player name on team] did a lot of community service there. It got to the point where I was going 3-4 times a week, just after practice, just to go there and help out. So once I heard he was coming they knew I was having hip problems, they had the doctors there actually look at x-rays and MRI's and stuff, and they were the ones who asked if I wanted to have it done by [doctor name]. So they had to write a letter to the [city] headquarters of [hospital name] because it's just a kids' hospital, and they had to get it approved because I was over 19. They ended up doing that and I had my surgery there, in [month] which saved my hockey career. Then I went home and did 3 and half months of straight rehab, 6-7 days a week and I ended up coming back and played the last [number] games of the year. But it was too hard to jump back into hockey at the end of the year, it get's faster every game from the beginning of the season. So then after our season ended I got to go play in [team name] in the [pro league name] just to get some more games in. I did that, I did pretty well and then I got an invite to [NHL team] camp that following year. I went to [NHL Team]'s camp that following year and it kind of gets hairy the next couple years after this. [laughs]

I: So you were done with [OHL Team]?

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P: No it was my third year with [OHL Team] and I had my hip surgery but at the end of that year the GM for [NHL Team] saw me play for a bit and [coach name] was our coach, he knew him. So they talked about me, and he came to watch a couple games but he wanted to see my play more because he didn't really see me much because of my surgery. So he was the one who got me to go to [team name]. I played there until the end of [team name]'s season, because the pro season is longer than the junior season. I played [number] games, and then [GM name] brought me to [NHL Team]'s camp that following year and so I was in [OHL Team] first for training camp and the day before I was supposed to leave, you know how they have a bunch of exhibition games during training camp and stuff, so my coach had me teach some of the younger guys who wanted to fight, and wanted to learn how to fight, you know? And I was holding on to one of the guys and he fell and as he fell I was hanging on, and my thumb snapped back. I thought I just sprained it, you know I had the feeling in my hand, but I thought nothing was broken, it's alright. I just sprained it. The next day I had to fly out to [tournament] I didn't pass my physical because my hand was torn up. I torn my ulner collateral ligament it's called and got sent home the next day, didn't even participate. I only got to participate in two practices. It was my first opportunity to battle back, after my two surgeries, I was really excited, you know? And then I was just crushed. So I came home back to [OHL Team] rehabbed for 8 weeks and this is my 4th year, my over age year. I started playing, my first 3 games, was playing really well and then ---

P: I ended up going back to [pro league]. The year before I went, well that same coach was still there. Played [number] games there, and then I got stepped on my wrist with a skate. It ended my season. I woke up the next morning and had hooks coming out of each finger nail, and fishing wire coming down. I thought I hit rock bottom there. 2 surgeries, [NHL camp], and now I messed up my hand. It was the worst year of my life.

I: How frustrating was that?

P: Oh ya. I was so messed up mentally. I was definitely depressed. After that, because it gets even worse. So I rehabbed, I ended up having my shoulder done at the same time as my hand because my shoulder was already messed up. So then I rehab after all that, a whole summer of rehab and then I got a chance to go to the [NHL Team] camp, and I'm from [city] it's my hometown so I was fucking pumped, right? I got invited to the rookie camp only. So I go to their rookie camp and they have that tournament in [city] and I play in that and do well, and they ended up inviting me to main camp. My first practice in main camp I get a puck to the face and loose my 2 front teeth, which is fine, not a big deal. And then I make it to the very last day of camp and things were going great, I was doing amazing in the inter-squad games and everything. I didn't get any exhibition games but I was still there. Then on the very last day they released me and didn't really say anything. I was so upset, because I thought for sure I was going to get something. Literally I went home that night, it was a Friday, I slept on it, Saturday I woke up and booked a flight out to [city], Sunday morning I left to [city] and went to [CIS University]. I was 3-4 weeks late, the school year had already started you know? So I went to [city] with my hockey gear, I didn't even have a backpack yet, and a bag full of clothes. I showed up there, didn't have a clue, these guys just put me in a residence on campus,

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didn't have a backpack. I had to go buy a backpack, buy my books and then get someone to show me around campus. I haven't been in school for 3 years now full time you know? I was so lost...so lost.

I: When did you decide to go to school?

P: Well I had it set up just in case, as a back up plan. I didn't really want to go, I just did it to make my parents happy. So I had that already all set up throughout the summer, but I was thinking I was going to get something from [NHL Team] to play pro. So I didn't end up getting anything from [NHL Team], I could of gone to play in the ECHL league and play for [team] right away but I didn't want to. I was just in another world. I was still mentally screwed up. I just said "fuck it" I just wanted to get out of town, just leave everything and just find myself. Just to see what happens. After all that stuff I was thinking something is telling me I shouldn't be doing this with my life, you know? So I did that, finally found my way with school, did really well in school, played the season out, but the ECHL coach kept in touch with me and he kind of fell in love with me. I was still young, I was [age] but I got to know him really well because the [pro league] wasn't the best pro league, I was the youngest guy in the whole league. So he kind of took a liking to me. And then I went to [CIS University] for the year and then February came around, the end of the CIS season, so once the season ended I already had a flight booked out. We had a Friday/Saturday game and that ended our season and I had a flight booked out on Sunday morning. So I packed up my whole apartment at [CIS University] I just left it all there [laughs] because I had to go back to write exams after, I didn't just want to throw away the semester. I still had my apartment rented until the end of April. I just left all my stuff there in my apartment, I went to the rink, grabbed my gear and then I called my [CIS University] coach while I was at the airport to tell him I was leaving and that I was going to play pro. And their like "woah, woah, why don't you come in and we'll talk about, you're a big part of the team, we don't want you to just leave" and I'm like "I'm really sorry, it's too late, I'm already in the airport about to board my flight" [laughs] so they were kind of pissed about that. The assistant coach understood, I still keep in contact with him. So then I went to [pro league team] played out the rest of the year there, had a blast, did well. The day the season ended I left, went back to [CIS University] and I had 6 exams to write.

I: How'd you do?

P: I talked to all my profs before I left, and because I was doing so well in school before I left, they understood. So they were keeping up with him while I was in [pro league team] and when I came back I basically sat down with each prof and they gave me a crash course for that last term that I missed. I did well, I passed all 6 exams. I had an 89% average. I stayed out there for the summer because I bike a lot and [city] is unbelievable. I stayed out there. Before I even left [pro league team] I was talking to [player name]'s dad, because he knows hockey and he knows my whole story. And I was in another place, in [city] I'd wake up every morning and I'd have to go to class, but I'd wake up and start crying and I didn't know why. I had to go see a psychologist, I told my coaches about it. So I went to see a psychologist once a week about it while I was there. The people that know me from [CIS city] don't really know me, because they saw a different

A STRUGGLE AGAINST THE ODDS

person of me, you know? So that was tough. But I just knew, every month I kept talking to the coach and all I thought about was hockey. Sometimes I wouldn't go to class because I'd just go to the rink and workout or go on the ice, or something you know? I knew I wanted to keep playing, so that was a good sign, because that's why I went there, you know? To figure out if I still wanted to keep doing that after all the shit that happened.

I: It sounds like you learned a lot there.

P: Ya, I learned a lot about myself out there. I think if none of that stuff ever happened to me I wouldn't be playing hockey right now. So I went there to figure my shit out, but then I went back for the summer, took a couple more courses and just lived out there for the summer. I just enjoyed a summer without having a surgery for once, you know? I enjoyed it. I went back [to pro league] after the summer, got ready for training camp. In [month] of that year I broke my hand. I got jumped in a fight and the guy had his helmet on and I hit his helmet a couple times and I broke my hand. It still looks...look at what my hand looks like [shows hand] after two surgeries that's as straight as my fingers can go. It won't go straight. Even though that happened, I wasn't mad about it at all but it wasn't something I could of controlled, you know? It was a freak accident, my hand broke, not a big deal, and I still had a great year, the most fun year of hockey I ever had. After that year I stayed out in [pro league team] for the summer and had two surgeries on my hand, just hung out. Then I went back to training camp and I played in my first game and I hit someone at center ice and got suspended. We had way too many guys on our roster, and you could only keep a certain amount of guys and in order to serve a suspension you have to be on the active roster, so my coach said he would have to release a guy in order for me to be on the roster and serve my suspension, which he didn't think was fair. And this was my 5th season with him so I was really close with the guy. He told me it was the hardest thing he had to do but he had to trade me because he couldn't keep me on the roster and take up someone's spot because of the suspension I had to serve. So he ended up trading me to [pro league team] where the assistant coach there was a buddy I had played with. So I had the connection there and he knew it would be a good spot for me, so I went there. I played there and then I got called up to [pro league team] and I've been here in [pro league team] until now.

I: So what now?

P: Well now I'm playing in [pro league team] and it's been a while and it felt great when they told me I got called up, you know? It's been a great opportunity because they've been talking to my coaches for about a month before they called me up, because they didn't just want to call me up on a Friday and throw me right to the fire and play. So they were waiting for a good time to bring me in and I could practice for 3 or 4 days first. After all-star break they had one game and then they didn't play again for another week so they called me up after that. So I practiced all week and then got into it, into the game and I'm still here.

I: That's good.

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P: [smiles]...ya.

I: If you had a kid and he could go to the NCAA or to the CHL where would you tell him to go?

P: I mean, I don't have any regrets. Although it's kind of been a shitty ride, I wouldn't take anything back, you know? To me, having an education is huge. Especially nowadays you can't get a regular job without having a degree, and a regular degree is nothing these days. I don't know. I don't know. I mean, it's worked out for me so far, you know? So I don't know if I would change it, but college is awesome too. I have so many friends who played in college, but I think if you want to make your life out of hockey, I would still send them the major junior route. But I would send him to the WHL, not the OHL. I don't like David Branch.

I: Do you think players need a union?

P: Ya. It's like child slavery down there. It's a joke...\$50 dollars a week? In [OHL Team] too actually, you'd get \$50 dollars a week, but then guys who drive would get gas money every week, and they drive guys to school and everything. Well, let's say [player name] was driving me to school every morning, our GM would take money out of my \$50 dollars a week to pay gas for [player name]'s gas money, which isn't right. They weren't supposed to be doing that, you know? But as a kid, I made the team, I was just trying to fly under the radar. You're not going to say shit. Now that I'm older, I realize that was bullshit. We were getting paid \$50 dollars a week, getting taxed on that and then he's taking money out to pay guys for gas money when he [GM] should be paying for it? It was brutal. Eventually, once a new GM came in he straightened that out and it wasn't happening anymore but that was bullshit. Once a week you'd get a pay check for \$80 bucks and then the second week is when they would take the gas money, so I was getting pay checks for \$52 bucks for every 2 weeks.

I: Does it ever worry you about everything you hear in the news about hockey injuries lately?

P: I'm just coming back from a concussion right now.

I: How does that feel?

P: You know, it's weird. I've always heard guys talk about it but I didn't really...I was just like "oh...alright" but there's pressure behind my eyes, pressure in my skull, I felt like puking every time I woke up, I couldn't focus. Like if I was talking to you right now last week...if you were talking to me I would be listening to you and looking at the screen, but I really wouldn't be able to tell you what I was looking at on the screen, I would just be gazing at nothing. So that was kind of weird, but I'm better now.

I: It just slowly goes away?

A STRUGGLE AGAINST THE ODDS

P: Ya. They are really cautious about it here. They don't let you do anything until you're symptom free for 3 days. Then they start you on a light 20 minute bike ride and if you're good you go on a 30 minute bike ride, and then if you're good you do sprints, a workout, and then even more sprints, and then a harder workout. Then you start skating on your own, then you start skating with the team and then you do an impact test and if you're good you can start playing.

I: Are the pro minor leagues really different from the CHL?

P: Ya. I mean...the CHL, it's the time of your life. It's the best time in hockey you'll ever have because you have absolutely no responsibility. You're a big deal in your town because you're 17 years old and you go to high school...and people...you don't really get it then. But when you look back at it...I mean everyone wishes they could go back to their junior days, because you have no responsibility and you're just playing hockey. All your friends back home think it's awesome, it's cool. But once you move on and play pro, it's a job. It's not just fun and games. It is fun but there are times during the season when it's not fun at all and you hate it because certain things happen. When you're getting paid, you don't make that much money but still if you're making \$600 bucks a week and you have another guy making \$1000 bucks a week, and the guy who is making \$600 bucks a week is playing well and producing more you're going to get released or you're pay is going to get bumped down, you know? So it's pretty stressful, and as soon as you turn pro, I was talking to someone about this a couple weeks ago, it's stressful because every single day is a job interview for you, especially as you move higher. They watch everything on video from every game, they don't miss anything. The way your skates are turning, the way your stick is, they watch you every practice, they're evaluating you because there's thousands of players in the world, hundreds of thousands of players who want to take your job. So every single day there's a guy working just as hard as you, if not harder to steal your job, so everyday they're evaluating you, it's like a job interview.

I: It sounds like you've come to terms with the fact that this is your job.

P: Yep.

I: When did you realize that?

P: This year. When I got traded. When I got traded I was like "oh...it is just a business" you need to put a winning team on the ice whether you're close with the guy or you just met him. That's when I realized that the best players are going to play and if you're not competing and if you're not doing as well as you should be, someone else is going to take your job. That's when I realized it is just a job. You can't go to work everyday and not do your job, just sit at your desk and go on Facebook all day, because you would get fired. And if you don't come to work everyday at the rink, at practice, you're going to get traded or you're going to get released.

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I: Do you think the CHL is a big business?

P: I mean...it is for them. Not for the players. For them, they make a lot of money. It's the best junior league in the world. They make a lot of money off the players. They hire a bunch of interns every year that they don't have to pay, they pay their real employees shit and they work like dogs.

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Appendix F

Additional Player Benefits

In-Season and Off-Season Education Costs

The Club will cover and provide, as per normal Club policy, the enrolment costs which shall include tuition, books and other fees for the Player to attend a suitable academic institution while the Player is with the Club. Club will purchase a laptop for Player's use. Such educational costs, which would include costs associated with both High School and/or Post-Secondary classes, shall be in addition to the US\$95,000 payment for Post-QMJHL Education costs stipulated in this Agreement.

Parental Travel

The Club will provide US\$3,000 per season to defray costs of Player's family to travel to Halifax during the time the Player is with the Club.

Living Accommodation (Billeting)

The Club will provide to the Player for his entire period of stay a suitable billet family.

'Release' Costs

The Club will cover any reasonable costs associated with the 'release' of the Player from his previous Club.

Summer Training/Fitness

The Club will provide to the Player the services of the Club trainer for fitness support and guidance during the time the Player is with the Club.

In addition the Club will provide to the Player an allowance of US\$2,500 per season commencing with the summer of 2010 to be used to defray the costs of the Player's off-season conditioning.

A STRUGGLE AGAINST THE ODDS

Appendix G

Appeal from Manitoba Court Ruling

Page 1

*Indexed as:***McCrimmon Holdings Ltd. v. Canada (Minister of National Revenue - M.N.R.)**

Between

McCrimmon Holdings Ltd. and 32155 Manitoba Ltd., a partnership o/a Brandon Wheat Kings, Appellant, and The Minister of National Revenue, Respondent, and Daryl Stockham, Intervenor

[2000] T.C.J. No. 823

[2000] A.C.I. no 823

Court File Nos. 2000-1538(EI), 2000-1540(CPP)

Tax Court of Canada
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Rowe D.T.C.J.

Heard: October 2, 2000.
Judgment: November 24, 2000.

(24 paras.)

Unemployment insurance – Insurable employment -- What constitutes -- Employer-employee relationship.

This was an appeal by a major junior hockey club from the Minister's decision that players for the club were engaged in insurable and pensionable employment. The club argued that the relationship between the players and the club was more akin to a form of private education. It argued that the money the players received from the club was an allowance rather than a salary. Players who had graduated from high school were entitled to post-secondary tuition for every year of service to the club. The Minister argued that the evidence clearly established an employment relationship between the players and the club.

HELD: Appeal dismissed. The players were paid employees of the club. An amendment to subsection 5(2) of the Employment Insurance Act would be required to exclude junior hockey players from the category of insurable employment. While there was an educational component to the con-

Appendix H
Appeal from Manitoba Court Ruling

can play for a chosen professional team as an under-age 19-year old player provided the professional league compensates his former WHL team by paying the sum of \$100,000. 7 of the WHL permit three 20-year olds on the roster of each team and they are referred to : "over-age" players. As a result, most players remain in the WHL for only four years. The Hockey League (NHL) rules permit an 18-year old to play in that elite league but not in a

Reclaiming the rights of youth: A preliminary analysis of the lived experiences of Canadian Hockey League (CHL) players.

The foundation on which the Canadian Hockey League (CHL) is based, the world's leading developmental junior ice hockey league, is currently undergoing a monumental shift. Comprised of 1,400 hockey players, aged 16–21 years old on 60 teams through three divisions, the CHL is a primary supplier of talent for the National Hockey League (NHL). In the last year, several issues surrounding unjust practices within the CHL have been brought to the forefront, including the need to reform education packages offered to players following the end of their junior hockey careers. The potential for harassment, abuse, and exploitative practices are heightened in an organization such as the CHL, where profits are extracted from the labour of youth. My research contends that power relationships within the CHL need to be critically examined. As such, the purpose of this research is to examine the experiences of CHL players using a Foucauldian discourse analysis. Ultimately, this study is an examination of power relations between players and officials (i.e., coaches, team, scouts, agents and league executives) within the Canadian junior hockey system. The research is designed to contribute to both scholarly and public audiences, providing a critical analysis of the welfare of youth in the CHL.

Vicky Grygar
MA Program, Faculty of Applied Health Sciences
Brock University
Email: vicky.grygar@gmail.com

This is Exhibit "C" referred to in the
affidavit of Victoria Grygar
sworn before me, this 11th
day of June, 2016
[Signature]
A commissioner for taking affidavits

11am - 11:45am

Room 110

Dr. Josh Pate, James Madison, & Dr. Rob Hardin, University of Tennessee. *Paralympic Athletes use of Twitter to Promote Social Change*
Mr. Sab Singh, SUNY-Farmingdale State. *How New Media Gives Athletes the Forum to Engage and Persuade*

Room 111

Mr. Bill Keig, RallyMe. *Advancing an Athletes and Sports Crowdfunding Platform*

Mr. Jonathan Jensen, Ms. Kristy McCray & Dr. Brian Turner, Ohio State University. *Factors Influencing the Propensity of Athletes to Contribute to Social Change*

11:45am - 1pm Lunch (Auditorium)

1pm - 1:45pm

Room 110

Mr. Michael James Brown, Other Awareness Project. *Athletes: Instruments of Change*

Dr. Katie Kity, Endicott College. *Sports, Arts, Peace and Digital Storytelling*

Room 111

Dr. Mary Hums, University of Louisville, & Mr. Eli Wolf, Brown University. *Athletes for Human Rights: A Case for the Scholar-Athlete-Activist*

Dr. Bryon Martin, Chicago State University. *Academics, Athletes & the Diverse Community*

2pm - 2:45pm Open Forum (Auditorium)

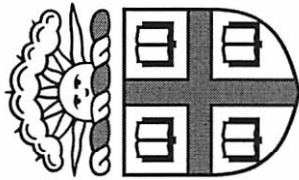
3pm - 3:30pm Closing (Auditorium)

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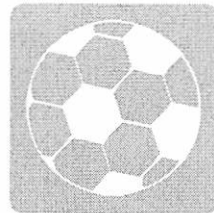
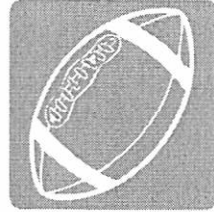
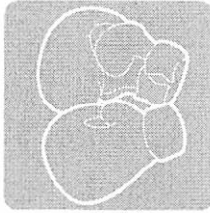
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& HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Muhammad Ali Center ATHLETES & SOCIAL CHANGE



EDUCATIONAL FORUM MARCH 29 & 30

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

We are very pleased and honored to welcome you to the Muhammad Ali Center Athletes and Social Change Forum, an innovative new conference designed to advance education, advocacy and research on the role and contribution of athletes toward social change, human rights and development.

What does it mean for athletes to engage in social change, philanthropy and work within the community? The Forum aims to examine and provide diverse perspectives in the intersection of athletes and social change.

In attendance will be a diverse group of practitioners, academics, athletes, and activists, who will explore what it means for athletes to engage in social change, philanthropy and work within the community.

Specific focus areas to be discussed at the Forum are:

- The roles and responsibilities athletes have beyond the playing field
- The ways athletes can serve as educators and advocates to address social problems within and outside of sports
- How the global sporting community encourages or discourages athletes working in the realm of social change
- The roles educational institutions play in providing grounding for athletes to make the connections between athletics, academics and the community

Thank you for your participation and involvement at the Forum, and we do look forward to an engaging and productive gathering. We do hope this is the beginning of a dynamic athletes and social change community developed in collaboration with the Muhammad Ali Center.

Kindest regards,

Marcel Parent
Muhammad Ali Center

Eli Wolff
Brown University

Mary Hums
University of Louisville

SCHEDULE

Thursday March 28

7pm - 9pm Informal reception – BlueGrass Brewing (Auditorium)

Friday March 29

8am - 9am Registration and coffee

9am - 9:45am Welcome & Introductions (Auditorium)
Mr. Donald Lassere, President/ CEO of the Ali Center
Mr. Marcel Parent, Ali Center
Mr. Eli Wolff, Brown University
Dr. Mary Hums, University of Louisville
Ms. Tori Murden-McClure, Spaulding University

10am - 10:45am

Room 110
Mr. Mike Geodes, streetfootballworld, Engaging Athletes to Utilize Soccer for Social Change

Room 111

Ms. Soalmaz Abocall, George Mason University, *The Power of Sport and Educational Institutions*

Mr. Matt Huml and Mr. Per Svensson, University of Louisville, *Exploring the Role of Educational Institutions in Student-Athlete Community Engagement*

11am - 11:45am

Room 110
Dr. Jennifer Bruening, UConn, Dr. Brianna Clark, Temple, & Dr. John Borland, Springfield College, *Female Student-Athletes Reflect on Mentors, Mentoring and Community Involvement*

Dr. Ashleigh Huffman, Dr. Sarah Hillyer & Mr. Hal Wilson, University of Tennessee, *From Apathy to Advocacy: Student-Athletes & Social Change*

Room 111

Mr. Eli Wolff, Brown University & Ms. Kalli White, IHCD, *Solidarity in Sport Pledge and Movement*

Ms. Abb Hill, Dr. Cheri Bradish, and Dr. Lucia Tribault, Brock University, *An Examination of Athletes in Sport for Development Stakeholder Relationships*

11:45am - 1pm Lunch (Auditorium)

1pm - 1:45pm

Room 110
Ms. Micki King & Mr. Gary Hall, World Fit, *World Fit Walk*
Mr. Michael Venile, GlloeStope, Citi - *Every Step of the Way*

Room 111

Mr. Rene Jon-Sardy Hip Hop Loves & Ms. Vanessa Chakour, *Sacred Warrior, Lord of the Rings*

2pm - 2:45pm

Room 110

Dr. Darlene Klujka, Barry University & ICSSPE, *Athletes as Leaders: How can they Contribute to Social Change Globally?*

Dr. Ernese Ivan, St. John's University, Hungarian *Sport Community in Transition : is there a Role for Athletes in Social Change?*

Room 111

Ms. Vicky Gygar, Brock University, *Reclaiming the Rights of Youth: Lived Experiences of Canadian Hockey League*

Ms. Rebekah Roulier, Doc Wayne, A Bio-Psychosocial Assessment of an Adjunctive Intervention for Youth in Residential Treatment

3pm - 3:45pm Open Forum

4pm - 5pm Tour

5pm Reception at Ali Center by University of Louisville
6pm Informal Dinner at Bristol Bar & Grill

Saturday March 30

8am - 9am Coffee

9am - 9:45am Athlete Speaker/ Panel- Envisioning the Future: Athletes and Social Change in 2020 (Auditorium)

Moderator- Mr. Eli Wolff, Brown University
Ms. Mikki King, World-Fit, Olympian
Mr. Vitalis Lanshima, Paralympian
Ms. Angelika Uremovich, University of Louisville
Student-Athlete

10am - 10:45am

Room 110

Dr. Ted Peetz & Ms. Kelley Cash, Belmont University, *Creating a LEGACY: Promoting a Socially Conscious Athlete*

Mr. Marcus Amos, University of Tennessee, *How an Athletes Flight affects Voice with Social Problems*

Room 111

Dr. Susan Ray, SUNY-Cortland, *Student-Athletes as Agents of Social Change*

Mr. Tobias Blake and Mr. Nick Sanchez, *Experience Baseball: Development of Educational and Charitable Programs through Baseball*

Interview #1/ Participant #1
January 29, 2013
Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario

1 I: So, ya, I just want to start from the very beginning and ask you where you grew up,
2 how you started playing hockey.

3
4 P: So I grew up in [city 1]. Um...so I lived there my whole life, I lived in the same
5 house, never moved. Um...how I started into hockey is a lot different than most
6 people. Um...I always had played and I always had um...

7
8 I: You were a goalie?
9

10 P: Ya I was a goalie. But I always, whenever I played it was never organized and like
11 I played as a kid just on the street or in the back with an ice rink that my dad made
12 kinda thing, never organized hockey until...probably Grade 4 was my first year of
13 organized hockey, so I was like nine or ten I would say. So for Canadians that's sort
14 of weird that you didn't start when you were like three almost.

15
16 I: And why did you start then?
17

18 P: Um...it was more so my parents were never the type of parents who would push
19 me into anything. I never asked to play, or I never, like I had asked to play like
20 organized...what was it...like softball one year when I was little so I had played that,
21 but then just neighbours and sort of getting older so like grade four feels like the age
22 when you start to realize, like not any big revelations, but you realize like all sports,
23 like you get into them a little more. And so, I just asked my parents if they would
24 enrol me and they were like "Yeah, no problem." So first practice I went to and I
25 could not like I couldn't skate very well, so I was like I'm going to go in net and I
26 played like two games as a player in my life and the rest was goalie.

27
28 I: Did you have any, do you have any brothers or sisters?
29

30 P: Ya, a younger brother and a younger sister.
31

32 I: And did they ever play sports?
33

34 P: Uh...ya my whole family played sports. My brother never passed like, I think he
35 played single A and double A for a few years but mostly just house league. And how
36 it started was pretty much I think I got him into hockey just when I...we had always
37 played together like on the street and stuff, but when I asked to be enrolled like the
38 next day he asked if he could play hockey so it kind of just "Oh my big brother is
39 playing so I want to play too."
40

41 I: So when you were playing when you were, before you were in organized hockey
42 were you a goalie then or would you play?
43

This is Exhibit "D" referred to in the
affidavit of Victoria Grayson

sworn before me, this 11th

day of June, 2016

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Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario

44 P: No, the funny thing is I hated goalie, like I...road hockey...a lot of goalies will say
45 this, but like road hockey goalie and like...if you're even just shinny, like I hate being
46 goalie just like cause you take it so seriously to a certain extent when you're on the
47 ice and then like on the road you just want to have fun, and like road hockey for me
48 was always a way to be someone else kind of. Like my favourite hockey player is not
49 even a goalie, like my favourite player is Mats Sundin. Um...so like I was always Mats
50 Sundin as a kid, like try to like emulate all his moves, and it's funny because I
51 couldn't even really skate in real hockey so [laughs] I just think that's pretty funny.

52

53 I: Um...so do you remember why, or like what caused you to asked to be enrolled?
54 Were your friends doing it...or?

55

56 P: Um...ya probably the biggest influence would have been my neighbour. We had a
57 really close, sort of family dynamic with my neighbours like I called them even
58 though they weren't related like aunt and uncle and they did the same to my
59 parents. Um...and uh...like he was probably, I think he was four or five years older
60 than me but it was just sort of a tight knit, and it was a court so everyone knew each
61 other and played the same sports together on the court. And he had started playing
62 hockey um...probably a few years before and I think, like the year before I had
63 enrolled I went to one of his games, and it was nothing special, it was like a house
64 league game, but like they were all bigger than me, older than me, so I just thought it
65 was really cool and thought I'd like to give it a try. So that was probably the biggest
66 influence for me actually asking to be enrolled in hockey.

67

68 I: Um...and then kind of how did your parents feel about it? Were they supportive of
69 it? How did they treat hockey?

70

71 P: Ya...at first 100% supportive um...not really um...sort of like, **my parents were**
72 **always, I don't want to say indifferent because that's not like, they cared a lot**
73 **but they're not like the typical hockey parent that you would sort of think of.**
74 **Like they would never yell at me or anything about a hockey game or anything**
75 **like that they were sort of...they always told me when it's not fun anymore that's**
76 **when we'll take you out, when you say you're not having fun that's when you'll stop**
77 **playing. So they were never, sort of...it's actually a joke now within the community**
78 **sort of the hockey coaches like my parents really did not want me to play rep**
79 **hockey, like they, because I played one year of house league and the next year the**
80 **rep coach had asked me come out and try out for the team, and so like I did that and**
81 **then there's actually a story that's come out about like my mom talking to the coach**
82 **and just like saying like I don't think he's ready, like don't take him and I don't want**
83 **him to play, but like the coach took me anyways. [laughs] So, and then like I**
84 **obviously played so they weren't like crazy hockey parents in the sense that they**
85 **wouldn't let me or anything they just, they were worried more about like**
86 **pressure...and like they were worried about travelling with my school and stuff like**
87 **that. And I came from a, not like a well off or anything, but my mom was a stay at**

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88 home mom and my dad was a police officer so it wasn't a ton of money, we did okay
89 but it wasn't a lot so they were a little worried about like the extra costs, but they
90 would, their biggest concern was like pressure I think, and like playing rep hockey
91 and like, if that would like change me as a kid kind of thing so, but they...they were
92 fully supportive.

93

94 I: So after your first...once you were in organized hockey, so grade 4 you said...do
95 you remember what it was like? Like how did you feel about the game?

96

97 P: Um...it varied, like to describe it, it's almost like everything was new because I
98 had never played organized, I had never played with whistles and everything like
99 that so it was different, I really loved it um... from the first time I stepped on the ice
100 and especially once I had...the first practice I got into being a goalie, and like I loved
101 that even more. Um...for me even still if I'm like uh...coaching and I'll put on the pads
102 if we don't have enough goalies or something, the competition of like, not just
103 between people, but like you versus them, like the goalie is very singular almost, and
104 I just really liked that aspect like right from the start, like you're sort of the last line
105 of defence kind of, um...but other than that, like I remember being super happy, like
106 first win super happy, I remember, I still remember first loss, it's like the second or
107 third game of the year in house league and we lost and like I, my mom said I came
108 off like bawling, like we lost a game like, it doesn't even matter a regular season
109 house league game in grade 4 and I was like bawling my eyes out so [laughs] it's just
110 funny and I don't know why I was so upset but um...I just think like right away I was
111 pretty much hooked though...for the game.

112

113 I: So then after um...can you take me through like the levels that you went so after
114 grade 4...

115

116 P: Ya, so grade 4 was house league but first year, then I moved to um...they're called
117 the [team 1] and [city 1] has two rep systems. One is [team 1] and one is um...[team
118 2]. And [team 1] was double A, single A and the [team 2] are um...single A, double A,
119 triple A. So, for the [team 1]it's weird that they have one team and depending on
120 how you do for half the season you are either double A or single A, so it's not like a
121 set double A, single A team, it's how you do and that's what you're classified as.

122

123 I: Ok.

124

125 P: So I did that for...3 years with [team 1] uh...eventually I, I decided to play for
126 [team 2] because I think it was grade 7 was probably my last year with [team 1] and
127 then started getting attention from, not scouts of anything but people like in your
128 own hockey community, like "hey you should try out for the triple A team" or "they
129 need a goalie" then it eventually got to where the triple A coaches were calling like
130 "hey can you come out and we want to take a look at you" kind of thing. So grade 8
131 until my draft year in the OHL, grade 10, I played for triple A for [team 2] so...

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132

133 I: So when you were with [team 1], when did you know that you were maybe your
134 talent was different?

135

136 P: Um...I...it's funny...I never remember like, I remember being good and knowing
137 that I was good but I don't remember ever being like steps, like leaps and bounds
138 above everyone. I was always really big as a kid, uh...like I was probably, like by
139 grade 8 I was almost six feet, like I haven't grown much since grade 8 [laughs] so
140 like I was probably like 5'10 or 5'9 in grade 8 which is like a pretty big kid in grade
141 8.

142

143 I: Ya.

144

145 P: Um...so that helps out a lot obviously. Um...our coach gave nicknames to everyone
146 on the team and I think, and I didn't understand mine at first and then once I asked
147 my dad like "what does this mean?" and then I was like "oh maybe they do really
148 think I'm good" because my nickname was the uh...the franchise. [laughs] And I had
149 no idea of what even that meant, like in like grade 5, my dad was like "oh that means
150 that your like the cornerstone of the team" and I was like "holy shit" [laughs] But, so
151 it was, that was cool, but I'm trying to think for [team 2] like, I think it was more just
152 like getting the phone calls from people too like "you should go try out here" or
153 "we're looking for you to come here" so that's when I sort of, sort of knew it was a
154 possibility. But I was never like uh...I was never like a John Tavares or anything.
155 Even going into the my draft year until a couple weeks before the draft I didn't
156 know 100% if I was going to be drafted so it's not like I was some highly touted
157 prospect or anything like that.

158

159 I: So...when would you say that you begun to take hockey more seriously, when you
160 were like "okay, I'm good at this."

161

162 P: Probably...probably high school. Like starting grade 9. Grade 8 it was my first
163 year of triple A and that was for like adjustment like. I think especially more in my
164 younger years uh...hockey was a way for me to like be like the super cool kid almost.
165 Like "wow like he plays triple A" kind of thing. I was like, like it was almost like
166 um...I don't know how you say it like a sense of accomplishment and like a status
167 symbol. For me like without really having to do anything other than play the game I
168 love so I thought it was sweet. Um...so then high school I realized that like I knew
169 that the draft was in grade 10 and I was in grade 9 so I was like I should start to take
170 this seriously. Um...not seriously as in like going crazy but **my generation,**
171 **especially was sort of like the last, and by generation I mean like 88 and like**
172 **older, was sort of like we didn't have training from like the year, from like 10**
173 **years old and on, like I started working out in high school like for hockey,**
174 **where now you'll see kids like in earlier years, like grade 5, 6, 7, 8 they'll like**
175 **do, they won't do weights but they'll do like resistance training and stuff like**

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176 **that. So, it, it was different in that sense, that I didn't have to do that stuff. Or I**
177 **wasn't...now it's almost seems like if you want to play hockey you have to do**
178 **that. Um...but high school was when I really started to, to focus in and, and think**
179 **that I could, cause like everyone has dreams of the NHL, and high school was when I**
180 **thought like maybe there's some, some sort of like reality to that if I work hard.**

181
182 **I: When you were on [team 2] or even [team 1] did you think about the OHL?**

183
184 **P: Um...not...to be honest not really. Like I had um...I never like followed it or, my**
185 **first OHL game was probably grade 8 or 9. I remember being in a tournament in**
186 **[city 2] and my dad um...my dad was like "oh lets, like you want to go see a [OHL**
187 **team 1]?" Because he knew what it was, and he wasn't like a big follower of junior**
188 **hockey but, and he knew like that there was good players and NHL prospects, so I**
189 **was like "yeah, let's go check it out" and we went to [rink 1] and like, I loved it, it was**
190 **sweet. And a funny story that comes out of that was my, the coach of [OHL team 1]**
191 **at that time ended up being, I didn't realize this until obviously 5-6 years after,**
192 **ended up being my first coach in junior B. So he was the coach of [OHL team 1] at**
193 **the first OHL game I saw. And then he was my head coach in junior B, so that was**
194 **kind of cool. But ya, that was probably when I first like took notice, it was probably**
195 **like grade 8 or 9 for sure.**

196
197 **I: So you were in grade 9 and you were still playing for [team 2]?**

198
199 **P: [team 2], ya.**

200
201 **I: Which is...**

202
203 **P: Triple A, ya.**

204
205 **I: So, what happened after...so from triple A you went directly...**

206
207 **P: To junior B in grade 11.**

208
209 **I: Ok, so grade 10 is the draft?**

210
211 **P: Ya.**

212
213 **I: And what happened?**

214
215 **P: Um...I had spoken with probably 4 or 5 teams before the draft.**

216
217 **I: And what do you mean by that, did they call you?**

218

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219 P: Ya, I had phone calls um...I think one might have been like a package they sent in
220 the mail, the rest were phone calls from scouts. Um...or talking with the scouts after
221 games too.

222

223 I: Did they approach you after the games?

224

225 P: Uh...more so like **they sort of like network in a way. They like find out who**
226 **your parents are in a sense, and they approach your parents first, instead of**
227 **just like ambushing a young kid** almost um...and then after like, after that I had
228 no, like I knew the goalie coach from [OHL team 2] and they had, he had promised
229 and given me his word that he was going to draft me in the [round number] or
230 [round number] round in that draft. Um...and so the other teams I spoke with...I
231 can't even remember uh...[OHL team 3], [OHL team 4], um...and there was one or
232 two more. Um...and then the draft came and the [round number] round went and I
233 wasn't drafted, and then the [pick number] pick of the [round number] round was
234 [OHL team 5] and they drafted me and like I didn't even talk with them, I never had
235 any contact with them at all. And so that was kind of, that was kind of a shock. But, it
236 was [OHL team 5] like obviously a historic and famous organization.

237

238 I: Did they call you after that happened?

239

240 P: The day of the draft ya, they called me probably, probably less than 20-30
241 minutes after I was actually selected, they, they called me and said "congratulations,
242 here's a day that we want you to come down" kind of thing. So, that was, that was
243 sort of the end of grade 10 like April, May of grade 10.

244

245 I: And before the draft, when all these teams were calling you do you remember
246 what they said? Like on the phone?

247

248 P: Um...no one...I was lucky in that no one except for [OHL team 2] who I think they
249 did it more because I had like a personal relationship with the goalie coach, and he
250 was the one who spoke with me directly. Um...no one like said we're going to take
251 you, it was more "we're interested in you, we think you have abilities" kind of thing.
252 It wasn't, it wasn't "we're going to draft you" and I have, **I have some stories of**
253 **friends who said like "if you're available in this round and further we're going**
254 **to take you" and they were available and then ended up never being taken.** So
255 like that's really bad, but I never had anything like that personally.

256

257 I: Um...and the relationship you had with that goalie coach, did he coach you before?

258

259 P: Ya, he's from [city 1] as well, um...and he was my um...summer hockey team
260 coach all through minor hockey so, minor hockey if you played triple A you would
261 play like, it was a tournament team, it wasn't a season but we had 4 or 5
262 tournaments in the summer we would go around and it was sort of like a collection

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263 of players from like [city 3] to [city 4] kind of thing. So they take the best players
264 from those teams and then have a summer team kind of.

265

266 I: So this was in grades?

267

268 P: This was grade 8, 9 and 10.

269

270 I: 8, 9 and 10. Ok. **Um...did you have an agent?**

271

272 **P: Um...technically yes for about a year but that was after the draft and he**
273 **really didn't do anything for me. He called me once...or twice...said he was**
274 **going to come down and visit one time, never came.**

275

276 I: Where was he from?

277

278 P: Um...[city 5]. I know his name, at the time it was [agency] I think uh...it was [agent
279 name] was his name.

280

281 I: And he called you?

282

283 P: Ya, he, they like, I didn't approach them to be like, they like approached me
284 um...and I went to [city 5] or [city 6] or wherever their office was once. Met him and
285 some people in the thing, the company I guess, with my parents, and then I never
286 saw him after, literally after that day. Like he had called me a couple times, said he
287 was going to come down to [Junior B Team], that's where I played junior B, um...and
288 just never came. And at the end of the year in [Junior B Team] I just said sorry, like,
289 thanks for nothing and you no longer kind of represent me.

290

291 I: Did you move to [Junior B Team]?

292

293 P: Ya, not like my family. I just billeted there.

294

295 I: Um...so did you go to school there?

296

297 P: Ya, I went to um...actually two different schools there but that spanned a year a
298 half. The first school year there I was at uh...it was called [school name].

299

300 I: So in grade 10 you got drafted, the draft is in what month June?

301

302 P: May, start of May.

303

304 I: So then you went to camp?

305

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306 P: I went to camp with [OHL team 5]. There was a rookie thing where we just did
307 workouts and stuff like following the draft like a month after.

308

309 I: Ok.

310

311 P: And then went to camp in the end of summer, um...I didn't really expect to make
312 the team they had. They had an over age goalie and a European import goalie, so
313 kind of the writing was on the wall.

314

315 I: Right.

316

317 P: I did well...and they sent me home after like the 48 hours. **I said like I wasn't**
318 **going to stay past that for NCAA reasons anyway. Um...and then...**

319

320 **I: Who told you those NCAA...**

321

322 **P: That was something that, sort of was just known in the hockey world, no**
323 **one really knew what it was, and I think even people misconstrue, or at least**
324 **at the time when I was playing. Like I stayed in a hotel and the team paid for it**
325 **and stuff and apparently that was okay, but to me it was a lot of like black like,**
326 **almost grey areas where people didn't know the exact rules like I was**
327 **technically there longer than 48 hours but I was only on ice for two days so**
328 **that's how they counted I guess.**

329

330 **I: Did you ever look at schools in the NCAA?**

331

332 **P: Uh...more so in grade 11 and 12, that's when I really was doing well in**
333 **junior B and that's when they sort of um...approached me, just nothing**
334 **serious, like packages and like cards and phone calls. But nothing like serious,**
335 **I had talked to...so grade 11 went, sorry, um...and I was just a back up goalie in**
336 **junior B, played well got to play in the playoffs too, I ended up taking over in the**
337 **playoffs. I was, my problem with hockey was, I was always hurt. Like I was, I**
338 **had to stop playing obviously, the end of my career because of a knee injury**
339 **but like always little groin issues and stuff like that.**

340

341 I: So when did that first happen? You're very first injury that you remember...

342

343 P: Um...probably in my last year of triple A, grade 10 I had a, not a bad groin
344 injury, but like something where I had to not play for like 2 weeks kind of
345 thing.

346

347 I: How did that feel?

348

349 P: Uh...it...it kind of sucked, like there's...there's...

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350

351 I: You were already, this was grade 11 you said?

352

353 P: This was grade 10.

354

355 I: So before the draft?

356

357 P: Ya, before the draft. It was...It was frustrating because it was, it was like right at
358 the end of the year. So I didn't get to play before we had like, they have an end of the
359 year tournament instead of playoffs now in your draft year. Um...so that was
360 frustrating but I came back fine and played in the tournament and ended well. **But it**
361 **was just frustrating, you just always want to be playing, and it was just**
362 **something where like I'd go back like a little too early and I try for a practice**
363 **and it'd be too bad so I'd have to stay like another 3-4 days completely off it ,**
364 **so it wasn't anything serious but, especially for goalies like, groin, like a**
365 **nagging groin injury is pretty common.**

366

367 I: So that was your first kind of...

368

369 P: Ya.

370

371 I: And then do you remember what happened next with injuries?

372

373 P: Um...**groin always**, like grade 11 I was out in junior B, like the seasons a little
374 long, I think it was a 48 game season in junior B and I was probably out
375 for...probably a combined month out of the season.

376

377 I: So you didn't go to practice?

378

379 P: You'd go and you'd do like a workout and stuff but...and you do sort of therapy on
380 your groin but nothing on the ice or anything. So you're still with the team in a sense
381 so that...it would be a lot harder if you're removed from the team which I was way
382 later on when I ended my career, which that really sucked because then you start to
383 realize like how quickly it can all go away, but I was still with the team, like going to
384 practices and stuff, just not actually participating in them. So I...I....it didn't feel in
385 that sense, just frustrated, wanting to get back on the ice.

386

387 I: **So grade 10 goes by you're drafted, you go to camp, and then you go back to**
388 **[Junior B Team] right?**

389

390 P: Yup.

391

392 I: So what's the goal now?

393

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394 P: Um...the goal for me...my parents would of liked me to go the NCAA, um....and I
395 kind of kept those options open, but like...like grade 9 and 10 I did really well in
396 school and I moved away and like my grades went from like 85 to like 60. Um...I
397 didn't care about school, like...I was going to the NHL, like...um...and I figured and I
398 was like "well...if I go NCAA they'll figure something out for me, they'll work out a
399 loop hole around it or something" and like I ended up talking to um...before I
400 decided to report um...to [city 8] because there was...grade 11 went by and I did
401 well um...didn't do good in school, did well in hockey, grade 12 came, I didn't want
402 to play for [OHL Team 5]. They had um...they just traded for um...it's the year they
403 went to the Mem cup.

404
405 I: Did you go to camp in grade 11?

406
407 P: No, I did not, like after, I went to camp once in [city 5]. Summer of grade 11, I...I
408 wanted to go back to [Junior B Team] the next year because I loved it there
409 um...really good friends on the team and I...I wanted to maybe take school a little
410 more seriously and pursue a, like getting a scholarship and **I really didn't see any**
411 **opportunity in um...[OHL Team 5]. They just traded for [player name] from**
412 **[OHL Team 2] at the time who like, a second round NHL pick. Ya, I think he**
413 **ended up playing like 50 games that year so I like...wouldn't of played that**
414 **many games. Um...**

415
416 I: So who did [OHL Team 5] take after...they had uh...the over ager and the
417 European. So in grade 11 the over ager is gone now...

418
419 P: And the European, they didn't take him back.

420
421 I: So now...

422
423 P: *They traded for a guy from [OHL Team 5] who was the [player last name] guy. And*
424 *then it would have been me as the back up.*

425
426 I: Right.

427
428 P: And instead of me it was the...the 89, like the person they had just drafted. Do you
429 know what I mean?

430
431 I: Ya.

432
433 P: **So, he went in and backed up for them while I...I stayed in [Junior B Team]**
434 **for half a year, and that's...I did really well um...for that half year in [Junior B Team]**
435 **I think like in half the year I had like 20...22 wins or something like that, and**
436 **that...that's only half the season pretty much. Um...**

437

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438 **I: Did they communicate with you? [OHL Team 5]?**
439
440 **P: No, not at all. They hated me [laughs]. Because I called them and I told them**
441 **in the summer that I wasn't going to come to camp. I didn't want to play.**
442
443 **I: For grade 11?**
444
445 **P: Ya...or going into grade 12, sorry.**
446
447 **I: Ok.**
448
449 **P: Grade 11 was my first year in [Junior B Team]. I really wasn't expected to make**
450 **[OHL Team 5]. Grade 12 they like expected me to come and play.**
451
452 **I: Ok.**
453
454 **P: Um...and and...they never offered me any sort of school package or anything,**
455 **we didn't get into those kind of details yet. But what I had known from...from**
456 **just word of mouth is that [OHL Team 5] was...this was at the time when it was**
457 **still money values, it was still a negotiated, it wasn't like you play you get a**
458 **year, um...they gave really low um...uh...packages. Like some packages that I've**
459 **heard of were like \$2500 a year, which is like half tuition. So, I was like I don't want**
460 **to deal with that, I'm going to try and a get a scholarship, and then half way through**
461 **the year like I had talked to probably...4 or 5 schools um...the best was being [Ivy**
462 **league college] but that wasn't anything serious. That was just talking to someone**
463 **who came from [Ivy league college] to watch my game, not like a scout. Uh...[US**
464 **college] in [US state] um...[US college] in [US city] and [US college] just outside [US**
465 **city]. And, so like I thought it was a possibility but then just before Christmas my**
466 **rights were traded from [OHL Team 5] to [OHL Team 2] and that's where my**
467 **goalie coach was at the time. Um...and that's...**
468
469 **I: How did you find out about that?**
470
471 **P: Um...I had known, I don't know if this is against, or if it would be considered like**
472 **tampering now in the NHL, for the NHL it definitely would, he had called me and**
473 **said like we have an opportunity to trade for you um...but...**
474
475 **I: [OHL Team 2]?**
476
477 **P: But we, don't like we want to make sure you're going to come because we**
478 **know you have interest in the NCAA so we're not going to make the trade**
479 **unless you um...you say you're going to play for us. And I was like "oh...give me**
480 **some time to think about it, a couple days and I'll let you know." So, I thought it**
481 **over and pretty much decided that I would go and play um...for [OHL Team 2],**

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482 **so the trade went through a few days after that and I left [Junior B Team] and**
483 **moved into [OHL Team 2].**

484

485 I: Can I ask you...going back kind of when that 89 goalie got the back up.

486

487 P: Yep.

488

489 I: How did you feel about that?

490

491 P: Um...it...it didn't really uh...bother me because I had like, if we went to training, if
492 I would of gone to training camp it would have been between me and him, it would
493 of kind of been a competition almost, but I didn't even go so I sort of gave him the
494 job you know?

495

496 I: Ok, and then when you didn't go you were kind of...what was your thoughts now,
497 like did you want to play in the OHL or were you like NCAA?

498

499 **P: I was NCAA and I think it was more so because I, I realized how stupid I was**
500 **in the year of grade 11 with school like letting it go so bad. Um...like I literally**
501 **went from a honour roll student to like 60% average, and then grade 12 I**
502 **didn't it as seriously but I took it serious enough where I could of like, I ended**
503 **up getting like 70, high 70s low 80s, so I could of gone to the states if I wanted**
504 **to. Um...but yeah it...I didn't really um...for me it was more of the situation, like I**
505 **liked [OHL Team 5] and like obviously a historic organization but being that close to**
506 **home like [OHL Team 2]...I'm from [city 1] and my dad works in [city 3] and I would**
507 **be living right in between so it wouldn't be hard to see my family. Um...the goalie**
508 **coach was there um...like my goalie coach, they had uh...a former NHLer as the**
509 **head coach, great facility, so it sort of just, it wasn't anything against [OHL**
510 **Team 5], I like I almost didn't want to be forced into, I was really worried about**
511 **going to camp in grade 12 and being forced to make a decision and, and not...maybe**
512 **if my parents weren't there, and not that I would of needed them to, but if**
513 **someone's offering you a job in the OHL it's very easy to...within a second say "yes,**
514 **I'll take that" and then like think about the "what did I just do?" kind of thing so, I,**
515 **I didn't want to be put in a situation where I had to um...at least when I was there in**
516 **[OHL Team 5] was notorious for like saying they wanted to see players in exhibition**
517 **games, so what would of happened is they would, they said "well we, we won't sign**
518 **you, we want to see you in exhibition game first" and I really didn't want to be put in**
519 **that situation you know? Because like a competitive person you, you think "Ya, I**
520 **could do well in the game" and as soon as you do that there goes your NCAA**
521 **eligibility so...it was kind of a...I think my parents were happier that I didn't go**
522 **right away but um...looking back to, I don't really have any regrets that I didn't**
523 **pursue NCAA, I have a few friends who have some not great stories, like I've actually**
524 **like had 3 or 4 friends who um...went to division 1 NCAA schools and lasted**
525 **probably the longest was two years, and they were home more...had to go to a**

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526 division 3 college because they, they just were cut from the hockey team, but like
527 their scholarship or whatever, part of their scholarship still honoured, but they're
528 not on the hockey team so, what are they really doing there kind of thing? You
529 know?

530

531 **I: Ya. So...you referred to...you know when they offer me a job in the OHL. Is**
532 **that something you look back and you call it a job in retrospect or is that**
533 **something you kind of felt that...was it a job to you or was it...**

534

535 **P: I could see it turning into a job, like...like that's more me bringing in like my**
536 **like knowing of what it is now, but like I...I could see it turning into a job.** It was
537 almost like not a shock but it was like an eye opener going from triple A to junior B
538 even like, you play...you go to triple A and you're like the warm up is 3 minutes the
539 periods go like 10, 15, 15, with no floods or anything, and then you go to junior B
540 and you have a 20 minute warm up and then you come off the ice, you have a flood,
541 and then you come out and they sing the national anthem, and they have 20 minutes
542 in between every period so like it was just, **it's just a totally different like set up**
543 **almost and you're like, and you're sitting there in intermission and you're like**
544 **"this...this is like...this is like real hockey now [laughs] this is like what they do**
545 **in the NHL" so it's...and you see it becoming like when you're going everyday**
546 **to something it's not just like...because when you're a kid practice for me at**
547 **least was always fun, and you practice what? Like twice a week and have two**
548 **games a week, something like that. Whereas, in the OHL and junior B even,**
549 **um...you're practicing pretty much everyday so...**

550

551 **I: Did you get paid when you were in junior B?**

552

553 **P: Uh...ya under the table but um...not a lot, like they really um...my first year I**
554 **wasn't paid anything like when I went in as a rookie. Then I think it was more like, a**
555 **thank you for coming back and helping us kind of thing, staying with the team even**
556 **though I left a couple months later [laughs] but I was paid just the same as an OHL**
557 **player, I was \$50 a week. But, it was like under the table, it wasn't out in the**
558 **open.**

559 **I: So...now you go to [OHL Team 2] camp in grade 12?**

560

561 **P: I didn't even go to camp, I...[Junior B Team]...this all happened right before**
562 **Christmas, my rights being traded.**

563

564 **I: So it's before Christmas and you're in grade 12 right now?**

565

566 **P: Ya.**

567

568 **I: Ok.**

569

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570 P: So I went from um...so let's see where was it...the [Junior B Team]...
571
572 I: You didn't go to camp that summer...you went to [Junior B Team]?
573
574 P: Ya, I went to [Junior B Team]. Didn't go to [OHL Team 5] or anything and just
575 before Christmas, traded from [OHL Team 5] to [OHL Team 2] and I...after thinking
576 about it for a few days, I decided to leave [Junior B Team] before Christmas and go
577 to [OHL Team 2]. And I started with the team...I think...just before they um...started
578 their Christmas break, like probably the 15th or 16th.
579
580 I: Ok...so who...where did you stay?
581
582 P: Um...I just was moved into a uh...a billet house um...
583
584 I: And your coach, or who told you about that? On the phone? Or how did you find
585 out where you were staying?
586
587 P: Uh...it was the general manager, what I did...me and my parents drove down my
588 stuff, met the general manager, signed my contract...
589
590 I: At the rink?
591
592 P: Ya...at the rink. They had a...it was the [rink name] so he had like a nice office and
593 stuff, so it was like in the dressing room or anything like that.
594
595 I: So your parents were there when you signed your contract?
596
597 P: Ya...ya they were there.
598
599 I: Did he go through it with you?
600
601 P: **Uh...not...for me I wasn't even really concerned. What my dad had done**
602 **before he asked for copy of it...he was more concerned than I was. Um...just**
603 **making sure that I wasn't...there wasn't any sort of...their biggest concern was**
604 **like loopholes in the school package...if there was any, like for the team to get**
605 **out of my school package. So he just asked if he could have a standard**
606 **contract, and they gave him one uh...and my dad took it to a lawyer.**
607
608 I: It was just your general manager, your parents and you?
609
610 P: Ya, a lawyer wasn't present when I signed or anything. He just...my dad was a
611 police officer in [city 3] and he knows people who would...he just handed to and
612 they would look it over for like 15 minutes...
613

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614 I: Did he say anything about the school package?
615
616 P: Um...the lawyer? Or...
617
618 I: The GM.
619
620 P: The GM...uh...no. I had gotten, I wasn't really arguing because I had um...a pretty
621 good school package for the round that I was drafted in um...I had...and it doesn't
622 seem like a lot but **I had \$7500 a year for every year that I played.**
623
624 I: And how did you get that? So that's when you get drafted to the...
625
626 P: No...that's when I signed my contract.
627
628 I: With [OHL Team 2]?
629
630 P: Ya, but that's total school package, I didn't see any of that money.
631
632 I: So \$7500 a year?
633
634 P: Ya, and **books and tuition only.**
635
636 I: For every year you played?
637
638 P: Ya.
639
640 I: So how were they going to...did they say how they were going to adjust that,
641 because you're coming in at Christmas now...so was it Christmas to Christmas? That
642 they were going to do this?
643
644 P: No...season by season.
645
646 I: Ok.
647
648 P: What it was...uh...it was explained as like...they don't break it by years **they put it**
649 **in by season.** So if you play um...as it was explained to me if you play one game, if
650 you're on one game sheet in the...**2007-2008** [example] season you get your
651 full...you get one year's worth of your full thing. Unless...there's stipulations on
652 leaving the team on your own sort of accord. If you leave the team and quit that sort
653 of can uh...hurt your school package, although I think now that would be probably
654 done because if someone's having like personal issues or something and they left it
655 would look really bad if the OHL withheld that school package.
656
657 I: So that's what he kind of explained...the GM...about the package.

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658

659 P: Ya...and what I thought too I was actually um...lied to...well not lied to, I just think
660 he didn't know he was a...a rookie GM at the time. **I was under the impression that**
661 **that money could carry over** um...but it ended up being 75...like...

662

663 I: Carry over, what do you mean by that?

664

665 P: **So let's say my tuition and my books cost \$6000 in year one of school, I was**
666 **under the impression that \$1500 would carry over...**

667

668 I: Right, and you would get that...

669

670 P: It doesn't happen. **It just was, I could of spent \$7500 on my books and tuition**
671 **in that year and then that's it.**

672

673 I: So...now it's you're there, what time is it? Like Christmas time?

674

675 P: Ya, just before Christmas.

676

677 I: Just before Christmas...so then...

678

679 P: I was there for like a week and then a 5 day break, and then back.

680

681 I: Ok...so do you remember...you haven't played a full OHL game yet...at this point...

682

683 P: No. I hadn't even um...

684

685 I: Been on the ice for a game?

686

687 P: No, for a game no. Practices only.

688

689 I: So...kind of...what happened next, you moved in with your billet family...

690

691 P: Ya.

692

693 I: And how were they?

694

695 P: Um...I didn't really like my first billet family in [OHL Team 2]. They were uh...a
696 little weird [laughs] but I...

697

698 I: Did they have kids?

699

699 P: Ya, they actually had a daughter who was at [Canadian University] at the time, she
700 was really cool, she was just never there. So like, when she was there we would
701 always talk and I got along with her well, but...they had an older son who was

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702 probably 4 or 5 years older than me but...the best way I could describe them like
703 would be like hipster [laughs] so I'm not like against that, so like he was just like
704 someone who like totally opposite of me [laughs] and so like we...it's not like we
705 didn't get along, we just really didn't become like buddy buddy kind of thing.
706 Um...and the parents they were nice, they were just...you know when people are just
707 like a little different then what...normal people...not normal people but just
708 different...like even my mom, my mom said um...because my parents like really
709 involved with stuff like that. They came and visited them before I moved in, like my
710 mom was like...I've like...cause I've lived at like...5 different billets, and she
711 said...still she's like "that's the only...house and family that like I didn't feel like
712 100% comfortable like leaving you at"

713
714 I: In [Junior B Team] did you live with just one...

715
716 P: Two families. I lived with one in my first year which was a really cool experience
717 on a farm. Uh...there was...it was crazy. Um...I was woken up by roosters and like,
718 for like the first month. [laughs] That was cool, it just...it was so far away from the
719 school and the team, they wouldn't let me um...stay there again. Like the team
720 wouldn't let me stay there again.

721
722 I: Okay so that's why you had to go to a second family...

723
724 P: Ya, because like, it was actually in [city name], they just couldn't get a billet.
725 Um...and this was someone who had billeted for them before, but they ran into the
726 same problems I think with it being so far from the rink and school. Um...so then I
727 was moved really close to the rink and really close to the school with a great family
728 too. So...[Junior B Team] was awesome, I really enjoyed it.

729
730 I: So now you're in [city 8] with this family um...I kind of just...when was you're first
731 game...

732
733 P: Like in [OHL Team 2]?

734
735 I: Ya.

736
737 P: Um...just before new years, I had played um...first game was against [OHL Team
738 6] at the [rink name] like, it was probably like the [day] or [day] of [month].

739
740 I: And can you describe your first practice, or when you go to the rink and
741 you...you're with these...bunch of new guys, did you know anyone?

742
743 P: Um...I had known a few people um...I had played summer hockey all growing up
744 with um...[player name] who was on the team for the whole time I was there as well.
745 Um...I'm trying to think if there's anyone else that I knew personally...

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746

747 I: Were you nervous?

748

749 P: Uh...a little ya. One thing I was really nervous about was, this is a funny story
750 actually um...I was really...cause I always would have um...like compression shorts
751 and groin wraps which is typically from goalies. **But I was really nervous about**
752 **the first few practices about like putting those things on, just because I didn't**
753 **want like the team to be like "we just traded for this guy and like he's got like**
754 **wraps on every which way" it wasn't cause I was hurt, I think it was more of a**
755 **mental thing for me like, I still even when I play hockey cannot play without**
756 **like my compression shorts because like it's just...you feel secure um...you**
757 **don't feel like you're going to rip your groin out when you stretch or**
758 **something and um....so I would go into the bathroom, I would leave the dressing**
759 **room and like go into the bathroom and like wrap myself and put on shorts and then**
760 **when I come back into the room I would quickly like take my shorts off put on all my**
761 **like my jock and my hockey pants so like no one could see. Like, and that stopped**
762 **after like probably a few weeks but I just didn't want them like...first impression**
763 **of me to be like "what in the?...we just traded for this guy and he's hurt all the**
764 **time"**

765

766 I: How was your coach?

767

768 P: Um...he was really good, he was um...sort of uh...a disciplinarian but never yelled.
769 Like uh...like never, I...**he would raise voice sometimes but never yelled. Like**
770 **he...he would almost have like a disgusted tone to him so like...and he**
771 **played...Stanley Cup champion...um....played for [NHL Team], [NHL Team],**
772 **um...he's actually...I think he's coaching in the OHL again but he coached the [AHL**
773 **Team], he coached [NHL Team], um...so he was really good, he just...he was only**
774 **there for the half year though and then it flipped over, because our team was bought**
775 **and sold, that was...that was the year we were sold at the end of the year.**

776

777 I: What was he like when you lost games?

778

779 P: Um...we lost a lot of games, we were uh...I think finished...3rd last in the 20 teams,
780 that's why they got me, that's why they got a lot of younger players coming in
781 because it was like re-building kind of year. **He was frustrated, like you could**
782 **tell...um...never one to like yell though, which was like I respected that**
783 **uh...and I don't mind coaches who yell but he didn't have to, you knew exactly,**
784 **he got his point across without yelling um...most of the time if we would get**
785 **like blown out or something like he wouldn't even say anything like, there's**
786 **not really much to say.**

787

788 I: Right...um...so what happened when you found out you were going to play your
789 first game?

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790

791 P: Um...to be honest, I wish I had more memories. I like...to me...it all happened so
792 fast like...being traded, going to [OHL Team 2], moving into a new place and going to
793 a new school and playing my first game all happened within like probably from 15th
794 to the 30th or 31st like...I...it just happened so quick, its like a blur almost. I
795 remember being really excited and I remember there was...we played [OHL Team]
796 so there was some really good players on the ice um like....[player], [player],
797 [player] um...who else? [player] so like I just remember being on the ice and...and it
798 was a really good game and I think we lost like 4-3 and they were like a way better
799 team than us and I just remember like...I just remember it went so fast...like games
800 always for me dragged on...like not dragged on where I'm disinterested but like they
801 always seemed so long, but that game was like, like I just feel...like I blinked, it was
802 like I didn't even have time to think I **just had to do the best that I could and sort**
803 **of like not think about too much or it would have been like overwhelming in a**
804 **sense.**

805

806 I: So at this point how'd you feel about school now that you signed this contract?

807

808 P: [laughs] **School kind of went uh...out the window.** But, like...I knew how to...I
809 was a lot, it sounds bad but I was a lot smarter than most typical hockey players in
810 the sense that I knew how to get marks that were acceptable for University. I knew
811 how to...

812

813 I: Were you thinking about University? Or what was the goal now? Was it still NHL?

814

815 P: Ya...I knew I had to have...**I knew I couldn't come out of high school with**
816 **anything less than like a 70% average,** I knew that. Um...and I know people who
817 don't even think that [laughs] like that's a pretty low goal already [laughs] um...and
818 to be honest like, the only reason why that was my goal and I even thought about
819 that was my parents. Um like...university was not a thought in my mind, like I had in
820 grade 13 I guess you would call it I had enrolled in University or I **had applied to**
821 **[Canadian University] because it was our last year in [OHL Team 2] and we**
822 **were told we were going to be coming to [city name] so I applied to [Canadian**
823 **University] in like...just the lowest mark programs and I got accepted,** but I like
824 didn't do anything with it but um...it was just like the team was like "Do this, here's
825 a credit card, like go apply" they sent you like on the computer in the coaches office
826 to go and...go and apply and everything so I was like "okay why not? I'll do it" and it
827 ended up paying off huge because it got me into school [Canadian University]
828 um...but like realistically I didn't think I was...

829

830 I: Were you going to high school in [OHL Team 2]?

831

832 P: Ya I was. I didn't graduate in grade 12 I like...from grade 11, I was pretty much a
833 **part time student from grade 11 on.** I remember my friends in high school, when

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834 I'd like go back to [city] for the last few monthss they'd like hate me because I'd
835 literally have class form like 8-12 and then I'd go home for the rest of the day
836 [laughs]. Just cause the way it transferred over, I would have like 2 classes and that
837 was it. **In high school I got 2 credits a semester for going to hospitals and**
838 **reading to kids at schools and stuff like that, so like...it's good that you do that**
839 **but like, to get credits for that...I think four of my high school credits were**
840 **that.**

841

842 I: Did you and your teammates hang out at high school?

843

844 P: Oh ya, that's all...other than hanging out with girls and teammates, like there was
845 a few guys at different high schools who like were good guys and for the most part
846 **you're hated though.**

847

848 I: Ya, I was going to ask...so how was it like...with um...like how did you feel or taken
849 by other students?

850

851 P: Well [OHL Team 2] it was funny because more of like an urban kind of city, or
852 urban setting then [city]. Like the kids I found were...I don't know any other way to
853 put it than...gangster. Like they were...like it was like Fubu and Lutz, we had a
854 uniform but like they would just have those big you know shiny jackets and...

855

856 I: What about race?

857

858 P: Um...there was...some Indian...I want to say Pakistani...

859

860 I: Predominantly white though?

861

862 P: Ya...there was a lot of Polish people, I think it was just in that section of [city] it
863 was a more Polish um...community. **It was a catholic school too**, so it was a lot of
864 white Polish people but there was um...some like I guess Indian and Pakistani who
865 converted because it was...[school name]

866

867 I: They put you in a Catholic school?

868

869 P: Ya...that's what...it just didn't seem right that they would do that but I didn't
870 question it I was put in...I was raised Catholic so I wasn't really...

871

872 I: Did you go to class?

873

874 P: Uh...kind of [laughs] like you're there when you have to be kind of thing
875 **um...it's...most of my time was spent in the cafeteria with the guys...like to be**
876 **honest. Um...**

877

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878 I: So...this part of the year is done, so Christmas to whatever...you guys don't make
879 playoffs, then you go home?

880

881 P: Ya, I went um...we didn't in [OHL Team 2] at the time, I'm sure if junior teams
882 now do it, it's more like pro teams like people will stay in the city, but no one really
883 stayed, especially [OHL Team 2] no one wants to stay in a busy, crowded city like
884 that. Um...so everyone goes home and just sort of does their own work out
885 programs um...I worked out in a place in [city] called [gym name].

886

887 I: With other hockey players?

888

889 P: Yep. Ya, it was all...it's actually huge...when I went there it wasn't famous but now
890 they have [NHL player], [NHL player], [NHL player] working out there over the
891 lockout but when I was there it was like me, which wasn't anything but like [player
892 name], [player name], [player name] and that's like the...those were the biggest
893 names when I was there, but it was really small starting out then, now it's huge.

894

895 I: Did you know the team was going to be bought?

896

897 P: **Ya, we knew...**I didn't know when um...I signed that would have been something
898 that...

899

900 I: So they didn't say anything about it?

901

902 P: **I don't even think the GM knew. Like to be honest, the owner did it under**
903 **everyone's kind of feet.** What it was...[owner name] do you know that? **Ya he's the**
904 **owner of the [NHL team] and used to own the [OHL Team] he bought our team**
905 **for the sole purpose of kicking us out of the [arena] pretty much so he could**
906 **move [OHL Team] from their little crappy arena in downtown [city] to the**
907 **[arena]. So we played there for a year while [owner name] still owned the**
908 **team then he sold us to [city] and moved [OHL Team] in.**

909

910 I: Ok so now you're in [OHL team 8]...

911

912 P: Yup. In [OHL team 8] and that was um...I guess...so **grade 13 which was when I**
913 **graduated high school** was um...last year in [city] so [year] and then [year] was
914 first year in [OHL team 8].

915

916 I: And you didn't have to go to school?

917

918 P: No but actually even at the end of the season, or in [month], **that's when I hurt**
919 **my knee.** Um...that's when in a game in [OHL Team 2]...

920

921 I: So just one month in?

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922

923 P: No...one month into the year but, the season ends in March like regular
924 season so I was a month from the end of the season um...just in a game...made
925 a save, went down and the whistle went and two guy fell on me and the way it
926 was, was that my foot stayed locked like that [motions] and my knee and cause
927 then falling like this [motions] came and then like snapped and popped and
928 everyone on the ice heard it and then came back, and like it really it...at the
929 time it did not hurt at all...it was more like really weird...like cause I heard it
930 and I felt it, but it didn't hurt and so I was like...I was...the trainer came out
931 and like I first moved it again and something popped again, like back into
932 place or whatever, like your patella popping back into place...and then like I
933 was like "no, like I'm fine" and he was like "no, if you heard a pop then it's just
934 adrenaline, like something's really wrong..." and he was like "go down into the
935 butterfly" so I went down and I started moving, and I'm like "I'm fine, I can
936 play" and he was like "you heard pops, we're coming out no matter what" so ya
937 then I came off the ice...like skated off...just with the help of someone, and first
938 step I took like on hard surface, like unsupported like my knee just completely
939 collapsed, like I just fell. Soon as I got onto the bench my knee literally like
940 fell...if you can picture it just falling out from under you that's what happened.

941

942 I: And this was, hold on where are you right now?

943

944 P: [OHL Team 2]. Last year in [OHL Team 2].

945

946 I: Right ok.

947

948 P: And that sort of, that was like...I would say like the beginning of the end of my,
949 like that specific event was the beginning of the end of my hockey...career.

950

951 I: Okay, so let's go back to this sort of injury...so when did you, what was it? What
952 happened? You were down, you're on the bench, you fell down...

953

954 P: Ya I just sort of fell, my knee sort of fell out, and luckily we were in [OHL Team 2]
955 so they took me right into the trainer's room. Had the doctor, I actually went
956 into the room and had like a rampage almost...I knew something was really
957 wrong but I didn't know how bad.

958

959 I: What were you mad at?

960

961 P: Um...just like...always being hurt uh...lik....this was the year I was supposed to...I
962 was passed over my first NHL draft I was rated but I knew we weren't going to be
963 sort of...I knew I wasn't going to be picked because of how bad we were and how
964 bad...

965

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966 I: Did you watch the draft?
967

968 P: Um...not really. It was on at...it's like online...you watch the first round and see
969 the first rounders go but I would just follow it like, probably checked every like 2
970 hours or something. And I knew I wasn't going to go, I was almost just checking to
971 see who was picked kind of thing. **Um...second year, I was right before my injury**
972 **I was ranked again by central scouting, um...and it sort of was going to be like,**
973 **I worked really hard the summer before and I was going to...not...I could have**
974 **been drafted probably, and even if I wasn't drafted I would of had a training**
975 **camp invite um...and that sort of spelled the end to that. But I wasn't really**
976 **thinking about those things at the time, I was just like I'm hurt again, like what**
977 **the hell?** I knew it was serious, so I went in to the dressing room and uh...ripped a
978 few things off the wall um...like if you ever seen the inside of a room like you know
979 the hooks where you put the skates? Ripped a couple of those out of my stall...then I
980 just sort of settled down. Um...it was funny the trainer just like, he didn't even care,
981 because he knew it was pretty serious too, just from the way like I reacted when I
982 fell and stuff like that. Um...went into the training room, waited for the doctor, then
983 it was just me and the doctor in the training room because the trainers back out on
984 the bench because the games going on and he does the lockman's test which like
985 tests your ACL and then he did the MCL test and he was like **"I think you tore your**
986 **MCL and ACL"** And that was when like, I just like sank...I like, **I didn't cry from**
987 **the injury, I cried because I realized like holy shit this is huge.**
988

989 I: You cried then?
990

991 P: Oh ya. Not like a sobbing cry kind of cry but like I had tears for sure.
992

993 I: So then what happened, the game is over...did you stay in the dressing room for
994 the rest of the game?
995

996 P: Ya, what actually happened, it was...awful what happened...with 3 minutes left in
997 the game, so it was tied, it ended up going to shoot out, so they were out there for a
998 little bit longer, probably like 5 overtime and then let's say the shootout takes
999 another 10 minutes so not that long but guys were coming in and just want to know
1000 what was happening and how I was doing. And like they could tell, I could see it in
1001 their faces, like they knew I was pretty...pretty upset. And no one could believe, like
1002 the trainer was like "no...he tore his ACL and MCL?" Cause I like wanted to stay in
1003 the game...and he was like there's no way, like he just did a the butterfly on the ice,
1004 like...and like said it was fine but...so they were like really confused. Other than
1005 that...it was...
1006

1007 I: Did your coach come up to you?
1008

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1009 P: Uh...ya. Everyone sort of...eventually everyone, I don't know for certain looking
1010 back but it seemed like every person on the team and part of the coaching staff came
1011 and talked to me.

1012
1013 I: So did you have a new coach now?

1014
1015 P: Ya, this was...**he was a nice guy, not the best hockey coach I wouldn't**
1016 **say...like with regards to experience and the knowledge that our other coach**
1017 **previous had had. But really nice guy...um...meant well but I just don't know**
1018 **uh...I think he was almost too nice to be a head coach, like couldn't really**
1019 **control the guys and stuff, sort of let them walk all over him in a sense. But,**
1020 **like...good person, like to be honest I probably never met a nicer person in**
1021 **hockey, than that coach so...**

1022
1023 I: Um...so what happens now, where do you go? Do you have to go to the hospital?
1024 Get x-rays?

1025
1026 P: Um...I remember the first immediate thing I remember, I remember feeling so
1027 pathetic because I was it's funny, I had some huge brace on and I had crutches and
1028 I'm in the shower with the trainer like standing outside, not like watching but like
1029 making sure I don't slip and fall and kill myself in the shower. [laughs] So that was
1030 just funny. Just feel like so, just go from like being hockey player you can do
1031 anything, and then you can barely stand up and have a shower.

1032
1033 I: Were your parents at that game?

1034
1035 P: Um...they were actually but they had no idea. They, and they like...I was always
1036 the one who, like they knew I was hurt, and they waited around...like I didn't get out
1037 of the room probably for 2 hours. They waited for like an hour and then they left,
1038 which I would always tell them like...

1039
1040 I: What'd you say?

1041
1042 P: Well I didn't talk to them until after like I got out of the room, I just called them. I
1043 would of never...**the relationship we had at games, unless we talked prior to the**
1044 **game saying hey stick around and wait, um...they would just leave anyway.**
1045 And they didn't think, like no one on the ice and in the stands thought it was what it
1046 was you know what I mean? It was really innocent looking, and like two people just
1047 fell on me and twisted my knee the wrong way. Like people couldn't really see that.

1048
1049 I: So you went home to your billets?
1050

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1051 P: Ya, well I went home, one of my buddies waited for me the whole time because I
1052 didn't have a car at the time, um...still don't have a car which sucks but [laughs] so
1053 ya, he drove me home, went back to my billets, uh...called my parents...

1054
1055 I: And what was that conversation like?

1056
1057 P: Uh...they...my dad was a little like sort of...uh...like...speechless in a sense. Like he
1058 uh...

1059
1060 I: Were you still really upset?

1061
1062 P: I calmed down um...I don't generally, especially in front of other people, I don't
1063 like show emotion really. Um...my family's a little different but I was at my billets
1064 house and even though I was really close with my billets, I...just...I don't like
1065 breaking down in front of people, like I didn't want to do that. Um...it was more like
1066 well, we got to tackle it head on, we'll figure it out, like get a good night's sleep. It
1067 was almost like trying to talk me down from what I was like saying like this is it, I'm
1068 done pretty much and sort of things like that. Um...ya it wasn't...I wish I could
1069 remember more like specific details, but **my parents have always been like**
1070 **uplifting and it...even if he was shocked himself like, and I could tell he**
1071 **was...he definitely, as soon as like the first initial shock, he definitely toned it**
1072 **down and like right away to try and calm me down I think.**

1073
1074 I: So, what were you...did you go to the hospital?

1075
1076 P: The next day we had um...**I went back to the rink, and they had the doctor**
1077 **come look at me again and like confirm**, just cause like sometimes when those
1078 things happen they can be wrong just cause of swelling and stuff, but it...he was like
1079 "ya I still think it is" so then **I think a couple days later I had a MRI, um...and then**
1080 **the surgery happened [date].**

1081
1082 I: So what did they say to you, like after you get the MRI what did they say? We need
1083 to do surgery or?

1084
1085 P: Ya, this was more, doctors rather than anyone involved with the team. Um...it was
1086 **the team physician at the time, just explained the procedure and what had to**
1087 **happen um...and that's pretty much it, just sort of I didn't really have people talk**
1088 about in Canada how you're suppose to have doctors provide you options, I didn't
1089 really have any options...I really wasn't looking for any, I just wanted make my
1090 knee...sort of...

1091
1092 I: Did you know how long you were going to be out?

1093

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1094 P: **Minimum 6 months, like that's for any ACL that's the rule, and since I did my**
1095 **MCL as well, and I'm goalie, like they said 6 months to a year.**

1096
1097 I: So what are you thinking now?

1098
1099 P: Oh...just so many things, like what am I going to do? What's happening? What if I
1100 don't come back? Well...what if I could come back? I wonder how it will feel if I can
1101 play the same kind of thing. It was just all questions, you don't really have any
1102 answers...

1103
1104 I: And you were with your billet family?

1105
1106 P: Ya but I moved out, I said like "I'm sorry but like, this is like a huge issue and like
1107 my life is like...**my parents can best set me up to recovery successfully, like**
1108 **living at my own house"**

1109
1110 I: Did you tell your coach you were going to do that?

1111
1112 P: **Uh...the GM, and they said they wanted me there, but like I was like I'm**
1113 **sorry...I'm going home. And I like said I'll come to the games but, I'm not going**
1114 **to be here. I think that would be like...in a sense...in a sense I was almost**
1115 **preparing myself for what I thought inevitably was going to happen I think.**
1116 Like I thought that I was going to not be able to play, and I didn't want to be around
1117 hockey, hockey, hockey...with me sitting there in crutches, not being able to anything
1118 pretty much, like I didn't want to do that. Cause like it's a huge recovery process, like
1119 6 months to a year is...

1120
1121 I: So what are you doing at home?

1122
1123 P: Um, well what happened was I started physio before my surgery and it was
1124 **great before the surgery, like...cause if you don't...my ACL was 80...or**
1125 **90...actually it was 100, my MCL was 80-90% so that was sort of little by my**
1126 **ACL was 100% gone so there was no pain really with that, it was just like if I**
1127 would like, if I started to run and like I would go the other way, that's when it would
1128 like, just gives out on you and then it will start to hurt, but there's no actual pain like
1129 in the knee, other than your MCL just a little bit. But, um...**surgery happened, that's**
1130 **when things went really wrong, like I had...supposed to be in hospital over**
1131 **night um...and it ended up being a huge major surgery like 4 and a half...5**
1132 **hours um...and I ended up being almost 2 weeks in the hospital and they**
1133 **they...the doctors they never specifically said, but I'm pretty sure that my leg**
1134 **got infected in the hospital and like they wouldn't say it, they would give me**
1135 **all these medications, but I think that's...they don't want to own up to that,**
1136 **they're surgery caused my leg to be infected...but like they were pumping me**
1137 **full of like antibiotics and pain killers and everything. For the first month after**

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1138 surgery, even out of the hospital my leg was like literally like that [motions] like in
1139 physio they put a coffee can under my heel and put like 2 people's weight on that to
1140 like loosen it until you could get it to straight. It was...like gruelling, **I had 6-7**
1141 **months of physio 5 times a week for like 2-3 hours everyday.**

1142
1143 I: So you were in pain...

1144
1145 P: Ya, it's like, and they like **I had so many pain pills**, like I'm lucky I'm not like an
1146 addict, because like in the hospital I was on morphine um...and then pretty much
1147 whenever I like, well **I had a second surgery too**, later um...in uh, closer to [month]
1148 after I had come to [OHL team 8] **cause things weren't responding well so I had a**
1149 **second surgery**, and then after that you get another like load of pain killers and
1150 stuff, so it's good and bad in a sense, but like for someone else who's like, for me I'm
1151 like...to be honest I've never done any drugs other than smoked a little weed but
1152 like, I could see someone with a bad addictive personality really get like...I had like 3
1153 refills of like a bottle of 60. So like, even if I wanted to sell...like it's pretty bad to be
1154 giving those just to a kid, I guess I wasn't a kid at the time, I was 18, 19 but...

1155
1156 I: Did you parents let you take...

1157
1158 P: My parents were really hesitant of that, like they were like...

1159
1160 I: Did your mom or dad take the pills and give them to you when you needed it?

1161
1162 P: No, they trusted me but they were like always on me...and to me there's no real
1163 appeal to doing that so like, it definitely did help when I was coming back and
1164 practicing and stuff again, it definitely took away the pain, takes away the pain and a
1165 lot of other things, so you're sort of like a vegetable, you just like sit there and melt
1166 into the couch almost.

1167
1168 I: Was it like a Percocet?

1169
1170 P: Ya, well...**oxycontin**. It was like, I don't know, you take 2 of those and you like
1171 don't do anything for 4 hours [laughs]

1172
1173 I: Ya...so did you go to [OHL Team 8]?

1174
1175 P: Yep, ya I came um...so surgery happened in [month] [day], so [counts months]

1176
1177 I: You remember the date...

1178
1179 P: Ya, [month] [day], I know the day I got hurt was [month] [day] um...I'm trying to
1180 think, I can't remember the day of my first game but...

1181

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1182 I: So when did things start getting better?

1183

1184 P: After my second surgery so...that was in [month] so...

1185

1186 I: So you're still not in [OHL Team 8] or you are?

1187

1188 P: I moved to [OHL Team 8] right away, cause I was hoping to play in [month]
1189 but I ended up needing another surgery so um...what happened was I went to
1190 um...[city] again...I was actually enrolled at [Canadian University] in one
1191 course, but um I had to drop that course because like I needed to go, move
1192 back to [city], well not move back but live in [city] for another couple weeks
1193 while I had the surgery, so I went back and forth. Um...but that went well, it
1194 wasn't as invasive, it was just a scope. So that went well, um...then I uh...I ended up
1195 practicing end of [month] and I played my first game uh...sometime in [month]. I
1196 can't remember when but sometime in [month] [year].

1197

1198 I: So were you on the team with like uh...[player name]?

1199

1200 P: Yep, oh ya, I know [player nickname] really well, I played my whole career with
1201 [player nickname].

1202

1203 I: So where were you staying?

1204

1205 P: I stayed with [describes billet] in a small little house, just me and [player name]. I
1206 think he's playing [league] now. But ya, we just lived together...it wasn't the greatest
1207 billet experience...[billet] didn't cook very good but, I had no complaints, we had a
1208 lot of freedom there. For two guys like we were, pretty independent, and not, and at
1209 the stage we were, like with my injury and he was a pretty quiet guy and didn't want
1210 to be...he had lived with a family before so he kind of wanted to step away from
1211 having little kids around all the time and stuff, so it was good for us.

1212

1213 I: So you didn't get drafted obviously...

1214

1215 P: **Nope. I had a, I was invited to go to [NHL Team]'s rookie camp that summer,**
1216 **but I couldn't go because obviously I was hurt.**

1217

1218 I: How'd you feel about that?

1219

1220 P: That was pretty upsetting because, just...knowing that that opportunity was out
1221 there, and maybe if I had a different time in my life something could of came of it.
1222 Because I had talked to...the head scout of [NHL Team] had called my house in the
1223 summer which was big surprise anyway, just getting that phone call um...and then
1224 he had asked me to give him the contact information of my doctor because they
1225 wanted medical records, um...and then he had asked me again, um...if I was

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1226 interested, or if I would be ready to come to rookie camp in a few months time, and I
1227 sort of...this was in...I think I talked to him...I want to say [month] sometime in
1228 [month]. Because I knew they probably weren't going to draft me, just with the
1229 medical history anyway so that wasn't something I was like hoping for...or saw in
1230 the future, but just getting that opportunity to go there would have been cool. So
1231 that was like really disappointing, just because...like...**if it would of happened a**
1232 **year earlier I could of gone so...just sort of disappointing...but...take it all sort**
1233 **of in stride...there was more motivation to come back but I...I eventually**
1234 **couldn't come back. I think I played...5 games in the [season] and that was it**
1235 **and I was...just the back up goalie for the playoffs and everything like that,**
1236 **because I couldn't play at that level anymore really...**

1237
1238 I: How did that feel, being a back up goalie. You know going from...

1239
1240 P: It...uh...it was...it was unique. Um...I like...it's not something to brag about but I
1241 think like I...I don't want to say flourished...in it...like I took a lot of pride
1242 in...working hard and...setting a good example and sort of um...like taking the
1243 younger guys like under my wing a little bit, and showing them the way,
1244 um...just because we didn't have the best role models on that
1245 team...[laughs]...but it...it is hard...you want to play obviously, even though, I
1246 think for me it was easier because I knew like, I couldn't play at that level,
1247 um...so I...I...I would always be one of the last people off the ice for practice
1248 like...cause I knew I wasn't playing in the game, so anyone who wanted to
1249 work on shots or anything like that I'd be in the net...just things like that
1250 which I enjoyed. Um...

1251
1252 I: How was your coach? Was it still the same one?

1253
1254 P: That was a new one again...I had 3 coaches...

1255
1256 I: So how was he?

1257
1258 P: Um...same thing, good guy like, I never like had any problems with him.

1259
1260 I: Did anyone else?

1261
1262 P: Uh...ya...there was other run ins, I don't know if that's his fault or the other
1263 people's fault though so I can't really blame that on him. But just again, uh...first year
1264 head coach with the type of personalities we had, couldn't really control them
1265 all...um...and at the same time too it's just...he wasn't as knowledgeable in hockey as
1266 the previous coaches I had even and so players see that, and he never played
1267 anywhere, so it's sort of like, I find it if you played somewhere you're able to...to get
1268 the respect of guys, especially the guys who don't buy in usually, because they
1269 respect you and they know you've done it, and you've been where they want to be

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1270 kind of...but if you like...I don't even know...this guy maybe played house league
1271 hockey growing up maybe, I don't even know if that, and it's really hard for someone
1272 like that to get the respect of like a let's say [player name] or someone like that, like
1273 he's not going to respect him so...so it kind of sucked for him, but I didn't mind him
1274 as a person at all. Even as a coach he wasn't ever...bad for me, but I know the team
1275 could have been coached better.

1276
1277 I: How was that team? I remember that team...how was that team with like curfew...
1278

1279 P: Oh...**we were awful...we uh...and for me like...I was always someone who...to**
1280 **me...curfews not that big of a deal** if it's Sunday, Monday night kind of thing, like
1281 going to [bar name] whatever...it's more so if guys are doing it the night before
1282 games and stuff where it gets out of hand...no one was really like that...other than
1283 one person...[player name]...it wasn't...that wasn't a problem...we just had so many
1284 like...high profile names, I feel like everyone didn't fit like...with talent we had we
1285 should have gone to the Memorial Cup that year because realistically...[OHL Team]
1286 hosted it...so all we would have had to done was win the [conference] and we would
1287 of went to the Mem Cup which as a back up this is awesome, let's go to the Mem Cup
1288 [laughs]...like just for the experience, even if I didn't get in the net, if I didn't even get
1289 a second of playing time...that would have been sweet...

1290
1291 I: So how long do you think it took to accept...like now it sounds like you're ok with
1292 your role, how long did it take you to accept...
1293

1294 P: Um...I think the whole process of um...going through rehabilitation...sort of...I
1295 **gradually accepted that I wasn't going to be able to play at the same...same**
1296 **level**, and I think right now, at the stage I am right now...I could probably...if I
1297 dedicated time, I think I could get back to close, not fully...but close...but at the same
1298 my knee was so...like pain...like constant pain...and not just like a dull pain
1299 where...where it is more now, it was...like really really bad pain with any sort of
1300 exercise, any sort of prolonged activity. So...I loved playing, so I wasn't going to stop
1301 practicing and stuff, like I was really hurting so in a sense I wasn't like asking for
1302 more playing time either...you know what I mean? So...it was a gradual thing...but it
1303 was more like reacting to my body like kind of thing.

1304
1305 I: Were you thinking about what you were going to do next?
1306

1307 P: That entered um...a lot. Especially because...start of that year, I started dating a
1308 girl who was in her third year at [Canadian University] and um...and sort of she
1309 starts thinking about that kind of stuff so naturally I just started to as well...um...and
1310 actually that's when, like at the end of that year, I didn't...**the team had asked me**
1311 **to come back and to try and play....for my over age year...and I said like "no I**
1312 **can't" so...**
1313

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1314 I: So they were going to take you?

1315

1316 P: Ya, I was going to come back. I was going to try and come back...as best as I
1317 could...but um...they just like...they decided like that, I don't know...they thought I
1318 could play...is what they said, and they said they still thought I could, and I sort of
1319 said, **I think I can...maybe...in a very limited role, but the way the OHL works**
1320 **you wouldn't ever have an over age goalie...or any over age player for that**
1321 **matter in such a limited role you know what I mean? So, I just said it would be**
1322 **better if we...went our separate ways...**

1323

1324 I: Do you think they were...so do you think they were lying or they were being
1325 honest with you when they said we want you to come back?

1326

1327 P: I had a really good relationship with the GM um...I...I think...I know they were
1328 **honest in wanting me to come back...but I think what would of happened if I**
1329 **came back is that they probably would of had to get someone else after**
1330 **realizing like 2 months into the season that I couldn't...like holy shit he can't**
1331 **play, like he was right...but so I don't think like they were going to screw**
1332 **me...as a function of it being a business and having to try to put together the**
1333 **wins, I think I would have been out as full time goalie, and eventually as a back**
1334 **up because you wouldn't have an over ager as a back up goalie...so it was...it**
1335 **was hard but at the same time I transitioned quickly, like right into school**
1336 **with a girlfriend, and so it was...and living in your own actual place for the first**
1337 **time...**

1338

1339 I: So now you...you're done...your OHL is done...now you apply to [Canadian
1340 University], what do you do about school? Do you ask about your package?

1341

1342 P: Um...actually I didn't, what had happened was I just **for my first year, I had paid**
1343 **all the bills and submitted it at the end of the year.**

1344

1345 I: Is that what they told you to do?

1346

1347 P: Um...I wasn't even sure up until the last like...few weeks before the summer that I
1348 was going to go to [Canadian University] 100%...um...but yeah essentially...this was
1349 going back like, way back, like probably like [year]...when I first played. The way I
1350 interpreted it was I pay...and then they reimburse me...so I did that my first year.
1351 But then every other year, my second and third year...**they just paid for**
1352 **everything...and I...like beforehand, I never had to look at tuition, it would**
1353 **never even show up as a cost.**

1354

1355 I: So you paid for your first year and then they paid you back?

1356

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- 1357 P: Ya and **the following year they just worked it out with [Canadian University]**
1358 **and all I had to do was submit my textbook receipts.**
1359
- 1360 I: And you would get that after?
1361
- 1362 P: Ya.
1363
- 1364 I: So they paid for how many years?
1365
- 1366 P: 3...3 years.
1367
- 1368 I: **3 years...full tuition and all your books...**
1369
- 1370 P: Ya full tuition and all my books.
1371
- 1372 I: Even though you just played that like quarter season.
1373
- 1374 P: Yep. Ya it um...
1375
- 1376 I: That's not too bad.
1377
- 1378 P: Ya, I think the way it is now...and I could be wrong, but I think the way it is, is as
1379 long as your in one game...and you have a contract...which you have to be to have a
1380 game...um...I think you get one year...I think it's one game, other than
1381 exhibition...like a regular season, one game on the game sheet...I think it's one year
1382 of education...but I could be wrong. I could have been in the situation too, um...just
1383 because how I left injured...like if you leave because you're leaving, I think it's
1384 written in the contract that way, that was like the only issue the lawyer had, like my
1385 dad showed him the contract and **he said like "I know these are standard**
1386 **contracts, but they are very slanted towards the team" and he just said like**
1387 **"make sure your son knows that if he quits the team for any reason,**
1388 **they're...able to like....renag on the school package" so that was the thing, and I**
1389 **didn't technically quit, because your contract ends before your over age**
1390 **year...um so you know how I said I didn't come back...but you have to sign a**
1391 **totally different contract if you come back as an over age year...**
1392
- 1393 I: So what was it like...now your at [Canadian University] how did it feel to be out?
1394
- 1395 P: Um...just the weirdest thing for me was...um...like socializing...in like a...like I
1396 don't like going out to the bar, but like as a hockey player I loved that and now it's
1397 like, I'm older now too but...I was like what was I doing? But like...even like the team
1398 dynamic makes things so much more fun...even like...I can go to bar with 5 of my
1399 friends and we'll still have a good time but it's not the same when you're there with
1400 20 guys...and like you're all having a good time like...and like the camaraderie of a

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1401 team atmosphere is just...even like there's guys who like I don't even stay in contact
1402 with but like...just because we played together, like if we met up or ran into each
1403 other it would be like...one day passed since I last saw them, but it's been like
1404 [number] years...so it's cool that way but it just like I said...socializing, **because**
1405 **your identity is so wrapped up in being a hockey player**...and then you're
1406 like...one day you're not, so it's just like..."**well what am I? Am I a University**
1407 **student? Am I a former hockey player?** Like...like you know? So it's just...cause
1408 like literally that's how people would ask, especially after high school..."oh well
1409 what do you do? Do you like go to school?"..."Oh no...I'm a hockey player..." [laughs]
1410 So like...it's just like...that's what I was...so...and now...it's just totally like...you
1411 almost feel...and not that I was ever like a star hockey player but **you almost feel**
1412 **insignificant in a way...like just because...you feel that...you're on the team**
1413 **like...like we had free meals everywhere we could go in town...and stuff like**
1414 **that, discounts here, and like I total unwarranted attention just because you're**
1415 **a hockey player um...and then it's just all gone...so...it's just weird...in a sense**
1416 **to me...**

1417
1418 I: So overall...looking back now how would you describe your experience of playing
1419 in the OHL?

1420
1421 P: I uh...I enjoyed it a lot, probably the worst experience I had, we didn't even
1422 talk about yet...was um...insurance stuff that happened after. Um...what
1423 happened was I had career ending insurance, it's um...a plan...

1424
1425 I: So...with who?

1426
1427 P: I'm not even sure, it's all done through like the league and stuff...

1428
1429 I: Right, so what happened with that?

1430
1431 P: So...we made the claim and whatever...and meet with...

1432
1433 I: For a certain amount of...

1434
1435 P: It's a set amount uh...you pay like \$500 and...you don't pay like, you pay a
1436 broker or whatever and the team reimburses you, and you have career ending
1437 insurance up to I think it was \$70,000 or \$80,000 dollars...um...and so we
1438 made the claim and meet with um...I don't know what you call it but the
1439 person who takes your claim...uh...and then I almost thought like for sure I
1440 would be getting this money...um...because I had like the medical
1441 documentation and everything and there was a clause that was written in this
1442 thing somewhere that says if you participate in over 20 games after your
1443 injury...um...you're no longer able to get that money...um...or if...there's
1444 certain things where you practice over like a month after your injury you're

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1445 **no longer able to get that money, and those are all things written into this**
1446 **contract that like I never saw, I never was...ever was notified of that those**
1447 **were in there...and then I ended up losing out on my money because I**
1448 **participated even though I only played in 5 games, I was on the game sheet for**
1449 **like...35-40 games, so that counts as participated in the game...so...I lost like I**
1450 **have a feeling it was \$77,000 dollars.**

1451
1452 I: Do you think they knew that?

1453
1454 P: I...I think it was a huge...um...just a huge a huge I don't know what you call it...a
1455 **blunder, like them not knowing it, I don't think anyone on the team knew, or I**
1456 **think they would have told me.** They wouldn't have had to pay the insurance, like
1457 the insurance company would of...um...

1458
1459 I: So they money wouldn't be coming from the CHL?

1460
1461 P: No, no, it's from like, I think it was actually [insurance company] which is like a
1462 big insurance company...uh...like [insurance company] is a...it's been around for like
1463 hundreds of years or something...

1464
1465 I: Did you ever talk to your coach or anyone from the OHL during the time when you
1466 were trying to get that money?

1467
1468 P: Um...no. I didn't speak with anyone...my old goalie coach um...I'm trying to think
1469 of who else...my dad spoke with a few lawyers, but no one from like the league or
1470 anything...**it was sort of out of the league's hands at that point**, you know what I
1471 mean? It's all done through the insurance company.

1472
1473 I: Do you think that...let's say that happened to someone else...do you think the team
1474 should know that?

1475
1476 P: Ya...**I really do, and I think the way they get around it, like I think legally in a**
1477 **sense there's nothing they did wrong**, but I think morally there's...and I don't
1478 even know if they actually know that they did...but the way it used to be was the
1479 team would just pay for it and like I think maybe...one year the team paid for it for
1480 me, and then the policy changed...where you pay for it and they reimburse you. So
1481 it's...**so you're technically the one paying for the service...you go out and get it,**
1482 **so I think it's...in a sense it's on me as a 16 or 17 year old kid to read through**
1483 **some complicated legal document and understand that, which obviously I**
1484 **didn't, and I don't even know if we got documents, I think we just called the**
1485 **place the team said to call and said here's our credit card, this is the insurance**
1486 **we're going to be on...and then that was it.** Like I don't think it was like any...any
1487 malice, sort of intent to screw him over like...me as in him, but I think it was
1488 just...should of never happened, **a properly run organization should of...should**

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1489 **of known that that's in the career ending insurance and someone should have**
1490 **told me about that.**

1491

1492 I: Ya, absolutely, Other than that though, you had a good experience?

1493

1494 P: Ya, like, that's just something, I'm not even that...even though I may sound a little
1495 sour over that...that's something that would have been great, would of helped me
1496 out a lot, starting out like real life I call it, but I just...other than that it was
1497 nothing...nothing but positive things, obviously things happen in any situation but
1498 like, **I met some great friends, like great opportunities, the way I look at it...I**
1499 **think my mom has always tried to make me look at it this way...but...I just think**
1500 **about the stuff that like I had given to me like, all my equipment, all my travel**
1501 **expenses, track suits, clothing, bus trips, we had internet on the bus and like**
1502 **staying in hotels, most like...Canadian boys dream of doing that kind of stuff in**
1503 **their teenage years, and like I actually got to do it so it was a dream in a sense,**
1504 **even though it was a very small glimpse on the hockey radar was my career**
1505 **[laughs] but um...it was like I said it was almost like living out a dream in a**
1506 **sense, and not by like making the NHL, but just playing hockey everyday, and**
1507 **having your whole identity wrapped up in that.**

1508

1509 I: When you were playing you got \$50 bucks or whatever, did you think that was
1510 fair? Did you care?

1511

1512 P: Ah...yes and no. **We knew we really couldn't do anything to change it,**
1513 **um...even at the time actually...we had a joke Facebook group, like the OHLPA,**
1514 **like it was a, it was just a big joke like closed Facebook group that like we were**
1515 **going to start this but it was just a bunch of guys joking around and stuff**
1516 **um...it...like...we knew it was never going to change, at least when we were**
1517 **there, and it's sort of a...a vicious circle in a sense that you don't want to be the**
1518 **one to say anything, to speak out about stuff like that, because you're always**
1519 **like on the team...I think you almost have to be...and then speaking out like...I**
1520 **was going to say you almost have to be a really good player, like a star, but**
1521 **then how does your NHL team that you're drafted to or going to potentially**
1522 **draft you feel about you speaking out? Already...at such a young age...against**
1523 **something, like is this guy going to talk bad about our organization too? And**
1524 **kind of thing...you know what I mean? So...**

1525

1526 I: So when you look now, in retrospect and see all this money...

1527

1528 P: Ya...

1529

1530 I: What do you think about that?

1531

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1532 P: Um...it's definitely um...it's sort of like...**they're making money on the back's of**
1533 **like children in some cases...because of the like whatever way you want to**
1534 **split the legal definition of an adult, so it is kind of...it is kind of odd to see...at**
1535 **the same time...I think there's always going to be that argument out there that**
1536 **we can't be giving large amounts of money to 16 and 17 year old kids, like I did**
1537 some pretty bad things with the \$50 dollars a week that I had so...[laughs]...like...I
1538 don't...I don't know if it will ever happen, maybe it will get bumped up to like \$100
1539 dollars a week or something like that, but it's never going to be like a salary I don't
1540 think, or anything and if it is...power to the players, but I...I just don't see it ever
1541 going that way.

1542
1543 I: So basically, I'm getting the sense that, you know there's no...like a CHLPA...it
1544 would be difficult unless some like really prominent like Wayne Gretzky kind of like
1545 says "hey, I'm going to make this CHLPA"

1546
1547 P: Ya, but even it's...I think you could do it, it's just...the credibility thing...like how
1548 they already sort of brought up all the past of the one person who was working for
1549 it...sort of squashed that pretty quick...um...like I'd be curious to see like...because
1550 I'm sure it will come up again...if not sooner rather than later, but just to see how
1551 the OHL responds. And...**I understand why they don't want that, at the same**
1552 **time their a business and...I could just see it being very messy collective**
1553 **bargaining with 16 and 17 year olds but...someone would speak on behalf of**
1554 **them obviously so...I don't know, I could see an OHLPA like being created, but I**
1555 **think more of the stuff that's going to come out of that is that more stuff to do**
1556 **with education package and, and how the package you have a year to use it, I**
1557 **think that should be extended. I think it should be at least 5 years, guys should**
1558 **be afforded the chance to go play pro if they want to try it out for more than**
1559 **just a year, um...but at the same time I don't really think, because I heard**
1560 **Georges Laraque talking about how he wants, the team...he wants it to be**
1561 **unlimited...um...like they can use it whenever...I don't think that, I don't know**
1562 **if that would go too well, just because if a guy plays till 30 and plays pro**
1563 **hockey, like what right does he have to claim some money that he could of got**
1564 **when he was 16? You know what I mean?**

1565
1566 I: If you had kids would you let them go in the OHL?

1567
1568 P: Uh...ya. Ya, I think I would um...

1569
1570 I: If they could go either NCAA or OHL what would you say to them?

1571
1572 P: **I think I would push them to the OHL.** Not push them, sorry...that's a bad word,
1573 but uh...just because I think the Canadian...this is not me pushing [Canadian
1574 university hockey team] but I think Canadian University hockey is really overlooked
1575 a lot, I mean like...go have fun, go play in the OHL, take your best chance at...at trying

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1576 to make hockey a career, and then if **not you have...essentially a better**
1577 **scholarship than a lot of Canadian kids get in the states anyway. Because most**
1578 **scholarships to the states for hockey now aren't full for a Canadian students...a**
1579 lot of them are like, I know people on like 50% scholarships all the way to like 90%
1580 but I don't know anyone from Canada, and it does happen but it's rare, like the
1581 really, really good players get the 100% full ride kind of deals...but **you can play 4**
1582 **years in the OHL and get your whole university education paid for, and even**
1583 **better players I know, they can negotiate to get their rent, I know OHL players**
1584 **who get their rent and groceries paid for at university now, that was just**
1585 **negotiated in their contracts. So like, if...the focus is just so much on making it,**
1586 **that people sort of overlook Canadian university hockey as a viable thing** but it
1587 is...I wish I would have had the chance to play...play for [Canadian university], it's
1588 just...to keep playing at this sort of level...obviously a lesser um...not
1589 competitiveness but skill level...it doesn't have the same kind of star power that the
1590 OHL has, it's still great hockey.

Interview #2/Participant #2
February 7, 2013
Skype Call

I: How did you start playing hockey? Can you remember the very first time you started to play?

P: Um...I **don't know if I can remember all the details because of my concussion I got Saturday** [laughs] but I'll try...so I started playing hockey when I was...I would say 5 years old, in my home town back in [European city]. I played in the system all the way through to when I was in grade 8 I believe. Then I was playing midget in a different town, I was captain of the team there, I was always playing a couple years ahead, going to the boys hockey school, that's how it was in [European country] so how it worked in that system was that the hockey team had my rights, since I grew up in their system. The only way you could play on a different team was if you go to school in a different city, or they lend you to a different team. So that's what happened to me in midget, I was playing for kind of our sister team, a different city close to mine, I was the captain of the team there, I had a pretty good season there so I got invited to a under 17 tournament and that's how my international hockey career started. Uh....went back [after u/17] played juniors first year back in my hometown, it was my last year playing hockey in [European country] I decided to...uh...I decided to go put my name into the CHL draft, when I was 17 years old. It's funny...it wasn't through my agent, it was through this guy who kind of just scouted me out, he trained with a lot of guys, like kids, so he told me he had connections and he could hook me up and put me in the draft, so I said sure. And so I played under 17 and under 18, so I made a name for myself on the international scene I guess, but I wasn't a star or anything like that. **So uh...what I thought was going to happen was being drafted to [OHL team], so I looked them up...looked at their jerseys, it looked like [NHL team] right? They had the same jerseys. I didn't know anything about the CHL, I didn't know what the CHL was.** I knew there was hockey for kids for juniors in North America when I was that age but I never seen a game, never heard of teams, I didn't know there was 3 leagues, I didn't know...I had no idea. So ya...I was looking at the OHL and [OHL team]...it looked like the teams were close to each other so kind of getting ready for that. I knew what round they were picking so it was like 3am our time and the draft was online, it was really just like a draft sheet and you just saw the name popping up like every 5 minutes. So I thought I was suppose to be like [round pick] in [round number] but then nothing...some Russian guy was there so...then I ended up...I think I was [round pick] over all or something like that, it doesn't really matter in the CHL draft. **But it was by [WHL team], which I had no clue what that is. So I quickly googled Tri-City Americans. The agent called me that night...or the guy and said ya sorry it didn't work out but I talked to the GM of [WHL team] he looks like he's very interested if you want to do it. So I said "well I guess I have to now," and he said..."ya you do. " [laughs] Once you're enlisted you have to go because you have the name of an agent on your behalf.** So...ya I had the summer to prepare. They sent me like a welcome package and it arrived in a shoebox and it was like these triple XL shirts with [team design] and I'm like..."is this like military camp?" I was like a scrawny little kid, not like little I was tall but like not very muscular or

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anything. So I started doing pull-ups, anyways...so left my country in like [month] I left really early. I left my girlfriend of 3 years behind and my family, crying mom at the airport. I had the worst flight ever...Am I going into too much detail?

I: No, no, no...keep going.

P: So I had like 5 connections, I got lost, my baggage was like broken. My flight on delayed, I had to sleep over in [American city]. Then the GM picked me up, I got settled. It was before training camp so a lot of people like [NHL player] was playing there...so it was pretty cool...[NHL player] too. It was pretty cool...it was like the middle of the desert but like it was pretty cool, it was different...the rink was nice, met some guys...then the camp started. I was doing really well...[coach name] was the coach at the time and he really liked me...I didn't play in pre-season games, I played other games...I got a concussion, like a bad one first game I played. So ya...I was getting settled...I liked my [billet] family lots and everything was fine. Then suddenly they brought in a 20 year old player...a European player from [WHL team]. So it was me...[player name] who was like a tall defenceman and this 20 year old sniper and me as a third guy so...and funny enough all 3 of us were with the same agent so like how did that happen? I'm not sure. But I kind of disagree...because you can only have 2 European players. So I'm like "they're going to need a big defenceman so that's [player name's] job and their either going to go with someone who scored 20 goals last year or someone who they want to play...so they decided to keep [player name] uh...they hadn't really seen him play but he was in the junior league so I'm like "okay am I going home or what?" **And then the GM told me "ya we've traded you to the [WHL team] and they are interested in you and ya you're going to [WHL team] tomorrow. And it was already close to the season so I was pretty depressed, I just got used to my family, started liking people and now I have to move to Brandon and I didn't know where it is. It was so cold when I got there, so I got there and I missed the home opener...I arrived the morning of the game, so I watched the game...it was sold out, it was outrageous, just nuts. The next game was an away game so...and I hopped on the bus and played the first game away and he [coach] put me on the first line and I scored a goal in the first game, so it was great. But the next game, boom, down to the third line and the fourth line, like I thought he was going to stop playing me. And ya...I played in Brandon for 2 seasons. My first year I didn't go to school or anything I just did hockey, but the second year I decided to go to school and take the transfers from the school I had in [European country] and try to get a degree in [WHL team city] so I think I figured out how to transfer my credits from [European country]. I didn't really need that much, I only needed 3 or 4 courses or something like that, so I got all the requirements I needed in one year, graduated high school my second year, so I was 18 my first year, 19 my second year and then as a 20 year old I got offered to go to a pro team in Europe, a try out in the summer, so I told my coach I would do that and I went there...played well enough to get a contract...it was the highest league in [European country]...like an entry level contract but I decided to [WHL**

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team] because I had a girlfriend there, I liked the city...I just liked it there. I just wanted to go back and finish my junior career there. But...but...ya I told my coach I'm coming back and he's like "ya, I'm looking forward to having you here at camp, but we have 4 or 5 20 year olds right." So I went back and got traded to [WHL team] so that was my third season.

I: So do you remember the day when you were leaving? The day before you were leaving from [European country] to go to the WHL?

P: The day before I was leaving?

I: Ya.

P: Actually I don't even remember that day. It was all just kind of happy and exciting. I just know my mom was super nervous and upset.

I: Did you know English?

P: I'd say minimal. I took English in elementary school and high school but...like I could understand like written language and like when people were speaking I would understand sort of what they're saying but I could not formulate a sentence. I never had to speak English anywhere. But like, I was fine. I was better than most, I wasn't bad.

I: Did you learn by yourself there? Or did they have classes for you?

P: I didn't take any classes, I just kind of learned it on my own. I read Harry Potter [laughs]. In [WHL team city] I was going to see this one teacher, I went to see her all the time she kind of taught me a little bit and recognized that I could learn on my own, you know?

I: Right.

P: So I did that and everything was fine. It took a couple years.

I: Were you getting more money than a Canadian player in the WHL?

P: No. In the WHL the way it works is you sign a contract, so I guess I would sign a contract with [WHL team]. So I would just a standard kind of salary or standard contract, so I think it's like \$80 bucks your first year, \$160 your second year...whatever that is...plus the tuition part where whatever province or state you sign then the level of tuition in that province for that given year when you want to attend that's what they were going to pay me...plus books.

I: Do you remember when you signed it? Right when you go to [WHL team]?

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P: It wasn't right away. I just know that the assistant coach said "we drafted some forms for your work VISA to come to Canada and also the contract, we need to get that done in a couple days, so stop by my office anytime." So I stopped by the office and I think the GM was there and the coach and they said here's the contract. **I actually don't even remember if I had to sign on the spot or if they told me to read it over.**

I: Was it after the first game you played there?

P: I think so. **I don't think I signed it before.** Because I believe...I showed up the morning of the home opener and the next day I went for an away game. So unless they made me do it the very first day, which is possibly...I know there was a lot of paper work to get done afterwards, like the work VISA and stuff and that took a couple weeks, but...that was nothing I would think about, like it wasn't something like you should pay attention to, like...**I was happy to be there, I was happy someone picked me up, I would literally sign anything.**

I: What did you think of when you thought of Canada, did you think NHL? Was that the goal?

P: **My aspirations were ya...definitely...was...**I don't know I just felt very lucky because I kind of had a good year back in Europe got to the national team, but I've never been like a top player that people would talk about so to go there and see the NHL players, and see all the star players that I read about and heard about...kind of playing with me...I saw that I could play as good as they can...I saw the opportunity, so I was like "wow, I could have a good year here too" like you never know. **Ya...I just wanted to go play the best way I can and establish myself in the league and get drafted.**

I: Do you remember if they said anything to you about the education package when you signed or was that something you learned after?

P: If they did tell me, I didn't pay too much attention to it. All I know...they did mention it though, no I think they did, **they said something like "it's a really good contract compared to the other leagues, so it's very standardized, and it's a good deal, and you have some education money" and I didn't pay attention to that. And I know some guys were taken advantage of while playing hockey in [WHL team city]. They were pretty big on the education package, everybody had to go to high school and if you don't do good in high school you don't play. But I know some older players, like 20 year olds were taking some classes while playing hockey and actually using the money from their contracts for that.**

I: And then you went to [WHL team]?

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P: Yes.

I: For one year?

P: For my last year, ya.

I: And then when did you go to the [NHL team] camp?

P: So that happened...as I said I finished my 20 year old season in [WHL team] but I **had like a bunch of surgeries and like a lot of injuries** so that was before the summer and I talked to my new agent, my old agent died. My new agent was good friends with someone from the [NHL team] organization and he had some players play there before, [NHL player] his name is and he's like **"hey uh, you know you had a very decent year, before the injuries you got noticed, then you played through the injuries which people noticed, people are scouting you, like you've been scouted"** although I never met any scouts..."you didn't get drafted before but you played in the world juniors, I have a hook up in [NHL team] and I can hook you up with the rookie camp, it's not a problem if you want to do it, this is really your chance, you're a 20 year old...you can decided if you want to go back to Europe play hockey there or do you want to try it here?" so I said **"well, I'll give it a try"** but I had a cast on, so I'm like **"I don't know how prepared I can be"** so he said **"well let's just do it anyways"** so he signed me up with the Traverse City rookie tournament, so I flew to [NHL team] but I had already talked to...at that point I was looking at the education right? So I received packages from all over, and I was in touch personally with 3 or 4 coaches, and just through a friend of ours at [WHL team] got talking to the coach here at [current CIS university] and decided to go there, but they knew about me going to camp, so I had kind of an agreement that **if I go to camp and something amazing happens and they sign me with a 2-way contract, NHL and AHL, I'll go and play and I won't go to [CIS university]. If I get anything below that, if I get one way AHL I would still stay but if I go ECHL or whatever is below that I would go back to school, that was kind of a verbal agreement. So I was in [CIS university city] working, preparing for the camp then I flew to [NHL team] to the camp, had a very good camp, was one of the leading scorers at the Traverse City tournament, so they asked me to stay with the main team on the flight back.** So I stayed with the first team for a couple weeks, with the whole training camp, the testing and all that kind of stuff, that was a lot of fun. Played against [NHL team], watched a game against [NHL team] at [arena], and then they said they are moving players down, I wasn't even in the first batch of players moving out of the camp, I was in the second one, they moved me to [AHL team] so if I wanted to continue playing in the organization I should go there, so I said "sure." I was only there for like [month], school started 3 weeks ago so I had to make a decision pretty quick, so like I played games in [AHL team], so I told the coach "listen guys, where do you see me as playing, I need to decide now before it's too late for my school" and the coach was like "you know we really like you but we

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still have 35 forwards on the roster, most likely, just given your age, and we didn't draft you, you would probably go to the ECHL first and then see what the opportunities would be like. I could see you playing here in [AHL team]." And I'm like **"thank you, I can't, I had an agreement with coach I want to go get my education, see ya later."**

I: Was that hard? Because you always wanted to be an NHL player and then all of a sudden, when did you realize that maybe it's not going to work I want to go to school.

P: It was hard because I could see that the difference between me and the NHL at that point was so...I was as good as any other player at camp or better. But at the same time, I was there. Like...I made it to the highest level, I played with the guys, I did the camp, I played a game, I was good. Like, for some reason I played really good hockey, I just adjusted to the level, and I could see myself playing. **There was no reason why I shouldn't be, but there's a lot of politics, a lot of injuries and a lot of luck that you can't input that.** And if something goes wrong I would have to go back to Europe, and I knew I wanted to stay in North America, I had a girlfriend waiting for me in [CIS university] and you know what? **Playing pro in the AHL, I would not like, [NHL team] is different. But I was actually excited about university and it was something different for a change, I was getting sick of playing hockey at that point, I would do it if I could play for the NHL, but [AHL team] is this ugly city, and it's pretty cut throat you know? Everybody wants to make it to the show, no one really likes to hang out with you, most of them have like families or girlfriends, like it's different. It's not junior anymore.**

I: So what's the difference between you and someone who just grinds it out in the ECHL?

P: Well first of all, I don't think everyone is fit for school. I know I have the smarts to do it, and I've always liked school. And...even going to the camp I was...genuinely excited to go to school. **At that point I had already had enough of hockey, not enough if the [NHL team] signed me to a contract, but enough to if I'm not 100% sure what I want to do, I saw the potential of the contract with the scholarship, I saw all of the opportunities there, I was just intrigued.** And I take business so I look at this in economic terms...if I stayed in [AHL team] and got paid whatever \$60,000 or \$70,000 dollars and paid off taxes, I almost made more money going to school. Given the fact that school here costs almost over \$20 grand itself, so I couldn't justify it with the the fact that I would make money in [AHL team]...I would just be playing to make it to the show. **And here and I had the opportunity to get my citizenship, stay with my girlfriend, go to school and still get my education, get established in Canada.** So I don't know, I just...and the difference between me and someone in the ECHL I guess is that if I was really, really, really crazy about hockey at that point I would still do it, but I was really excited about doing something different, and **I had the injuries.** If I didn't have any injuries and

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made it there, I might of looked at it differently but I know how feel I was doing my last year playing junior and I know how quickly it changed. In a matter of weeks I broke my hand, or I broke my foot, and like you know like...you can't control that. It's just the style of game I played too right? I'm not a top 2 line scorer...I'm more of a 2-way center, **you know 2nd or 3rd line type player...penalty killing, blocking shots, hitting people...that's kind of hard on your body right?**

I: How did you feel when you were injured?

P: It was just super frustrating. I've always had some minor injuries in [WHL team] like, I actually never really had a full season, well my first year I had a full season, but my second year I only played half the games and same thing for [WHL team] but in [WHL team] I was just pissed off, I wanted to finish it, so I broke my hand and played 13 days later. I broke my foot...I decided, well I didn't have to do it, but I put a screw in it, so I could play as soon as I can and I played after like 2 or 3 weeks. So I played with a screw and a broken hand...I had a cast on my hand playing hockey, I had a screw in my foot playing hockey and I knew already that my wrist was messed up, and I knew I had to get surgery. So I was just a mess. Just trying to grind it out, but like I was having a good time, I just obviously couldn't perform as well and just knowing that, you know...and also the difference between me and someone else in the organization who they drafted a couple years ago, he was the star and they spent so much money and effort on him...he's always going to have preference to me, no matter how better I am, no matter how better my attitude is compared to his. So there's a lot of politics in that sense, right? I wasn't bred [NHL team], I was just kind of an outsider in the organization. And quite frankly, although it was probably one of the best experiences to go there to the [NHL team]...it's probably the worst team to ever try for. If I go to [NHL team] or [NHL team] it would be different. The [NHL team he was trying out for] actually paid guys \$60 or \$70 grand to guys playing juniors, but they still took 5 years to play, you know their playing in the ECHL, get traded a couple times...you know it takes time. And usually they just get better players from somewhere else, but anyways I'm happy for that experience.

I: Overall, how would you describe your experience in the WHL?

P: **It was amazing. It was probably the best experience I had because given the opportunity to go to Canada** which I had been to Canada before but I was like 11 or 12, I went for tournaments in Vancouver and I fell in love with Vancouver and Canada in general, I had such a good time, I went twice in a row. So that was amazing, being able to play in front of people, **like you've been treated probably as NHL players especially like [WHL team]...it's a small city...hockey is the only thing they know so it was an amazing experience, just overall it was a lot of fun. Had a professional kind of career, like you take it very seriously, a lot of**

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the guys do, you know? You're just trying to win games, get paid a couple bucks every couple weeks, you know?

I: It seems so different, the WHL compared to the OHL, you know? Just with education, it's amazing that they put it in your contract and you didn't even know it was there for you.

P: That's the thing, [WHL team] is a small town and there's a lot of tradition, they were never trying to trick someone or something. It's one of the oldest junior organizations, like 45 years, and ya so, I guess I was fortunate in that sense. Because if I went to [OHL team] for example...who knows right? That's the team I could have been right, I could have had the same career, but same injuries, but maybe not go on to play university. So I was very fortunate. But even like, it's not even the contract...as soon as you're a 20 year old the office of the WHL, the guys working full time for the education get in touch with you and ask "how it's going" and ask if you're thinking about school and if they can help you that or help you with preparation. Then you go to school and they're like "make sure you do this and that, if you have any problems let us know, this is how you claim your textbooks" like I've been on the phone with them and they're great guys trying to help you. You never feel like..."can I get my money?" It's more like they're calling you to make sure that you got your money.

I: So when you look at the CHL and obviously there's a lot of revenue they are making...do you think that players should be getting more than \$60 bucks a week?

P: Well...as a 20 year old you get decently...for doing nothing. For me coming from Czech, that's a lot of money, for here I guess it's not really that much when you compare the owners getting paid millions right? So, I don't know...you're still a kid though, and I don't think...I think if they do put more stuff into these scholarships, making sure its for everybody not just all the Canadians but also international players. If that was taken care of, like then you don't really have to worry about education. Because I know even my teammate here at [CIS university] he played in the WHL, and he played 5 years, even then it's not enough to cover for tuition, because he signed, let's say he signed with [WHL team] well that's [CIS school] territory, well that tuition compared to [CIS university] tuition is totally different. So if you look at it in terms of if you could actually afford any Canadian university, and nobody had to pay for anything then that would be cool, and I would sacrifice my \$80 bucks for that, right?

I: Do you think they need a player's union?

P: That'd be funny, they're just kids. Any kids that start thinking about things that matter are like 20 years old, and then you have a bunch of concussions by that time so I don't know how that would work [laughs].

I: If they had people working on their behalf, adults who had their best interests...

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P: Ya, in that sense, but **I don't think it's needed in the WHL, but from what I heard about the other leagues, it might be cool.** If it was old NHL players, who played in the system, or players who played in university, kind of got together...they are alumni groups like that, so it should be pretty easy to form a group people who could take charge of that, and **maybe make sure that new players, especially the ones from Europe coming into the league get everything explained to them. Because really, I had no idea about the league, I didn't know how many teams were there, I didn't know anything about the contracts or education package, nothing.** But the fact is most kids probably don't care, right? They're going to play hockey, that's it, then go back home and drink. But, if someone said to me, even when I was 17, made sure I understand...that'd be pretty cool. That could probably be improved even in the WHL. But as I said, I never had a bad experience.

I: If you had a kid, would you let them play?

P: Yes, but **I wouldn't let them go play CHL if it was up to me.** I know my scout, the guy who brought me to the CHL draft, said "I wish I saw you before, and we would go the high school route in the states and go NCAA" so that's what I would recommend. **You get the best of both worlds, you get the education plus you still had a good shot in the NHL, here in the CHL it's like one way or the other almost. But at the same time the experience in the WHL is very professional, you just play hockey.** I would never tell my kid not to do it if he's good enough. I mean you are the star for 4 years, you get the best years of your life, you're just having fun.

I: So now you're almost done school, so this is your last year of hockey?

P:...Ya. I could go back next year and play a fifth year, but I don't know.

I: So what are you going to be when you're done. Are you going to be a former hockey player, are you a student, who are you?

P: Right now?

I: Ya.

P: I would said I'm a **varsity-student**...it's funny because I do have the career experience, it's 20 years of hockey I played before [CIS university] at a very high level so it's kind of like almost two different lives. I've reached a peak before I went to [CIS university] and I kind of focused on a lot of things, try to reach my peak there, pretty successful in school and pretty known around for those achievements, not so much for the athletic ones. Which is funny because when people ask me where I played before and I say the WHL they're like "wow" they don't really expect that from me a guy who played juniors. So I see it as kind of two different worlds.

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I: So was hockey, when you in the WHL, was it part of your identity?

P: Ya.

I: And now it's less so?

P: I don't even want to be a hockey player...ever since I went to [CIS university] I've made more friends outside of the team, I never wanted to be known as the hockey player, unless I was going to a world championship or something like that. Sometimes you mention that you're an athlete, but if I'm having a normal conversation, I don't even mention it anymore. After so many years, you don't just want to be known as that, because you don't want to be put in a box, a dumb hockey. But there are some [laughs] but yeah...unless I have my track suit on, nobody really knows I'm a hockey player.

I: Were you really close with your teammates when you were in the WHL?

P: Yes, I guess it was a little tough for me because, I guess every European is looked upon as an outsider. And I had another European player with me so that was good, but, ya I've always been personable, I've never had issues, or any conflicts. I never disliked anyone on any of my teams. People respected my for my on ice abilities but they also knew I was smart, they knew I had other things to do besides just hockey, so, ya I think I just had a really good relationship with everyone.

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1 I: Where did you grow up?
2
3 P: I grew up in [city].
4
5 I: So can you remember your very first time skating?
6
7 P: [sighs] I don't think I can ever really remember my first time, I just remember
8 making my first like rep type team, and that was in [city] at a small little arena. I
9 remember being on that team.
10
11 I: How old were you?
12
13 P: I was 7 at the time.
14
15 I: How did you start? You just wanted to play hockey or?
16
17 P: Hockey was kind of big for my dad and stuff so they decided to put me into it and I
18 kind of just kept going through it.
19
20 I: Did he play?
21
22 P: Ya he played growing up.
23
24 I: The only thing [laughs] I really remember from being younger was...because I'm
25 colourblind, so I remember when I was playing in hockey school type thing, we
26 separated two teams and I didn't know which team to go to because I couldn't tell
27 between the two colours, they were too similar, so I didn't know which bench to go
28 to.
29
30 P: Did the coaches know that?
31
32 I: Eventually, they didn't know I was colourblind, so I looked at my mom and she
33 pointed to which side I had to go to.
34
35 P: That's when you were 7?
36
37 I: No that's was a little before then.
38
39 P: So that was your first memory?
40
41 I: Ya, that was my first memory for hockey and stuff.
42
43 P: And then you just kept playing?
44

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45 I: Ya, just kept playing. I just kept progressing through. After I made that first rep
46 type team when I was 7 I made the triple A team for the [team].

47

48 P: So how old were you now?

49

50 I: I was 8. So then I played triple A for the next two years but it wasn't that great
51 because the coaches...once you got into the reps and stuff it used to be like where
52 you played all the time and stuff right? So it was very equal for everyone, but I went
53 to some games...I remember specifically I went to [city] one day, played one shift, I
54 got scored on that shift and didn't play a shift after that.

55

56 P: Were you upset?

57

58 I: Oh ya. I remember I quit the team at one point.

59

60 P: Really?

61

62 I: Ya I quit the team for a few weeks and then finally came back.

63

64 P: So you just stopped playing?

65

66 I: Ya, I told them I was done. And then I just missed it too much so I ended up going
67 back.

68

69 P: Were your parents supportive?

70

71 I: Ya, my parents were actually really supportive because I mean they could tell I
72 wasn't happy with the way everything was going and stuff right? But, one of the
73 biggest things that made me go back was the fact that we talked it over and we
74 didn't want to be looked at as quitters. So we just eventually decided that ya we
75 were going to go back, plus I missed it. But the next years after that I played double
76 A.

77

78 P: So now you are 10 or 11?

79

80 I: Ya, I was...I would have been 10 or 11 the years I played double A because I played
81 two years of double A, which were actually probably really good for me. Because
82 those years you're able...

83

84 P: That's the level below...

85

86 I: Ya just below triple A. Because I had got...I think I got cut from the triple A team
87 for my 10 year old season and then the following season I did really well that
88 season, and I had made the triple A team by 11 years old but I had asked for them

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89 not to take me because I wanted to go back and play double A. I had a few really
90 good friends that played on that team, so...and I mean that was probably two really
91 good years for me because I was captain one year, and those were the years that I
92 kind of built my confidence back up to knowing that I was actually a half decent
93 player and then after that I transferred to the [city's] triple A team.

94
95 I: So now you're 11 or 12?

96
97 P: I was 12 when I went to the [city] team.

98
99 I: And this is triple A?

100
101 P: Ya, this is triple A. And I played the rest of the time out there until I got drafted.

102
103 I: Do you remember when you noticed that "I think I'm pretty good at this"?

104
105 P: I started getting a lot of recognition when I went...when I made the move over to
106 [city] because in order for you to go to a team that's outside of your city or whatever
107 you have to be considered...if you're a forward you got to be the top 6 of the
108 forwards and for defence you have to be in the top 4 for the defence. So you have to
109 be one of the better players in order to go over there.

110
111 I: You're a forward?

112
113 P: I'm defence. Well...that's one of the things too...throughout my junior career I
114 kind of switched back and forth from being a forward and defence.

115
116 I: So now you're in grade 7 or 8 maybe?

117
118 P: Ya something like that, I honestly the grades and everything...I could not...

119
120 I: Did you go to high school in [city]?

121
122 P: Yes.

123
124 I: So when you were in grade 8 and 9 you're playing in [city]?

125
126 P: Yes.

127
128 I: But you're going to school in [city]?

129
130 P: Ya so I still lived in [city] and played in [city] which was a 15 minute trip to the
131 get to the rink and stuff or where we played so it wasn't...it was like going to play in
132 [home city] anyways.

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133 I: And when did you kind of start thinking about the OHL?
134

135 **P: I probably started thinking about the OHL when I was around...probably the**
136 **year before my draft year.**
137

138 I: So you were in grade 9?
139

140 P: **Ya grade 9.** So when I was 14 I really started thinking about it...um...I even
141 started going to, because my dad was really excited about the fact that there's a
142 chance I could get drafted so we wanted to make sure we did a lot of....he was very
143 supportive and wanted to make sure that I made the right decision about whether I
144 wanted to go to the OHL or NCAA.
145

146 I: Did you talk about that?
147

148 P: Ya we talked about it all the time. **But like I had no real interest in going over**
149 **to the states, my mindset was straight hockey.**
150

151 I: Was the dream the NHL?
152

153 P: **Ya. Essentially that's where...you figured if you want to get there, then I have**
154 **to go to OHL in order to do that. So we started going to a lot of OHL games, we**
155 **went and watched all the time, just to kind of see what the...I actually really**
156 **wanted to play for [desired OHL team] growing up, so we went to a lot of**
157 **[desired OHL team] games.**
158

159 I: Did teams start calling you before the draft?
160

161 P: The year, so like my draft year...I'd had an agent but I had the same agent as a lot
162 of big name guys.
163

164 I: Did he approach you?
165

166 P: **He approached me, because I got invited to like an agency camp the year**
167 **before my draft year. At that camp I met my agent.**
168

169 I: So is that where agents go and they pick the players they want to represent?
170

171 P: Ya, well. It's a little different, that agency camp was a specific agency that was
172 running the camp and had invited players to come play in it and it was a tournament
173 style, so than afterwards he approached me and asked to represent me. But the
174 problem with him was I called him and he wouldn't call me forever, because he had
175 other big name guys, like he was representing [NHL player] and stuff, so then I
176 **ended up signing with another agent before I got drafted.** They have a lot of

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177 these prospect tournaments that happen just before your draft and I met him there,
178 so he was the one that did a lot of talking and stuff for like...calling teams and stuff
179 and talking to teams. And then eventually it was just like everyone who was on the
180 draft list, teams will eventually start calling you. **I remember [OHL team] called**
181 **me, it was the first team that called me, and I was not happy that [OHL team]**
182 **called me, I did not want to go to [OHL team]. I did not want to go there**
183 **because...like I told my mom I hate the colour of the team, I don't want to go**
184 **live there [laughs] I had no desire to go there. I just kept waiting for [desired**
185 **OHL team] to call and then [desired OHL team] never ended up calling, even**
186 **though they kept telling my agent that they had me rated and they were going**
187 **to take me in the [round #].**

188

189 I: Who drafted you?

190

191 P: **[OHL team] did. [OHL team] took me in the [round #].**

192

193 I: So do you remember the day of the draft?

194

195 P: Oh ya, I was so pissed that day.

196

197 I: Really? [laughs] and you found out online right?

198

199 P: Ya, that's all you do. You sit there and it's like 8 or 9 o'clock in the morning, we
200 actually set it up the night before right on the page and you just sit there and refresh
201 the entire time. So my family whole was all around just in the one upstairs room that
202 we have right around the computer and I remember the [round #] went by and
203 [desired OHL team] didn't take me, so I was like "okay well maybe they'll take me in
204 the next round right?" [desired OHL team]'s pick went by in the [round #] and
205 nothing right? So...

206

207 I: And that's when you thought you were going to go?

208

209 P: Well I thought I was going to go in the [round #] because that's what they rated
210 me as, was going in the [round #] so then that round went by and the [round #]
211 went by so after that I was just like...I was upset and I was like "I don't even want to
212 get drafted anymore, I don't even care" [laughs] I was actually going to [junior A
213 team] rookie camp and I packed up all my stuff and was like "that's it I'm going to
214 school I don't care anymore" So I actually had like...I was walking out the door and
215 my mom screamed at me saying that I got picked and I just closed the door because I
216 didn't care.

217

218 I: What did you parents say? Did they try to talk you down?

219

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220 P: Ya, they were talking me down and stuff right? **I mean my parents were ecstatic**
221 **at the time because I mean going in the [round #] is still pretty high for going**
222 **in the OHL right?**

223

224 I: Do you have any brothers or sisters?

225

226 P: Ya I got two brothers.

227

228 I: Do they play?

229

230 P: My one brother, the brother that's a year younger than me used to play but kind
231 of gave up because he didn't want to put the effort in anymore and then my
232 youngest brother actually plays junior B in [city] he got taken by [OHL team].

233

234 I: Did they call you after you got picked?

235

236 P: Ya they called me, probably 15 minutes afterwards, congratulated me and told me
237 that they were going to be sending me a lot of stuff in the mail and all that.

238

239 **I: So you're still playing with [team name] at this time?**

240

241 **P: Yep so I was still with [team name] at the time.**

242

243 I: This was in grade 9 right? So then did you go to camp that year in the summer?

244

245 P: Ya you go to camp, the first rookie camp would have been in [month] so you
246 would head there the end of [month] it was most of the younger guys, the older guys
247 wouldn't go to those, we'd end up going to, everyone would always go to the main
248 camp so that was at the end of [month].

249

250 I: How was that? Were you nervous?

251

252 P: Oh ya, I was terrified going into it. Ya, because for me I've always kind of
253 been...you always want to try and be the best, so for fitness wise I was competing
254 against guys that were that have been doing this forever and stuff, because this was
255 my first kind of real look at training in the off season and stuff right? So I was...I
256 mean I talked to my agent probably...everyday for like 2 weeks leading up to that
257 main camp. He had to try and talk me down because I was like "I hadn't trained
258 enough, I haven't done this" but I trained everyday and stuff right? My parents
259 actually had to tell me at one point to like take easy because I was just so worried
260 that I wasn't...that I was going to go into this and not be ready.

261

262 I: How were your grades in high school?

263

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264 **P: My grades in high school leading up to the O...awesome. I was a 90s student,**
265 **first year in the O...took three classes...failed 2 of them [laughs].**

266

267 **I: It seems that hockey players now have to do that extra training to get to that**
268 **level.**

269

270 P: Oh ya...I lost a lot of friends, going through this and my first stages of junior
271 because that was my...I put so much time into it...I said "I want to do this, I want to
272 be a hockey player" so like **that was my life, just working out.** So when all of my
273 friends were like "come hang out" I was like "I...I seriously can't, because I got to be
274 at the gym" even now, I'll work in the summer time, my job was [summer job] and I
275 worked from 6:30am-2:30pm and then I was at the gym for two hours afterwards.
276 So then by that time you're just dead and ready to head home and sleep.

277

278 **I: So then at camp you made the team?**

279

280 P: First year I didn't make the team. **First year they told me that they liked me**
281 **and stuff but they already had enough guys for defence, so they wanted me to**
282 **go play tier 2 and get some experience playing junior, getting used to playing**
283 **against older guys, so I had actually signed,** I had an idea that I wasn't going to
284 play so I had already made an agreement with [tier 2 team] that I was going to be
285 one of their 16 year olds, because for tier 2 you can only have 2 16 year olds, so that
286 was kind of...I mean I wanted to play in the OHL but that was still a big step because
287 not many guys got to play as 16 and play tier 2. And then I had a pretty good year
288 starting off there, so **they ended up actually signing me at Christmas time to**
289 **[OHL team].**

290

291 **I: Did you home to [city of tier 2 team]?**

292

293 P: No, I was still in [city] still went to high school in [city] and stuff. So then I signed
294 my first year, so my 16 year old year half way through, and once our season was
295 done because we didn't have a very good team my 16 year old year, I actually went
296 up to the [OHL team] and just practiced with them for the remainder of the year.

297

298 **I: So you moved there?**

299

300 P: No I still commuted back and forth.

301

302 **I: You parents put in a lot of mileage [laughs].**

303

304 P: Oh ya [laughs].

305

306 **I: So now you're in grade 10, so end of grade 10...**

307

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308 P: No this was...it was grade 11, my 16 year old year would have been grade 11.
309
310 I: So then you go back to [OHL team], you're practicing now.
311
312 P: Ya, I was practicing with them and then the following season I had made the team
313 that year. **So I did my...I was in grade 12, I was doing grade 12 courses because I**
314 **remember I failed two of the courses I was doing.**
315
316 **I: So you moved to [OHL team] in grade 11 or grade 12?**
317
318 **P: Grade 12 ya.**
319
320 I: You lived with billets?
321
322 P: Yes.
323
324 I: How was your billet family?
325
326 P: First one, not good.
327
328 I: Did they have kids?
329
330 P: Ya they had kids. That's the thing about billets families, you find it's a real toss up
331 because they all have different motives. Some billets are great they do it because
332 they love the team, they love the guys and they just do it for the love of the game.
333 Some do it because you get such and such money a month, I know guys that the
334 billets didn't feed them...they just took the money and then you get some billets
335 where they want their kids to have a big brother, or their kids to be cool in school
336 because they got a hockey player there. So that was my first billets, he was like all
337 about...I would be trying to do school work, I didn't have a laptop at the time so I
338 had to use their family computer, and I would try to do school work the computer
339 was right in the room where the kids play, so the kids were always trying to play
340 with me and the mom would be like "come on why don't you take a break form
341 homework and you know go play with [billet kid's name]" [laughs] "like go hang out
342 with him" and stuff "why don't you go and do that?"
343
344 I: Did your parents move you into the billets?
345
346 P: Ya, well my parents, I didn't really have too much stuff, just my clothes and they
347 already had the room pretty much set up for me, it was just...the experience
348 was...the one of the staff for [OHL team] called us one day and was like "hey, we got
349 a billet for you, go meet him see what you think, see if you like him" so me and my
350 parents drove out to [OHL team] went and met them, they seemed okay at the time

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351 and stuff, said “okay, we’ll move in in August]” so I just showed up in August with all
352 my stuff and that was pretty much it, they just kind of took off.

353

354 I: Did you stay with them for the whole year?

355

356 P: Yep, I was there with them the whole year.

357

358 I: How was your rookie year?

359

360 P: My rookie year...you know what it was actually really good. **That’s one of things**
361 **I loved about [OHL team] the most was how good the guys were.** Because I had
362 been on teams...like I was one of the older guys, well not really one of the older guys
363 but I was one of the middle aged guys. **But the older guys when I played in [OHL**
364 **team] were awful to a lot of the other guys. But it was really good, a lot of the**
365 **older guys were really supportive and stuff.**

366

367 I: And you were going to school in [OHL team city]?

368

369 P: Ya, I was going to school in [OHL team city], **that was one of the toughest things**
370 **though too, I lived really far away from the school, so getting to school was a**
371 **bit of a struggle a lot of the times.**

372

373 I: Would your teammates pick you up?

374

375 P: They eventually...that’s what they ended up doing because so many of us, we all
376 lived in the same area and so many of us didn’t have vehicles, so we couldn’t get to
377 school. **So they eventually ended up setting up where the older guys who**
378 **weren’t going to school came and picked us up and drove us to school and then**
379 **finally they ended up getting, one of the billets a big van and he now goes, he**
380 **still today he goes and drives around and picks up everyone and stuff and**
381 **takes them to school.**

382

383 I: Did you guys all hang out at school?

384

385 P: Ya. We had to because the school we went to was...uh...**we were the**
386 **minority**...the school is the biggest school in Ontario, it was like 2600 kids in it and
387 the majority of the population of the school was either brown or black guys and stuff
388 right?

389

390 I: Did they know who you were?

391

392 P: Uh...ya, they knew who we were. Some of them liked us, some of them didn’t. **We**
393 **were kind of just neutral.** They were too worried about themselves, because at our
394 school there was a lot of problems. The year before I got there a kid was killed at the

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395 school, there was cop cars there everyday because there was at least one fight
396 everyday at our school. So we just kind of...no one really bothered us, we didn't
397 really bother anyone.

398

399 I: So then your grades dropped?

400

401 P: Ya, I just...I got into the OHL I thought "you know what? I'm going to be a hockey
402 player" mind you my first semester it was...when I was in high school in [city] I went
403 to [high school name] an [high school name] was a self-paced school, so basically it
404 was like university sort of, where they give you all the work at the beginning and say
405 "this is what you're doing" and then you work, like most high schools I guess you
406 went to class and they would lecture you and stuff and then you'd do home work, we
407 didn't have any lectures in class. They gave us all the information and then we went
408 through it, did the work, we didn't even have to go to class. There would usually be
409 30 students in a class or whatever and there'd be 5 kids in the class, everyone else
410 would be scattered around the school, in the hallways doing their work and stuff.
411 You could finish a course in 2 months or you could take an entire year to finish a
412 course. So it was just kind of, once you finished a certain section you told the teach
413 "okay I'm done, I'm ready for the test" and then she's like "okay tomorrow you're
414 writing the test" and then say if I had a game that night and didn't have time to
415 study, I'd go in a be like "Miss, I'm sorry I'm not ready for this, I had game last night"
416 and she'd be like "no problem, we'll write it tomorrow." It was designed a lot for
417 athletes or assigned for kids to kind of speed through, I've known people who've
418 finished all of high school in 2-3 years. So that's what it was like, and **once I went to**
419 **[OHL team] high school it was like a normal high school, where you were**
420 **writing a test this day, you were lecturing this day, and I was in calculus,**
421 **physics and grade 12 English for my first semester, trying to do that [laughs].**
422 **So calculus and physics didn't go very well [laughs].**

423

424 I: So what was the goal for hockey?

425

426 P: Ya, it was ultimately...like I knew I was...I wasn't the greatest player but I mean I
427 knew that that I ultimately wanted to get there but especially within my first year I
428 kind of...I kind of had the mind set too where I knew that...**I was kind of looking**
429 **past hockey already, and I knew that I get money every year for school.**

430

431 I: When did you start thinking about that?

432

433 P: **I'd probably say about half way through my first year. Because I didn't play**
434 **very much my first year, So I kind of realized that...**

435

436 I: Did you guys talk about that kind of stuff?

437

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438 P: You know what? No one really talked about that kind of stuff, everyone was just
439 kind of there, **everyone just loved the fact that this is what we did for our life, it**
440 **was...we played in the OHL. That's really the only mindset we had, it was very**
441 **much...for a lot of us this was our first time away from home, just trying to**
442 **take in the whole experience of you know...we can hand out with our friends**
443 **whenever you know? We can just pretty much do...we kind of run our own life.**
444 **Because our billets didn't really guide us very much, they were just kind of put**
445 **a roof over our head and fed us. It was up to us to make our own decision.**
446

447 I: Did you go out a lot?
448

449 P: My first year we didn't really go out. When I got traded to [OHL team] we went
450 out probably...at one point we probably went out 4 times a week [laughs].
451

452 I: Your coach in [OHL team], how was he?
453

454 P: You know what he was...[laughs] **he was interesting.**
455

456 I: He was the same coach before you got to the team?
457

458 P: Ya he was the same coach, same coach now, he's been there forever. He was very,
459 very respected because he's coached a world junior team.
460

461 I: Did he play?
462

463 P: I'm not sure if he played or not. **Everyone just kind of respected him because**
464 **he coached the world juniors and stuff, he's a pretty established coach. So, I**
465 **mean in that sense he was a good coach, he knew what he was doing, I mean I didn't**
466 **agree with a lot of the philosophies he had, I just didn't. But he was the kind of**
467 **guy where, he was not afraid to put you down...**
468

469 I: Do you remember if he ever did that?
470

471 P: For me? No, because **I never played, basically all I did was work out, work out**
472 **and then I would just do everything as hard as I could, and I didn't really play**
473 **so he couldn't comment on my play at all.** He was actually...there were times
474 when we had meetings and he would go around to each guy in the room and say
475 something about him, and just put him down.
476

477 I: How did they feel about that? Did they talk about it?
478

479 P: No, I mean guys, a lot of us would just laugh about it, like he would tell some guys
480 that his 12 year old daughter shot harder than him [laughs] or that he has a better
481 body than these guys or something like that right? **So it put you down but at the**

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482 same time guys kind of come together and just laugh about it. I think about all
483 the stuff he said to a lot of the guys and we just kind of joke about it now. But
484 for me, he never really said anything because, the only thing he ever really
485 said to me was the fact that if I don't make it to the NHL it's not because I didn't
486 work hard enough for it. Which ultimately told me, if I didn't make it to the
487 NHL it's because I wasn't good enough [laughs] not because I didn't put the
488 effort in.

489 I: What was he like when you guys lost?

490

491 P: You know what? He wasn't too, too bad. **He didn't really say much, if we ever**
492 **lost he didn't come into the room and say anything.** I remember we went on
493 some pretty big losing streaks at one point and I only remember him doing it
494 once...but he was pretty cool, calm and collected. I know some coaches broke stereo
495 systems and stuff, so he was pretty good in that sense.

496

497 I: So when did you get traded?

498

499 P: **I got traded my 2nd year in [OHL team] so my 17 year old year.**

500

501 I: Did they tell you it was going to happen?

502

503 P: I didn't play very much my first year and coming into my second year basically
504 they gave me a spot on the team because I had worked so hard my first year and
505 they wanted to give me a chance. I didn't really play that much either, I was kind of
506 switching back and forth between forward and defence...**I was pretty much the**
507 **kind of guy if there was injuries and there was a spot on the line up they would**
508 **put me in. I was playing a lot of forward actually and I had asked to be traded.**

509

510 I: Who did you ask?

511

512 P: You just tell your agent and then your agent usually goes and talks to the GM or
513 whatever, the coach because they usually hold both positions.

514

515 I: Do you remember the day he talked to the coach?

516

517 P: No, he just knew I wasn't happy playing so I actually started playing a bit more
518 because he wanted to try and see...essentially he really liked me as a person and
519 stuff and he wanted to see me get a chance on his team, **so he started playing me a**
520 **lot so he could get my interest out with other teams and then just one day I**
521 **remember I was doing homework with my one buddy and then he called me**
522 **and he never really calls anyone, the coach never really calls anyone. He said**
523 **"hey we're going to need you to come to the rink right away" so I was like**
524 **"okay" and they said "we'll talk to you when you get here."**

525

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526 I: Did you know?
527

528 P: At that point I had known that I got traded so I basically told my buddy, because
529 he had a car at the time and I said "listen I need to get to the rink" so we just
530 immediately stopped and went to the rink. I walked in and he told me that they
531 traded me to [OHL team]. Basically I walked into the office and he's like "you got
532 traded to [OHL team] for this...here's their GM on the phone" so he hands me
533 the phone and I started talking to the GM, GM told me..."we're really happy to
534 get you, we look forward to seeing you, be here for practice tomorrow at
535 2:30pm" so I was like "okay" so basically the coaches thanked me after that for
536 putting in all the effort I had.
537

538 I: How was it to leave those guys?
539

540 P: You know what? It was tough. **It was tough leaving because I had developed**
541 **some really really...I still hang out with the guys I played with that first year in**
542 **[OHL team] all the time.** So it was tough leaving them, but my one really good
543 friend had just got traded to the same team, exactly a month before I had gone there
544 so I was going to this team knowing a few guys already and stuff too. And I was
545 excited for the opportunity to go somewhere new and try to actually play a lot more
546 than I was in [OHL team].
547

548 I: So you drove to [OHL team] that night?
549

550 P: I finished talking to the GM, went and packed up my equipment. Took my
551 equipment back to my house, told my billets I got traded, called my parents, told my
552 parents "hey I just got traded to [OHL team] I need to be there for practice
553 tomorrow" so my dad drove down, helped me pack everything up and then me and
554 him drove, he stayed over at my billets that night and me and him drove the very
555 next morning to the rink. **It was actually kind of a crazy experience, it was just**
556 **packed everything I had, drove to [OHL team], went to the rink, they set me up**
557 **in my stall and basically said...they gave me an address and said "okay here is**
558 **where you're living" [laughs] so I just took that, went and found the place and**
559 **then I just walked into the door and was like "hey I'm the new player and I'm**
560 **living here."**
561

562 I: How were they?
563

564 P: **Awesome. They were a family, 2 kids, younger couple but even to today I**
565 **still...even when I stopped playing in the O and played tier 2 I stayed with**
566 **them.** Even till today...they have a cottage up around where their house is and I go
567 for a week every summer to go see them.
568

569 I: So you got to [OHL team] and you had a couple friends already?

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570

571 P: Ya I knew two guys already, but for most guys you can see....when they introduce
572 themselves to you, you can some guys are sort of like "okay who's this guy? Is this
573 guy coming in to take my spot?" so you can kind of sense that some guys aren't
574 happy to see you there, but others are pretty open to bringing you in.

575

576 I: So when were you eligible for the NHL draft?

577

578 P: **My NHL draft was my first year in [OHL team].**

579

580 I: And you knew that...

581

582 P: **I knew that I wasn't really a priority for a lot of teams.**

583

584 I: Did you watch it?

585

586 P: Ya, I did. Because once you get to that point, you know a lot of the guys, a lot of
587 them are your friends right? So even though you aren't going to get picked you still
588 want them to do well. I know I was...I was sitting there watching on the TV and one
589 of my really good friends got taken and I called him instantly to congratulate him.

590

591 I: Was it hard? How'd you feel?

592

593 P: Ya, you know what? **It is hard because...ultimately you want that to be you,**
594 **right? But you kind of...come to the realization that, I mean there's only so**
595 **many people that get taken, I mean there's only so many spots and stuff right?**
596 **So you kind of understand that.**

597

598 I: Did you understand that once you were at that point or did you understand that
599 when you were playing?

600

601 P: When I was playing triple A I was like "I'm going to be playing there [NHL]" That
602 wasn't even a consideration [not playing in NHL], I was just trying to pick what team
603 I wanted to be on [laughs]. But...even now...you still sometimes get the...mindset
604 where you're like "well maybe if I put a little more effort in and start doing
605 this...maybe I can work my way up and maybe finally make it" but...the more and
606 more as you go along you realize that ya it would be nice to be a hockey player your
607 entire life but at the same time you aren't going to be a hockey player...**you could be**
608 **a hockey player for a good portion of it but you still have to be able to do**
609 **something afterwards and stuff, so I mean that's where I'm at right now**
610 **too...I'm like "okay...I did my time, now it's time to kind of...look forward."**

611

612 I: How was your coach in [OHL team]?

613

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614 P: This coach was...really different. **Very very old school.** He was actually in one of
615 the original slapshot movies. And he would just...he coached like it was in the 70s
616 really. The systems we had were very basic, very not much to them. He didn't really
617 give any real pep talks, he didn't really do much...I remember he actually smoked on
618 the bus all the time [laughs] he would just go down by the stairs a little bit and just
619 smoke on the bus, I remember one of the trainers came back one time and he told
620 the scariest thing of his life just happened, he thought the bus was on fire because he
621 was sleeping and he just woke up and smelled smoke.

622 I: How was he when you guys lost?

623

624 P: Honestly I think he was just...I feel like he just wanted to get out from coaching.
625 He just wanted to do GM, so he didn't really, one of the pep talks I remember...is he
626 walked...the coaches office was at the one end and to get out you have to walk right
627 through the dressing room and out the other door. And the first pre-game speech he
628 walked out of the coaches office, walked to the middle of the room and said "let's
629 really try to win this one" and then just kept walking [laughs] and most of the
630 time...we usually didn't get a pre-game speech or anything like that. **He was just not**
631 **really into it at all.**

632

633 I: What grade were you in now?

634

635 P: At this point I was done.

636

637 I: So you graduated in [OHL team]?

638

639 P: **No, every year I would finish [back home].** I would do the first semester and
640 half of the second semester in [OHL team] and then finish off the last half of the
641 second semester [back home]. I would work with both schools and get classes that
642 are offered at the same time for both, and then I would just transfer into them and
643 go back.

644

645 I: So how was the first year...you played the full year in [OHL team]?

646

647 P: Ya.

648

649 I: And then what happened that summer?

650

651 P: That summer there was just a lot of training and stuff, getting ready for the next
652 year. I had kind of taken on a role, **especially when I was in [OHL team] as a...as a**
653 **fighter. Because I figured that...I was a bigger guy and stuff.**

654

655 I: That was that year you decided?

656

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657 P: No, I **decided my second year going into [OHL team] I decided...probably half**
658 **way through my first year, because that's how I was going to be able to play,**
659 **because we didn't really have a fighter.** So I figured if I took on that role, that
660 would give me the chance to dress more and play more.

661
662 I: Did you like fighting?

663
664 P: **At the end I loved it.**

665
666 I: Do you remember your very first fight?

667
668 P: It was just kind of right in front of the net, I was playing forward that game and
669 the guy slashed me and I slashed him back and he just dropped his gloves so...I
670 didn't really know how to really fight so I just kind of dropped my gloves too and
671 just kind of went with him. But I remember being the most terrified because I had
672 asked for a trade at this point and I was starting to fight a little bit more and then I
673 figured in order for me to get some real credibility as a fighter and to get interest in
674 teams was to fight the league tough guy. So I fought the league tough guy that played
675 on [OHL team]...[player name]. **The guy beat me up pretty good and I remember**
676 **going into this thing just shaking because I did not want to do this but I knew**
677 **that I had to. I actually called my mom the night before and told her not to**
678 **come to the game because I was planning on doing this [laughs].**

679
680 I: So what did you do? Did you just skate after him?

681
682 P: Ya...well the coach had said something beforehand too. He said "well, these guys
683 only have 5 D...if we can get this guy out for 5 minutes for fighting one of you
684 guys...that will help the team out because then their other D will be tired" so
685 then everyone looked at me because they knew I started taking on that role, so
686 I knew I was playing forward that game too...so I just remember going across
687 the ice and hitting the guy, like I was way out of position just to hit him and he
688 looked at me and just took his helmet off.

689
690 I: Did he say anything?

691
692 P: No, he didn't say anything at all, he just looked at me and knew that's what I was
693 trying to do, so he took his helmet off, dropped his gloves. So I was like "oh great" so
694 I took my helmet off, dropped my gloves, and kept backing up farther and farther
695 from him, and eventually the refs stepped in a broke up the fight so we each just got
696 10 minutes but we didn't have to fight, so I was like "thank god" like I actually
697 thanked the refs for saving my life [laughs] because this guy would of killed me. The
698 still plays now...in the AHL.

699
700 I: So how did the rest of the year go in [OHL team]?

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701

702 P: The year went pretty good, I was playing a ton when I first got there. **I was**
703 **playing power play and penalty kills, I was one of the top guys and then they**
704 **started to bring in more and more defensemen and I slowly started going**
705 **down and down and I mean my confidence started going down further with**
706 **that because the coaches weren't that great, the assistant coach there was**
707 **probably one of the worst coaches I've had.** Because I had actually went in at one
708 point and asked him what happened to my ice time, "what can I do to get my ice
709 time back up?" and he told me "well listen, we got this young guy here, you know we
710 really want to try and develop him so he's going to play and essentially there's
711 nothing you can really do" so my confidence at this point was "well what am I still
712 doing here?" so I just played out the rest of the year and then kind of trained really
713 hard the next summer, came back in the best shape I had ever come back in,
714 following that summer **I had won the fitness testing for the team.**

715

716 I: So this is now you're third season?

717

718 P: **Ya so this is now my third season. I would have been 19.** So the rest of that
719 year went pretty good, but that's when I started losing more and more ice time an
720 then I came back in really good shape and started playing a lot and again the
721 following season, but **eventually it went back to the same thing,** more guys came
722 in and they wanted to develop the younger guys and stuff.

723

724 I: Were you still the fighter on the team?

725

726 P: **Ya, I mean that's why, essentially that's why I ended up stopping playing for**
727 **[OHL team] because I got into a fight and broke my hand pretty good. I was out**
728 **for 8 weeks with a broken hand and then during that team the tier 2 team**
729 **contacted me just before Christmas.**

730

731 I: Do you remember the fight?

732

733 P: Ya, I had asked the guy...because that's what I started to do, **most of my fights**
734 **were premeditated, where I would talk to the guy during warm up and stuff.**

735

736 I: What'd you say?

737

738 P: Just asked the guy if he wanted to fight that day [laughs].

739

740 I: Did guys every say no?

741

742 P: Some guys do. I would ask them "do you want to fight today?" and he said "no, I
743 don't want to fight" so then I kept going after him the entire game saying "let's fight,
744 let's do it" and then eventually in the third period he actually hit me, looked at me,

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745 sighed and said "ok fine" [laughs] so we both dropped our gloves, I hit in the
746 forehead a couple times, too many times, and I **knew that I had done something to**
747 **my hand right away because my hand was just killing me and usually it just**
748 **doesn't hurt after a fight because of the adrenaline is blocking it and then by**
749 **the time I had gotten out of the penalty box my hand was a balloon.** So then I
750 stopped playing the rest of that game, and went to see the doctors.

751

752 I: What did they say?

753

754 P: They said my **hand was broken.**

755

756 I: And how did you feel?

757

758 P: **At that point I was kind of upset...because I knew that I wasn't going to be**
759 **able to play, but at the same time I was like "oh cool I just broke my hand in a**
760 **fight" [laughs] it makes you feel kind of tough.** I mean for that...essentially it
761 screwed me because with all that time off I just eventually just work my way right
762 off, to not playing again. So once I was ready to come back...

763

764 I: Did you stay in [OHL team]?

765

766 P: **Ya I stayed in [OHL team] the whole time, I was still at the rink everyday,**
767 **basically I was in there...I would still kind of work out, I would just lower body**
768 **stuff and then once I got the cast off I was doing a lot of treatment on it, so I**
769 **was actually in there probably longer than a lot of the guys for workout and**
770 **doing therapy on my hand and trying to strengthen it, going on the ice by**
771 **myself and stuff, but after one point when I had my hand broken the tier 2**
772 **contacted me and offered me a spot saying I was going to play a lot more than I**
773 **was there and that I didn't have to be the fighter role and I could just play and**
774 **stuff all the time.**

775

776 I: Did you talk to your parents about it?

777

778 P: Ya, I talked to my parents about it for awhile, I talked to my agent about it. My
779 parents said, at that point my parents were like "you've had a really tough go
780 playing in the league" I was never really a go to guy, or a set guy, I was always kind
781 of in and out of the line up pretty much my whole time in the OHL. So they were like
782 "if they are going to offer you this and that...then go" and actually my one buddy that
783 got traded a month before me from [OHL team] to [OHL team] got cut that year, so
784 he was playing for this team already, so I was like "well now I can go play with him"
785 and then one of our other buddies who got traded exactly a month after me to the
786 same team...we all just decided to go play with the tier 2 team afterwards in [OHL
787 team city].

788

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789 I: And you stayed with the same family?

790

791 P: Ya, stayed with the same family.

792

793 I: So then you finished the rest of the season off with the tier 2 team and then you
794 went home for the summer?

795

796 P: Ya and then the next year I got asked to come back to play for [OHL team] but I
797 told them that **"listen I had gotten to be the captain to play for the tier 2 that**
798 **next year"** so I played that whole last year with the tier 2 team.

799

800 I: And now were you starting to look at schools?

801

802 P: Ya, I had started looking at...**I actually committed to [CIS university], well I**
803 **didn't essentially commit to [CIS university] until the summer time after my**
804 **final year of junior, but I was planning on going to [CIS university] and playing**
805 **that year but the coach had told me that had too many defensemen and I**
806 **wouldn't be playing that much so just to finish junior and come here after.**

807

808 I: What was it about [CIS university] why did you want to go there?

809

810 P: [program name] I told myself...I was getting offers from...because I had a really
811 good last year in tier 2, **I won defenseman of the year so I was getting calls from**
812 **pretty much every school in Ontario.** [CIS university] called me, [CIS university]
813 actually offered me a full scholarship but I told myself that if I got into the [program
814 name] at [CIS university] that I would go to [CIS university] so I got accepted into it
815 and I called the coach and said I was going for sure.

816

817 I: So you were 20?

818

819 P: I was 21 at this point.

820

821 I: So you moved to [CIS university] and what are you now? Are you a student? Are
822 you a hockey player? What's your identity?

823

824 P: Uh...I'd say I'm a student...**I'm a student-athlete, way more than an athlete-**
825 **student.**

826

827 I: You always used to be a hockey player right? And that was your identity...

828

829 P: I've always actually been really good at school. Once I finished high school I
830 actually finished a college certificate, **I did a whole online college certificate when**
831 **I was playing in [OHL team] so I've always done really well.** That's how I got to
832 [CIS university]. So coming in I already had the mindset that I was more student

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833 than athlete. **I mean hockey was still a real big part and there was still a lot of**
834 **time when I would miss class for practice or for certain things for hockey**
835 **right? But, as I progressed on, I'm slowly moving more and more towards**
836 **student than athlete.** I guess...I mean there's still times when I get the mindset
837 where I'll be like "well you know maybe I can still do something with hockey and
838 stuff and maybe still play pro somewhere" and then the next day I'll be like "well,
839 you know what I need to move on, I need to find a job" I want to work in hockey so, I
840 mean I'll still be around the game.

841

842 I: So coaching?

843 P: I don't know if I would do coaching...the [CIS university program] has been a real
844 kind of eye opener...I say it more for jobs afterwards because originally I came into
845 the program saying okay I'm going to be an agent, that's what I'm going to do, I'm
846 going to be an agent, that's it, that's that...this is how I get to there and stuff and then
847 I thought "well I really want to do law school afterwards" and I've met with some
848 agents and stuff at the conferences the program has held and telling us that they're
849 constantly doing this, we're constantly on the road doing that, and I'm like "well do I
850 really want to be travelling all that much? Still?" I would still kind of want to be an
851 agent, but the different courses I've had, this is the first time I've actually been really
852 excited about class, so I'd like to maybe get into something like operations
853 something like that...I mean the [CIS university program] has really helped, opened
854 my eyes to different options for me to do after I'm done playing.

855

856 I: When you were in the OHL you got paid \$50 bucks a week or whatever, did you
857 ever think about that?

858

859 P: How much money we were making?

860

861 I: Ya.

862

863 P: How it was like impossible to live?

864

865 I: Ya.

866

867 P: Ya. It was...in [OHL team] we got transferred our money every 2 weeks on
868 Thursday night at midnight. And you waited for that night. As soon as 12:01am hit
869 you were going to a bank to get your money, or buy something, I mean...you got by
870 with it, but at the same time...when I got to [OHL team] it was a bit better because I
871 got gas money too, so that was kind of nice, but the money would go towards
872 spending. I didn't have to buy food or anything like that, right so? **You would use it**
873 **to spend on whatever. But you buy the one thing and your money is gone for**
874 **the week, and you have no money left.**

875

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876 I: When you look at it now and you realize how much money the CHL makes...what
877 do you think about that? Do you think they should be paying their players more?
878

879 **P: I'm pretty sure I've read somewhere that players that were playing in the**
880 **70s were making \$50 bucks a week, you'd figured with the amount of increase**
881 **and desire and the popularity of the OHL and all the other CHL teams that they**
882 **would increase the pay check with that. But I mean at the same time, ya as a**
883 **player it would have been nice, you think you deserve more money, but you**
884 **gotta remember that if you increase the money, you're just giving 16, 17, 18,**
885 **19 year olds more and more money to do what with it? I mean it's more money**
886 **towards beer, it's more towards...I mean I know a lot of guys that chewed, so**
887 **it's more money to fund a habit like that. A lot of guys once they got older, I**
888 **know I played with a lot of guys that would go to the casino all the time, so it's**
889 **more money being put towards gambling. It's more money to do something**
890 **that they aren't suppose to do with it.**

891
892 I: I never thought about it like that.
893

894 P: I've known guys, we weren't essentially suppose to be getting paid to play for the
895 tier 2 team, it was a secretive type thing, but I know guys that were going through, I
896 **got paid a significant amount more than I did in the OHL, and all the guys**
897 **made pretty much the same as me, and they were at the casino 3 times a week,**
898 **just wasting that money away.** When I look back on it now, because I'm looking at
899 getting a car now and I need to move out on my own and get my own place, and now
900 when I look back on it, I had all that money and it would have been nice if I had
901 someone around, someone part of the organization, part of the OHL who would have
902 been like "listen you can't just go out and spend all this, you need to start saving, you
903 need to start putting some aside" that would be a big help to a lot of kids, because I
904 know every year I left the OHL for the summer, I left with no money, I left with \$0.
905

906 I: It would almost be better if they gave you \$50 or whatever into an account that
907 you couldn't access until you were older...
908

909 P: Ya. For a lot of guys \$50 was not enough to live on but I mean...we still lived on it.
910 We still had a pretty good life style, we still got to do the things that we wanted, **the**
911 **experiences I had in the OHL were...I wouldn't trade them for anything.**
912

913 I: How many years of school are you getting paid for?
914

915 P: Because I signed half way through the year with [OHL team] they made an
916 agreement with me that even though I didn't play my 16 year old they would pay
917 half of the money to cover for that year, so **I'm getting 3 and a half paid for.**
918

919 I: And books?

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920

921 P: No, **just tuition**. That's one of the things I wish too that I had looked into more
922 because I didn't realize until I got to [CIS university], some guys on the team have
923 parking paid for, books paid for, some guys have rent paid for. It would have been
924 kind of nice to know that you can negotiate stuff like that. I just got straight tuition.

925

926 I: Did you know that when you signed your contract?

927

928 P: **No. When I signed my contract I had no idea what I was signing up for. I was**
929 **going to be on a OHL team, that's all I cared about.**

930

931 I: Do you remember signing your contract?

932

933 P: Yep, just off [road name] at the Tim Horton's.

934

935 I: Who was there?

936

937 P: **Me, my mom, my dad and my agent. We were sitting in Tim Horton's, the**
938 **agent had the contract.**

939

940 I: So your GM or coach weren't there?

941

942 P: No. We just signed it right there. **I didn't read it, didn't know anything about it,**
943 **I just knew that as soon as I signed it I would be playing in the OHL. I didn't**
944 **care what it said really.**

945

946 I: Everyone seems to have a different package.

947

948 P: **No one's package is really the same.** I know one guy who got drafted by [OHL
949 team] and before he played one game he signed a package that guaranteed him 4 full
950 years of school and he played one season for them, but still got 4 years of school
951 paid for. It really all depends on the team, the time that you end up signing with the
952 team, where you go...because the schooling package usually varies based on the
953 round you go in. So first round pick will usually get everything covered for him,
954 second round pick will usually get the same, and as soon as you start going 3d, 4th or
955 5th...it slowly starts decreasing...you get less and less money from the team. It also
956 depends on which team you play for too. Team's like [OHL team] even if you're
957 drafted in the 10th round you would still get a good package. That's all it really
958 is...they say "sign here" and then they just don't care. As soon as you sign you can
959 play and that's all we really care about because you're 16 years old. The thought of
960 being an OHL hockey player is a lot more than what are you going to do after this...

961

962 I: If you had a kid and he was a good player. He could go NCAA or OHL, what would
963 you do?

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P: See I'm still not a real big fan of NCAA, because I've known a lot of guys who have played there and been guaranteed full scholarships and a lot of guys have gotten those scholarships taken away from there because they haven't performed. One of the worst parts about playing university hockey is that once you pick a team than that's it, **you can't move from team to team.** If you get put into a bad situation, the coach may not like you...or you may not like some of the guys, and then you're kind of stuck there, if you go to the OHL you have the freedom to move around and try new environments so I guess if I had kids and there were good enough and I guess with my knowledge of the league now I would ya I would let him play in the OHL but I would never really push it, because I know how tough it is on you, mentality and stuff trying to deal with...but at the same time I wouldn't have traded the experiences, and the fact how well it has set has set me up. I've been told that playing in the league has given me a bit of an upper hand because I know the system already. The people I've met, just the networks you've developed and stuff.

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I: What was your earliest memory of ever playing hockey?

P: My grandfather of all people would take me public skating, actually started on the pond and then he would take me public skating during the day in [city]. Those were my first memories of skating, and the one thing that sticks out...and this is so weird...my grandpa would always skate on the very outside of the rink because he said that's where no one skated and that's where the best ice was so we used to just skate along the boards and we would never go in the middle. He'd be like "no no no don't go in the middle this is where the best ice is."

I: How old were you?

P: I was 3 years old, because I started out in my backyard when I was like 2 sort of puttering around and I used to go public skating when I was 3, and I was pretty good at it.

I: And then you started playing?

P: I started playing when I was 4. Just organized sort of...I think it was a church league, so ya I was 4 years old.

I: And you just liked it?

P: Ya, I just loved the skating part of it, and I picked up skating right away, I was a really good skater and I think I liked skating more than I liked hockey before it all...before hockey came about, so I think it was more the skating that intrigued me and then hockey sort of just came naturally.

I: So you just continued playing organized when you were young?

P: Ya organized, until I turned 8 years old and that's when you could play triple A double AA rep. So when we were 8 years old we would switch from just a house league to where you would actually go to try outs and all that.

I: Were your friends playing?

P: Yep, everyone. That was like...you only knew your friends through hockey.

I: So let's sort of fast-forward. When did you know or realize that you maybe had some sort of talent that not a lot of other people had?

P: Ya I think...even around 10 or 11 I think I sort of separated from the pack a bit and I mean...I think when you're that young the skill level goes from either you got it or you really don't. Development is so all over the place when you're so young, so I

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46 think 10 or 11 I could see that I was better than most of the kids and I started to
47 really separate. And you realized that when other people tell you that, like your
48 friends on your team, and you're always of course counting every single point you
49 get at that age so I mean that's another way to look at it. But I think at least 10 years
50 old you see a separation, because up until then like 7, 8 and 9 everyone's crappy you
51 know what I mean? When you're younger. But once you get 10 or 11 people take off
52 and others stay behind.

53

54 I: Do you have any siblings?

55

56 P: 2 sisters.

57

58 I: So you're the only hockey player?

59

60 P: Ya.

61

62 I: Were your parents supportive of you?

63

64 P: Ya my parents were good, in hindsight I sort of wish they would have pushed me
65 a bit more. I don't know if that would of paid off, but they were so laid back. Because
66 my dad went through it, he played hockey his whole life, he didn't go on
67 professionally but he grew up in [city], played [city's] triple A, so I mean he went
68 through it and I think he had a father that was sort of in his face, so when it came to
69 me it was...I mean I guess a way to put it is I could of quit hockey whenever I wanted
70 and my parents would have been totally fine. I guess that really helps out.

71

72 I: When were you drafted to the OHL?

73

74 P: **Grade 10, so I would have been 15 at the time. No I would have been 16**
75 **already.**

76

77 I: And you were still in [city]?

78

79 P: Ya.

80

81 I: Living at home?

82

83 P: **Living at home, going to school. Playing triple A.** Triple A finished that year,
84 finished in about February and you sort of join a....I think they used to call them
85 prospect teams where sort of just tournament teams where you're season was done
86 but now the draft is coming up so you play in this tournament where scouts would
87 come. And so I would play with guys from [city] and all over the place, and they'd
88 just sort of assemble these teams and you go to prospect tournaments so scouts
89 could see I guess sort of all the top players around the city. So for example my team
90 that year won 4 games in my draft year and I mean I was a good hockey player, but

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91 our team was so bad, we would get killed 10-1, 13-1 every game, even though I
92 would play well, you couldn't really see, so what they would do is at the end of all
93 these leagues they would get all the top prospects and put them on these teams and
94 send them to tournaments to see all the good players play together and scouts
95 would come and watch that. And actually that's when I went from...they had these
96 ratings and you sort of got rated during the year, I think...

97

98 I: How old were you now?

99

100 P: 16. So you would have, I think they were single A and double A ratings and double
101 A was the top. If you got a double A rating you were considered possibly a first
102 round, second round, third round draft pick to the OHL. So I think I was rated a
103 double A player and was looked at as a second round pick because my team was
104 really crappy and we didn't win any games. And I went to these prospect
105 tournaments and played with some better players and began to show the skills that
106 I had and **I became a double A player that could possibly be picked in the first**
107 **round.**

108

109 I: When did you start thinking about the OHL?

110

111 P: I would say...**the summer going into my draft year, so I would have been 15,**
112 **it's funny...I think I was still playing lacrosse up to that point and I remember**
113 **talking to my dad and my dad was like "you sure you want to play lacrosse?**
114 **What if you get hurt? You have a big year coming up, your draft year" so there**
115 **was a lot of anticipation for my draft year, which I remember I stopped playing**
116 **lacrosse and just sort of focused on hockey.** That was the first year I focused on
117 **off-season training,** I never did any weightlifting but that summer I remember
118 going to a personal trainer, getting education on how to train, how to get stronger,
119 and I think that summer was when I really...it sort of sunk in that if I have a decent
120 year I could be playing in the OHL within a year. So I'm an [year] birthday and it was
121 unheard of for me at 14, 13, 12 to go train in a gym, never did it. We played soccer,
122 baseball, lacrosse and you would play hockey, you go to hockey school or hockey
123 camp and you may play in a summer tournament, maybe 2 tournaments in the
124 summer, but that was it. You didn't talk about hockey, you didn't train for hockey,
125 you just played sports. And I think that's...it's sort of gotten away from that and I
126 would encourage...I always see young kids training now and I'm like...it's crazy. And
127 I remember actually my roommate when I played in [city] he actually, I remember
128 him...this is so funny, he did an article back home in [city] where he's from about
129 how he saw the shift from us going home to play baseball and soccer and now kids
130 just train for hockey and he's like "that is such a bad thing to do" you've got to
131 refresh your mind you know? And it's scary that you have to do that at 15 or 14 you
132 know what I mean? So I was definitely...there was no gym when I was growing up, it
133 was just summer time off.

134

135 I: Do you remember the draft day?

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136

137 P: I do because **it was the first year they did it online** and they didn't even have a
138 draft [laughs] so I didn't go.

139

140 I: How did they do it before?

141

142 P: You would go to...they would rent out an arena at a particular city and they would
143 host the draft...sort of how the NHL would do it and you would go...from what I
144 remember you would just go and they would draft the first 2 rounds and you would
145 get to go up on stage, get your jersey like the whole professional thing and I'm pretty
146 sure my year was the first where they did it online. So I woke up...and let's say the
147 draft started at 10 that morning, I remember waking up, having breakfast,
148 preparing, going down to my computer...and the internet back then [laughs]...

149

150 I: A desktop?

151

152 P: Ya [laughs] a desktop, and dial-up internet, and we sat in front of the computer
153 and hit refresh.

154

155 I: How long did it take to refresh?

156

157 P: Oh it just spun...[laughs].

158

159 I: Did teams call you before the draft?

160

161 P: No. **I found out I was drafted when the screen refreshed I saw my name and**
162 **then within minutes I got a phone call from them.** So it was the general
163 manager...no I think it was the head coach...[coach name] was the coach at that time,
164 I think it was him, he called me. And it was honestly...

165

166 I: And you had no idea you would get picked by them?

167

168 P: No and [OHL team] was one of the teams that I had actually never spoken to
169 because before the draft you sort of...you're approached by different teams
170 especially if you're a higher pick. I met with...I mean I probably met with 5-6 teams, I
171 actually had a couple come to my house, I met some.

172

173 I: Was there a team you wanted to go to?

174

175 P: Well being a [city name] boy, that year they approached me. The thing about that
176 year...they had the second overall pick so I wasn't going to be a second overall pick,
177 but that meant they had the 2nd pick of the second round, and that was sort of where
178 I was being rated, I was projected to be a late first round, early second round and
179 they were like "listen we have the second pick in the second round, we're going to
180 take you at that pick pretty much...if you're available, would you like to play for

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181 [OHL team]?" and I was like "obviously if I'm available I would love to come play for
182 [OHL team] but obviously I don't just want to commit to you guys" you know what I
183 mean? But ya so they were one of the teams that sort of just approached me and said
184 they were interested, but [OHL team] I had never spoken to, I don't even think...you
185 would receive letters from teams. I mean I probably received a letter from every
186 team saying we're interested in you to play. And you sort of just respond back and
187 say ya I'd love to come.

188

189 I: You'd respond in writing?

190

191 P: Ya it was in writing. We would write...I don't even know if we e-mailed then
192 [laughs] I can't even remember.

193

194 I: What year was this?

195

196 P: [year]. But I think my agent would have done all that.

197

198 I: **When did you get an agent?**

199

200 P: **My draft year, before I was drafted.**

201

202 I: **Did he approach you?**

203

204 P: **Ya, you're actually approached by a lot of them.** I mean just like scouts coming
205 to the games, agents come to the game to find to their next client and they will send
206 you letters, they will meet you at games and they'll sort of...I think they come watch
207 you and seek out your parents in the crowd, or they'll contact the team you're
208 playing for and sort of...they don't just storm up to the kids, I think they're
209 professional enough, at least the one's I was approached by, I think contacted my
210 team who then contacted my parents and then we organized a meet. It was fairly
211 early on, I was still 15, that grade 10 year my draft year and I mean I was probably
212 approached by maybe 5 or 6 agents that said they would love to represent me and
213 help me and the one I ended up going with just sort of stood out. It was fairly early
214 on that year and ya, then they just do their agent thing.

215

216 I: So when you were in grade 9 and 10 going to high school, how was that?

217

218 P: **I was a good student just sort of naturally, high school wasn't that tough for**
219 **me academic wise** but I mean...it's funny I think my grade 10 year you definitely do
220 focus more on the hockey a bit, I mean even though looking back now I say it was
221 just grade 10, but at the time it's pretty serious, I was a pretty serious student, you
222 do definitely cater...**I definitely catered more to my hockey that year for sure.** I
223 mean if I had you know a late game on a Tuesday or a Wednesday night say up in
224 Barrie somewhere and I got home late, I would take a morning off school to get
225 some sleep and be ready for practice the next day or if I had another game. So I

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226 wouldn't say my academics really hurt, but I would definitely cater to my hockey if I
227 needed to because I saw that it was, a you know...potential career for me. And then
228 as far as high school life goes I don't think I missed out on too much of the social
229 aspect of it.

230 I: So what did they say to you on the phone when you got drafted? And how did you
231 feel when it was [OHL team]?

232

233 **P: Well I was shocked that it was [OHL team] because I'd never spoken to**
234 **them, never gotten a letter, nothing** and it's funny...up until a few weeks before
235 the draft I didn't even know [OHL team] had a team in the OHL, like I knew [OHL
236 team] and the teams they played against but I wasn't one to like...I didn't know a
237 whole lot about the OHL.

238

239 I: Did you go to [OHL team] games?

240

241 P: Ya I'd go to [OHL team] games, I'd go enough, but ya up until...maybe a month or
242 two...I was like "oh [OHL team]" I didn't know too much about them and then got
243 that call and when I saw my name being drafted especially in the first round, it was
244 more sort of just like...you were shocked, I don't know, just sort of an odd moment I
245 guess. And then you get the phone call, it was literally 30 seconds long, it was like
246 "nice to meet you, we're excited to have you we'll be in touch about training camp
247 and meeting, congratulations see you later" and I was like "thank you...a lot" and
248 that was it.

249

250 I: Did you go to camp that year?

251

252 P: I did, I think they had sort of an orientation where we came and families could
253 come, you met everyone, you met all the draft picks, you met players that played
254 there last year, and then they did a bit of fitness assessment, but that was it for that.
255 And then they would have...we had about 2 fitness tests that summer, so we would
256 come to the arena at [OHL team] we would do various fitness testing and I think we
257 did it a second time and then training camp was held at the end of the summer for
258 the official season.

259

260 I: And you made the team?

261

262 P: Ya. Usually the first round and second rounders are going to be there and get their
263 spot.

264

265 I: Did you know anyone else on the team?

266

267 P: Actually the second round pick that year, I knew him because he grew up in the
268 sort of the [town] area of [city] so I knew him because I played against him all
269 growing up so that was good. So that was a familiar face, we went to camp together
270 and our parents knew each other, but other than that...no I didn't know anyone.

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271

272 I: So then you made the team and moved in with a billet family?

273

274 P: Yep, billet family. I was so lucky, I had...well obviously I'm a little biased, **I had**
275 **the best billet ever**. She had done it for a few years, it was a single mom and her
276 daughter but her daughter had left that year to go on to university so it was just the
277 mom. The summer I got drafted [OHL team] made an arrangement for us to meet in
278 the summer before training camp, before anything. They were good with billets that
279 way. So I got to meet her and sort of get the run down before camp, like I just didn't
280 move right in, and my parents...that obviously calmed them down a lot because at
281 16 you're just a baby at that time.

282

283 I: Was it around [OHL team city]?

284

285 P: Ya it was in [city]. **Ya, she had done it for a few years, stopped but then the**
286 **coach sort of made a request because I was coming in as a 16 year old and then**
287 **my roommate was a 17 year old first rounder from the year before me.**

288

289 I: So there was two of you there?

290

291 P: Ya there was two of us, and since...they liked to put a younger guy and an older
292 guy together or usually they liked to do that when I was at [OHL team] but they had
293 **two young guys together so they got this billet who was known as the best**
294 **billet** so that's why they called her up and said "listen I got two young guys that
295 we'd like to put with you, you're the best.." she had a great house and everything so
296 they called her up and they agreed to it.

297

298 I: How was your rookie year?

299

300 P: It was good.

301

302 I: Were you nervous?

303

304 P: Oh...so nervous.

305

306 I: Did you have to do all the bitch work?

307

308 P: Ya you definitely...ya...**I think rookies you automatically know that you're**
309 **going to have to do certain things as far as the work around the dressing room,**
310 **unloading and loading buses, stuff like that...anytime water bottles need to be**
311 **filled, that sort of stuff.** I mean there's always talk about different teams and **how**
312 **they initiate their rookies**, and that's always on the back of your mind, definitely.
313 Something I definitely thought about, but I don't know if it was just [OHL team] but
314 they didn't have any sort of initiation whatsoever which is pretty calming to a 16 or
315 17 year old. Other than that I think a credit to [OHL team] they did a pretty good

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316 job...they were really cautious about their young kids coming in and I think they sort
317 of knew that...I guess in the OHL and these sort of leagues if you can get your young
318 players to adapt and you can get your young guys to just immediately jump in to
319 that lifestyle...you're going to be a successful hockey team, you can't just always rely
320 on your older guys and then not take care of the young guys and then realize that
321 there's more to just on the ice stuff, there's going to be issues with them living away
322 from their parents, there's going to be issues with them adapting to a new school, all
323 that sort of stuff...I think a credit to [OHL team] they just made it easy for us young
324 guys.

325

326 I: And you went to high school there?

327

328 P: Ya, we went to a **private college there, all boys.**

329

330 I: You would usually have to pay for tuition there?

331

332 P: **Ya you usually would have to pay, at the time I think admission was 12**
333 **grand to go there a year and that was waived for any player on the team.** I don't
334 even know if they did it after...so I was there...I did grade 11 and grade 12 there and
335 I got all my credits to graduate but I think something fell through with the funding
336 for that and if you wanted to...so I wanted to do some extra courses for a grade 13,
337 and we were the last year before grade 13 ended. So I wanted to do some extra
338 credits but I couldn't...**they ended the relationship with the private school at**
339 **that time, so I ended up going to another high school and taking a grade 13**
340 **year.** I think that was just sort of a falling out with the private school and the team, a
341 couple guys went there after me but that was it, I don't think too many went after
342 that.

343

344 I: How was your coach?

345

346 P: My coach was by far the **best coach I ever had.** He was good because...I mean he
347 was the best coach I ever had but **by far the hardest on us,** which a lot of guys hate
348 but he was so...he was just very prepped, he studied the other teams a lot which
349 then...you know forces you to put an extra video session or extra time on the ice.
350 And I mean he was hard on us but...

351

352 I: Hard on you physically or mentally?

353

354 P: I would say...he was good at...I would definitely say **he was hard on us**
355 **physically as far as...you know...you had to be in shape at all times, like that's**
356 **an aspect of the professional game. He was hard on us that way, but he also put**
357 **an onus on us to...the mental side of things. You have to prepare off the ice for**
358 **a game, you have to prepare...you have to study for a game.** And even though
359 this was my first taste at it, for like the video sessions and prepping for a game and
360 knowing what you'll have to face...I never saw that in any other coach as good as he

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361 was. And I think at 16 and 17 that was a little overwhelming but he was just so good
362 at that, and maybe some people wouldn't adapt to that well, some people might
363 think that's a little too excessive but I don't know...

364

365 I: How did school go?

366

367 P: School was good. **School was fine for me.** At the private college which I think is a
368 little tougher than...it was definitely harder than my grade 10 year...the high school I
369 went to in [home town...and then coming to this...it was a lot tougher. But dealing
370 with school...I mean it did make it hard when you had to be up for a 7am practice or
371 you know you go to class and then you leave class and you have to jump right on the
372 ice, or you go to class all day and you got to jump on a bus and go on a 5 hour drive
373 to play a game you know? I definitely saw a lot of guys struggle with it, but I was
374 okay, I sort of just got by in school. **I could not put in a lot of time in school and**
375 **get by, private school was tougher. I think I would of done better in high**
376 **school if I didn't play in the OHL, but I did okay go in school.** But...definitely if
377 you didn't have the OHL you would do better in school for sure...ya.

378

379 I: I forgot to ask you...did you sign a contract?

380

381 P: Ya...I think happened before training camp. **I think my parents were there, I**
382 **even think my agent was there as well, and the coach and the GM.** I think
383 everyone was there. It was a pretty formal process, and it's weird that they've gotten
384 away from that now. **You would think that now with whatever laws against...I**
385 **mean some of the stuff happening today has to be illegal and make those**
386 **contracts void.**

387

388 I: That's good though, that everyone was there.

389

390 P: I'm trying to think...we went away from training camp and it might have been at
391 the location where we went away for camp but ya...I'm positive my parents were
392 there. It was a big thing, it was like "it's going to happen today at this time, we're
393 going go" and it wasn't just like "oh here...sign this."

394

395 I: Was there anything about education in the contract?

396

397 P: Ya I had a **full education package.**

398

399 I: Did they mention that to you?

400

401 P: That was actually...once we sort of learned about all of that, **my agent sort of**
402 **told us all about this. I think before I even got drafted he was sort of telling us**
403 **what to expect** because I am going to get drafted, it's probably going to be in the
404 first or second round, I'm probably going to go off and play if I want to next year. So
405 he sort of said this is what a contract will look like, this is what he wants to go after

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406 and I remember him telling my dad about this education package and how it sort of
407 works. And then my dad, he has no education, he has his high school and that was it.
408 **The education thing was so big for him, it was like “that better be in there, it**
409 **better be this amount of dollars, it better say this this and this” and I**
410 **remember my dad being a real stickler on that.** But I mean, if I didn't have a good
411 agent and didn't have a dad who was so...and my mom was the same way too, but I
412 mean I would have no knowledge of that right? I mean...I think it laid it out in the
413 contract, but I mean the coaches wouldn't have told me that, I don't think the
414 general manager would have told me that, I think because I had a good agent, he was
415 well known, the coaches were talking to my parents in the summer, we were all
416 really tight, and that's how the information got down to me and my parents. But if
417 you don't have anyone...to tell you that stuff...or the coaches don't tell you, who says
418 they couldn't slip it in that contract? You may never know it's there.

419

420 I: What was your goal at this point?

421

422 P: I think after being drafted and you start to play...**the next big thing...especially**
423 **if you're a 16 year old playing is when you're 18 you can be drafted to the NHL.**
424 That's your next goal.

425

426 I: So were you thinking about that a lot?

427

428 P: Ya, I mean...definitely not my first year as 16 year old turning 17 year old, but
429 **definitely my second year which is your draft year again but for the NHL.** That
430 was...that's...I think that's sort of all your thinking about, and I mean you want your
431 team to do well but you're...I mean you're trying to get drafted to the NHL that year,
432 so that was sort of the next big step, was to do that.

433

434 I: How was your coach when you lost games?

435

436 P: He was weird in the sense...**well he was vocal, very vocal, he was a yeller, a**
437 **screamer, whatever you want to call it.**

438

439 I: Did you like that?

440

441 P: See, **I don't mind that, but it rattled some guys for sure.** I mean some guys
442 don't take it well. But our coach...it wasn't about winning games or losing games, **it**
443 **was like if we didn't play the way we could play that's when we got yelled at.** So
444 for example...we would win a game, thought we played great, he would come in at
445 the end of the game and scream at us for not playing our best, say it was a weaker
446 team...and we would have a tough practice the next day, because even if we won we
447 played not up to our standards. So it wasn't like the win or loss with him, it was “you
448 guys didn't show up tonight, you didn't play well, something's wrong” and I guess
449 that hard practice the next day was sort of a punishment or to teach you a lesson I
450 guess, but ya he was good that way, **it was more just about the character of our**

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451 **play, win or loss wasn't good which at the time when you're young you're like "what**
452 **the hell?" you know what I mean? You're like "who is this guy?" you know? And it'**
453 **funny you look back on it a bit and you're like "I think he had a bit of a point with it"**
454 **if we had a coach that just because we lost skated you hard or just because you lost**
455 **you got yelled at, that could just be totally devastating for young guys, but we sort of**
456 **saw the pattern with him, he sort of just wanted us to play our best, it didn't matter**
457 **about the win or the loss, and you sort of got to see that a bit, you sort of knew what**
458 **he was doing, and I think it brought out, it brought out the best in some of us, some**
459 **of them maybe not, I don't know.**

460

461 I: So then your draft year is coming up and how did that go? Did you think you were
462 going to get drafted?

463

464 P: **So my first year I hurt my shoulder, came back my second year.**

465

466 I: How long were you out?

467

468 P: **First year...maybe 2-3 weeks. I rehabbed it, came back and it sort of**
469 **bothered me all my first year, came back my second year and this is suppose**
470 **to be your big year.**

471

472 I: Sorry, did you do training in the summer?

473

474 P: Ya that summer I did training. **There's a hockey gym back home, I went to this**
475 **specific hockey gym, had a trainer and went through all that.** So my second year
476 was the big year, the draft year, **I had hurt my shoulder again and I totally**
477 **dislocated it, and there was significant damage to it.** I was out for, like the first
478 time I was out for maybe **3-4 weeks, came back hurt it again, maybe out for**
479 **another week or two, came back, hurt it again. I only played...I think I only**
480 **played 40 something games that year out of the possible 68.** So I missed half a
481 season almost, and I remember when time draft for the NHL was coming, it
482 was...there's an option where you...you can opt into the draft or you can opt out of
483 the draft, and it's actual paperwork.

484

485 I: What does it mean when you opt out?

486

487 P: I think it's basically saying you're not interested in being drafted, or not this year,
488 maybe next year. **So for me there was an option that I didn't play enough games,**
489 **I didn't play half the year, maybe I wasn't noticed as much, when I opt out of**
490 **this draft...go play next year hopefully healthy my third year, opt into the draft**
491 **that year and try to get drafter higher.**

492

493 I: Did you do that?

494

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495 P: I didn't do that, my agent was like "you know what? You had a good year, you
496 didn't play enough and you probably won't get drafted, but it's okay we'll go in,
497 chances are you won't get drafted" but **I had to have surgery at the end of that**
498 **year in the summer, so he was like "we'll have surgery, we'll get you back for**
499 **your third year and we'll have a great third year, opt into that draft and get**
500 **drafted in that third year, so it doesn't matter if you get drafted this year" I**
501 **was opted into the drafted, ended up being picked by the [NHL team] who had**
502 **seen me play a couple times.**

503
504 I: Did you know that?

505
506 P: I didn't know.

507
508 I: Did you watch the draft?

509
510 P: I didn't watch because....

511
512 I: What round was this? Sorry...

513
514 P: It was [round number].

515
516 I: So you didn't even think you would get drafted?

517
518 P: No, I think they should the first two rounds were on TV and then the 3rd round to
519 the 9th round are the next day and they just do that online. I didn't even pay
520 attention and my agent called, my dad answered, my dad came to me and he's like
521 "you just got drafted to the NHL."

522
523 I: Do you remember where you were?

524
525 P: I was walking down my stairs and I could hear my dad yelling "Ryan! Pick up the
526 phone! Pick up the phone! It's you agent" and I was just like "ya...hello?" and he's
527 like "ya you ended up getting picked up by the [NHL team] they took you in the
528 [round number], they've seen you play, they didn't even know you were in the draft,
529 because you were injured and you probably wouldn't be in it" and he sort of said
530 something like "you might of even get picked higher if they would of known, because
531 they were one of the teams that happened to see me play a handful of times, and
532 liked me. **Ya so they were just like "injuries aside, get fixed up and we'll see**
533 **where this can go" sort of thing.**

534
535 I: How did you feel?

536
537 P: That was a weird moment. I was happy because I didn't think it was happening,
538 my mind was so far from that, where I think some kids were waiting around for it,
539 where I didn't even check the computer that day because I was like "there's no way

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540 anyone was picking me up” and so my mind wasn’t even near that and then when it
541 happened I was like this is a great thing I guess.

542

543 I: Did they call you?

544

545 P: They called me...I don’t think it was a coach or general manager or anything,
546 someone called me and just said “you’ve been selected” and needed to get some info
547 from me, and they were going to send me my jersey in a package saying when
548 training camp was going to be, fitness testing and all that sort of stuff.

549 I: So then you went to play for [OHL team]?

550

551 P: **Ya so then I went back to [OHL team]. I had a really good year, my shoulder**
552 **was healthy because I had it repaired, came back and had a really good year.**

553

554 I: Was it just the NHL in your mind?

555

556 P: Ya, my third year was like okay no you’re 18, you’re turning 19, this is where you
557 become a professional hockey player if you want, right? **And I had a really good**
558 **year and how it works I guess is when they draft you they sort of own your**
559 **rights as a player for 2 years. So after my third year which was my first year**
560 **with [NHL team] they obviously, unless you’re a star player, they’re not going**
561 **to bring you to the NHL at 18 or 19, they’re going to let you stay in the OHL and**
562 **let you go back for your 4th year, let you get better, bigger, stronger and then**
563 **after your 4th year which would be your second year with them, they would**
564 **then make a decision on you to sign you to a contract, bring you down to their**
565 **minor league team or to them.** So that’s what they did after my third year, they
566 were like “you had a great year, obviously you aren’t ready for the NHL, professional
567 hockey, you’ve got a 4th year in the OHL, get strong, we’ll be in touch in your 4th year,
568 and we’ll look to see if there’s a future with us” and that’s what I did, went back for
569 my 4th year and in my 4th year I ended up getting traded from [OHL team] so I was
570 about a month in.

571

572 I: Did you know that was going to happen?

573

574 P: No. **We had a new coach my 4th year, new coach, new sort of everything and**
575 **about a month in he came to me one morning and was like “we got a deal done**
576 **with you and another guy on the team for another player on another team” but**
577 **within my contract was a no trade clause, like I have to sort of approve it all**
578 **before they can. With other players, they don’t have that, they can just literally**
579 **get a call and you’re gone, and you just go.** But with me I had that clause where
580 they got to basically ask my permission sort of. So they brought me in, told me that,
581 and I just said “okay I’m going to go call my parents and call my agent” so I just left
582 that meeting and I called my parents and just said “they proposed this deal to trade
583 me” but at the time **I wasn’t playing well my 4th year, I had a rough start, this**
584 **new coach...I don’t know, we sort of just bumped heads hockey style wise, he**

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585 wanted to play hockey a certain way with this sort of design and I don't know...I just
586 was having a bad year. So at that time, even though I didn't want to leave [OHL
587 team], leave the organization, leave my billet or leave the city, **hockey wise it was**
588 **just a good move I think to just get out of there.** I don't think I would have been
589 successful with that coach and so I wasn't too bummed out about it hockey wise. I
590 think it was a good move, and I was going to [OHL team] where that coach was the
591 coach in [home town] my original draft year who wanted me to come to [OHL team]
592 and start my career with [OHL team] and I had known him, he was coaching [OHL
593 team] now and he sort of contacted me that day before the deal was done, just
594 saying basically "we'd love to have you here" and I called him and I said "I think
595 we're going to get the deal done" sort of thing. It was just very informal. So I was just
596 happy to go to a team where I knew the coach and I knew that he wanted me to be
597 there, he was the one who actually just pushed for the trade.

598

599 I: Did you know anyone there?

600

601 P: I had known a couple guys from just playing in the league, but other than the guy I
602 was getting traded with, we didn't know anyone. And funny story, this happened in
603 the morning, so let's say I got to the rink at about 8 o'clock, and meeting happens,
604 you're going to be traded, we go through all that and the deal gets done, it's maybe
605 11 o'clock and I talk to the coach in [OHL team] and he says "can you make it out for
606 a practice at 2 o'clock?" and I said "ya, I got a car, me and the other player can head
607 down there for your practice" we literally hopped in the car from [OHL team]'s rink,
608 drive to [OHL team] get on the ice, have a practice there, meet everyone, [OHL team]
609 has a game in [city] tomorrow night. So they said, "go back to [OHL team], get your
610 stuff together, meet us in [city] tomorrow night at the game and then play the game,
611 and then the day after that we have a day off, you can then sort everything out after
612 that, we'll get you moved into [OHL team]" so before I had even moved in anywhere
613 or moved out anywhere, I had a practice and game already set up, and that day, I
614 had seen my billet in the morning in [OHL team], say goodbye to her, went to school
615 whatever, practice, went to [OHL team] for dinner, we had all sat down for dinner
616 after having practiced in [OHL team] that day and being traded and she literally sat
617 down and said how was your day? What did you do? And I said "well funny this is, I
618 won't be living here anymore, I got traded today, I'm going to be moving out within
619 two days" and she just started laughing and said "what?" and I had been there for
620 almost 3 and half years, and she was like family to me right? And I was like "ya, I'm
621 packing up tomorrow or the next day" and there we were just sitting there, and we
622 sort of laughed about it, but **that's how quick it can happen for a young kid.** You
623 know you're living in one city...ya I was 19 and you're gone within a day, you're
624 gone. So ya it was funny.

625

626 I: How was your year in [new OHL team]?

627

628 P: So, this was another important year for me because [NHL team] said you know
629 "third year we just want you to get better" and I remember meeting with a scout

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630 from [NHL team] and he said "you know they're really impressed with you, if you
631 have a good 4th year you could essentially sign a contract with them, play in the
632 minors and start your professional hockey career" like I was playing that good at the
633 time. **And my 4th year I got to [new OHL team] played 15 games maybe, blew
634 out my shoulder again, the same shoulder. Totally destroyed.**

635

636 I: Do you remember that moment?

637

638 P: Ya...we were in [OHL team] on a road trip, we were playing in [OHL team] and I
639 had fallen in the corner and the puck was sort of, the puck was underneath me and
640 one of their players fell on top of me and landed on my shoulder. I was in so much
641 pain, he just fell on my shoulder and it just totally ripped everything in there. I
642 remember getting sort of carried off the ice and we went to the [OHL team] training
643 room or doctor's room to put it back into place, and I **remember being devastated,
644 just devastated because I knew that, I knew that I was going to have to have
645 surgery again, I knew that I was going to miss a lot of time this year, and I
646 knew just...essentially...that's a huge downfall for someone's who's about to
647 become a professional hockey player and sign a contract. I think I was even in
648 tears, I was devastated.**

649

650 I: And then they told you?

651

652 P: And then they told me **"it's totally torn again" my options were to get it fixed
653 then right away and miss the whole year, I didn't, I decided to come back and
654 play the rest of my 4th year, but I was in and out of the line up with problems
655 with it, and I just didn't have a great year, I missed a lot of games and
656 eventually that sort of...when it came time to talk to [NHL team] it was
657 like...you know...that was a pretty sad moment when you sort of know that
658 you're not having a good enough year where you're going to be signed to a
659 contract, but I sort of saw it slowly coming. And then that was sort of cut ties
660 with them I guess, like that's it we've had your 2 years.**

661

662 I: Did you go home to rehab?

663

664 P: **I stayed in [OHL team] did treatment there, and then went home for the
665 summer and got it fixed.**

666

667 I: Then what? What were you thinking?

668

669 P: I honestly was thinking "you did it before, you got it fixed, you came back had a
670 great year" so it was like, you **know I had motivation to do that again, I was still
671 not completely giving up. A lot of players at that stage in their career, if they
672 come back for a 5th year do sign contracts with NHL teams you know so? It
673 wasn't like that was it, it was just like an opportunity has passed, you still have
674 another great opportunity for one more year and come back as an over age player, if**

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675 you have a great year any team could sign you. **So I went back to [OHL team] and**
676 **within, I'm going to say I played 25-30 games that year, shoulder destroyed**
677 **again and this time it separated very easily, it wasn't even a big hit, I had just**
678 **fallen on the ice and it totally just came out, very easily, and so I went and got**
679 **MRI's and stuff like the done and what they sort of came up with is I saw a new**
680 **doctor and he said the person who did my second repair missed something,**
681 **they didn't do a very good repair and my shoulder just essentially dislocated**
682 **very easily because they didn't do the right repair. So there I am, after all this**
683 **rehab thinking my shoulder was going to be ready to go, it was still not ready**
684 **to go and I had no idea and it came out, dislocated, and I was back to square**
685 **one again. That was before New Years that season and they said "if you want to**
686 **continue to play hockey, or even if you don't want to continue to play hockey**
687 **you have to get this fixed again, it's that bad" so that time I decided to stop**
688 **playing.**

689
690 I: Did you talk to your parents?

691
692 P: Ya, it was a big decision because basically my options were to stop playing or
693 continue with a bad shoulder, it was going to be painful, it was going to in and out of
694 the line up, I would of just had a miserable year essentially. So after I talked with my
695 parents, and I mean we came up with the decision that I have to get it fixed, there's
696 no point in going through all this pain, and I was just sort of at a moment where
697 hockey has to be set aside for a second, now it's like my shoulder and you know my
698 future as a human being I guess [laughs] you know what I mean? I wanted my
699 shoulder to function normally and I think I was just so frustrated with hockey too
700 and I was just like you know what? This is a good time to just part ways with it,
701 maybe forever, or maybe just for now, and I went and got the surgery in [month] of
702 the year. I think it was the first week of [month] that I stopped playing. By me
703 stopping then, they could go out and get another over aged player, so that was also a
704 thing...I was sort of thinking a little bit about the team at that point, they could bring
705 in another over aged player if I dropped out, or they could have me stick around and
706 be in and out of the line up that year. So then I had the surgery in [month] and
707 ya...ya it was crappy.

708
709 I: So did you go home?

710
711 P: **Went home for that and I was home that year, and I rehabbed.**

712
713 I: So what did you think when you're at home?

714
715 P: Ya it was...weird because I didn't have, you're away from a lot of your friends, you
716 don't have many friends at home because you're always away, every year right? You
717 live away and you see your friends in the summer. So I went home to like...my
718 parents, I didn't go home to a regular routine because I had been playing hockey for
719 5 years, doing this you know crazy lifestyle, when it's just like you know what do I

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720 do? And I was rehabbing at the time which takes a lot of you know, a lot of your
721 hours. Ya you definitely...it was a huge change of lifestyle. It was weird being home
722 doing nothing essentially. I mean I was done high school so all I did was rehab my
723 shoulder, it was strange, it was strange actually.

724

725 I: Did you start thinking about schools?

726

727 P: **Ya, that's when I was like okay now I'll probably go on to university.** But then
728 I sort of got whim of how you know you can hockey at university, you can get
729 scholarships, stuff like that and to be honest I didn't know if I had it in me to keep
730 playing hockey just because of my shoulder alone. I think I still wanted to play
731 hockey, but I was like my shoulder is in jeopardy here, I don't know if I should do it.
732 And then that's when I started getting calls from universities who I think...the
733 hockey world is very small, rumours get out, okay there's this player who you know
734 he's done playing might be willing to go to university, we should start contacting
735 him.

736

737 I: What was the role of your agent at this point?

738

739 P: So this is where, you know you sort of...my agent was good because he knew that
740 I was going to not play professional within that year...or ever. So for him, there's
741 nothing really in it for him anymore, but he was great because he knew that I was
742 leaning towards going to school and starting to make all these contacts and he
743 actually helped me out just by putting me in touch with certain coaches around
744 Canada that had coached at different teams, so he was like "ya listen, obviously I get
745 nothing out of this, but we're good friends now if anything" you know? He was a
746 really good guy, so he just sort of was like "listen I'll put in some calls for you, do
747 your thing" and even till this day, he's always been like listen, and even when I
748 finished hockey at school, he was like "call me if you ever want to go professional
749 somewhere, I don't need to take a cut or anything" so I was lucky that way. He sort
750 of just helped me get my feet wet in that sort of school process, he didn't know too
751 much about it, but he just put me in touch with guys.

752

753 I: So you went to [CIS university]?

754

755 P: So I went to [CIS university], I mean I went out and talked with different teams,
756 different schools and stuff came to [OHL team] and came to [hometown] and took
757 me out, just sort of like the OHL process, they're trying to woo you to come to their
758 team I guess, but **it's a little different because there's no draft, it's like "here's
759 our school, here's our facilities, we get this kind of weather" you know
760 whatever, they try to woo you into that position. [CIS university] was high on
761 my list because I knew guys there, 2 guys that I had played with, one guy in [OHL
762 team] and one guy in [OHL team] I had played with were there, and I had known
763 maybe 2 or 3 other guys that were and had played in the OHL that I had just gotten
764 to know, they were already there so when it came time to go and visit, I went to visit**

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765 [CIS university] they call them recruiting trips, they bring you out just sort of show
766 you around, when I got there and saw the city...all I really needed to see was the city
767 and sort of what the school was like, and I was sold because I knew guys there. So
768 they were high on my list, I talked to other schools but [CIS university] was sort of
769 the one I was always going to go to.

770

771 I: So when you went to [CIS university] what were you? Were you a hockey player?
772 Were you a student?

773

774 P: **They label you as a student-athlete, I mean...I would say definitely my first**
775 **year not knowing, I didn't know a thing about university because it hadn't be**
776 **on my mind whatsoever, because I mean the last couple years you're trying to**
777 **become a professional hockey player and that's all you think of.** When you
778 graduate high school you're not thinking about university and you don't want to go
779 to university, you want to go play professional hockey. So when I got there in my
780 first year, **I had no idea what I was doing school wise and I always got good**
781 **grades, but I literally had no motivation, no path, nothing.** So ya, my first year all
782 I did...I thought about hockey mostly, and school was just like...I had no idea why I
783 was at school. **But I mean, I went to my classes, got my grades, but definitely I**
784 **would say I focused on hockey, for sure my first year, even my second year it**
785 **was hockey, hockey, hockey. And it was pretty demanding too.**

786

787 I: So you played 4 years there?

788

789 P: **5. Snuck in that extra year because of that year like my first year.**

790

791 I: Did they [OHL] pay for that?

792

793 P: Ya. **All 5 were paid for.** I think my OHL stuff was only for 4 years, I could of
794 gotten a 5th year but I stopped playing my 5th year in [OHL team], I sort of played
795 that half year, and they...**what they did for that 5th year was just sort of, they**
796 **gave me a little bit of money to add on to each one of my 4 years, so the OHL**
797 **one was for 4 years and I didn't get any OHL stuff for my 5th year.**

798

799 I: Did you get your books paid for?

800

801 P: I think my OHL stuff covered, if I had enough for my books, it could go towards
802 books, ya I think mine was tuition and books, it might have been tuition, room and
803 board and books, ya, **it was a lump sum of money and as long as you used it for**
804 **your tuition, room and board and books, you could use it on all that.**

805

806 I: So you got the money, and then you could use it?

807

808 P: Ya, we have to file, you go there and you have to send paperwork from [CIS
809 university] to the OHL or to [OHL team] maybe because [OHL team] had all of my

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810 school stuff, **ya you sort of send them your paperwork and your bills and your**
811 **receipts sort of thing and then they would look at it and obviously verify it and**
812 **then send that money to you.** So I had to cover it up front, anything sort of like that
813 I covered up front and then was reimbursed.

814
815 I: Do you remember how much you got paid in the OHL?

816
817 **P: It was \$50 a week and then when you were an over ager it was \$150 maybe.**
818 It was definitely \$50 a week and then you would get some gas money. I think when
819 you're an over ager I think it was a little bit negotiable, there was some room. I
820 never personally...I think the standard was \$125 or \$150 I'm pretty sure I just got
821 the \$150 and then just got some gas money added on to that. So it was maybe \$175 a
822 week I got. But I had heard some guys could negotiate \$200 a week when they were
823 an over ager or \$300 or whatever, so I think it was a little more flexible, I think when
824 you're an over ager, I don't know why but I had heard that.

825
826 I: When you look back on it and now and you see how much money some franchises
827 make, **do you think they should be getting paid more than \$50.**

828
829 P: The players?

830
831 I: Ya.

832
833 **P: Ya. Absolutely.**

834
835 I: Do you think they would spend it in the right way?

836
837 **P: No, I don't think they would. It would depend on how much more they got.**
838 **We used to joke around about how much it worked out to be an hour.**

839
840 I: How much was it?

841
842 P: I think we came up with, I think we came up with **\$3-\$4 dollars an hour.** And
843 another thing we used to joke about was a PA, **you know these organizations**
844 **make money off of us, and we make \$3-\$4 dollars an hour, which I don't know**
845 **if that's right.** Looking back on it, and even at the time I noticed it too. **You get that**
846 **check and you're like...even at time it was like...for the amount of time you put**
847 **in and I mean you are a sort of shadow, you just enjoy being there and you feel**
848 **so lucky when you're there that I think a lot of times you don't really care**
849 **about it, you're just having such a good time, but definitely me coming out of it**
850 **with all these injuries, and looking back on it, I wish I had made a little more**
851 **money going through that, you know...you can have something to show for it.**
852 But definitely if it was too much money you would have 16 and 17 year olds just
853 running...and as wild as they are now...at 16, 17 and 18 if you have money sitting in
854 your bank account, you could be reckless. But I think if there was a way to you

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855 know, like the education money you sort of bank it up, if you could sort of bank like
856 a savings where you earn this money and can save it for university after, or even if
857 you aren't going to university you could save it to buy a house with your girlfriend
858 after you're done this. I mean you get out of it when you're 20 or 21 and if you're
859 dating something or pursuing another career, I mean a lot of 20, 21 or 22 year olds
860 now can have a job where they start saving for a house or whatever you want and if
861 they play in the OHL they can out with a lot of injuries and nothing to show for it.

862

863 **I: So if they had a fund, where they got maybe \$50 bucks and a week and the**
864 **rest of it, they couldn't access it.**

865

866 P: Ya, like a **savings thing** where they could, you know if you wanted to play a year
867 and you can take your money and go, then sure, go. Or if you wanted to play 5 years
868 and save all this money and use it towards whatever you wanted. I think maybe not
869 when you're 16 or 17, but when you get to be 19, 20 or 21, and you do grow up
870 pretty fast when you're in this league, you mature very quickly and I think when I
871 was 19 and 20 I think I could of handled saving that sort of money and knowing I
872 had this money and use it responsibly afterwards for education or a house, or
873 whatever I wanted to do. There definitely should be some sort of, monetary value
874 given to these players.

875

876 **I: Did you have anything in your contract about career ending insurance?**

877

878 P: I think there was something like if you, **I'm almost positive there was**
879 **something about career ending, I don't know if it was necessarily career**
880 **ending, but if something really happened to you if you were, maybe not able to**
881 **work after, I think there was something there that there would be some sort of**
882 **compensation. I never thought of it really, I don't know if I would of qualified**
883 **for it, although I mean essentially they told me to stop playing hockey, you**
884 **know you've got to get this shoulder healthy.** I don't know if I would have
885 qualified for it, but I think there is something in there that did mention if something
886 did happen to you there would be some sort of package, but I couldn't give you any
887 of the details about that. **At the time when I signed the contract that was never**
888 **something I was looking for, it was probably something my parents were**
889 **looking for, like I said before you're on your own, I don't think there was**
890 **anyone on the teams jumping out to notify you about all of this for sure.** I don't
891 think there was, I don't know if teams have people that take care of that thing for
892 players who aren't represented or maybe don't have great parents in their lives. I
893 don't know if there's a person who takes care of that, to make sure that a 16 year old
894 kid knows exactly what he's getting into.

895

896 **I: If you had a kid, and he was good and he could go to the OHL or he could go to the**
897 **NCAA, what would you do?**

898

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899 P: It's so funny, I had this conversation with my buddies last weekend, because my
900 one buddy just found out he's having a kid and it's boy and we all got talking about
901 that. It's so funny because now that I've gotten an education, and after I played 5
902 years at [CIS university] and I mean I wasn't totally taking hockey seriously, but I
903 was still playing at a high level out in that league, it's a really good league. I was able
904 to go play professional that next year and a lot of guys I know are still playing
905 professional and a lot of guys from that league, if you don't step into a career, you go
906 and play pro hockey. Right so when I left I had my education, I wasn't ready to go
907 look for a job, and I went to play pro hockey, **I went down to [ECHL team]. I**
908 **wanted to keep playing hockey, I didn't want a job yet, and I was only there for**
909 **like a month and I was like "you know what? This is not for me anymore" and I**
910 **packed up from there and finally made the decision where I said you know**
911 **what? I'm going to take my education and start to figure my life out.** But at the
912 time, I wanted to go and see what professional hockey was like, I want to go see if I
913 could make it, and I did. Looking at that now, I think "man, why didn't I just get my
914 education when I was 18?" I would have been done when I was 20 or 21, then I
915 could of went off and played professional hockey and I wasted all this time. I ended
916 up being [age] when I went down there and that was one of the thing that made me
917 leave. I was like okay I'm [age] years old and I'm just getting into professional
918 hockey, I'd be doing it just for the fun and not the career, you're wasting your time
919 down here, why don't you go look for something you can start doing for the rest of
920 your life? **And I'm like man if I got my education early and went to the NCAA, I**
921 **could of then you know, leisurely played professional hockey from 21 all the**
922 **way up to 30 and then stopped, or not you know what I mean? So I was saying**
923 **to my buddies, you know...I almost wish I would of went to the NCAA, just for**
924 **that. Because it's such a good league, with me it's difficult because a lot of the**
925 **injuries but, I don't know, like it's so hard. If they're telling you he's going to be**
926 **a great hockey player and that's he's probably going to play professional**
927 **hockey, I think you step into the OHL and you're like okay...you'll do it. But I**
928 **think if you're sort of a player that doesn't grow up in the states and they're**
929 **not really saying you're going to become a professional or a star, I think that's**
930 **when they would sort of go the school route, it's still a good way to become a**
931 **potential NHL player.**

932
933 I: So what would you say though? If he was like "Dad, what do I do?"

934
935 P: **sighs** If he was...***sighs*** I honestly...***sighs*** to be honest...if he was a really good
936 hockey player and a good student, **I think I would send him to the NCAA.** If he was
937 good at hockey and good at school, I think now, especially that league is a breeding
938 ground for professional hockey players. I don't know 10 or 15 years ago if it was as
939 good, or even at my time, but going through the education I think I would push him
940 towards that direction. I think you can now become such a well-rounded individual
941 through the school and hockey that the NCAA has, that I don't know if I got from the
942 OHL. I would definitely push him, and open his eyes to the NCAA.

Interview #5/Participant #5
Brock University
February 19, 2013

1 I: Can you remember your first experience skating or playing hockey?
2

3 P: The first I can remember I'd say, probably when I was in [country] I was 4. My
4 dad played in the NHL for 10 years so for his last year he went to [country]. And I
5 was on the ice there.
6

7 I: So he was still playing when you were young?
8

9 P: Ya. He was sick, so he stopped playing. He has [disease]. So he had to stop playing
10 and then he went for some fun at the end but he had another flare up. So he went to
11 [country], so my first memory when I was 4 was being in [country] and being on the
12 outdoor rinks, it was half indoor outdoor, like you could see outside and be on the
13 rink. It was a really cool lifestyle and that was basically my first memory. Basically
14 you start remembering things when you're 4. So ever since I can remember I was on
15 the ice.
16

17 I: And then when did you start playing organized?
18

19 P: Probably 7.
20

21 I: And where were you at this time?
22

23 P: [US state].
24

25 I: So you moved to [US state]?
26

27 P: Ya, my dad had coached. So we always live in [Canadian city]. When he was
28 playing we'd move with him. So he started coaching right after [country]. I think my
29 first organized team was when I was 6 years old. I was a forward, I wasn't a goalie
30 like I am now.
31

32 I: Did you ask to be enrolled?
33

34 P: Ya. My dad and my brother played obviously. He was a forward.
35

36 I: Is he older than you?
37

38 P: Ya, he's an [year of birth]. He went to [CIS university]. He got drafted to the OHL
39 too, but he just didn't want to go. He wanted to go to school in the states. He went a
40 different route...obviously. But I think I just did it because it was the thing to do, and
41 there was two forwards and they needed a goalie to shoot at, so I wanted to fit in so
42 I'm like "Ya! Ya! I'll go in and be goalie." And my brother went in net and it kind of
43 hurt him and he was upset, and I went in and didn't mind getting hit. So my dad was
44 like "well you should stay in net then if you don't mind it" [laughs] And I liked it, it
45 was okay, so I just sort of kept going.

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46

47 I: Do you remember a point when you realized you were good at hockey?
48

49 P: Ya, there was, but I liked being a forward better because I liked scoring. So I'd
50 celebrate and everything, and my dad was a forward you know? But I started
51 playing in goal, and I was way better in goal then I was as a forward. So at the time
52 they would split time, so you'd have to rotate playing goalie, you'd play 5 as a
53 forward then back as a goalie. It wasn't as organized. And I played three in a row as
54 a goalie and I didn't let a goal in, so my Dad was like "your coach wants you to play
55 for the rest of the year, do you want to do it?" and I was kind of like "ya...okay, it's
56 kind of fun" and then as I got older I kind of liked the whole...I thought about it you
57 know the forwards are on the ice for half the game, a quarter of the game and the
58 goalie's on for the full time. So I wanted to play the most, so I stuck in net and went
59 from there.

60

61 I: So where were you in grade 7 and 8.
62

63 P: In grade 7 I moved back [current home], grade 5 and 6 I was in [US state] and
64 anything before that I was in [US state].
65

65

66 I: When did you start thinking about the OHL?
67

67

68 P: **I didn't even know it existed and then I moved back from [US city], my Dad**
69 **got a job coaching the [OHL team] and he was the coach and GM.** And I was like
70 "what is this?" And I looked at the junior B team's, it just looks like kids except theirs
71 fans. **So I was like "I gotta do this no matter what" and I actually got a call from**
72 **a few NCAA schools before I went to [OHL team] but it was just...and they**
73 **asked if I had ever thought about going the NCAA route and I said no.** I knew a
74 guy who went there and they said they wanted to bring me down there to check the
75 campus out. I had no interest in that because my Dad was coaching and I just
76 thought it was the coolest thing. **You see the players, they look like NHL guys eh?**
77 **I looked up to his guys, to his players when I was young, they were my role**
78 **models and I went the OHL route. Anyone I knew did.**
79

79

80 I: Did you go to the rink a lot during the games your Dad coached?
81

81

82 P: All the time. **Even when he was coaching the [NHL team]. I'd go down there**
83 **and be around [NHL player] and [NHL player], all the guys.** And he wouldn't let
84 me go in before the games or anything but practices and stuff, I'd be in his office,
85 guys would be coming around. You get to talk to a lot of the guys, and a lot of the
86 goalies you look up to. [NHL goalie] was his goalie. I just had a huge man crush on
87 him. He was probably the biggest influence on me as a goalie because he was so cool
88 and so well spoken and I loved everything about it. I would get so upset if he let a
89 goal in.
90

90

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91 I: That must have been so cool.

92

93 P: Ya, not everyone gets that opportunity. Looking back on it now, and not taking
94 anything for granted but it takes a few years to set in, before you realize where you
95 were right? Now you look at a TV and it's hard to get in the NHL, they don't let
96 anyone in right? It was pretty cool.

97

98 I: Did you have an agent?

99

100 P: Ya.

101

102 I: Before the draft?

103

104 P: Not before the draft. **I got one in the OHL, and everyone had the guy, the**
105 **whole OHL had the guy.** This guy contacted me in my first year before the OHL and
106 he wanted to represent me and said "ya, why not?" He wasn't a bad agent, it's just
107 that he had so many of the elite guys in the league, I didn't want to go talk to him
108 afterwards. He'd have sticks for people and stuff, and he'd just look at me and say
109 "Hey [name] keep it up man, good job!" But I'd want someone to call me too right?

110

111 **I: So you got drafted in grade 10?**

112

113 **P: I believe so.** See that messes me up because I think I was in grade 10 or 9, I'm a
114 year behind. I got held back in grade 5 in [US state]. They have different age groups,
115 so that was kind of a mess. So I'm actually a year behind the kids who were my age.

116

117 I: So were you thinking about the OHL before you got drafted?

118

119 P: That was all I wanted to do. That's it.

120

121 I: Do you remember the day of the draft?

122

123 P: Oh ya. I was on my computer hitting refresh, refresh, refresh, new names would
124 come up. [OHL team] was taking their time because a bunch of these teams would
125 call and ask if I would report to them and I said "ya, for sure, for sure" and [OHL
126 team] I had never heard from them. So I'm like refresh, refresh, refresh and I got
127 made because they took their time, and I'm like "you know what? Just draft this guy,
128 he probably stinks, he's probably never going to play a game in the OHL anyways"
129 right? And then I clicked it, and my name popped up right under it. It was weird
130 because I had never talked to them.

131

132 I: That's funny. I've heard that a lot.

133

134 **P: That's what worries me because I run a goalie school and I work with a guy**
135 **who is supposed to be a really high pick, one of my goalies. And his Dad was**

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136 **saying he's talked to every team except [OHL team], and I'm like "Oh shit..." I**
137 **hope [OHL team] doesn't draft the kid.**

138
139 I: So then did they call you?

140
141 P: Ya. The trainer called me, and it's just cool. You have to report...they have their
142 camp in [city], the fitness stuff. You go to [city] two times in the summer, have a
143 test...so three times. Right after the draft they always have a testing, they had one in
144 the middle, a progress, and then one kind of near the end before your camp, about a
145 month before you go to your final camp to make sure that you're fit.

146
147 I: So you went to the final camp?

148
149 P: Ya.

150
151 I: Were you nervous?

152
153 P: **Ya I was because I broke my collarbone, right before my first camp. I wasn't**
154 **supposed to play anyways that year, but I broke my collarbone maybe a month**
155 **before so I wasn't 100%.** Ya, I wasn't pretty nervous but I knew a few of the guys
156 and they treated me really well at camp.

157
158 I: And then you came home to play for that year?

159
160 P: I came and played junior B at home. I was suppose to go play in [city] but my
161 brother played on the team too and they were offering me more games so I was like
162 "why go away, if you're going to stay at home, free food and stuff."

163
164 I: So then that year went by and how were you doing in school?

165
166 P: **I was doing really well. Well...I don't want to say really well. I had decent**
167 **grades, low 80s, high 70s, nothing to put the tests up on the fridge. My parents**
168 **were always really strict with school.** So if I was failing stuff I wouldn't be allowed
169 to play and if I got in trouble I wouldn't be allowed to play. I kind of knew that
170 because my Dad was in hockey his whole life, they never were the parents where
171 like hockey then school, it was always like get your schooling, get this and then you
172 know if hockey's there then you can use that as well.

173
174 I: How was your Dad with your hockey?

175
176 P: Um...good. It can be kind of frustrating. A lot of parents act like they know what
177 they're talking about but they don't. Him...you'd think you have a good game, you
178 know you let in 2 goals and he was like "those goals stunk, if you were my goalie I
179 wouldn't play you for another week" you know what I mean? **So even in the OHL**
180 **he'd do it, even when I was playing pro he'd do it. I'd call him after the game**

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181 **and he would be like “how do you think you played?” and I would be like “I**
182 **don’t know...alright” and he was like “I don’t think you played alright.”** So it
183 was different, there was no bs’ing him, because **he knew and everything was from**
184 **a coaching standpoint.** Like watching games...I can’t watch NHL games with him
185 because he watches and goes “that’s stupid, that powerplay isn’t set up right” and
186 it’s like “Dad I don’t care, I just want to watch it” you know? I’m done playing...I just
187 want to watch the Leafs you know? [laughs]

188
189 I: So then that year went by and you went to camp again?

190
191 P: Ya, I went back the next year. I had a good year in junior, I was rookie of the year
192 in junior, so I was confident going into my season. So I went into...I don’t know what
193 grade that was, I think grade 11 or 10 because I was a year behind, I can’t
194 remember, but I went in that year, had a good camp and made the team and I stuck,
195 which I was pretty happy about. Really happy. It was kinda cool because my brother
196 had wanted to go that route but didn’t, and...I don’t know...I always thought that my
197 Dad...I always wanted to do it for...not my parents but I thought it’d be cool, you
198 know what I mean? You want to show off to your Dad right? Do something that he
199 did. He played and coached you know? So me doing that was kinda the first thing I
200 ever did that was along the same lines of him, so it was pretty cool.

201
202 I: Did you live with billets?

203
204 P: Ya.

205
206 I: How was that?

207
208 P: **I had the best billets you could get.** You know what? Ironically, my billets....I
209 lived with [CHL player] in [OHL team] and one of the guys came back from Ottawa
210 and so there was no room for me at the time. So I was really close with [CHL player]
211 and his girlfriend at the time. So his girlfriend had room at their house, so she asked
212 her parents, who had never watched a game of hockey in their life. And I ended up
213 living with his girlfriend, well her family. It was just the best because they didn’t
214 know a lot about hockey, so a lot of billets always want to put their nose in, and
215 that’s the hard part about the OHL is that your billets...if you get the bad ones, it’s
216 like gossip, billets will be like “Well we got this kid” and mine were never...they
217 didn’t care, they would treat me like a son. I’d come in from [far OHL team] and I’d
218 come in at 6 in the morning, or [far OHL team] I’d come in at like 3am, and she’d be
219 up waiting for me. And she’d have food, and she’d get up and be like “Oh...I was up
220 watching TV, I couldn’t sleep” and it’s like “[billet name] you can go to sleep, I’m a
221 big boy, I drive, you don’t have to wait” but her 2 daughters, they became my sisters,
222 I never had sisters. They were like family to me. I still see them, I was supposed to
223 go up to [OHL team] last weekend that just passed but I didn’t go. I can’t say enough
224 good things about them.

225

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226 I: How was your coach in [OHL team]?

227

228 P: I had two. Good. **My first year was [coach name] who ended up coaching [OHL**
229 **team] I believe now. He got fired that year, which was my first year, and it was**
230 **kinda a weird situation, there was a lot of pressure on him, so there was a lot**
231 **of pressure on the forwards. And then my second year, the assistant coach that**
232 **year took over as the head coach which was weird because he was always the**
233 **Mom, you'd go to him if you needed help, he'd get you out of trouble, and then**
234 **now he's the authoritative guy...so it didn't really mesh too well, and he played**
235 **in the NHL as a goalie so he was my goalie coach slash head coach. So he'd run a**
236 **practice and then come work with me, we didn't butt heads but it was just a**
237 **different situation, it was his first ever coaching, [coach name] was his name, he**
238 **played for [NHL team]. Good guy, got a long with everyone, never had a problem**
239 **with him but it was just one of those things, it was hard...and we were last place in**
240 **the league so that never makes it easy.**

241

242 I: What was your goal now? Once you're in the OHL what are you thinking?

243

244 P: **Well obviously your goal is to go as high as you can get.** I remember my
245 second year would have been my draft year to the NHL, and you want to get drafted
246 but...**you know it's tough when you're playing on a weak team.** You get letters
247 from teams, you talk to teams, you think it's the coolest thing in the world and then
248 it kind of puts you back into place when you play a few games and stink the joint
249 out. [laughs] You know? That's what your goal is, but you know we'll talk about it
250 later but I was just happy you get the money for the schooling and stuff. I was just
251 happy to be part of the team in any way.

252

253 I: Did you know your fate when it came to making the NHL?

254

255 P: **No, goalies are kind of tough. It's always hard. Once I missed my draft year I**
256 **realized it was a long shot and so did my Dad.** I played two years of pro
257 afterwards and I had the money left for school. So I kind of just figured at Christmas
258 time, like you know what? **I was injured, I said I'm going to pack it up and go to**
259 **school. Just focus on that, try to get an education instead of just losing it**
260 **because the bus trips were kind of rough, everyone thinks you're making a lot**
261 **of money, you're not. It's a hard lifestyle, and you can't really raise a family if**
262 **you're going to...I was in [US city] and it's so far away right? It was rough,**
263 **fun...but rough.**

264

265 I: So how many years did you play in [OHL team]?

266

267 P: 2.

268

269 I: And what happened after that?

270

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271 P: **I got traded to [OHL team] when I was injured.**

272

273 I: Did you know you were going to get traded?

274

275 P: Kinda, **I asked for a trade.** I was supposed to go to [OHL team].

276

277 I: Why did you ask for a trade?

278

279 P: We have a couple other goalies they were trying to figure out and...just...**I wasn't**
280 **playing enough**, I thought I wasn't playing enough. You want to play the most, and
281 the [OHL team] goalie coach, a few of our players got traded there, they said they
282 wanted me to go there so I said "hey can you trade me to [OHL team]" and they said
283 "ya." **Deadline comes, I broke my foot, so on the day of the deadline, they called**
284 **me right after practice, right on the deadline. I thought I was going to finish**
285 **the season there, they called me in and said "pack your stuff up, you're going**
286 **to go to [OHL team]" and I was hurt so I went there and then just went home**
287 **for the rest of the year.** It was kind of weird eh? You shouldn't trade people
288 injured, but I don't have any hard feelings. I met a lot of people in both [OHL team]
289 and [OHL team] so I have no hard feelings for anything that happened to me. Some
290 of my best friends came from the OHL.

291

292 I: So then after you went to play pro?

293

294 P: Well I came back, I was supposed to stick in [OHL team] but they had [goalie
295 name] and [goalie name] were their goalies and they were waiting to see which one.
296 And they had another one, [goalie name] was good too. So they were just waiting to
297 see which one would play and they told me "you're going to have to sit for a couple
298 months, and you're not going to be able to get in" **So at that point I said "you know**
299 **what? I'm just going to go home and play B, because I don't want to sit around"**
300 I didn't want to wait a couple months, and they were all pretty good goalies, so its
301 like what do you do? Wait around to get a back up spot? So I came home and played
302 B, and then I went pro after that. Which is kinda an odd situation.

303

304 I: Where did you go?

305

306 P: I went to [Central Hockey League team] in the Central Hockey League. And then I
307 went to [team name] the next year, my first year in [Central Hockey League team] I
308 was called up to like 4 AHL teams which was pretty cool.

309

310 I: Do you remember signing your contract in [OHL team]? Do you remember that
311 day?

312

313 P: Yep.

314

315 I: Were your parents there?

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316

317 P: Nope, it was at the end of camp. You sign a think. I cant remember how it works
318 but you sign something and then...it didn't even matter what was on that sheet. **It**
319 **could have been anything, it could of said you know that they could of done**
320 **whatever they wanted to my body, or sell it, I didn't care, I just wanted to play.**
321 So they go to our educational consultant and they go over all your stuff and set you
322 up for whatever school, and I was like "I don't care, yeah, put me in that school" like
323 boom, and I signed my name. It could of said anything in that paper, **I didn't need**
324 **my mom or my dad, nothing I just boom...signed it. And then you have to go**
325 **back before the season, you have to sign another contract, turned out that**
326 **contract didn't even mean anything. Because they aren't really even contracts**
327 **eh? Because they don't really even pay you [laughs] so it's kinda like, put your**
328 **name on it just for legal purposes.**

329

330 I: Did you know how long you could play pro before your educational package
331 expired?

332

333 P: Ya, I was advised that it was after Christmas. The rule changed now, I heard. But it
334 was up until a certain day around Christmas.

335

336 I: So you knew what day and then you stopped?

337

338 P: Ya, I just came home.

339

340 I: And then you went to [CIS university]?

341

342 P: Ya, I came home around Christmas. After Christmas I was supposed to go, my
343 friend played at [CIS university] and I was going to go up there, but it was too far.
344 Then I went to [CIS university] and I was supposed to stay in [CIS university] and
345 then I thought you know what? I'm just going to start a fresh season. That summer it
346 kind of hit me, I don't know, I did it backwards, **I went from OHL, to pro, to school.**
347 A lot of people would go OHL, school, then want to play pro. So I didn't have any
348 ambitions to do anything afterwards, so I kind of looked at it like I want to get my
349 schooling, and **I had a few injuries so I kind of just wanted to rest my body. It**
350 **wasn't in me anymore. Every year since my first season in the OHL I've had a**
351 **bad injury [laughs] so I just wanted to focus on my schooling. I can't multi-**
352 **task, and I just thought I should get my schooling done with.**

353

354 I: How many years did they pay for school?

355

356 P: **They stopped this year. I didn't even know it, but my first year I was an**
357 **applied student or whatever because I was away for 3 years after high school**
358 **so I had 6 grand a year for school but I put money towards my first year and I**
359 **only took 3 courses because I was you know? Whatever the hell it is. So I put**
360 **money towards that, so I technically lost, it was like \$1700 bucks, so I**

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361 **technically lost the other \$4300 dollars went down the drain, and they told me**
362 **that afterwards because it doesn't roll over. So this year I called the guy from**
363 **the OHL and I was like "well, what the hell is going on here? Do I have money? I**
364 **have a full course load." And they're like "well no, you spent it, here's 1 here's**
365 **2 and there's the 3rd" and I was kind of just "well, that's kinda bullshit, no one**
366 **advised me about anything like that" so this year it had to come out of my**
367 **pocket.**

368
369 I: They paid for that third year though, and you didn't really play right?

370
371 P: Ya, but I dressed games. It just works as if you were on the bench. Because that
372 was my stink, I remember saying "well, ya you're right but I should have money left
373 over" and he's like "no" I just wish I would have been told that. What can you do?

374
375 I: When you look back now do you players should be paid more?

376
377 P: **Definitely. They get the same as my Dad did when he played. It's like how**
378 **does that work? And the stuff they do...somebody sued the OHL eh? One of the**
379 **players, he played for [OHL team] or something. Took them to court for child labour**
380 **law or something like that. I think they take advantage of kids. I don't complain, I**
381 **don't ever say "oh man, it was a grind" I had the most fun in my life, but you take**
382 **advantage of kids who would sell their soul to play on that team and you pay**
383 **him \$50 bucks a week? It doesn't buy you a lunch. I remember getting my pay**
384 **check and it would be \$70 or something bucks and it's like "oh ya! pay checks!" and**
385 **you think you're rich, and you don't understand. Guys who drive, that's a tank, and**
386 **you're done. So I think they take advantage of a lot of these kids who want to**
387 **play there so badly that they'll do anything for it, and a lot of these kids...I've**
388 **played with guys, there was a lot of bad injuries, it's a demanding schedule. We**
389 **got our checks in our lockers on Fridays and the OA's got paid a little bit more, and**
390 **you look at the over ager's like they're rich because they get \$100 extra bucks and**
391 **you're like "oh my god" a couple of my friends were over agers and I'd be like**
392 **"man...drinks are on you this week eh? Like oh my god, you're loaded, \$200 bucks a**
393 **week, wow" but then you look back and these kids go through so much. You're**
394 **mentally not ready for a lot of stuff. You leave home when you're 15, you get**
395 **put in situations like you're an adult, and you're not, you know what I mean?**
396 **You have to go live with these people, live on your own, eat on your own, you**
397 **have to eat on your own, road trips on your own, no one coddles you. So to do**
398 **all that, you're on the ice everyday, you practice, you play what is it? 68 games**
399 **a season, you're on the ice every single day, you don't see anyone, you're not**
400 **allowed to go to school dances, you're allowed to go to prom, you have curfew,**
401 **every team has curfew, well except [OHL team] [laughs]. You live a demanding**
402 **lifestyle and you don't get paid for it. It's just like...you put your time in**
403 **because you want to go to the NHL and only a few do it.**

404
405 I: Do you think they need a PA?

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406

407 **P: Yeah I think so. For sure. There's a lot of stuff, even with injuries, a lot of**
408 **medical stuff you have to do with rehab afterwards and that kind of stuff.** And
409 it's not fair, a few of my friends, some of the injuries they got...my one friend who
410 played in [OHL team] he tore something in his hip and they wouldn't cover his
411 surgery so he was the OHL humanitarian of the year twice and Shriner's Hospital for
412 Children actually did the surgery for free, because he did so much work. **But a few**
413 **of those things, where it's kind of like you play a few years and get hurt for life,**
414 **you know what I mean?** My first year before I played I broke my hand and I
415 can't...it's not a big deal it's just your hand but, it's kind of deformed and I can't close
416 it. So little things like that, and I got nothing for that, I just did it for them in their
417 packed arenas and they make money and none of the kids make money.

418

419 **I: If you had a kid and he was good and he could either go in the OHL the NCAA**
420 **where would you tell him to go?**

421

422 **P: If he was really good, the OHL. Because I think if you're really good I think**
423 **the OHL preps you for the kind of mind frame you need to play pro, even when**
424 **I was playing pro the OHL was more professional than these lower pro**
425 **leagues, way more professional.** And I think it preps you the right way, and if
426 you're a really good player, it's a fast track, You go to school, and it's tough because
427 you're supposed to stay the 4 years and if you're going to the NHL, the NHL teams
428 don't want you to finish school. So if my kid was really good, and there's nothing
429 wrong with it because you get your schooling paid for, so I'd say as long as you know
430 what you're doing and you get your schooling and you make sure you finish your
431 schooling when you're done, I'd have him go to the OHL but it's tough unless you
432 have a kid. But there's nothing wrong with the college route at all, going to
433 university, you can't argue with a degree.

434

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- 1 I: Can you remember your very first time you played hockey or your earliest
2 memory skating?
3
- 4 P: I do, it was at [arena] in [city].
5
- 6 I: That's where you grew up right?
7
- 8 P: Yes, I had a yellow jersey on. My Dad was the coach.
9
- 10 I: Did you want to play or did your parents enrol you?
11
- 12 P: My Dad kind of asked if I wanted to play, and I wasn't too thrilled about it, but I
13 wasn't like "oh I don't want to" I was more like "I guess I'll try it."
14
- 15 I: He was already coaching?
16
- 17 P: He was going to coach my team. I think he wanted me to play more than I wanted
18 to play at the time. Obviously it grew into where I love the game, but at the time he
19 kind of pushed it on me, but it wasn't "you're doing this" kind of thing, it was like
20 "you should try it" kind of thing, so I did and I'm thankful for it.
21
- 22 I: Were you a goalie the whole time?
23
- 24 P: No, I used to be a player, I turned goalie when I was about 11 years old, I made
25 the switch but I used to play out before.
26
- 27 I: Do you remember why?
28
- 29 P: I just liked making glove saves [laughs] I just loved making glove saves.
30
- 31 I: Do you have any siblings?
32
- 33 P: Ya I have a brother he actually played in the OHL for [OHL team] and then [year]
34 he actually won a Memorial Cup with [QMJHL]. This year he's in [Canadian city] and
35 they are hosting the Royal Bank Cup. So he has a pretty good resume under his belt.
36
- 37 I: So then you always sort of stay in the system in [city]?
38
- 39 P: Ya in the minor hockey system.
40
- 41 I: Did you go up to triple A?
42
- 43 P: Ya I was in single A a lot of the years and then when I was in grade 8, so that's
44 minor bantam I guess, I made the triple A team.

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45

46 I: Do you remember when you realized your talent might be different from other
47 people.

48

49 P: I think so. I think when I made the triple A team, I think it kind of hit me, like I've
50 made the next step I think it's time to get to the next step and the next step at the
51 time was to try and fit in at the triple A level, and once that happened it then it kind
52 of progressed. And once you progress in something you want to establish new goals.

53

54 I: And was your goal in triple A, did you think about the OHL?

55

56 P: **That's all I thought about honestly. At the time that's what I was brought up**
57 **to know, it was more "if you want to be a hockey player then go the OHL route,**
58 **this is the way to go" kind of thing if you want to be a hockey player right?**

59 School wasn't really, like NCAA wasn't really down my avenue, it might have been,
60 but honestly everything promoted to me was towards the OHL.

61

62 I: So you went to high school in [city]?

63

64 P: In 9, 10 and 11 yes.

65

66 I: **And you got drafted in grade 10?**

67

68 P: **At the end of grade 10, yes.**

69

70 I: Did you know you were going to get drafted?

71

72 P: Um...

73

74 I: Or can you take me through the day of the draft?

75

76 P: Well probably a **couple days before the draft, I knew [OHL team] had a lot of**
77 **interest in me.** There was a couple other teams that had some interest. But I've
78 heard a lot of horror stories where guys say they're going to be taken in this round
79 and then they don't get taken at all right? So I wasn't really keeping my hopes up,
80 and then no one really said they were going to take me until the day before [OHL
81 team] called me and said "alright we're going to take you between the [round #] and
82 [round #]" they said "we're going to take you, we've have two goalies in our system
83 right now but we need another guy, we're going to take you late" so I was like
84 "alright, golden" so sure enough [round #] comes, [round #] comes...

85

86 I: Were you at the computer refreshing?

87

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88 P: Oh ya, big time. And at this point a couple of my buddies were drafted so I was
89 happy for them but at the same time I'm like "what the heck?" right so? So [round #],
90 [round #] comes, I haven't gone yet. So I'm thinking [round #] nope, [round #] nope,
91 [round #] comes and I'm like "this is it" right? All the other teams I've talked to have
92 already picked, [OHL team] has the next pick and I ended up getting picked. But just
93 that whole waiting and actually the other goalie on my team, he was supposed to go
94 in between the [round #] and [round #] or something and he didn't end up getting
95 picked at all, so at the same time I was really happy but it was kind of a downer
96 because we were both expected to be drafted, and you know he wasn't drafted so
97 we couldn't really share that, and he was a good friend of mine at the time.

98

99 I: Do you remember going to practice the next day?

100

101 P: Well the season was over at that time, but we had a team party and he didn't
102 show up. I called him right away, after the draft, and I just told him that it was b.s.
103 you know? You're promising a 15 year old kid you're going to pick him and you
104 don't pick him, that's a pretty tough thing to swallow right? When you're being
105 pushed OHL, OHL, OHL, and then the next day it doesn't happen right? It's
106 definitely...when you're 15 years old it's hard. It's different when you know, you're
107 20, you've experienced stuff like that but when you're 15 years old it's definitely a
108 gut check, it's a gut wrench.

109

110 I: Did you have an agent?

111

112 P: **At the time, no. Usually you only have an agent when you're ranked a little**
113 **bit higher. Usually big agencies will hop on those guys but after I did.**

114

115 I: After you got drafted?

116

117 P: Well, actually **I didn't even get one until I signed.** I just kind of didn't really
118 think anything of it. I ended up getting a really good agent, but it actually kind of...I
119 don't know, I don't want to say too much but it kind of didn't really work out, but he
120 was a good agent. I still talk to him today.

121

122 I: Ya a lot of guys I've talked to have had that experience.

123

124 P: Ya I feel like if I wasn't with him I could of done better, but I mean I don't want to
125 say that, I don't want to have regrets.

126

127 I: So then you got drafted, did you go to camp that summer?

128

129 P: Yes I did.

130

131 I: How was that? Were you nervous?

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132 P: I was really nervous, yes. I actually had a great camp, it was probably the best
133 junior camp I've ever had. I was 16 years old and I came out of camp, they said "we
134 weren't expecting that from you, you showed us what you can do, don't be surprised
135 if we call you within the next couple months" right? So, sure enough I go home and a
136 month later I was offered a contract, right? **At this time I'm playing midget hockey**
137 **in [city], and I just get this contract out of no where, right?** So 16 years old,
138 right? I'm bamboozled by the fact I'm getting a contract, right? And I was drafted in
139 the [round #] right? I kind of get tunnel vision. I had a pretty good agent, so he said
140 "stop, wait" he was actually part of the system, but he was like a close friend, the
141 agent, he was actually part of the system, they offered me a contract, I'm like ready
142 to sign it right? And he said "No, no, no, let me look it over first" so he looks it over,
143 ends up getting me...probably a deal I shouldn't of got right? **So I signed it, they**
144 **made some changes, I signed it, and so 16 years old I just signed my life away**
145 **to the OHL, I have no eligibility for NCAA and I'm only 16 years old. So I move**
146 **away from home, at that time I moved to [city].**
147

148 I: Do you remember signing the contract? Do you remember where you were? Who
149 was there with you?

150
151 P: **Yes, both my parents were there with me.**

152
153 I: And you signed at the rink? Or did you meet somewhere?

154
155 P: Well when I signed it was just before practice. **So I signed the deal, said bye to**
156 **my parents and that was it right?** So ya they were obviously really proud of me, it
157 was obviously a big moment for me, I thought it was. I worked my whole minor
158 hockey career for this moment right? It was a good experience I guess.

159
160 I: Did you ever think anything about the education package at the time when you
161 signed?

162
163 P: **Of course not, no. I don't think anyone does. When you're 16 years old and**
164 **you're in grade 10, how are you supposed to make that decision?** You don't
165 even know what school is, you're in high school, your teachers are basically giving
166 you your marks, like you go and you're like "can I re-do this test?" and they're going
167 to let you re-do the test. You just think school is a joke...honestly you do, and I think
168 any guy will say that when they are 15 years old. You ask a 15 year old right now
169 and they're going to be like...you know.

170
171 I: So you went to camp, had a good camp and then signed with them that next year?

172
173 P: **Ya I signed a month or two after my first camp. So I was 16 years old at the**
174 **time.**

175

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- 176 I: So then you moved to [city] and you stayed with a billet family?
177
- 178 P: Yes, I did that for a bit and my aunt lives in [city] so I would just stay with her
179 some nights, or I would just go home.
180
- 181 I: How was your billet family?
182
- 183 P: They were good. It was just like a temporary kind of thing. They were good.
184
- 185 I: Did you play a game that first year?
186
- 187 P: **No, I never played a game.** I dressed probably 20, and I think that's...again 16
188 years old, **I think as a goalie and not touching the ice...I think that was a**
189 **big...gut check, just a big confidence downer.** Why am I here kind of thing. And
190 everyone's playing and I'm the only one not playing, it's kind of like you don't really
191 feel part of the team. They say you are part of this team, but you don't feel it, you
192 don't feel like it. I think, especially as a goalie like I said, you're 16 years old, it's just
193 a huge confidence downer.
194
- 195 I: So then you didn't play that first year, you just dressed, and then you go that
196 summer and there's another camp?
197
- 198 P: Ya, I came home.
199
- 200 I: Did you just work out that summer?
201
- 202 P: **Ya, I just trained all summer. I wanted to make this my living right? I wanted**
203 **to pursue hockey.**
204
- 205 I: So that's all you were thinking about?
206
- 207 P: That's all I was thinking about. So 17 years old, I'm going into next camp, I trained
208 really hard in the summer. I ended up going to camp, having a pretty good camp,
209 that's when we had our new coach, [coach name], and I remember being at camp
210 and him just not saying a word to me. **So I show up to camp and I didn't even**
211 **know if I had a spot on the team, I go to camp, guys have billets, guys that are**
212 **my age, that signed after me, or signed before me either way, have billets,**
213 **they're all set up, they're all enrolled in school, this is a week before school**
214 **and I don't know if I'm even going to be on the team.** So I go there, I have a pretty
215 good camp and then after the first 4 days they were making cuts, and I didn't know, I
216 didn't know, no one talked to me, so I didn't know if I was staying or if I was going
217 home.
218
- 219 I: How many goalies were there?

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220

221 P: **There was like probably 7.** So there was a line of guys waiting to talk to the
222 coach to see what they were going to do. So like I go and it's not even an office, it's in
223 the open kind of thing, so I go up to him and I'm like "hey [coach nickname] what's
224 going on" and he's like "what are you doing here?" I'm like "oh, I'm just coming to
225 talk to you" he's like "oh ok...you're sticking around obviously right?" and I'm like
226 "yeah" No one talks to me right? No one let me know, so I was like alright. I go into
227 the lobby where my Dad is and he asks what's going on and I tell him I'm staying.
228 He's like okay good, what's next? School starts in a couple days, I don't have a place
229 to stay, and you know what I mean? So my Dad's like alright let's just go home, so I
230 went home and he drove me back the next day for camp. And then finally they put
231 me up in a hotel with another guy that was trying out for 2 weeks. I was in a hotel
232 for 2 weeks, and then finally they got me a billet this time. This is all through pre-
233 season too, and pre-season was going well, **I was playing, I was playing well, I**
234 **ended up getting a billet, billets were unbelievable, unbelievable billets.** I think
235 that's probably one of the best things that came out of playing in [OHL team], was
236 having awesome billets. They were a caring family, I loved them. So 17, I think this is
237 4 days into school, they finally enrol me, into school at [high school name]. They
238 bring me in, they hand me my courses, and I just take off, I have no idea where to go.
239 So ya that's it just started going to school at [high school name].

240

241 I: Do you remember your first pre-season game or whenever you first played.

242

243 P: Yes.

244

245 I: How was that game? Were you nervous? How'd you feel when they said you were
246 going to be starting?

247

248 P: They told me literally right before I went on the ice, and I had no idea I was going
249 to play and I was obviously scared shitless, I was so scared. It ended up going really,
250 I played well, I think that calmed my nerves for the rest of my games.

251

252 I: So how did they year go with hockey?

253

254 P: Hockey, it could of gone better. **I definitely played well when I got in, but again**
255 **being back-up goalie and having [coach name] as the coach, he just didn't like**
256 **me and I don't know why. I did everything he told me to do, I never gave him**
257 **attitude or anything, I always worked hard for him.** I couldn't wrap anything
258 around that because...growing up I was always told by my coaches and my parents,
259 especially my parents, listen to your coach and always work hard. So when you're
260 put into that situation and you're working hard, you're playing well and you're
261 listening to your coach and you're not giving him attitude, and he still doesn't like
262 you and he still won't play you...it's just...it's so degrading. It's something you want
263 to do so bad and you'll do anything at the time to pursue it and for it to work, and it's

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264 just not happening. **And I think, you know if I'm not playing well and you**
265 **know...you don't like me that's fine, send me home, don't play me, but if I'm**
266 **playing well and I'm working hard for you, don't drag me a long, tell me**
267 **straight up, tell me to go home and play for a different team, tell me not to**
268 **stick around for my grade 12 year when I could be going to high school with**
269 **my friends, right?**

270
271 I: That's what you wanted to say?

272
273 P: Ya...and just...this is weird because it's the first time I've opened up about this.

274
275 I: It's okay.

276
277 P: **It was definitely degrading.** And it was like, well what are you doing then? I'm
278 playing well, we're losing when we play the other guy, so give me a chance, you
279 know? I'll win, sort of thing. And I was fired up to play, this guy, he was a really good
280 goalie the other guy, and it was just like...give me a chance. He just didn't like me
281 and I think that's the worst part about it. You know? **He just never gave me an**
282 **opportunity and he just never liked me.**

283
284 I: You could feel that from him?

285
286 P: Oh ya. Definitely. I know he didn't like me, I know he didn't like me for a fact. I've
287 never had a coach not like me, you know? We'll talk about it after but I had a coach
288 who ended up cutting me, and you know what? I didn't like the decision but I
289 respected it because he was straight up with me, he told me that they didn't want
290 me there, and he sent me home. I look back and I respect that. At the time I was
291 pissed off, but I respect that because I went home and ended up playing somewhere
292 where I had a great opportunity and I had an awesome time.

293
294 I: So you didn't get much playing time that year?

295
296 P: **No. I played 7 games, I had great numbers.**

297
298 I: Would they put you in when the other guy wasn't doing well?

299
300 P: We were just doing so bad that they finally just threw me in. I ended playing well
301 and they kept riding me, then for some reason they just stopped playing me. The
302 coach left and they played me 3 games straight, the assistant coach, and we won all
303 3. And then he came back and I wasn't playing. After that your confidence is so high,
304 you expect...anyone would expect to play a little bit more, so again...I couldn't figure
305 that out. It was so degrading.

306
307 I: It was all you probably thought about...

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308

309 P: Ya...I mean going home every night, I wasn't happy. I wanted to be happy, because
310 I wanted to play, you know? And I just couldn't. I just wasn't happy. And people
311 wonder why players just hang up the skates, well there you go, you know?

312

313 I: How was school that year?

314

315 P: Again, you're in high school. The teachers at [high school] were great. They were
316 awesome. I have nothing bad to say about anyone there, I loved them all, they were
317 awesome, but it's not university. **They're there to help you, but it doesn't prepare**
318 **you for...the OHL does not prepare you for university.**

319

320 I: How do you think you were taken by the students there?

321

322 P: **Definitely people didn't like us.** I honestly think...because of the whole hockey
323 swag, but I look at myself as not really having that, and I ended up coming in
324 knowing a couple people that went there because I grew up playing summer hockey
325 in the area, so I was fine, because I knew them and introduced myself, I wasn't cocky
326 at all. **But some guys were over the top, too aggressive kind of thing. Obviously**
327 **people didn't like that,** but I mean the first couple weeks was just weird because it
328 was a new school, but after that it was fine, it was okay.

329

330 I: Did you guys just hang out together there?

331

332 P: Ya, we had our lockers all in the same spot.

333

334 I: Same lunch table?

335

336 P: Oh ya, and when we'd walk in everyone would kind of stare at us, obviously we
337 thought it was cool but they were like "holy fuck we hate them" kind of thing.
338 There was quite a few guys that liked us, but there was a handful that just didn't like
339 us, but there was probably a handful that did like us because they were just absolute
340 beauties. [laughs]

341

342 I: So what did you do that summer?

343

344 P: Well at the end of the season, well middle of the season we traded away [player
345 name] and brought in [player name] who's a 20 year old and would have been done
346 after that year.

347

348 I: So they traded their goalies?

349

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350 P: Ya, [3rd string goalie] is hurt this whole time. So we had [player name] who was
351 our starter and then we traded away him for [player name]. So [player name] was
352 our starter now and [player name] was gone.

353

354 I: Do you know why they did that?

355

356 P: **Again, [player name] was playing great, they were playing him every game**
357 **he was run down. They were blaming it on bad play. Guy has played 20 games**
358 **in a row, he needs a break. They were just riding him right? And then that's**
359 **when our coach just started not liking him, when he said he was playing bad,**
360 **you know he's tired, anyone would be tired after 20 games.** He kind of threw
361 him to the wolves. Brought in [player name] who started playing excellent for us.
362 But same thing, ran him into the ground, then after the first round of playoffs, we
363 were supposed to go pretty far that year and we ended up losing in the 2nd round, so
364 I think if he was a little bit smarter about the goaltending position, I definitely think
365 we would of gone further. **Anyways, after the season I was brought into the**
366 **office and they sat me down and they're like "we love the way the work hard,**
367 **blah blah blah" so I'm like oh okay this is awesome, they're noticing, maybe I**
368 **just had to pay my dues kind of thing right? So they're like "we love the way**
369 **you play, you play awesome, you worked hard, we want you to work hard this**
370 **summer, and come into camp next year and battle for the starting job" so I'm**
371 **like yes, this is awesome, I've paid my dues, I'm going to get my opportunity this**
372 **year. So I get home, take a week off and then get right to it, right away. I start**
373 **working out, I start hitting the gym, on the ice, I wanted to be ready right? I**
374 think May comes around and they have the draft, they ended up taking [player
375 name] in the [round #], and he's young so I'm like alright maybe it will be me and
376 him battling for the starter job, or he'll play junior and someone else will come in. So
377 June goes by, and July 1st comes and I get a call from the GM and **he goes "ya, we've**
378 **decided that we don't want you to come back" that was...that was pretty hard.**

379

380 I: Do you remember that day?

381

382 P: Ya...I do. I remember that day, it wasn't a good day. My Dad talked to him, and
383 basically he said we don't have a spot for him here, so it was just kind of one of those
384 things again like okay why? Again why don't you like me? You lied to me when we
385 left, why couldn't you just tell me this? Instead of feeling like an idiot all summer,
386 and training to come in and be the starter right? So that was hard. **And then they're**
387 **like "but we're going to trade you to a team, we're not going to hold you back"**
388 **so then that happened, and I was pretty hung up about that. So this is July 1st,**
389 **probably a month, a month and a half until camp. So that whole July month it**
390 **was just talking to teams. Teams were just talking to the [OHL team], I think**
391 **there was 4 or 5 that had interest, but the [OHL team] were stringing me along,**
392 **they were trying to get more than I was worth at the time. And I didn't have a**
393 **spot, I didn't have a spot for the longest time so finally my agent at the time**

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394 **who belonged to the team, he left, and he was like “alright this is b.s. I’m going**
395 **to help you, we’re going to call the owners and get this done” so I called the**
396 **owners, they told me to do it and so I did it.** And the [owners] are unbelievable
397 people they’ve always been supportive of myself and anyone who has ever played
398 there. And they didn’t know what was going on, they didn’t know what was
399 happening, so they were a little bit disgusted over it, they didn’t think the way I was
400 treated was fair. As owners I guess they try to stay out of that kind of stuff, but at
401 this time I was like “I want to play, they’re not trading me” so they’re like “alright
402 we’re going to call you back in a week” so they call me back in a week and go “tell
403 you what, there’s these 3 teams and you’re going to pick which one you want to go
404 to”

405
406 I: Who were they?

407
408 P: It was [OHL team], [OHL team] and [OHL team]. So probably the best opportunity
409 was either [OHL team] or [OHL team].

410
411 I: So how did you make that decision?

412
413 P: It was a tough one, it was a tough decision. Pretty much it went on, I knew a
414 former coach who was very very close with the head coach from [OHL team]. Same
415 equal opportunity, but that’s what it came down to. So I picked [OHL team], they
416 ended up trading for me, went into camp, had a pretty good pre-season, started the
417 season there.

418
419 I: So hold on, you said ya I want [OHL team] and then they made the trade?

420
421 P: **Ya, then they made the trade. And that was a week before camp too, so this**
422 **whole summer they had to trade me and they did it a week before camp.**
423 **Again, that’s the OHL life, right? 16, 17 year old kids, that’s what happens.** So then
424 I ended up going to [OHL team]’s camp.

425
426 I: How was the situation there?

427
428 P: There was one guy ahead of me, and there was a drafted kid who they just drafted
429 and then me. **I of course was battling for the back up spot.** The first two skates I
430 didn’t do as well as I should of, but after that I did really well, just a new place, I
431 mean I was nervous, I was really nervous and again back to the whole [OHL team]
432 thing, my confidence was shot, I didn’t really have anything going for me at the time.
433 I think that’s the biggest thing that coaches don’t realize, young goalies like that,
434 especially in my situation, I was shot. So coming in, I felt like I wasn’t welcomed, I
435 was just a scrony kid, didn’t know anyone.

436
437 I: You didn’t know anyone on the team?



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438

439 P: No, I didn't know anyone. I was there for pre-season and then they told me I'm
440 going to be there opening night and I was, and then they said I was going to get at
441 least one game before they made a decision. **They told me they were going to give**
442 **me an opportunity, couple games in they bring me into the office and go "sorry**
443 **to be the bearer of bad news but we're going to send you home" and I was like**
444 **"I asked to be traded here because there was an opportunity for me here, you**
445 **told me you were going to give me an opportunity" and they said "well in our**
446 **eyes, we have" so I'm like "but I haven't played a game yet" you know? So**
447 **you're saying you're going to give me an opportunity, but you haven't given me**
448 **an opportunity because I haven't been in a game.**

449

450 I: Is that what you said to them?

451

452 P: Ya. And then he's like "well..." and I'm like "no" I argued it, and I got upset. But,
453 again I don't agree with it, at the time they had an opportunity to trade for an older
454 guy, who was a really good goalie and they got him for nothing and I was the odd
455 man out.

456

457 I: Did you know about that trade before you sat down in that office?

458

459 P: No, they told me right then and there.

460

461 I: Do you think they knew they were going to do that the whole time?

462

463 P: I don't think so. I think a good opportunity just came up, he was always available,
464 they just got him for really cheap, basically nothing they got him for. You know, I
465 was told I was going to get an opportunity, something a lot better came a long for
466 them and they were going to get it for nothing, they hopped on it, I don't agree it, I
467 was really upset about it, but at the same time I do respect it because they told me
468 straight up. I was upset, I was pissed, I was pissed more than anything, I never
469 thought I'd get over it but I respect the fact that they told me how it was.

470

471 I: Did you ever think about the NHL when you were in the OHL?

472

473 P: **I mean ya, You're in the O, and again it's just back to minor hockey. You**
474 **were like OHL, OHL and now you're in the OHL it's like NHL, NHL. So at that**
475 **time, you're so pumped.**

476

477 I: Were you still thinking about that when you got the trade to [OHL team], were you
478 still thinking about the opportunity to maybe go?

479

480 P: Yes, but not as much. I was though, obviously I still wanted to play. I was thinking
481 about it a lot but just not to the extent.

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482

483 I: So then what happened? You went home?

484

485 P: **Ya, I went home.**

486

487 I: This was when? What month was this?

488

489 P: Probably [month]. I went home, **I said I don't want to play hockey anymore.**
490 **I'm done.**

491

492 I: Because you were just really upset.

493

494 P: Oh ya. I was mentally drained. **I worked so hard that summer, so I mean I took**
495 **that month off and literally did nothing.**

496

497 I: What did your parents say when you told them you didn't want to play anymore?

498

499 P: Well, at first my Mom was like okay, because she could tell I was upset, and my
500 Dad kind of got bitter about it, and he's like no, you got to battle back.

501

502 I: Just being a Dad...

503

504 P: Ya, just being a Dad kind of thing. I was just too upset, I didn't want to do it, I was
505 tired of being screwed around, being promised things, ya...just being screwed
506 around. I went home, took about a month off, didn't really know what I wanted to
507 do.

508

509 I: So what happened after that month, what did you decide to do?

510

511 P: Well, at this time I'm getting a lot of offers from tier 2 and I had some offers from
512 the QMJHL too. At this point I'm not going to Quebec, having the same experience
513 there. So I'm at home, and I'm not trying to sound big, but I think I had 20 teams
514 calling and that was maybe 7 junior B and a couple junior A. This is where...people
515 probably thought I made the dumbest decision I ever made, but I'm glad I did it. **I**
516 **had teams calling and offering, you know \$500-\$600 bucks a week, plus giving**
517 **me a signing bonus, more money than I ever made playing major junior,**
518 **winning teams, good teams, and I decided to go to probably the worst team**
519 **and that was the [team]. But the difference between them and all the other**
520 **teams is that they were so desperate for a goalie. So I ended up going there**
521 **and my good friend was there. I ended up living with him that year.**

522

523 I: At his house?

524

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525 P: Ya. He knew I was upset because he was with me going through this whole thing,
526 and he was like "you know what man? Just come to [team]" and I'm like "I'm not
527 going there" it's a joke.

528
529 I: But you knew they wanted a goalie...

530
531 P: But I knew they wanted a goalie, and I knew they needed one bad. He just said to
532 me "come on man, we'll just have a blast" this is my second last year in junior "just
533 come and have fun" and I'm like "I don't know, I'll come to practice and I'll talk to the
534 coach" so I came to the practice, literally not wanting to play there at all, practice
535 was god awful. I went into the office, coach sat me down, it was nice and laid back,
536 nothing like major junior, laid back. So he's like "when do you want to sign?" and I'm
537 like "I don't know, I have to talk to my parents and stuff" and he's like "alright, well
538 just know that you're going to be the guy, you're our guy, you're our best player,
539 we've never had a player like you here before" and they weren't offering me
540 anything at this point. **No money, no equipment and I thought wow these guys**
541 **just want to play hockey. I think for me, I think getting away from all that**
542 **"we'll give you this, we'll give you that" I think that's what I needed, just to**
543 **play, just like minor hockey days. And my parents were a little sceptical about**
544 **this, because I'm getting all this money thrown at me, and at first they were**
545 **like "well what are you doing?" and after they're like "ya, you're thinking right,**
546 **you have a good head on your shoulder" so I went in there, ended up getting**
547 **55 shots a game, having a great year, we ended up coming 4th and doing pretty**
548 **well. And you know...I mean [team] is like my second home, I love it there, the**
549 **coaches are awesome, I still talk to the coaches to this day, all the guys are**
550 **awesome, I mean...people thought I was crazy for doing it, they still think I'm**
551 **crazy for doing it, but I wouldn't do it any other way.**

552
553 I: I think they think you're crazy because they haven't heard what I just heard. If
554 they heard your story, what you just told me...they wouldn't think you're crazy at all.

555
556 P: Ya...maybe...I don't know...

557
558 I: So how old were you when you were playing for [team]?

559
560 P: 18.

561
562 I: So what happened after that year? Did you play in [team] again?

563
564 P: Well actually the end of the season came around and we ended up losing in play-
565 offs, and I signed a 2-way contract with [team] which is a tier 2 club and they were
566 on me earlier. **They were offering me a lot of money, but they had a really good**
567 **team. But now they were struggling for a goalie, so I signed a 2-way just before**
568 **play-offs, and when [team] lost I ended up going to [team] full time, and we**

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569 ended up going all the way to the championship, and I played all the games.
570 That was awesome. So then I did that, and then I got a call, it was the [OHL
571 team] coach. And he said "alright, we want you to come to camp, we're pretty
572 sure that you're going to get a spot here, we just brought in a new guy, he's
573 going to be our starter but we want a guy to push him. We know you've had an
574 awesome year, we want you here."

575
576 I: What did you think?

577
578 P: I was like...[sighs]...at the time I had a big ego because I was in [team] and I
579 played every game in [team]. I remember being in [team] and being like "I'm not
580 feeling well today, I can't play" they're like "no...you're playing, we're not throwing
581 in the other guy, you're our guy, you're playing" and I was kind of like "woah, okay"
582 that got me fired up. So at this time, it's in the summer and I'm not really thinking
583 much of it, I ended up training really hard that summer just in case I wanted to
584 pursue it, and I told them in June that I would go to camp. And I remember
585 going down to [team] in the summer and just being with all the boys and
586 thinking...I'm not ready to leave here, I'm not ready to leave here. So I ended up, a
587 week before camp I ended up calling my agent being like "I don't want to go to camp,
588 I don't want to go, I don't want to have any part in it, I'm done playing major junior, I
589 don't want to do that" So then he freaked out he's like "what are you doing?! They're
590 offering you a contract, what are you doing?!" and I'm like "I just don't want to play
591 there, I don't want to be in that shadow, what if I have a bad game and I get
592 cut" you know? So I showed up to camp, I actually had an unbelievable camp
593 and I mean...I think about this all the time, when I walked in they offered me a
594 contract, and my parents were so mad...but I said no. I didn't tell them I was
595 going to say no. I don't think any kid in the world would say no to that.

596
597 I: What happened?

598
599 P: They were surprised. I'm like "ya I had a really good year in [team] last year, I
600 think it would be best if I went back there, I got a good thing going there" and
601 they're like "oh...ok" and I just shook their hands and it was good, we left on a good
602 note.

603
604 I: And then you told your parents after?

605
606 P: And then I told my Mom. She was like "what the hell?" and my agent was even
607 more pissed because he went on a limb to get me there. But, I mean...I ended up
608 going to [team], I had a good year, the team didn't have a good year, but you know
609 what? I was playing with [player name] in his last year, I know that meant a lot to
610 him, I moved in with [player name], he moved into a new house that year, and I
611 moved into a guy by the name of [player name] he's a native of [city] and I ended up
612 moving in with his family. And his family was unbelievable, amazing, definitely the

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613 best billets I've ever had, hands down. I still talk to them today all the time, I'm
614 actually going this weekend to see them.

615
616 I: Were you still going to school?

617
618 P: That year, they were going to pay for my school...[team].

619
620 I: But the first year at [team] did you go to [high school]?

621 P: **I did for a bit and then I just stopped. I already graduated so I just stopped**
622 **going.**

623
624 I: What happened that next year?

625
626 P: I went to [college].

627
628 I: **At what point did you go to [CIS university]?**

629
630 P: **Last year.**

631
632 I: So you were done playing for [team] at that point?

633
634 P: Well then my 20 year old year I went to [hometown] and played my last year
635 there.

636
637 I: So then you decided to go to [CIS university]?

638
639 P: Yes.

640
641 I: **Did you get any money?**

642
643 P: **Yes, it was like pulling teeth to get my education package, but I got it.**

644
645 I: At what point did you know there was money available?

646
647 P: **Well as soon as I left [OHL team] when I got cut, I was all about my education**
648 **package. Like I'm definitely cashing in on this, and when I looked at it, and me**
649 **not knowing this, when I played my 16 year old year, when I dressed, I**
650 **automatically got one year.** So then when I dressed my second year, as soon as I
651 stepped on that ice, I got my second year of education, and then my third year when
652 I played for [OHL team] in the pre-season, or when I dressed I got my year 3 and 4.
653 So that is the big thing. The thing where they are trying to get me is when I didn't
654 sign that contract in [OHL team], because I didn't step on the ice, they're trying to
655 say I didn't play my 4th year, which I didn't, but on my contract it says I get year 3
656 and 4. So that's what the battle is now.

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657

658 **I: You're still battling that?**

659

660 **P: I'm not in my 4th year yet, so I don't have to worry about it at this point, but I**
661 **want to make sure I get that 4th year, right?**

662

663 **I: And it says that in your contract right?**

664

665 **P: Ya. Oh ya.**

666

667 **I: You should get it.**

668

669 **P: Exactly. I should get it right?**

670

671 **I: Ya.**

672

673 **P: But I mean that's the way it is. If I had a kid and he plays hockey...**

674

675 **I: That's my next question...**

676

677 **P: Really?**

678

679 **I: My question was if you had a kid and he was good and he could NCAA or OHL**
680 **where would you tell him to go?**

681

682 **P: I mean...my Dad knew nothing about hockey. All he knows about hockey is from**
683 **me growing up and playing. He never played hockey as a kid, my Mom doesn't know**
684 **anything [laughs] but I think me knowing I would definitely scope the situation, I**
685 **would never ever...if he was offered a contract the way I was, I would say no. I**
686 **would say no and I would hold off at least a year. You know I was playing**
687 **midget, and if I came in the next year to [OHL team] I probably, if I made the**
688 **team, then I would tell my kid to sign, but again I would definitely...I would**
689 **definitely expose him to school more, and let him know that it's an option,**
690 **right? That's an option, it's good hockey, lot's of players move on from there. Even**
691 **playing tier 2 and going CIS is good, but don't get me wrong, getting your OHL**
692 **package is awesome, I think I have \$20,000 worth of money, which is awesome,**
693 **that's huge, that goes towards tuition but at the same time a lot of players face a lot**
694 **of heart ache and a lot of players are promised opportunities and then they don't**
695 **even get a sniff. I think I would take playing my junior days, like tier 2 or something,**
696 **and trying to pursue as much as I could then having that \$20,000. And you know**
697 **what? I'm probably the only example of someone who...got a way better deal**
698 **than what I should of with the number of games I played. Do I think I should of**
699 **played more? Absolutely, I think I should of played more. But for how much money I**
700 **got...that's unheard of. Guys who are regulars in the O for 5 years and they probably**

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701 got just as much as I did. I definitely had a good agent at the time who made sure
702 that everything was good. But I'm 1 in probably...I'm probably the only one. I had
703 buddies who played 1 game and they had no money or anything and now they can't
704 go NCAA, they have nothing, they have no money, nothing.

705

706 **I: Do you get books paid for me?**

707

708 **P: It pays for books, yes.**

709

710 I: Is this your first year collecting the education package?

711

712 P: Second.

713

714 I: So you didn't send in your book slips last year?

715

716 P: No.

717

718 I: You should do that this year.

719

720 P: I don't know if they'll pay for it though, that's the thing.

721

722 I: You should e-mail that one guy who works for them, [name].

723

724 **P: [name]? Ya that's like pulling teeth trying to get your money every year.**

725

726 I: Sorry to go back to this, but let's say you have a son and right now there's 2
727 contracts. The University of Michigan, or the London Knights, and he's good.

728

729 P: How good?

730

731 I: Everyone's saying he's going to play in the NHL. But it's not a guarantee.

732

733 P: It's obviously not a guarantee. Honestly, I'd probably say the London Knights, I
734 would. But...I mean say he's a first rounder, that's 20 players, what about the other
735 289 players that are picked after him, if he was one of those, I'd say University of
736 Michigan.

737

738 I: Would you take it back, take any of it back? Or are you glad everything happened
739 to you the way it did? Your experience in the OHL...

740

741 P: I don't want to say that I regret anything, because I made those decisions, I
742 wanted to do those things. Which probably if I went back, I'd probably make the
743 same decisions, because that's what I wanted to do, that was my goal right? But I
744 don't think I'd really change anything, overall I was just very unhappy, the way

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745 everything worked out. I mean still to this day, **I'm still a little bit bitter about it,**
746 **just even talking about it now I'll start rambling on, I'll get a little upset about**
747 **it but I mean just that one year in [OHL team], that's what killed me, that one**
748 **year.**

749

750 I: On any given team right now in the OHL, how many guys do you think are
751 experiencing that heart ache, the same feelings you felt. How many guys do you
752 think feel that per team.

753

754 P: Probably 2 or 3 per team, if not more. I know there's guys out there who got it a
755 lot worse than I did. That being said, hockey doesn't work out for everyone, it
756 doesn't. It's one of those things that can be great to you or it can be not so great to
757 you. I don't know, you can cut a player but you should be respectful about it,
758 definitely. He's going to be upset at the time, he's probably not going to like it, but a
759 couple years from now he's going to be like "wow, you know what? It just wasn't
760 meant to be" and I can swallow that, I think anyone could, if they're respectful about
761 it. If they're [player] mature they can be like you know? It just didn't work out, it just
762 wasn't for me because I went to play somewhere else and I played a lot. But just...I
763 think the way they just kind of throw you to the wolves, I remember when he did
764 it...when I got the snips in [OHL team] I had to call my Dad to come pick me up. You
765 know? "Hey, what's going on? Oh...I was just cut" like..."what? What? You were
766 cut?" ..."Ya I was cut, you have to come get me" it's embarrassing. I want to make my
767 parents proud, you know what I mean? There's no warning, there's nothing. Again,
768 it's hockey, but your 16 and 17 years old, it's tough...tough.

769

770 I: How is playing at [CIS university]?

771

772 P: It's good, it's good. **It's different because you come in here and you're stuck**
773 **here for 4 years. It's not like you can ask for a trade, so it's good on that note.** I
774 wouldn't say it's not as serious as the OHL because you're in a different situation.
775 You're going to school, guys are a little bit older, **the hockey is great, but at this**
776 **point you're pursuing your academic goals and at the same time you have at**
777 **the back of your mind that you can go play in Europe, or the ECHL.** So I like that
778 there's not just only one thing you can pursue...like the NHL. That's why I like CIS
779 because you have all these options, and you just meet so many people.

780

781 I: So when you were in the OHL you were a hockey player, and now you're going to
782 school. So if I asked you...what are you? Who are you? Are you a student? Are you a
783 hockey player?

784

785 P: **I'd say I'm a student probably.**

786

787 I: Ya?

788

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789 P: Not a great student.

790

791 I: Is hockey a huge part of your identity?

792

793 P: Absolutely. I think it always will be. I don't think anyone in the world thought I'd
794 be going to university, it's weird to think about kind of thing.

795

796 I: Do you think a PA could exist?

797

798 P: **Yes, you need to have someone, you need to have the right person at the top.**

799

800 I: That's what you all say.

801

802 P: You can't have like me, or an NHL player, you have to have a former OHL, or CHL
803 player that is well known, somewhat. Just off the top of my head, a guy I used to play
804 with [player name]. He's just a well known guy around the league, great guy. All
805 about the players kind of thing. He would be the perfect guy to run it. Then you have
806 to have certain representatives, but **I definitely, definitely, definitely think it**
807 **should be done. I mean we're getting \$50 bucks a week, which is fine when**
808 **you're 17 years old.**

809

810 I: Do you think they should be getting more?

811

812 P: **Yes but I think it should be put away. I know if I was 17 years old I'd just**
813 **blow it. I'd definitely just blow it. But that extra money can go away to school**
814 **or something. Most owners are making so much off their players, not that I'm**
815 **bashing owners because I had great owners.**

816

817

818

Interview #7/Participant #7
Skype Call
March 6, 2012

1 I: Can you remember your very first memory of ever skating or playing hockey?
2

3 P: My Dad used to make me a rink in the backyard, I was probably 5 and I just
4 remember I had the Canadian Tire clips, they were plastic, and I remember skating
5 in the backyard by myself.
6

7 I: Where did you grow up?
8

9 P: [city].
10

11 I: Did you ask to be enrolled in organized or did your parents push for it?
12

13 P: I asked to be enrolled one year, I asked if I could play, they said not this year,
14 maybe next year because they couldn't afford it at the time. So I couldn't play when I
15 wanted to. But the next year my parents saved, I got hand-me-down equipment
16 from my cousin. This is when I was 9.
17

18 I: And then you just continued in organized?
19

20 P: I played my first year it was "whites" hockey, that's the second highest in house
21 league, our team half way through moved up to "red" we ended up doing a thing
22 with another house league team in [U.S. city] and we would go down there and stay
23 with their families, so I did that at a really young age. And then I moved to A hockey
24 next year, played a year there and then I moved to AA, played a year there and then
25 moved to AAA. But my parents just wanted me to move up slowly, not to just go
26 right to AAA.
27

28 I: Do you remember a point in time when you realized you had a talent that was
29 different from your friends?
30

31 P: Probably in my second year playing A hockey, I was one of the better players, and
32 then my best friend moved up to AA and I stayed in A again, and I just tore it up that
33 year and then I went up to AA and did alright, then went on to triple and was one of
34 the better players, I was bigger too.
35

36 I: What was your goal playing triple?
37

38 P: I used to go to OHL games and think the OHL was the sweetest thing ever.
39

40 I: Did you go with your Dad?
41

42 P: Ya, I'd just go with my Dad. It was pretty fun, and that's pretty much where I
43 wanted to be, I didn't really know anything about school. The O is where it was at,
44 you know?

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45 I: Did you know you were going to be drafted?
46

47 P: Ya. **In my 15 year old year I was approached by an agent, a few different**
48 **agencies with a few different agents. We sat down, and at 15 years old that's**
49 **pretty overwhelming** but you think this is sweet, but at the same time when I look
50 back on it so many kids had agents and for what? They don't know if you're going to
51 be that great or not. They're jumping on these 15 year olds before they know if
52 they're truly going to develop, everybody's just getting their hands on them so
53 you're property of them, which is not right when I look back on it. My agent had so
54 many different players, friggin sometimes even players on my team in the O, I had
55 the same agent as 6 different guys just on my team. That's not including in the
56 league, out west, or in the pro leagues. I realized when I was 19...I just dropped my
57 agent because he wasn't doing nothing for me.
58

59 I: Did he ever call you?
60

61 P: No. He was just there when I called him, or when I needed to talk to him when I
62 was out in the dumpster, **I wasn't happy with how things were going. That was**
63 **big, a big help but at the same time you can't be helping everybody get to the**
64 **next level because there's such few spots.**
65

66 I: Did OHL teams start calling you?
67

68 P: Ya I started getting letters from different OHL teams and that was kind of cool,
69 and you'd talk to them once in awhile at the rink after a game or a prospect
70 tournament, I went to a few of those when I was 15, to get your name out there, kind
71 of like show case tournaments.
72

73 I: Did they ever call you or was it just letters?
74

75 P: I talked to a few teams on the phone. They kind of just want to know what your
76 plans are, they want to know that too, right? When they are scouting you like "this
77 guys more likely to go play in the O, so we have to pick him up early because a lot of
78 teams after this guy" if you say you're going to school they won't pursue you as
79 much.
80

81 I: Do you remember the day of the draft?
82

83 P: Yes. I was at home, I was on the computer. I was told I was going [round #]. So
84 [round #] goes by don't see my name, [round #] nothing, [round #] for sure my
85 name is going to get picked up, didn't get picked, and I was so mad. I went into the
86 shower, I was crying in the shower because I was so upset. I was like "this is
87 bullshit!" and then my parents knock on the door and say "hey! **You got drafted by**
88 **the [OHL team]!" and then I was all happy and shit.**

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Skype Call
March 6, 2012

89 I: What round was that?

90

91 P: That was the [round #].

92

93 I: Did they call you after that?

94

95 P: Yep, right after they drafted me they called me and I talked to the GM. He said
96 congratulations and that they look forward to meeting me, told me when training
97 camp was and that we would keep in touch.

98

99 I: So then that summer you went to [OHL team] for camp?

100

101 P: Yep. That summer I went up there, it was a rookie camp. My parents ended up
102 flying me up there, they wanted me to have a good rookie camp. I made a good
103 impression and then went to the main camp.

104

105 I: Were you nervous?

106

107 P: Oh ya, I was so nervous. I was 165 pounds, like 6'2 when I was 16. These guys are
108 like 200-220 pounds. We had to do bench press, like 150 lbs, when I was 16 I
109 couldn't even put that up, I put that up like once. By the time when I was 20 I was
110 putting that up 25 times.

111

112 I: So what happened after camp?

113

114 P: After camp...that was the shitty part, I was having a good camp, I think. **Then I go**
115 **into the boards awkwardly and I sprained my rest back and I couldn't even**
116 **stick handle or nothing.** So I was put on the DL, and then friggin, I was up with
117 them for a bit because they told me whether or not I was going to stay up with them
118 they wanted me to play with the A team that as up there, the [team]. So I was ready
119 to do, so then I started practicing and I was up with the big club, and then they just
120 kept putting me back down to the junior A team. But it was weird because I would
121 never practice with the junior A team, I would go practice with the O boys everyday
122 after school. **So I wasn't even practicing with my team, and then eventually they**
123 **said just stay down there and practice, and I was pretty rattled. Because I was**
124 **up there the whole time with the boys, and then I'm fucking with the junior A**
125 **team. But it ended up being the best year of my life up there.**

126

127 I: That first year?

128

129 P: Ya just because I'm from the city, then going to the [OHL team], I got to meet all
130 the local people because I played on the junior A team, so all the older local boys. So
131 I got to meet all the older local boys, a bunch of different chicks, and high school
132 dances...you don't get to do that in the city. In [OHL team] everybody is going to

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133 those high school dances, they got big video screens playing music and everything, it
134 was unreal. You can't do that in the city. I made the most of what it was.

135

136 I: Were you getting paid?

137

138 **P: I did get my OHL money because I got called up after I beat the shit out of**
139 **this one kid. And then they said I would be up for the rest of the season, so I'm**
140 **up for 3 games and then I'm back down. They told me I was going to be up**
141 **there all year, blah, blah, blah, 3 games later I'm back down.**

142

143 I: Do you remember signing your contract with them?

144

145 P: Yep.

146

147 I: Who was there?

148

149 **P: The coach, the GM and maybe one of the head scouts.**

150

151 **I: Were your parents there?**

152

153 **P: I think they were, actually I'm not sure if they were there.**

154

155 I: Did they mention anything to you about the education package at that point?

156

157 P: My agent looked over it and he knew what I was going to be getting. **I was going**
158 **to get 6 grand, tuition and books for every year that I played. That first year I**
159 **got it just for playing one game. I think...see that's how unclear I am about my**
160 **package. Still to this day, I don't even know. I just get my parents to send shit**
161 **in.**

162

163 I: So then after that first year you went home for the summer?

164

165 P: Yep, went home, then went back. **Played 6 games with the big club, and then 6**
166 **games in I get traded to [OHL team].**

167

168 **I: Did you know you were going to get traded?**

169

170 **P: No.**

171

172 I: Do you remember the day of the trade?

173

174 P: Yes. I was in school and the teacher picks up the phone and says "[participant
175 name]? Yep, he's here" so they put me on the phone and I was on the phone in class
176 with the coach saying "hey you need to come down to the rink, we need to talk to

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177 you" so I'm like fuck, am I getting released? But he said everything was good and not
178 to worry. So I packed up my books, left school, went down to the rink and then they
179 told me that I'm getting traded, just like that. I packed up my bag when I was down
180 there and then...see ya later. I was gone that next day to [OHL team]. Bye billets, bye
181 team, bye everyone. I got traded with another guy so I went down there with him,
182 just like that the next day. And then we friggin get there while they're practicing. So
183 practice starts at 3:30p and we get there at 4pm, rushing to get our gear on, all these
184 new gear, I'm wearing all this new equipment. I had the worst first practice ever.
185 They're thinking like "who the fuck did we just pick up? This kid sucks."

186
187 I: How did that year go?

188
189 **P: That year was good because they told me I was going to get an opportunity**
190 **to play, I was going to get an opportunity there. I played 43 games and I had a**
191 **concussion that year too. I was mostly in every game, but I was a 4th line guy**
192 **just mucking out, but just happy to be there.**

193
194 I: What was your goal in hockey at the time?

195
196 P: At the time? When I was playing in the O?

197
198 I: Ya.

199
200 **P: Was going to the NHL, just like every friggin player that's playing. Fucking**
201 **going play in the NHL and make millions.** I just realized year after year that the
202 pipe dream was just getting smaller and smaller.

203
204 I: So then you got traded again?

205
206 **P: Then I got released from [OHL team].**

207
208 I: How'd you feel? What did they say?

209
210 P: It was the worst. I'm having the best training camp, beat the shit out of one of the
211 tough guys on my own team, just great training camp. I'm going to be a leader on
212 this team, I'm 18 now, I'm one of the older guys. Having good exhibition games, then
213 the one exhibition game I friggin call the one guy a "euro" and I get a 5 game
214 suspension. **So this was the beginning of that season and it was fucked because**
215 **5 games took a month a half to be played out because the games were so**
216 **spread out. It was fucked.** So then I'm working my bag off every day in practice
217 with all the guys who don't get to play in games, working hard, just getting into
218 game shape for when I get to come back. Friggin tells me one game before my
219 suspension was going to be up that I'm going to play, so I get my bag packed, we're
220 about to hit the bus and he calls me into his office before we were going to on the

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221 road game. He's like "unfortunately because of your package, you just have to
222 play one game" because I haven't played a regular season game yet, and if I
223 played one game they would have to pay me my education package, [OHL
224 team] did. So they're like "financially, we can't do it right now" so it's purely
225 business. I'm just a kid at that point, I'm about to play a game and they're like okay
226 you're released, who knows you might get picked up in the 48 hours and you'll still
227 have your package. So fucking...I say bye to all the boys on the bus, just like that,
228 because I'm never going to see them again. They all go on the bus, I'm fucking
229 outside calling my Mom crying like a fucking baby again. Like...they're still fucking
230 kids, you're still a kid and they push these kids to grow up way too fast, they
231 treat it like a business and this is their whole life. So I get released but I get
232 picked up off waivers by [OHL team] and they told me I would have a good
233 opportunity there. The 3 years I was there, I was 2nd and 3rd line, got a little bit
234 of power play, was on the first PK, I just had a role on that team. So [GM name]
235 he kept his word, he stuck me around. But dealing with all that bullshit I just told
236 you...and my OA year I had to fight for a spot...because there was [player name],
237 [player name] and there was [player name] and fuck...I was always battling with
238 [player name] for a fucking spot, even in [first OHL team] because he was drafted
239 ahead of me. So I just battled it out again during training camp, got into a nice fight
240 with [player name] and they're like okay, we're going to keep this kid around.

241
242 I: Did you feel like you had to fight to stick around?

243
244 P: Well, I feel like I had to do something to stand out, or friggin bring
245 something that the other guys weren't bringing. I was still putting pucks in net
246 and getting chances but that extra...you got a 20 year old who's going to be willing to
247 drop the gloves and back up his team, you know? That was accepted a few years ago.

248
249 I: So what happened in your over ager year?

250
251 P: So in my OA year just...

252
253 I: You're getting a little bit more money now?

254
255 P: I was getting \$150 a week.

256
257 I: So you're a rich guy now?

258
259 P: [laughs] oh ya. Loaded. Same school money, then I was getting approached by a
260 few different schools, they were sending me packages and stuff.

261
262 I: When did you know that you weren't going to go to the NHL?

263

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264 P: Well, I got a few letters from the ECHL and stuff, I probably could of done
265 that right out of the O but I had that school money to use and you have to use it
266 within 6 months of being out or something, so I might as well. So I found out I
267 got into [CIS university] without having to do any extra courses or anything,
268 [CIS university] wanted me to do some summer shit, and I'm like fuck that. [CIS
269 university] was a new program, so I just accepted there. I went in there with the
270 mindset, I'm like fuck, this whole time I was always doing the right thing, doing what
271 coach always wanted me to do, not turning over pucks, I just went in there with an
272 open mind, and just played freestyle hockey, I played how I wanted to, and I
273 loved it, and he loved me. I had a totally different style of game, and it's like if I
274 played like that, and had that much confidence in the O...I would have been so
275 much better and they just never gave me that opportunity, for me to grow as a
276 player. And you see these players who...I'm giving you some good info right now
277 [laughs] K...so all these players who get drafted in the 1st and 2nd round, they come
278 in and their friggin given it on a platter. They don't have to deserve it, they don't
279 earn anything. When I played it was all a pecking order, you're 16...you're getting 2
280 shifts a game. 16 year olds come in now, "oh, he's a first rounder" I remember first
281 rounders when I played...you'd get 2 shifts a game. First rounders now are fucking
282 getting double shifted, power play and this 20 year old who's got to friggin figure
283 out if he's going to go play pro next year isn't getting time. That 16 year old has
284 another 2 years to develop, he's comfortable, oh next thing you know he's getting
285 drafted to the NHL, it's all just set up for these kids, it's either set up for them to
286 succeed or fail. That's a quote. [laughs]

287
288 I: So you went to [CIS university] and you loved it?

289
290 P: Ya, I had a really good first year. We were a good team, we were pretty close,
291 all older boys which I liked, I didn't have to hang out with 16 year olds
292 anymore. Everybody was of age, we all hung out together, it's a small kind of
293 environment which I've been used to so I've been playing.

294
295 I: Did you consider yourself a hockey player or were you now a student?

296
297 P: [pauses]...I was a **student-athlete**. I just thought of it as I'm just going to try out
298 the uni thing and see how it goes and just play hockey. And I never liked to classify
299 myself as a hockey player anyways, because girls...

300
301 I: I'm sure you did...at one point.

302
303 P: Never. I always hate that question. I'm not a hockey player. Still to this day
304 girls are like "oh you're a hockey player" and I'm like "I'm not a hockey player"

305
306 I: How many years did you play at [CIS university]?

307

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308 P: **I played first year and then last year I played the first exhibition game and**
309 **broke my ankle. I had to get surgery, so then I didn't really do the rehab and**
310 **this year I wasn't really so I just decided that was enough.**

311
312 I: So how many years did they pay for your school?

313
314 P: **I got 5. But I'm still going into debt, crazy debt. It's just covering my tuition**
315 **and books. So I'm going into debt at least 10 grand a year.** But the thing too that
316 set me back, was just because I wasn't one of those go to guys, every time I got hurt
317 and was out of the line up I had to start from the fucking bottom to get back up, to
318 get my ice time again, and like some of these young guys, okay he's back in, give it to
319 him like he was getting it, and I had to fucking work for everything I got.

320
321 I: That's hard.

322
323 P: Ya, it is. You know it starts getting to you.

324
325 I: Mentally too?

326
327 P: Mentally, ya for sure. I remember I was 16, I wasn't sure if I was with the big boys
328 or the junior club, and then fucking I was 16 and all the old guys since I started
329 playing with the junior guys, I wasn't sure if I was welcome with the older guys, then
330 I felt all alone, it was fucked.

331
332 I: When you look back on it now do you think players should be paid more?

333
334 P: **\$50 bucks a week didn't get me shit. I had to ask my parents for money. I**
335 **think they gave you \$60 bucks because you had to give \$10 gas money a week**
336 **to your driver. Even then, getting \$10 and to go wherever you're driving, it**
337 **doesn't go far. You can't really live off that, \$50 a week. I was going through it**
338 **pretty quick.**

339
340 I: If you had a kid and he was offered to go playing at the University of Michigan or
341 the London Knights where would you tell him to go?

342
343 P: **Well if I would of done it all over again, I would of done the school route.** My
344 parents never pushed me to do anything, were never on me for anything, for
345 homework, my life revolved around my minor hockey league and that was it, and
346 then OHL. Now...I'd make sure my kids on top of all his school, and I'd probably push
347 him the school route. Unless he's going to get the biggest package you can get from
348 the O, but most of the time you're going to get more from a D1 school. I wouldn't
349 want him to go play D3, I'd rather him play in the O.

350
351 I: So that's pretty much it...

Interview #7/Participant #7
Skype Call
March 6, 2012

352

353 P: That's it? You got me all going here, you got me all fired up. It's free therapy. At
354 **the end of the day it's a business, you've got kids running it by putting people**
355 **in the seats and everybody is just out for the money, out to make profit.**

Interview #8/Participant #8
Skype Interview
March 14, 2013

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I: What is your earliest memory of playing hockey, or skating?

P: Well I started skating when I was 5, around there. It was just pond hockey and stuff, until I turned 9 and I went into minor hockey. I played my first year...[team name] was our name.

I: Where did you grow up?

P: [city name], just a small town. So I started playing there when I was 9 years old. I started out playing rep hockey. I played rep hockey for 2 years there and then I went to play triple A down in [city name] for the [team name] for 5 years, and that's when I jumped to major junior after that.

I: Did you ask to play or did your parents enrol you...how did that start?

P: I bugged them quite a bit I guess [laughs]. I bugged them for a while to play and my dad said that "let's wait a year and if you want to play this bad next year then we'll let you play next year."

I: Were you a player or a goalie?

P: I was a goalie. And I'll tell you an interesting story of how I became a goalie, you'll probably laugh. Me and my brother, I got a brother who's 2 years older than me, he and I always got dressed very similar, almost identical, as my mother...I don't know if it was a fetish of hers or what [laughs] but she loved to dress us alike. So we were always dressed alike no matter where we went to school, there's always pictures of us dressed the same. So we went to the sports store and my father asked me "what would you like to be?" I said a player. He asked my brothers, he said a player, so I said "no wait, I'll change, I'll be a goalie" just to be different.

I: That's funny. Do you remember a point in time when you realized your talent was different from other players?

P: I don't know, right from the start when I started playing hockey. Usually when kids start off they start off in house league and kind of work their way up. When I started playing hockey I started playing rep hockey which is kind of better hockey. I got thrown into it because they needed a goalie. It turned out I did well. I never really thought I was better than anyone else, but to realize and have an understanding, to grasp my skill came when I was around 12 years old or so, when I went down and started playing [team name]. When I went down and started playing triple A with the best players of all of Ontario, even then I had a great deal of success. That's when I kind of realized I could benefit from my skill and create good opportunities in the future.

Interview #8/Participant #8

Skype Interview

March 14, 2013

46 I: Did you know you were going to be drafted?

47

48 P: No, no I had no idea. My draft year was...it was an interesting thing because you
49 only face your draft year once in a lifetime. As I went through and played for the
50 [team name] I received numerous letters and phone calls from a lot of OHL teams
51 and stuff, I mean I didn't know if all that interest would result in me being drafted,
52 or whether it was they showed that interest in every kid. But I was fortunate enough
53 to be picked [round #] by the [OHL team]. The [OHL team] actually called me on the
54 draft day, 2 minutes before [OHL team] called me and they said "ya our pick is
55 coming up, would you come play for us if we picked you?" and I said "yes, of course"
56 [OHL team] being a great organization and everything, so I was pretty excited about
57 it. And then 2 seconds later the phone call came and [OHL team] drafted me, so I was
58 kind of disappointed that day but I didn't really realize how great an organization
59 [OHL team] was, so I was fortunate it all panned out.

60

61 **I: That's funny, everyone I've spoken to they always say they thought they**
62 **were going somewhere...**

63

64 **P: And then they go somewhere else?**

65

66 I: Ya, everyone has said that. That's so strange. Did you have an agent before the
67 draft?

68

69 P: Ya, [agent name], do you know him?

70

71 I: No.

72

73 P: He's the GM of the [NHL team].

74

75 I: Oh right. Did he help you out?

76

77 P: I don't know if he helped me before the draft. But, a great deal of my stock...how
78 my stock raised for the OHL draft was when I was 15, usually start playing
79 junior...you probably already know this, was at 16 and there's only 2 exceptions or
80 whatever. But I got excepted to play junior A in the [team]. Where did you grow up?

81

82 I: St. Catharines, so Niagara area.

83

84 P: Niagara, so what's the junior A team around there?

85

86 I: Falcons I think.

87

88 P: Anyways Junior A, to get to the RBC which is the national championship...I played
89 for the [team name] and then I played the Fred Page Cup and you have to win that to
90 go to the RBC, so I played in that as a 15 year old and I was on the best team in

Interview #8/Participant #8
Skype Interview
March 14, 2013

91 Canada, so that helped a lot. We lost in the finals but I got all-start rookie of the
92 tournament at age 15, so that helped my stock rise. So that was a big part of how I
93 got drafted.

94

95 I: So after that did you still not think you were going to go in the draft? After playing
96 there?

97

98 P: See I was kind of oblivious to the whole situation. I **felt like I was drafted low,**
99 **and I was upset that day. I was mad. I mean everyone wants to get drafted**
100 **higher, but I mean...it was all kind of surreal to me.** Stepping back and when you
101 look at everything now going in the top [#] rounds as a goalie is a pretty good
102 accomplishment. At that point in time I was kind of oblivious to everything, and
103 everything was kind of surreal to me, kind of looking back at it now you see all the
104 great accomplishments, but at that time you wanted everything to be just a little bit
105 better.

106

107 I: Do you remember the day of the draft? Waking up and going to the computer...

108

109 P: Ya, I mean I don't remember a lot of it, I do remember whenever right after I got
110 drafted I was mad, as I told you already. I went outside and I was shooting pucks,
111 just trying to clear my head, trying to grasp the situation.

112

113 I: For sure. Did you go to camp that summer?

114

115 P: Yep. I went to [OHL Team]'s rookie evaluation camp and then I got an invite to
116 main camp.

117

118 I: Were you nervous?

119

120 P: Ya, extremely...extremely. I went in blind, I was glad that my father came down
121 with me and stayed down for my time in camp, I think that helped me a lot. I think
122 going down there alone and experiencing all by myself would have been more
123 difficult than it was, but having my father there helped me kind of just share the
124 experience with him and by doing that it kind of almost eased the tension and
125 almost took a weight off my shoulders. As you probably already know, goaltending
126 fathers always tend to be a little worrisome and carry the weight of their sons
127 playing goal.

128

129 I: So it sounds like he was really supportive.

130

131 P: Absolutely, absolutely 100%. He was in my corner for sure.

132

133 I: Did you make the roster that summer?

134

Interview #8/Participant #8
Skype Interview
March 14, 2013

135 P: No, what happened was they said me being there, **I wouldn't play because I was**
136 **just a 16 year old kid. So they said they'd rather me go somewhere where I was**
137 **going to play. So I went back to my hometown where I played for [team] and I**
138 **went there and played there for the season and I was pretty well the starter.**
139 We had an older guy there but I played a lot. We were once again the best team
140 ranked nationally in Canada. We won it all, we won the Fred Page Cup, went to the
141 RBC and we lost in the semi-finals in overtime. That was a really good year for me, I
142 got lot's of hockey in, played till the end of May which was ridiculous, it was
143 awesome. Played there, we won it, it was a great time and full of learning
144 experiences. I met a lot of cool, neat new people. **Then the next year I went and I**
145 **tried out again for [OHL Team] and I had such success in junior A that I was**
146 **looking at going the NCAA route instead of going to play major junior.**
147

148 I: Okay, and you were still allowed to that even though you went to camp?
149

150 P: **Ya because I never spent longer than 48 hours.** I think it's 48...or 52,
151 something like that. Something along those lines, I think it's that you can't stay
152 longer than 48 hours. So I never stayed there long enough to jeopardize my
153 eligibility. When I went back to [OHL Team] their coach was [coach name] he
154 coaches [NHL Team] now. **But this is kind of where my agent stepped in and**
155 **kind of was my agent, I guess you could say.** [Coach name] ran junior hockey for
156 years and years and this was his last year coaching major junior until he moved to
157 the NHL. **He was very manipulative and just kind of got his own way in junior**
158 **hockey. He was using power over kids. And this is where my agent kind of, him**
159 **being such a powerful individual, as you can tell he's now a GM in the NHL, he**
160 **kind of pushed [coach name] around in a sense to get me my school package**
161 **and all this.** The deciding factor of me going major junior was that they had
162 purchased the Memorial Cup. **So they were hosting the Mem Cup, so I went there**
163 **because of that, and I was having a great year. I had tons of NHL teams talking**
164 **to me and stuff, my draft year was that year. At the trade deadline I got called**
165 **into the office and I got traded to a young team, in a 3-way deal that brought**
166 **[player name] to [OHL Team].**
167

168 I: Do you remember the moment when you signed the contract with [OHL Team]?
169

170 P: Yep.
171

172 I: Were your parents there?
173

174 P: **Ya, my dad was there.** It was actually right out of camp. It was right after rookie
175 camp when I got back from the RBC. I don't even think I was skating because I had
176 just gotten off the ice. But anyways, I went in there and they were all antsy to sign
177 me I guess you could say, so I signed right there and then with [coach name] we
178 signed a paper just basically outlining my commitment. Then when I got to [OHL
179 team] main camp I signed the contract.

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180

181 I: Did they mention anything about the education package?

182

183 P: **Not in particular to me. My agent he kind of took all those aspects under his**
184 **belt, and just let me focus on hockey which was a big thing. He took care of**
185 **everything behind the scenes.**

186

187 I: But you knew it was there?

188

189 P: Absolutely, **my dad was very aware of it.** Obviously I'm glad to get the package
190 that I did because now I don't have to pay for school, right? I mean you look at
191 something so small and now I'm glad I had my father who was aware of it and my
192 agent who was very well aware about the situation.

193

194 I: **When did the trade happen?**

195

196 P: **Right at the deadline.**

197

198 I: **Did you know anything about it before?**

199

200 P: **I knew nothing. I was completely blind-sided.**

201

202 I: Tell me about that day.

203

204 P: Well, I mean it's trade deadline, everyone on the team kind of feels it. It's just a
205 little bit different around the room. I mean no one wants to see anyone go, but at the
206 same time it's always opportunities made by you know, an opportunity presenting
207 itself.

208

209 I: Were you backup at this point?

210

211 P: No, we split game for game. And the other guy who I was with, he was an older
212 guy. He just came out of the USA under 18 development. So it was me and him. It
213 was his first year in the league too, but he was older than me.

214

215 I: What was his name again?

216

217 P: [player name]

218

219 I: He goes to school now right?

220

221 P: Ya, he was go [CIS university]. So it was me and him. Trade deadline...I went in for
222 a morning skate and I remember walking out the door, just about to hop into a car
223 and one of the trainers ran out "[player nickname]! Coach needs to talk to you
224 quick!" I was like ok, I didn't think anything of it and the boys just waited for me in

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225 the car. So I went into the room and they told me the whole schpeel, **basically that I**
226 **had been traded to the [OHL Team], a developing team, a young guy going into a**
227 **team with a lot of young players, hoping for it to be a good move for me. It wasn't**
228 **bad, I mean I went there and finished up the year. They were a last placed team, next**
229 **year same thing, I got the start. I played 55 out of 68, we were brutal, we got**
230 **pounded the majority of the nights. [laughs]**

231

232 I: Were you mad that you didn't get to play in the Mem Cup? Because they traded
233 you before they went to the Mem Cup right? Were you upset about that?

234

235 P: At the time I wasn't mad about that. I was mad that I got traded from my team. I
236 wasn't mad that I missed the Mem Cup. **Looking back on it now and realizing the**
237 **significance of the Memorial Cup...absolutely. I'm pissed I missed the Mem**
238 **Cup. I mean it's not too often that any junior player gets to play in the Mem**
239 **Cup, and according to the situation that year, [player name] got hurt, [player**
240 **name] kind of crapped the bed on them. They offered me to stay there when I**
241 **got traded, their like "you can get traded there and go play in the OHL, or you**
242 **can stay here, be a third goalie and play junior B and maybe play next year"**
243 **and so I obviously wanted to stay in the OHL so that's why I got traded. But ya,**
244 **it was definitely a big thing to miss.**

245

246 I: How was your coach in [OHL Team]?

247

248 P: My coach in [OHL Team]?

249

250 I: Ya.

251

252 P: You're smiling, who have you talked to? [player name]?

253

254 I: No no no, I haven't talked to [player name]. I just heard you didn't get along with
255 him.

256

257 P: My coach in [OHL Team] was just there. It was just not a lot of good structure.
258 [Coach name] very old school guy, he was in and out when I was there, and then in
259 my final year [coach name] came in. **He was...he's a good player coach, but he's**
260 **just not a good technical X's and O's coach. Which is a major factor in higher**
261 **you go up in levels. Every teams going to have a certain amount of skill that**
262 **they can compete with other teams, but when you have your system set in**
263 **place and your players are doing what you want, that truly shows...I mean you**
264 **look at the good organizations in the NHL, successful teams always have a powerful**
265 **coach that sets up a system and the team buys into it. You know...do or die. I think**
266 **that was the only thing that we were missing [OHL Team]. They brought in another**
267 **goalie in the summer, after I played 55 games in back to back years without making**
268 **playoffs, I mean I didn't want to get stuck there a 3rd year so I asked for a trade. They**
269 **traded me...it was between [OHL Team] and [initial OHL team] again. And I already**

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270 told you how good of an organization [OHL Team] was, so I was not mad one bit to
271 go back.

272

273 I: Was it the same coach when you went back?

274

275 P: No. When I went back [coach name] left and went to the NHL. The system coach
276 that was there stepped into the head GM/coaching role, [coach name] is his name.
277 So going back there, **they were the worst team in the league the year before so I**
278 **wasn't really, I mean I was just going there because they were a good**
279 **organization, not really about how well they were going to be. And it turned**
280 **out we were one of the best teams in the league, I had my best year**
281 **statistically, I had the best save percentage and best goals against in the**
282 **league, so I was happy to be there all year.** I think we were second in the
283 [conference] behind [OHL Team], they were always a powerhouse. And in the
284 [conference] was [OHL Team] and they were another powerhouse actually better
285 than [OHL Team] .

286

287 I: What year was that?

288

289 P: [year]. I played there until the trade deadline and actually me and a bunch of the
290 boys, see once I was in [OHL Team] and **I got blindsided again...we didn't think of**
291 **any of us getting traded away** so we were all getting ready to go out, a night on the
292 town and they called me. I got called in late at night so I obviously knew what the
293 situation was, I had been there before. [laughs] I drove in, ran a red light on the way
294 to the rink, [OHL Team] was so well known so I just got off, said I was in a rush to
295 see coach. Ya, so I went in there and [coach name] **said just basically said that it**
296 **was completely my choice whether I wanted to be traded or not, he said he's**
297 **not going to trade me if I don't want to get traded. He said [OHL Team] is**
298 **unbelievable, I knew how good they were, we had played them one time. They**
299 **were first in [conference], he said he strongly believed that [OHL Team]**
300 **wouldn't beat them, and this was right after they traded for [player name] and**
301 **a couple other big name players. So they were kind of stacking up and he said**
302 **they want you, and they want you real bad. And they want you to go there and**
303 **play, they're not going to sit you out, they only got [player name] there. So I**
304 **was like I'll seize the opportunity, ya I'll go.** So I packed up my stuff and headed
305 to [OHL Team] for that year. **It was probably one of the better time, if not the**
306 **best time of my junior career was spent in [OHL Team]. I only spent half a year**
307 **there, but we were on top of the world.** We were ranked first in Canada, we went
308 on a [number] game win streak, we basically ran the city, it was a pretty fun time.
309 We got to the finals and unfortunately we met [OHL Team] and we just...we
310 pounded them in the regular season both times we played them, but we lost the first
311 game in OT in the finals and it just sort of mudslidged from there. We just couldn't
312 come back from it, they beat us in the finals. So it was unfortunate to get so close to
313 the Mem Cup and lose again. After that season [OHL Team] lost I think 16 players,
314 something ridiculous. They lost a lot of their players. So I knew it was my last year

Interview #8/Participant #8

Skype Interview

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315 going into the OHL, so I wanted to be in an organization that had a chance to win
316 and I knew that [OHL Team]...you know, I was simply brought in there for a push,
317 just a chance to win. It's not like I was, you know if I was still in [OHL Team] I
318 probably would have stayed there and played out my career, just for the sole fact it
319 was with the team that drafted me, this team just sort of traded for me to make their
320 team deeper and have a chance to win. **So I asked for a trade, I went to...it's hard**
321 **as an over ager because a lot of places don't want to fill that spot unless they**
322 **for sure know they have a player so I went down to [OHL Team] and made a**
323 **home down there. It was awesome, I had a great billet family, the city itself is**
324 **down in [city], and it's close to a bad spot so anytime you go there you think**
325 **it's a dump, but I learned otherwise. We all had great billet houses so that**
326 **never turned out to be an issue. Went there, had a great team, we lost in the**
327 **[number] round to [OHL Team] again [laughs]. Ya that was my year, not a lot**
328 **to share about my OA year.**

329

330 I: How did you feel about school after you decided I'm not going to the NCAA I'm
331 going to the OHL, how was school?

332

333 P: How was school in the OHL? You know what...you'd die laughing if I told you. Me
334 and [player name] you must know [player name].

335

336 I: Ya.

337

338 P: He and I were little mischief makers I suppose you could say. We got in trouble a
339 couple times at high school, which resulted in us sitting out games. But other than
340 that the teachers were pretty lenient. **School itself was never overly hard, I mean**
341 **if you go to class everyday you don't have any problems really. So, I mean in**
342 **[OHL Team] they kept a pretty tight knit, they made sure you went to school.**
343 **Other spots were a little more lenient, but [OHL Team] was one of the best for**
344 **ensuring players go to school.**

345

346 I: And what was your goal? Did you think about the NHL a lot?

347

348 P: **Ya, that was mainly my goal, to go and play pro hockey.** After I finished up my
349 OA year with [team name] I got a try out with the [NHL Team]. So I went to do that
350 and I had a great camp, they just didn't have any goal tending positions available
351 down through their system. **Over the summer of my OA year I was waiting to**
352 **hear back to get NHL try outs, which I finally and was fortunate to get, after**
353 **that I pursued schools, I just thought it may be a good idea as a back up plan,**
354 **just in case. Because there was a 50/50 shot of me going pro, so I went on a**
355 **couple visits to schools, came to [CIS University] and I loved it. It was similar to**
356 **home, which I loved.** So I committed here and then went to the [NHL Team] camp
357 and played 3 games. 1 I came in for the other guy, he got pulled, and I started 2 other
358 games. I won two of my starts, so I had a good camp but they just had no room, like I
359 said, so it was back to school for me.

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360

361 **I: Is this your [number] year at [CIS University]?**

362

363 **P: Ya.**

364

365 **I: What are you now? Are you a hockey player? Are you a student? Are you a**
366 **student-athlete? If someone asked you what are you?**

367

368 **P: Student-athlete.**

369

370 **I: And you feel that hockey is always going to be part of you?**

371

372 **P: Absolutely. I don't think you're ever going to see hockey too far from my life.**

373

374 **I: If you had a kid and he was good, and he was deciding between going to the**
375 **University of Michigan or to the London Knights, where would you tell him to go?**

376

377 **P: [pauses]. I would never tell my son to do either or, I would share with him my**
378 **great learning experiences and how fun junior hockey is, but I would never tell him**
379 **where to go. I would let him make the decision and try to get an understanding**
380 **of what he really wants out of either experience, and give him my advice.**

381 **That's what I would probably do, share with him what I've gone through. I can't**
382 **speak a whole to NCAA just because I never went, but now that I've gone to school I**
383 **realize the similarities and what it would be like to a certain extent. So I could give**
384 **small advice to him, but my only words of wisdom would be do what's going to**
385 **make you happy.**

386

387 **I: Do you feel that players in the OHL or CHL should have some sort of union or**
388 **protection outside of their agents.**

389

390 **P: What do you mean? Elaborate.**

391

392 **I: So like a CHLPA.**

393

394 **P: Absolutely. I think they should have a group in each league. A small group, it**
395 **doesn't have to be a large group, but a small group in each league, maybe 5**
396 **guys from each league. I think it would go a long way to getting a better**
397 **understanding of the players and what they desire and what they need,**
398 **because I think in the last couple of years in major junior hockey...it's been**
399 **pretty...kind of like the coaches and executives have ran everything from their**
400 **point of view. So a group like that could give them their side and different**
401 **ideas may occur, I mean you got to look at what's best for the players.**

402

403 **I: Do you think players should be getting paid more?**

404

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405 **P: Absolutely. 100%. I knew a player whose dad played in the OHL years and**
406 **years ago, probably 20 or so years ago, and they were receiving \$50 dollars a**
407 **week 20 years ago. And the economy now is ridiculously growing, so I mean**
408 **that yes they should receive a lot more money.**

409

410 I: I was interviewing a player who said his dad got the same money he did when he
411 played in the OHL.

412

413 P: [laughs] Ya, it's ridiculous. **You live pay check to pay check, absolutely.**

414

415 I: So overall you had a good experience then?

416

417 P: I would never change any of my life decisions. They made me who I am today and
418 there's lots of rough times in junior hockey, just because it's a part of growing up, I
419 felt that I learned so much and had to grow up on my own by living on my own, I had
420 to grow up on my own. I realized responsibilities and stuff like that. Take
421 responsibility for my actions. So going through the learning process, and all the
422 great people I met, how much I developed as a hockey player, I mean it goes hand in
423 hand, with the OHL saying it's the best of both worlds. For sure.

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Interview #9/Participant #9
Skype Interview
March 14, 2013

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I: What was your earliest memory of every playing hockey or skating?

P: Ya, I remember the first year that I played. I was 4 years old, I loved it. I was begging my mom and dad to play real hockey, as I defined it I guess. [laughs] But they told me I had to wait 2 years until I was 6 years old. I'm not sure how else to describe that, but I pushed a chair around a skating rink, you know I loved it and I wanted to play right away.

I: Did you have any siblings that played?

P: Yep, I had my brother who is a year older. I think we started at the same time. And I have a sister who is 3 years younger and we all played hockey, my brother played rep hockey growing up, my sister played rep hockey, my father played his whole life and my mother, although she didn't play she was the founder of the [city name] girl's hockey league, she was a big hockey advocate anyway.

I: Did you play triple A?

P: Yep, I played every year that I could. I played triple A.

I: Was there a moment when you realized that you had a different talent than your friends did or other players on your team?

P: No. I honestly didn't. I was never the best player, I was always kind of, you know, 4th or 5th best, but I was driven to be the best. Sounds kind of cliché but I was kind of always under the radar and I was comfortable with that role. I think that's kind of what motivated me, I was shocked the day I was drafted to the OHL, as high as I went.

I: Did you have an agent going into the draft?

P: Ya, I did.

I: And you knew you were going to be drafted?

P: Ya, I had been interviewed by 12 or 13 teams so it wasn't a surprise. It was just a matter of where I was going to go and what round.

I: Do you remember the day of the draft? Waking up and going to the computer?

P: Yep. Totally. The night before, to distract myself I went out and played hockey at midnight. I found the latest shinny time that I could find and played until 1:30am or 2:00am in the morning, then I went home and went to sleep. And my goal was to sleep through the first few rounds, because I wasn't going then. And when I woke up

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46 it was half an hour of watching the computer screen, which was absolute torture
47 [laughs] and that was it, it was kind of over.

48
49 I: Who took you?

50
51 P: I went to [OHL Team] in the [round #]. I think I was the [pick #]. I think the funny
52 story about that was that two picks before me, a guy by the name of [player name]
53 so his first name was my last name so we all jumped for joy, and I actually ended up
54 playing with him for [OHL Team], and I'm still friends with him to this day.

55
56 I: So then did you go to camp that summer?

57
58 P: Yep, I went to the mini camp, you know the player development rookie camp,
59 which is you know 48 hours or whatever it is.

60
61 I: And then you went home after that?

62
63 P: Yep.

64
65 I: Did you go to main camp after?

66
67 P: No, not my first year. I think it was pretty set that I wasn't playing there my first
68 year.

69
70 I: Were you still keeping the NCAA option open?

71
72 P: Not really, I knew it was an option. **But I was born and raised in [city] watching**
73 **the [OHL Team]. That was my whole life so, and I was drafted high enough that**
74 **I knew I could play I just needed a year or two of development. But it was the**
75 **OHL, the entire way for me.**

76
77 I: So you played that year at home and then went to camp again the next summer?

78
79 **P: Yep I played junior A for the [team name] for a year and then I went back**
80 **the next year to camp and made the team.**

81
82 I: Do you remember when they told you that you were going to stay?

83
84 P: [pauses] I don't think they ever really told me. [laughs] They just didn't tell me I
85 was leaving. [laughs] I had a really good camp, and my uncle was a scout for the
86 team at the time, so he had talked to me kind of behind the scenes the whole time
87 saying "you're probably going to make it, it's just you have to perform."

88
89 I: Do you remember signing your contract with the team?

90

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91 P: Yep. I do.

92

93 **I: Were your parents there?**

94

95 **P: Ya, they were. It was at the [OHL Team] head office. It was one of those life**
96 **moments where you thought it was a bigger deal then looking back then it**
97 **really was. But it still meant something to you.**

98

99 **I: Do you remember if they said anything to you about the education package?**

100

101 **P: That was totally on my mind. I mean that was all that we were really negotiating.**
102 **And we did negotiate what [OHL Team] traditionally...they didn't have a whole**
103 **look of money at the time so the packages weren't too extensive. So for us it**
104 **was trying to negotiate that.**

105

106 **I: So you got a certain amount of money for each year?**

107

108 **P: Yep, for every I played in the league I was given \$5250 dollars I think it was.**

109

110 **I: It's funny now all the players...it's not a certain amount.**

111

112 **P: Ya, you play one game and they cover the year.**

113

114 **I: How was your first year with the team?**

115

116 **P: First year was okay. I was a 4th line player, small guy that had some skill but I**
117 **only played half the games, I was a healthy scratch the other time. I had to**
118 **fight and do things that weren't really part of my game to stay there, so it was**
119 **rough but I was just happy to be there. Worked my butt off and did what I**
120 **could and enjoyed the experience.**

121

122 **I: How was your relationship with your coach?**

123

124 **P: Relationship was pretty good. As I said my uncle was a scout so we had known**
125 **the coach [coach name] for...we had kind of heard of him and he knew I was related**
126 **to the scout. It wasn't really that I was drafted as a favour, because I was drafted**
127 **reasonably high so anyways the relationship was good. Not really great in my first**
128 **year because I didn't do a whole lot very well [laughs] I was just kind of there**
129 **playing my role, biding my time for next year.**

130

131 **I: Did you ever start thinking about professional hockey once you started in the O?**

132

133 **P: I think I...ya, I thought about in my first year because that was my draft year**
134 **right? It's the big life goal to play in the OHL, and then you play in the OHL and**
135 **you're just trying to make the line up and establish yourself, and then you're**

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136 **quickly reminded that it's you NHL draft year, so it's a lot to take in, and really**
137 **challenging if you're not ready for it.** I thought about it, but I never really got to a
138 point where there was even any chance I was going to get drafted to the NHL. For
139 me it was just about being a really good OHL player is what I wanted to be.

140
141 I: So how many years were you in [OHL Team]?

142
143 **P: I played two full seasons in [OHL Team] and in my second year I was traded**
144 **in the off season to [OHL Team].**

145
146 I: And the second year went well for you? Better than the first?

147
148 **P: Ya, the second year again I had scored 5 points in the first year in 30-**
149 **something games and then I came back and got a bit more of an opportunity**
150 **and I really surprised and shocked a lot of people, I think I had 40 points in 50**
151 **games because I had an injury and missed a lot of time. I had a really good**
152 **season considering, a lot better than most expected which was kind of funny**
153 **because then they traded me in the off season. [laughs]**

154
155 I: Did you know the trade was going to come?

156
157 **P: So it was initially a shock. They had drafted two players in my position back**
158 **to back that year [player name now NHL star] and [player name now NHL**
159 **star]...[laughs] I kind of had an average summer camp and I didn't play great but I**
160 **was, maybe I went in a little over confident at the summer camp right? So, they**
161 **called me into the office and said "we're going to trade you" and they did it with a lot**
162 **of respect. They said "give me a list of 5 teams you want to go to and we'll try to**
163 **get you there" and to me that was great. I actually made a list and number one**
164 **was [OHL Team] so I was actually traded to [OHL Team] and then quickly**
165 **before I was contacted by them I was traded again to [OHL Team] it was kind**
166 **of a 3 way trade.**

167
168 I: So you knew the [OHL Team] was in there just to get you to [OHL Team]?

169
170 **P: Ya I knew the GM in [OHL Team] really liked me, so after the fact it was sort of**
171 **odd because I know he wanted me to stay there but they traded me away to get a**
172 **really good player from [OHL Team].**

173
174 I: So how was [OHL team]?

175
176 **P: [OHL Team] was interesting. The next year I had a really good year. My whole**
177 **career was sort of plagued by injuries, every year. I broke both of my legs in**
178 **junior hockey, I broke my jaw twice, multiple concussions, you name it, it was**
179 **rough. My next year, after breaking my jaw my second year in the OHL, I was**
180 **having a really good year in [OHL Team] and broke my leg. But I think I had 25**

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181 goals in 40 games, I had a good year. It was the best year of my career by far, but it's
182 just different playing for a different team, living in [city], it's just a different dynamic.

183

184 I: What happened after that season?

185

186 P: I was an over ager the following season, had a really good season the one before. I
187 showed up to camp and **the first exhibition game I broke my jaw for the second**
188 **time, missed three months and came back from a broken jaw and I had**
189 **essentially forgotten how to play hockey. I was just absolutely awful.** I played 9
190 games, and they had a new coach [coach name] who is with the [NHL team] now and
191 I just went in, my uncle had actually moved from [OHL Team] to [OHL Team], very
192 bizarre but he was kind of my biggest fan and he knew I was playing like shit, but I
193 broke my jaw and was out for 3 months. 9 games is not a lot, you know 3 weekends
194 in the OHL, but I wasn't playing well. **I just went into his office and said "I'm an**
195 **over ager, if you want to trade me go ahead, I'm open to whatever, I'm happy**
196 **here but I know I'm playing like shit."** So then he said **"we're going to trade**
197 **you, a bunch of teams want you, go home"** So I went home, waited 4 days, 5 days,
198 6 days, 7 days, a week or two went by and then they said no one really wants you
199 and by that time I had already negotiated a contract to go to [CIS University] so it all
200 just happened really quickly.

201

202 I: Were you thinking about university a lot more that final year?

203

204 P: Ya, definitely. I mean, you know, you're sitting out 3 months, you're 21 years old,
205 all your friends are going to university, you know you're not going to the NHL, you
206 know you're going to finish out your last year as best you can. **But when all this**
207 **trade stuff happened I was already negotiating all these contracts with junior**
208 **A teams and university teams and kind of planting some seeds in the**
209 **background.**

210

211 I: How was the transition to university from the OHL?

212

213 P: The transition hockey wise was very tough, because I had just suffered a pretty
214 substantial injury. I almost quit hockey and was thinking of never playing again. **So I**
215 **went to [CIS university] and it's really good hockey, very under rated. And I**
216 **still hadn't figured out my game, I was awful at [OHL Team] and I was awful**
217 **there as well. I was offered a bunch of money to go there and whatever. I**
218 **wasn't great but academically I did really well, I really exceeded my**
219 **expectations and that was what was driving me.**

220

221 I: So at that point if someone asked you what you were, would you say you were a
222 student, a hockey player or a student athlete?

223

224 P: **At that point I intentionally tried to brand myself just as a student.** Hockey
225 had done everything for me sort of up to that point, but it was you know, I have to

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226 get good grades, you know I worked my ass off out of fear really, and then I ended
227 up on the Dean's list and whatnot. But it was out of fear. I tried to brand myself...I
228 would always be an athlete, everyone that knows me knows I'm an athlete, but for
229 me it was intentionally trying to say I'm a student.

230

231 I: If you had a son and he could go to the University of Michigan or to the London
232 Knights and he asked you where he should go, what would you tell him?

233

234 P: **London Knights. Without a doubt.** I mean at the end of the day here's the
235 argument. You want to play pro hockey and if you don't, at the very least you want
236 to get a university education. **So if you play one game in the OHL for 4 seasons**
237 **you get 4 years of university paid for, regardless of what university you go to.** I
238 mean if you're looking for a prestigious school to slap on your resume that will
239 hopefully help you in your career one day, maybe the University of Michigan is a
240 good option, maybe some of those big schools in the states are a good option. But at
241 the end of the day, if you're looking to play pro hockey I would go with the CHL.

242

243 I: Looking back on it now do you think players need some sort of unionization in the
244 CHL?

245

246 P: **Totally. Totally. I was a big advocate of it when I played. There were talks of**
247 **it. I eventually went on to get into student politics and was the president of the**
248 **athletics council at my university,** but ya I talked about it...not frequently, but I'd
249 raise it a few times. I think the issue is that you've got, essentially your career is 2
250 and a half or 3 years if you're lucky in the OHL, in major junior. **So it's really just a**
251 **transition league, it's a stepping stone and the players that really matter, the**
252 **superstars, you know you can name whoever you want, they're only there for**
253 **2, maybe 3 years, and they're going on to big money. Then you've got the**
254 **fringe players who are just happy to be there. And then you've got the other**
255 **people in the middle who actually play 3 or 4 years. No one steps up to make**
256 **that call, no one has really put it forward. Although there was a small attempt**
257 **there a few months ago, but that was a big fail.**

258

259 I: I guess the other thing I wanted to know is that the amount of money you got, it
260 was what \$50 dollars?

261

262 P: Yep, \$44 dollars, \$98 bi-weekly.

263

264 I: Do you think that should be changed?

265

266 P: Yep. **That's the same amount of money they were making in the 50s. Factor**
267 **in inflation, I don't know what that dollar amount should be nowadays. I think**
268 **it worked out to 50 cents an hour by the time you factored in road trips and**
269 **hours at the rink and things like that. It's bizarre to me. They're still making**
270 **that amount of money. I brought the issue of a union up to my buddy [NHL player]**

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271 and he said "Fuck no, I would never give those guys a union. They're getting the
272 experience of their life, they're still making a little money on the side." And I guess I
273 agree with this point, the \$50 dollars is actually enough to survive on, because
274 you're literally not buying anything, right? **But just because you can survive off**
275 **that doesn't mean it's right.** We can say professional athletes can survive on a
276 fraction of what they're making. But you know if the demands there to pay people, if
277 people are going to watch them, then they deserved to be paid that much. Same
278 reason a lawyer and an accountant deserve to make more than everyone else. **It's**
279 **just the demand for their services and they have unique skills. But ya, I was**
280 **sort of shocked to hear that from him, but I'm a huge supporter. I'm not**
281 **suggesting you go out and that those players need to be making \$1000 dollars**
282 **a week, but I'm saying it should go up at least 2.5% a year, like the average**
283 **inflation rate. Which it literally has not budged in 40 years, that's absolutely**
284 **insane.** And I guess the teams will argue that the education packages have gone up.
285 Ya, I'll give them that. They have. But they didn't from the 50s until 2010, right? I
286 think they've figured it out with the education package. You play a game you get a
287 year of university paid for. When I played it was you wanted to go higher in the draft
288 because you know if you went in the 6th round you made nothing, if you went in the
289 first round you made 15 grand a year, you were loaded, right? Which isn't right.
290 There's tons of guys who went in the 10th round who were absolutely studs in the
291 OHL, and got no education and no compensation for it.

292
293 I: Some guys say if they got more money they would spend it on the wrong things.

294
295 P: If you go to [CIS university] you get your education package, plus they give you
296 money on top of that. So I made more money from my Canadian university a year,
297 almost double then what I made in the OHL, times 4 years, plus my OHL money. But
298 there's some guys out there who get their education entirely paid for, living entirely
299 paid for, driving mustangs. You wouldn't believe it. It's better lifestyle than going
300 down and playing in the AHL and making 90 grand a year. So ya, oh ya they blow it
301 away. And a great example of that is the QMJHL. Those players are making more
302 than \$50 bucks a week, you negotiate your salary every year. So I played with guys
303 who made \$700 dollars a week in their over age year playing in the Quebec league,
304 and I could tell you almost for certain that they all blew it away.

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1

2 I: What is your earliest memory of skating or playing hockey?

3

4 P: My dad was actually my coach in house league in [city]. He used to run skating
5 lessons and I would always go out with him and do it. [arena] in [city]...Saturday
6 morning practices at 6am, I remember getting changed at home into my equipment,
7 and he would fire up the car and warm it up and then we'd be at the rink by 5:30am.

8

9 I: Did you want to play or did your parents put you into it?

10

11 P: I'm pretty sure I wanted to play, but you don't really know that when you're a
12 young kid. Obviously my parents got me started with it.

13

14 I: Was there a point where you realized your talent was different from other people?

15

16 P: Not really [laughs]. I played my first year in house league 2 years up because my
17 older brothers an [year of birth] and I'm an [year of birth] so to make life easier on
18 my parents I just played with my brother and then the following year I went down
19 and played with my own age group and actually started playing and stuff. I played
20 on a team called [team name] and we ended up winning all of Ontario and stuff
21 against 9 year olds. That was kind of a cool year.

22

23 I: Did you play triple A after?

24

25 P: Ya, my dad was actually offered a coaching job with [team name] and so I went to
26 those try outs because obviously life would be easier if I was playing where my dad
27 was coaching, I went to those try outs and they said I was too advanced for everyone
28 there, so then before the season even started with them I went and started playing
29 with the [team name].

30

31 I: Did you like your dad as a coach?

32

33 P: No, I hated it. He was really hard on me and he has a temper. He's a screamer, he
34 yells, but he always took it harder on me and my brothers.

35

36 I: Would he talk about it at home at stuff after?

37

38 P: More like on the bench and in front of the other teammates, I guess he didn't want
39 to show he was taking it lighter on me because I was his kid. Sometimes we would
40 talk at home. If I did something stupid, or if I got too many penalties or something he
41 wouldn't even talk to me, he would give me the silent treatment. I would get in the
42 car and he'd be waiting outside and we wouldn't talk for a week.

43

44 I: Was your goal the OHL?

45

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46 P: I don't know if I really had a goal when I was younger. **I was just playing**
47 **because it was fun, and then once it got more competitive and serious the**
48 **older you got, then I actually realized...I don't know.** My mom was born in
49 [European country] and my dad was born in [European country] and none of them
50 really played sports. My dad just kind of picked up hockey to learn it so we could get
51 into it, and I mean anyone can really teach first timers to start skating, you don't
52 really need to know much. So I didn't really know too much about it, but eventually
53 as the years went on, got older, I wanted that, ya, for sure.

54

55 **I: Did you have an agent before the draft?**

56

57 **P: No.**

58

59 **I: Do you remember the day of the draft?**

60

61 **P: Ya. I didn't even get drafted.** The night before [OHL Team] called me and said
62 they would take me within the [round #s] and then the next day came and I was at a
63 practice for the [team name] the junior A team. The draft kept going on and people
64 kept getting updates, I eventually got off the ice and I still wasn't drafted and it was
65 the 10th round already so I was pretty rattled. And then the draft ended up finishing
66 and I didn't end up getting drafted.

67

68 **I: How'd you feel?**

69

70 **P: I was pretty upset.**

71

72 **I: Did you go home?**

73

74 **P: Oh ya. Of course I did. I went straight home, I was pretty upset because I was**
75 **expecting something, you know?**

76

77 **I: Ya, for sure. It's funny I talked to some guys and one guy told me he locked himself**
78 **in the shower and started crying...**

79

80 **P: Oh ya.**

81

82 **I: ...because he thought he was going to go higher.**

83

84 **P: I definitely started crying because I thought I was going to get drafted, and I didn't**
85 **even get drafted. I thought my world was over.**

86

87 **I: So what happened after that?**

88

89 **P: After that I just ended up playing...the 15 year old year that was my draft year I**
90 **was playing for the [team name] a junior A team and I actually got hit behind the**

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91 **net and was knocked out cold and ended up missing the rest of that year with**
92 **a concussion. And then the following year I played my midget year with the**
93 **[team name] and then after that year was up I got a try out with the [OHL**
94 **Team] the following training camp.**

95
96 I: So you were 16 or 17?

97
98 **P: I was 16 turning 17 that year.**

99
100 I: Do you remember going to camp? Were you nervous?

101
102 P: Ya I actually went with my buddy [player name] and I went with him and his mom
103 to camp, because I knew him and had grown up playing with him, went to school
104 with him in [school name]. We grew up going to school together and became really
105 good buddies so I got a try out with him, with [OHL Team] so my parents were
106 actually on a cruise at the time. So he offered to take me down with his mom.

107
108 I: Was he already on the team?

109
110 P: No he was drafted by them but didn't play his first year.

111
112 I: How did the camp go?

113
114 P: Went well. I was actually a defenseman at that point still. My whole life I was a
115 defenseman up until that point. I went to camp as a D-man. I don't know, I had a
116 good camp, I just kind of had to...**I said to myself I had to do something to set**
117 **myself apart from their draft picks and someone asked me to fight my first**
118 **inter-squad game and I did. I beat him up, did pretty well.**

119
120 I: Was that one of your first fights?

121
122 **P: Ya, actually it was [laughs]. Obviously in minor hockey you can't fight and in**
123 **junior A you get suspended for it so they don't really condone it.**

124
125 I: Were you fired up?

126
127 P: Ya I was [laughs]. I kind of felt bad for the guy because he was older than me and
128 he was trying to make a name for himself too and make the team. By the time we got
129 up to eat our meal his face was pretty messed up.

130
131 **I: Did you decide going in that you needed to fight to make this team?**

132
133 **P: No, it kind of just happened.** I was always kind of a blue collar guy, I always had
134 to work for everything and I'm pretty intense and competitive. I like hitting and
135 everything, I was just hitting out there and playing my game and then someone

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136 asked me to fight off the draw and I was like “ya sure” and then it ended up working
137 out well for me. I don’t know, my whole life has kind of been lucky like that, with
138 opportunities like that and I’ve just done well with them.

139

140 **I: So then you made the roster?**

141

142 **P: Ya. By the end of training camp, my parents were still on the cruise so I**
143 **couldn’t really get a hold of them. My one deal with them was that if I went to**
144 **camp I wouldn’t play in a game unless I was signed and got a school package**
145 **because obviously you give up your scholarship rights after right?**

146

147 **I: Your parents told you to do that?**

148

149 **P: Ya, so then after training camp was done we had our exhibition game**
150 **against [OHL Team] and [GM name] didn’t want to sign me, he wanted to see**
151 **how I did in the exhibition game first. So I said “well I can’t do it, I promised**
152 **my parents that if I came here the only way I would play is if I got a school**
153 **package. I promised them that so I can’t do it.”**

154

155 **I: What did he say?**

156

157 **P: He said “alright, I understand” and I ended up leaving that meeting and I**
158 **went back to the camp to pack my bags and I was going to leave that next**
159 **morning. The next morning when we woke up they wanted to sign me to a**
160 **contract and stuff. So I said I’ll sign and then played that next day.**

161

162 **I: So then he gave you a contract...**

163

164 **P: Ya [laughs]**

165

166 **I: Did he tell you what you would get for school?**

167

168 **P: \$5 grand a year.**

169

170 **I: That’s what he said? \$5 grand?**

171

172 **P: Ya.**

173

174 **I: Did he say anything about books?**

175

176 **P: Nope. He just told me that it’s a pretty good deal for a free agent. I didn’t**
177 **have an agent, [player name]’s Dad came in with me because my parents**
178 **weren’t there either. So he came in with me as my representative [laughs] and**
179 **he agreed because I think [player name] got \$5500 and I mean he was drafted**
180 **and stuff and I wasn’t drafted so \$5 thousand I thought was a fair deal.**

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181 I: What year was this?

182

183 P: 2006-07 season.

184

185 I: Now it's like for every year you play you get it covered, full tuition and books.

186

187 P: Holy shit, that would be nice.

188

189 I: Do you remember your first regular season game?

190

191 P: Yeah. Actually no I don't. I don't remember if we were home or away. I remember
192 my first exhibition game we went to [city] for training camp and we played the [OHL
193 Team] and I got an assist my first game so I was pretty pumped about that.

194

195 I: Do you remember your first fight?

196

197 P: Yes. It was at home in [OHL Team] we were playing [OHL Team] and I fought
198 [player name]. I fought him 6 times that year too.

199

200 I: How'd it go?

201

202 P: It went well. I cut him open over his right eye. It was [player name friend on
203 team]'s first fight too. He did really well against [player name].

204

205 I: Really?

206

207 P: Ya, I think then and there it kind of established...me and [player name friend on
208 team] were already pretty close, but when...we had something. I would get him
209 going and when he would fight it would get me going, you know? We both just fed
210 off each other.

211

212 I: Did you live with billets?

213

214 P: Me and [player name friend on team] lived together.

215

216 I: With a family?

217

218 P: Ya.

219

220 I: Was that good?

221

222 P: Ya, it was great. I had a couple different billet families. My first year they were
223 kind of struggling with billets so I was with [player name friend on team]
224 temporarily they said, because his billet only wanted one player. But it ended up
225 being February and I was still there. And then obviously as the trade deadline comes

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226 and they start moving guys they had more space, so then I went to another place
227 and I didn't like these billets. The following year I came I didn't want to live with
228 them because they were just in your face, as soon as I got home they would be like
229 "oh so what happened at the rink today? I heard this, I heard that" like...just shut up.
230 I just wanted to eat dinner. All they wanted to do was gossip. I moved out of that
231 place and moved into another place and they were awesome. But then the following
232 year I came back and they were having financial issues as a family, obviously they
233 don't get paid enough, the billet families, so it's not like they were breaking even, or
234 even making money with me. I mean they struggled to tell me but it was in the
235 summer one time when I was going by, they told me to come by and the mom talked
236 to me and stuff. They were so upset about it, but I mean obviously I wasn't mad
237 about it. Then I ended up moving in with [player name one team], [player name],
238 [player name], we had a 4 man billet house with grandparents. It was awesome.
239

240 I: How did your first year go?

241

242 P: Ya. I mean...I had to learn everything. As I said, I didn't get drafted. My parents
243 didn't really have the best background with hockey. My mom would always do her
244 research, she's the one who found out about playing and losing your scholarship to
245 the NCAA, so they were pretty smart about that. But I didn't know the hockey side of
246 it, you know?

247

248 I: Ya, for sure.

249

250 P: It was a learning experience for me the whole year.

251

252 I: It was different from what you were used to...

253

254 P: Ya, well I also, I went there and I went to [high school name in hometown] so
255 when I went there to [OHL Team] they had actually 2 schools. They had a private
256 school, just like [high school name in hometown] and a school just like everyone else
257 went to. In order for me to graduate, because I had one more year left at [high
258 school name in hometown] because I was going there since I was in grade 7, **so my
259 parents wanted me to go to the private school and take all their courses and
260 then I could transfer back here to [high school name in hometown] and
261 graduate.** So that's what I did.

262

263 I: What were you thinking at this point? What did you want to do with hockey?

264

265 **P: I wanted to make it my life. I mean I was a good student, I love school, I
266 could go back to school anytime I wanted, I really enjoyed it but I wanted to
267 make hockey my life.**

268

269 I: So then you came back for a second year?

270

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271 P: Yep. Quarter way through the second year we were losing to [OHL Team] one
272 game and the coaches put me on forward for a shift and I ended up scoring a goal,
273 ever since then I stuck forward. So it was a new learning curve for me. I had to learn
274 a new position that I never played before in my life, so it was like I was a rookie all
275 over again.

276
277 **I: Was your role the fighter at that point?**

278
279 **P: Ya. Like I said, when I made the team I fit myself into that by mistake, by**
280 **chance. You know the guys on the other team that you're potentially going to**
281 **fight, you know? But it's not really staged where you go and ask them during**
282 **warm up. I mean even here [professional league name] and my first game here**
283 **we were playing [team name] and I went over in warm up and asked him if he**
284 **would give me a go just because it was my first game, you know? Just give me a**
285 **chance. And we ended up getting at it, but usually it doesn't really happen like**
286 **that.**

287
288 **I: How did the rest of that second year go?**

289
290 **P: It went well, but by the end of it I was having some hip issues. I'd get up in the**
291 **morning, and I lived in the basement of the billet house and I'd barely be able to**
292 **walk up the steps. I had really bad hip issues, so I was getting therapy and stuff, but I**
293 **just played out the year. It got the point where I'd just come off and it would be the**
294 **intermission and we were sitting down and it'd be hard to just get up off my stall**
295 **and get it going again. That summer I ended up having hip surgery at [hospital**
296 **name] and by the time training camp rolled around again we were in [city]**
297 **and we were doing a bag skate, at the end I was on all fours in the corner**
298 **because I couldn't skate. My hip was messed up still. I ended up going home for**
299 **therapy for 4 weeks and then I tried a cortisone shot a couple times, and it would be**
300 **good for a week and then I wouldn't be able to walk again. I ended up having**
301 **another surgery, the hip is a new thing in the last 10 years, so there's only a**
302 **handful of really good surgeons. This one [doctor name] who is the [NFL team]**
303 **team doctor, he's a hip guru in North America, he's the one who teaches everyone**
304 **about it. He was coming to [OHL Team] to the [hospital name] to do a hip scope**
305 **seminar. He was doing 3 surgeries and I had did a lot of, me and [player name on**
306 **team] did a lot of community service there. It got to the point where I was going 3-4**
307 **times a week, just after practice, just to go there and help out. So once I heard he**
308 **was coming they knew I was having hip problems, they had the doctors there**
309 **actually look at x-rays and MRI's and stuff, and they were the ones who asked if I**
310 **wanted to have it done by [doctor name]. So they had to write a letter to the [city]**
311 **headquarters of [hospital name] because it's just a kids' hospital, and they had to get**
312 **it approved because I was over 19. They ended up doing that and I had my**
313 **surgery there, in [month] which saved my hockey career. Then I went home**
314 **and did 3 and half months of straight rehab, 6-7 days a week and I ended up**
315 **coming back and played the last [number] games of the year. But it was too**

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316 **hard to jump back into hockey at the end of the year**, it get's faster every game
317 from the beginning of the season. So then after our season ended I got to go play in
318 [team name] in the [pro league name] just to get some more games in. I did that, I
319 did pretty well and then I got an invite to [NHL team] camp that following year. I
320 went to [NHL Team]'s camp that following year and it kind of gets hairy the next
321 couple years after this. [laughs]

322

323 I: So you were done with [OHL Team]?

324

325 **P: No it was my third year with [OHL Team] and I had my hip surgery but at the**
326 **end of that year the GM for [NHL Team] saw me play for a bit and [coach name]**
327 **was our coach, he knew him.** So they talked about me, and he came to watch a
328 couple games but he wanted to see my play more because he didn't really see me
329 much because of my surgery. So he was the one who got me to go to [team name]. I
330 played there until the end of [team name]'s season, because the pro season is longer
331 than the junior season. I played [number] games, and then [GM name] brought me to
332 [NHL Team]'s camp that following year and so I was in [OHL Team] first for training
333 camp and **the day before I was supposed to leave, you know how they have a**
334 **bunch of exhibition games during training camp and stuff, so my coach had me**
335 **teach some of the younger guys who wanted to fight, and wanted to learn how**
336 **to fight, you know? And I was holding on to one of the guys and he fell and as**
337 **he fell I was hanging on, and my thumb snapped back. I thought I just sprained**
338 **it, you know I had the feeling in my hand, but I thought nothing was broken,**
339 **it's alright. I just sprained it. The next day I had to fly out to [tournament] I**
340 **didn't pass my physical because my hand was torn up. I torn my ulner**
341 **collateral ligament it's called and got sent home the next day, didn't even**
342 **participate.** I only got to participate in two practices. It was my first opportunity to
343 battle back, after my two surgeries, I was really excited, you know? And then I was
344 just crushed. **So I came home back to [OHL Team] rehabbed for 8 weeks and**
345 **this is my 4th year, my over age year. I started playing, my first 3 games, was**
346 **playing really well and then ---**

347

348 P: I ended up going back to [pro league]. The year before I went, well that same
349 coach was still there. Played [number] games there, and **then I got stepped on my**
350 **wrist with a skate.** It ended my season. I woke up the next morning and **had**
351 **hooks coming out of each finger nail, and fishing wire coming down. I thought I**
352 **hit rock bottom there. 2 surgeries, [NHL camp], and now I messed up my hand.**
353 **It was the worst year of my life.**

354

355 I: How frustrating was that?

356

357 P: Oh ya. I was so messed up mentally. **I was definitely depressed. After that,**
358 **because it gets even worse. So I rehabbed, I ended up having my shoulder**
359 **done at the same time as my hand because my shoulder was already messed**
360 **up.** So then I rehab after all that, a whole summer of rehab and then I got a chance to

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361 go to the [NHL Team] camp, and I'm from [city] it's my hometown so I was fucking
362 pumped, right? I got invited to the rookie camp only. So I go to their rookie camp
363 and they have that tournament in [city] and I play in that and do well, and they
364 ended up inviting me to main camp. **My first practice in main camp I get a puck to**
365 **the face and loose my 2 front teeth, which is fine, not a big deal.** And then I
366 make it to the very last day of camp and things were going great, I was doing
367 amazing in the inter-squad games and everything. I didn't get any exhibition games
368 but I was still there. **Then on the very last day they released me and didn't really**
369 **say anything. I was so upset, because I thought for sure I was going to get**
370 **something. Literally I went home that night, it was a Friday, I slept on it,**
371 **Saturday I woke up and booked a flight out to [city], Sunday morning I left to**
372 **[city] and went to [CIS University]. I was 3-4 weeks late, the school year had**
373 **already started you know? So I went to [city] with my hockey gear, I didn't**
374 **even have a backpack yet, and a bag full of clothes. I showed up there, didn't**
375 **have a clue, these guys just put me in a residence on campus, didn't have a**
376 **backpack. I had to go buy a backpack, buy my books and then get someone to**
377 **show me around campus. I haven't been in school for 3 years now full time you**
378 **know? I was so lost...so lost.**

379

380 I: When did you decide to go to school?

381

382 P: Well I had it set up just in case, as a **back up plan.** I didn't really want to go, I just
383 did it to make my parents happy. So I had that already all set up throughout the
384 summer, but I was thinking I was going to get something from [NHL Team] to play
385 pro. So I didn't end up getting anything from [NHL Team], I could of gone to play in
386 the ECHL league and play for [team] right away but I didn't want to. I was just in
387 another world. **I was still mentally screwed up. I just said "fuck it" I just wanted**
388 **to get out of town, just leave everything and just find myself. Just to see what**
389 **happens. After all that stuff I was thinking something is telling me I shouldn't**
390 **be doing this with my life, you know? So I did that, finally found my way with**
391 **school, did really well in school, played the season out, but the ECHL coach**
392 **kept in touch with me and he kind of fell in love with me.** I was still young, I was
393 [age] but I got to know him really well because the [pro league] wasn't the best pro
394 league, I was the youngest guy in the whole league. So he kind of took a liking to me.
395 **And then I went to [CIS University] for the year and then February came**
396 **around, the end of the CIS season, so once the season ended I already had a**
397 **flight booked out. We had a Friday/Saturday game and that ended our season**
398 **and I had a flight booked out on Sunday morning. So I packed up my whole**
399 **apartment at [CIS University] I just left it all there [laughs] because I had to go**
400 **back to write exams after, I didn't just want to throw away the semester. I still**
401 **had my apartment rented until the end of April. I just left all my stuff there in**
402 **my apartment, I went to the rink, grabbed my gear and then I called my [CIS**
403 **University] coach while I was at the airport to tell him I was leaving and that I**
404 **was going to play pro.** And their like "woah, woah, why don't you come in and we'll
405 talk about, you're a big part of the team, we don't want you to just leave" and I'm like

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406 "I'm really sorry, it's too late, I'm already in the airport about to board my flight"
407 [laughs] so they were kind of pissed about that. The assistant coach understood, I
408 still keep in contact with him. So then I went to [pro league team] played out the rest
409 of the year there, had a blast, did well. The day the season ended I left, went back to
410 [CIS University] and I had 6 exams to write.

411 I: How'd you do?

412

413 P: I talked to all my profs before I left, and because I was doing so well in school
414 before I left, they understood. So they were keeping up with him while I was in [pro
415 league team] and when I came back I basically sat down with each prof and they
416 gave me a crash course for that last term that I missed. I did well, I passed all 6
417 exams. I had an 89% average. I stayed out there for the summer because I bike a lot
418 and [city] is unbelievable. I stayed out there. Before I even left [pro league team] I
419 was talking to [player name]'s dad, because he knows hockey and he knows my
420 whole story. And I was in another place, in [city] I'd wake up every morning and I'd
421 have to go to class, but **I'd wake up and start crying and I didn't know why. I had**
422 **to go see a psychologist, I told my coaches about it. So I went to see a**
423 **psychologist once a week about it while I was there. The people that know me**
424 **from [CIS city] don't really know me, because they saw a different person of**
425 **me, you know? So that was tough. But I just knew, every month I kept talking**
426 **to the coach and all I thought about was hockey. Sometimes I wouldn't go to**
427 **class because I'd just go to the rink and workout or go on the ice, or something**
428 **you know? I knew I wanted to keep playing, so that was a good sign, because**
429 **that's why I went there, you know? To figure out if I still wanted to keep doing**
430 **that after all the shit that happened.**

431

432 I: It sounds like you learned a lot there.

433

434 P: Ya, I learned a lot about myself out there. I think if none of that stuff ever
435 happened to me I wouldn't be playing hockey right now. So I went there to figure my
436 shit out, but then I went back for the summer, took a couple more courses and just
437 lived out there for the summer. **I just enjoyed a summer without having a**
438 **surgery for once, you know? I enjoyed it. I went back [to pro league] after the**
439 **summer, got ready for training camp. In [month] of that year I broke my hand.**
440 **I got jumped in a fight and the guy had his helmet on and I hit his helmet a**
441 **couple times and I broke my hand.** It still looks...look at what my hand looks like
442 [shows hand] after two surgeries that's as straight as my fingers can go. It won't go
443 straight. Even though that happened, I wasn't mad about it at all but it wasn't
444 something I could of controlled, you know? It was a freak accident, my hand broke,
445 not a big deal, and **I still had a great year, the most fun year of hockey I ever**
446 **had.** After that year I stayed out in [pro league team] for the summer and **had two**
447 **surgeries on my hand, just hung out.** Then I went back to training camp and I
448 played in my first game and I hit someone at center ice and got suspended. We had
449 way too many guys on our roster, and you could only keep a certain amount of guys
450 and in order to serve a suspension you have to be on the active roster, so my coach

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451 said he would have to release a guy in order for me to be on the roster and serve my
452 suspension, which he didn't think was fair. And this was my 5th season with him so I
453 was really close with the guy. **He told me it was the hardest thing he had to do**
454 **but he had to trade me because he couldn't keep me on the roster and take up**
455 **someone's spot because of the suspension I had to serve.** So he ended up trading
456 me to [pro league team] where the assistant coach there was a buddy I had played
457 with. So I had the connection there and he knew it would be a good spot for me, so I
458 went there. I played there and then I got called up to [pro league team] and I've been
459 here in [pro league team] until now.

460
461 I: So what now?

462
463 P: **Well now I'm playing in [pro league team] and it's been a while and it felt**
464 **great when they told me I got called up, you know? It's been a great**
465 **opportunity because they've been talking to my coaches for about a month**
466 **before they called me up, because they didn't just want to call me up on a**
467 **Friday and throw me right to the fire and play.** So they were waiting for a good
468 time to bring me in and I could practice for 3 or 4 days first. After all-star break they
469 had one game and then they didn't play again for another week so they called me up
470 after that. So I practiced all week and then got into it, into the game and I'm still
471 here.

472
473 I: That's good.

474
475 P: [smiles]...ya.

476
477 I: If you had a kid and he could go to the NCAA or to the CHL where would you tell
478 him to go?

479
480 P: I mean, I don't have any regrets. Although it's kind of been a shitty ride, I wouldn't
481 take anything back, you know? To me, having an education is huge. Especially
482 nowadays you can't get a regular job without having a degree, and a regular degree
483 is nothing these days. I don't know. I don't know. I mean, it's worked out for me so
484 far, you know? So I don't know if I would change it, but college is awesome too. I
485 have so many friends who played in college, but I think if you want to make your life
486 out of hockey, I would still send them the major junior route. **But I would send him**
487 **to the WHL, not the OHL. I don't like David Branch.**

488
489 I: Do you think players need a union?

490
491 P: Ya. **It's like child slavery down there. It's a joke...\$50 dollars a week? In [OHL**
492 **Team] too actually, you'd get \$50 dollars a week,** but then guys who drive would
493 get gas money every week, and they drive guys to school and everything. Well, let's
494 say [player name] was driving me to school every morning, our GM would take
495 money out of my \$50 dollars a week to pay gas for [player name]'s gas money,

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496 which isn't right. They weren't supposed to be doing that, you know? But as a kid, I
497 made the team, I was just trying to fly under the radar. You're not going to say shit.
498 **Now that I'm older, I realize that was bullshit. We were getting paid \$50**
499 **dollars a week, getting taxed on that and then he's taking money out to pay**
500 **guys for gas money when he [GM] should be paying for it? It was brutal.**
501 Eventually, once a new GM came in he straightened that out and it wasn't happening
502 anymore but that was bullshit. Once a week you'd get a pay check for \$80 bucks and
503 then the second week is when they would take the gas money, so I was getting pay
504 checks for \$52 bucks for every 2 weeks.

505
506 I: Does it ever worry you about everything you hear in the news about hockey
507 injuries lately?

508
509 P: **I'm just coming back from a concussion right now.**

510
511 I: How does that feel?

512
513 P: You know, it's weird. I've always heard guys talk about it but I didn't really...I was
514 just like "oh...alright" but **there's pressure behind my eyes, pressure in my skull,**
515 **I felt like puking every time I woke up, I couldn't focus.** Like if I was talking to
516 you right now last week...if you were talking to me I would be listening to you and
517 looking at the screen, but I really wouldn't be able to tell you what I was looking at
518 on the screen, I would just be gazing at nothing. So that was kind of weird, but I'm
519 better now.

520
521 I: It just slowly goes away?

522
523 P: Ya. **They are really cautious about it here. They don't let you do anything**
524 **until you're symptom free for 3 days.** Then they start you on a light 20 minute
525 bike ride and if you're good you go on a 30 minute bike ride, and then if you're good
526 you do sprints, a workout, and then even more sprints, and then a harder workout.
527 Then you start skating on your own, then you start skating with the team and then
528 you do an impact test and if you're good you can start playing.

529
530 I: Are the pro minor leagues really different from the CHL?

531
532 P: Ya. I mean...**the CHL, it's the time of your life. It's the best time in hockey**
533 **you'll ever have because you have absolutely no responsibility. You're a big**
534 **deal in your town because you're 17 years old and you go to high school...and**
535 **people...you don't really get it then. But when you look back at it...I mean**
536 **everyone wishes they could go back to their junior days, because you have no**
537 **responsibility and you're just playing hockey. All your friends back home**
538 **think it's awesome, it's cool. But once you move on and play pro, it's a job. It's**
539 **not just fun and games. It is fun but there are times during the season when**
540 **it's not fun at all and you hate it because certain things happen. When you're**

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541 getting paid, you don't make that much money but still if you're making \$600 bucks
542 a week and you have another guy making \$1000 bucks a week, and the guy who is
543 making \$600 bucks a week is playing well and producing more you're going to get
544 released or you're pay is going to get bumped down, you know? So it's pretty
545 stressful, and as soon as you turn pro, I was talking to someone about this a couple
546 weeks ago, **it's stressful because every single day is a job interview for you,**
547 **especially as you move higher.** They watch everything on video from every game,
548 they don't miss anything. The way your skates are turning, the way your stick is,
549 they watch you every practice, they're evaluating you because there's thousands of
550 players in the world, hundreds of thousands of players who want to take your job.
551 So every single day there's a guy working just as hard as you, if not harder to steal
552 your job, so everyday they're evaluating you, it's like a job interview.

553

554 **I: It sounds like you've come to terms with the fact that this is your job.**

555

556 **P: Yep.**

557

558 **I: When did you realize that?**

559

560 **P: This year. When I got traded.** When I got traded I was like "oh...it is just a
561 business" you need to put a winning team on the ice whether you're close with the
562 guy or you just met him. That's when I realized that the best players are going to
563 play and if you're not competing and if you're not doing as well as you should be,
564 someone else is going to take your job. That's when I realized it is just a job. You
565 can't go to work everyday and not do your job, just sit at your desk and go on
566 Facebook all day, because you would get fired. And if you don't come to work
567 everyday at the rink, at practice, you're going to get traded or you're going to get
568 released.

569

570 **I: Do you think the CHL is a big business?**

571

572 **P: I mean...it is for them. Not for the players. For them, they make a lot of**
573 **money. It's the best junior league in the world. They make a lot of money off**
574 **the players. They hire a bunch of interns every year that they don't have to**
575 **pay, they pay their real employees shit and they work like dogs.**

Interview #11/Participant #11

Guelph, ON

March 15, 2013

1 I: What is your earliest memory of ever playing hockey?

2

3 P: My first memory is sitting on the ice in a skating lesson, I think I was 5 or
4 something like that. I was crying because I hated it, I hated being out there and I
5 hated skating.

6

7 I: You played when you were younger?

8

9 P: Ya, I played house league in [city].

10

11 I: Did you ask to keep playing?

12

13 P: Ya, I just wanted to keep playing. I think the first year I had to be convinced, and
14 then from then on I wanted to keep playing and never quit from there.

15

16 I: Did you realize at a certain point that your talent was different from your friends,
17 or from others on your team?

18

19 P: After my third year of double A I realized that I could really do something with
20 this. I had all the necessary skills.

21

22 I: You were doing well?

23

24 P: Ya, I was doing well. I was a leader on my team. Both by scoring points and as a
25 person. I thought I could make something out of it.

26

27 I: Did you play triple A?

28

29 P: Ya, I played triple A for 7 years.

30

31 I: And what was your goal in triple A?

32

33 P: Once I was in triple A I wanted to win the [tournament] with my team obviously,
34 **but on a personal level it was to get drafted in the first round to the OHL.**

35

36 I: Did you have an agent before the draft?

37

38 P: Ya, I met with [agency name] half way through the season in minor midget.

39

40 I: They approached you?

41

42 P: Ya, they came to be and asked to represent me and my career as I went forward.

43

44 I: Did you have a good feeling about being drafted?

45

Interview #11/Participant #11

Guelph, ON

March 15, 2013

46 P: Ya. Teams had been talking to me. I think I talked to almost every team. My agents
47 were obviously in my ear saying "this is where we project you, this is what other
48 teams think of you" they kind of gave me an idea how I was ranked and what teams
49 thought.

50

51 I: What team did you think you were going to?

52

53 P: I had no idea.

54

55 I: Usually when I talk to players they say that they thought for certain they were
56 going to this team and then they end up going to a completely different team.

57

58 **P: That's kind of what it was like, but I never had an idea of what team really**
59 **wanted me.**

60

61 I: Was there a team you wanted to go to?

62

63 **P: I didn't have a preference. Not too far up north and nowhere in the states.**

64

65 I: Can you walk me through the day of the draft?

66

67 P: I was at the [tournament] and we were actually in [city] at the University campus
68 and I woke up and it was a normal day at camp. We all got breakfast together and
69 then went to the rink for practice. I think it was around 10:30am and practice was
70 about to begin, and I was getting dressed, sitting there with all the guys. Everybody
71 had their phones out looking at the draft list.

72

73 I: Were you looking at it?

74

75 P: I wasn't looking at it. I was just sitting there ready for practice, you know? I
76 wanted to make this team. I was sitting there and getting dressed, I put my helmet
77 on and actually one of the guys looked at the draft list and was like "[OHL Team]'s
78 up next" and my best buddy from home turns to me and goes "oh yeah, you're going
79 to them for sure" and then sure enough my name gets picked.

80

81 I: How did you feel when you saw your name?

82

83 P: I felt relieved because I noticed I slipped out of the [round #].

84

85 I: This was what the [round #] now?

86

87 P: Ya, I was expecting...not expecting, but I really wanted to go in [round #]. You
88 know? I was starting to get a little worried about how far I'd slip and then sure
89 enough when they picked me I was extremely happy because it's close to home and
90 it's a great organization. I pulled out my phone and got a call from [GM].

Interview #11/Participant #11
Guelph, ON
March 15, 2013

91

92 I: So he called you and what'd he say?

93

94 **P: Ya, he called me and he was just like "we're happy to have selected you, we**
95 **expect a lot out of you."**

96

97 I: And you were in the dressing room?

98

99 P: Ya, I was in the dressing room, fully dressed in my equipment. I had to step out on
100 the ice to I was like "actually, I have to go right now, I have practice, maybe we can
101 get together because I'm in [city] right now" [laughs]

102

103 I: What did your teammates say to you?

104

105 P: They all congratulated me.

106

107 I: Did anyone else get drafted on that team?

108

109 P: Ya, I think 8 or 9 of us got drafted.

110

111 I: And then you went and practiced?

112

113 P: Ya. For that team it was all the high rated prospects so they all got drafted.

114

115 I: You went to camp that year?

116

117 P: Ya, I went to camp.

118

119 I: How was that?

120

121 P: ...Scary.

122

123 I: Scary?

124

125 P: Scary. I was out there with guys that were a lot bigger than me and a lot stronger.

126

127 I: This was main camp or rookie camp?

128

129 P: Main camp. Rookie camp for us is just fitness testing and that wasn't too bad, I felt
130 comfortable there and I knew a bunch of guys. That was alright.

131

132 I: Did you know anyone at main camp?

133

Interview #11/Participant #11

Guelph, ON

March 15, 2013

134 P: Ya, I knew a couple of guys. Some of the older guys I had known just from my
135 previous coach, but I wasn't exactly comfortable. I'm not the most social guy there,
136 so I kind of kept quiet.

137

138 I: How were the older guys?

139

140 P: They were really welcoming, at least the guys that were going to be on my
141 team. Some of the older guys that had started to move on to the AHL they were
142 kind of still stuck in the mode of treating rookies badly, not being the nicest
143 and picking on them. It's been key for our team to change that.

144

145 I: So it was just intimidating and seeing all the older guys?

146

147 P: Very. Especially guys that were drafted to the NHL. You know, you got to
148 have a lot of respect for them.

149

150 I: You made the roster?

151

152 P: Yep, I made the roster.

153

154 I: Do you remember finding out or was it that they just didn't tell you that you were
155 going home?

156

157 P: Well I had signed in the summer with them. They were a really young team.

158

159 I: You signed your contract before camp?

160

161 P: Yep.

162

163 I: Do you remember that day? Signing?

164

165 P: Ya. That was all a surprise. I was with my mom she said we had to go to
166 [agency] and talk to them, that they needed to talk to me for some reason. So I
167 get there and sure enough they just have a contract sitting there on the table
168 for me to sign. And they said "well if you want to, go ahead and sign it now and
169 we'll get it to [OHL Team] as soon as we can" they ran me through the contract.

170

171 I: Did they say anything about the education package?

172

173 P: Ya. So for every year you play you get...

174

175 I: Yep, that's right.

176

177 P: You used to have to negotiate your education package.

178

Interview #11/Participant #11
Guelph, ON
March 15, 2013

179 **PM: There still is negotiating. Not everyone gets the full package. Some people**
180 **get the residence, the books and tuition, some get books and tuition. Some**
181 **guys get the 4 years guaranteed right away. Some guys it's year to year. It all**
182 **depends what he's negotiated with the manager.**

183

184 I: Is his guaranteed?

185

186 PM: [nods yes]

187

188 I: Not that you'll need it.

189

190 P: Hopefully.

191

192 I: After you signed it how did you feel?

193

194 P: I was the happiest guy in the world. It was just such a relief. Obviously you're
195 worried, you really want to make the team.

196

197 I: And it was just a surprise?

198

199 P: Ya, my mom and dad both had planned it out that they were going to surprise me
200 without telling me.

201

202 PM: Ya, I knew when I talked to his agent, but I didn't tell him. I just told him it was a
203 meeting. I didn't tell him they were signing him.

204

205 I: How did that first season go?

206

207 **P: First season went well, I played really well.**

208

209 I: And you're with the same billets now that you were in your first year?

210

211 P: Ya. I enjoyed it there, they're good people.

212

213 I: You go to school here?

214

215 P: Yep, all the high school kids go to [high school name].

216

217 I: Do you all hang out together there?

218

219 P: Ya, all the time.

220

221 I: How did it go hockey wise? An adjustment?

222

Interview #11/Participant #11

Guelph, ON

March 15, 2013

223 P: It went well. **A big adjustment. It's faster and much more physical, there's**
224 **less time out there. Everybody is just that much better and quicker, and**
225 **everything happens in a split second. It's definitely a tough adjustment if**
226 **you're not prepared for it. It can be really shocking to some players.**
227

228 I: What was your goal in first year?
229

230 P: First year it was just to leave a lasting impression on the coaches that made them
231 want to keep me and made them want to respect me as a player and want to play me
232 in key situations.
233

234 I: Did you think about the NHL a little bit? Or start to?
235

236 P: Not first year, no. I was never thinking about it. Obviously you have dreams and
237 goals to set for yourself. **You want to get drafted, but it was always in the very**
238 **back of my mind.**
239

240 I: Now maybe it's a little more at the front?
241

242 P: Now it's at the front. I'm definitely thinking of where I want to go and how high I
243 think can be then some of the other guys.
244

245 I: Does it consume your mind or can you detach?
246

247 P: I just detach from it. I never think about it.
248

249 I: You don't let it interfere with your hockey now...
250

251 P: Ya.
252

253 **I: Do you think you should be getting paid more?**
254

255 **P: I don't think so. I can live off the money they give me. I think for guys with**
256 **cars, they need a little bit more because it is pretty expensive with the amount**
257 **of gas they use. Some guys that drive us to school consume a lot of gas, it can**
258 **cost a lot of money.**
259

260 I: What if they started giving players more money, but put it into a savings account.
261 You'd still get \$50 bucks. And since they do have that money. I'm not trying to
262 convince you, I'm just asking if you deserve it...
263

264 P:ya. **I mean there's a lot of sacrifice that we have to take. Also with**
265 **everything that we do, we put a lot of time and effort into the hockey and we**
266 **play for the coaches and the organization. They're making lots of money.**

Interview #11/Participant #11

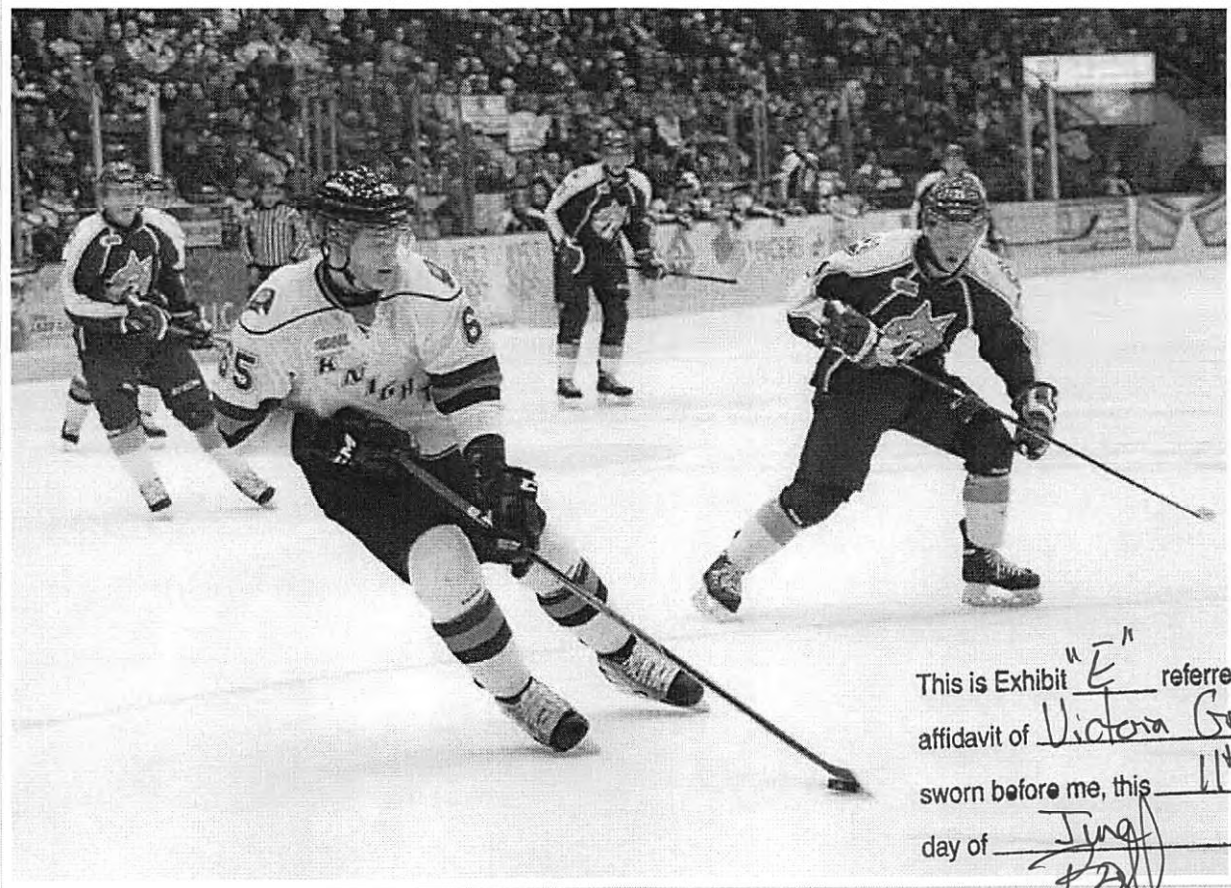
Guelph, ON

March 15, 2013

267 **Maybe it would be nice for us to get a little extra. We're trying to represent**
268 **them, you know, it could be like a little thank you.**
269

What the \$%&! is going on with major junior hockey?: An open letter to David Branch

vickygrygar / March 18, 2015



This is Exhibit "E" referred to in the affidavit of Victoria Grygar sworn before me, this 11th day of June, 2016
[Signature]
 A commissioner for taking affidavits

Image

from: http://storage.iframe.com/v1/dynamic_resize/sws_path/su/ns-prod-images/1297521128376_ORIGINAL.jpg?quality=80&size=650x&stmp=1391229714667

Dear Mr. Branch,

What is going on with major junior hockey? No, seriously, what the \$%&! is going on with major junior hockey?

We know each other. Over the past several years I have sent you multiple correspondences, and our names have appeared in many of the same newspaper articles. We share a commitment to the wellbeing of CHL players. We believe in supporting young, elite athletes. You are an honest person—someone who is attuned to the needs and vulnerabilities of your players. But many of those within, and outside, of the hockey world have not witnessed you acting that way.

I am contacting you today in a form you seem to prefer: an open letter. I'm asking you the following (familiar) questions in an open letter because whenever they are posed to you otherwise, you refuse to provide straightforward answers, let alone answers at all. We're in the dark here.

Without answers and communication, and with deceptive information appearing in the media, people are getting increasingly frustrated and angry. Meanwhile, the CHL has continued to do as they've always done, even when it seems irrational to do so. The possibility of the CHL taking the initiative to adapt its existing business model to the realities of contemporary society is becoming more remote. All signs seem to be pointing to disaster, Mr. Branch—I sincerely don't think that's what you want to happen.

Can you please clarify the following?

1) You and I both know that the reimbursement plan CHL players receive is insufficient. You've attempted to address this issue before, just last year, by replacing the word 'stipend' with 'reimbursement', and altering its distribution from weekly to monthly. Many individuals have insisted on a league-wide increase to a more appropriate minimum.

Now you're speaking to the media and saying CHL players are thoroughly supported and that there is no need for improvement because "nobody does it better". Your interviews have included absurd claims that every player can see through. I'll spare you a catalogue of the colourful responses I've heard.

So, which is it? You are portraying the league as an angelic, invincible and morally grounded institution, yet you have failed to adjust player reimbursement for over 35 years, as if these players are merely cheap cogs in a machine.

I know that's not how you see them. Can you please just confirm your longstanding commitment to the wellbeing of your players and admit that player reimbursement must go up? Is it really your position that the amount they currently receive is fair? I can't believe that's the case. And if not now, after 35 years, when?

2) You know how the education package is structured.We spent over a year (indirectly) discussing the relationship of import players to the rest of the package, as well as eligibility restrictions players must adhere to—something the media have not yet accurately portrayed, largely due to your own knowing misstatements.

Several players, parents and agents have issued joint recommendations regarding the 18-24 month claim period.

You know that, unless the structure of the education package fundamentally changes, proposed amendments to player benefits are meaningless. Will you state that publicly and stop focusing on the millions of dollars the league spends on players' tuition each year? This is a dishonest message, and you know that.

3) The numbers you've more or less relayed to the public regarding league revenue are flawed in many ways. You know that, because team and league financial records are inaccessible. When revenues have been discussed with you, many highly acclaimed journalists, including Stephen Brunt, freely admitted the problems with the way the league is financially operating, and the problem with player benefits more generally.

The distortions are obvious. Journalists, lawyers, bankers, researchers, alumni and your very own players have all easily exposed the ridiculousness of your assertions. I know you to be a person uninterested in deception. Please provide the necessary context for the financial health of the league or stop misguiding us.

I believe that the issues the CHL is currently encountering can be settled relatively easily if the league simply does the things you've known for years it needs to do.

Increase player reimbursement. It's been 35 years!

Stop using whatever terms suit your needs to define players. In 2009, Hockey Canada bylaws defined CHL players as

10/06/2016

What the \$%&! is going on with major junior hockey?: An open letter to David Branch | Hockey in Society

"professional", in 2011 this changed to "non-professional", most recently I have heard you adamantly use the words "amateur" and "student-athlete". Pick one—stick with it.^[1]

(TIP: Just call them "major junior" players. Despite your thesaurus trickery, this is what everyone calls them anyways. So, do us all a favour and quit reinventing the dictionary, it's not necessary. "Major junior" works—trust us on this one.)

Finally, stop applying restrictions to the education packages—anyone with a moral compass knows that's wrong.

If I could take your word that these things would happen without public pressure, I would. Unfortunately, this is not the case. You and I both agree that unionization is not an appropriate response. As with ALL organizations, unions suffer from their own structural deficiencies. Moreover, the way in which Unifor attempted to play "CHL hero" last summer was disreputable and out of line with basic union principles. Like yourself, Jerry Dias has much to be ashamed of. You are both individuals in high positions of power—yet have failed/refused to use this power in an honest and impactful way.

It should come as no surprise that I have a high degree of skepticism regarding the CHL's self-capacity to implement necessary changes. This cynicism is certainly not mine alone.

The CHL's attitude breeds rigidity and an arrogant disregard for the changing nature of sport. Complacency is not a recipe for a competitive, healthy organization and you know this. If the league continues to ignore the rapidly changing circumstances of business and sport—then expect to (further) go the way of the dinosaur. Adapting may be difficult, but it is not impossible.

Mr. Branch, you occupy a position that gives you the ability to implement overdue changes and produce positive results. The only thing that remains is whether or not you are willing to do so. As always, what's right is right.

Sincerely,

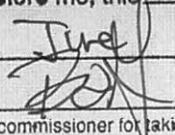
Vicky Grygar
Ph.D. Student
University of Toronto

^[1] I highly advise against any combination of "amateur" and "student-athlete" for two main reasons:

- 1) The NCAA has relied upon amateurism for decades longer than you. As per NCAA bylaws, remuneration of any kind directly violates the rules of amateurism (e.g., CHL reimbursement plan). But, none of this really matters anyways considering that just a few months ago, in the Ed O'Bannon v. NCAA case, Senior District Judge Claudia Wilken ruled that the NCAA has historically used amateurism in a malleable fashion, sometimes in significant and contradictory ways. In a court of law, the "amateurism" defense is no longer viable. Please take note—this will only serve you in the long run.
- 2) The CHL is a hockey league, not an institution of higher learning. You know, perhaps better than anyone, that players are not governed by any stipulations requiring them to attend school. As such, many of them don't. It goes without saying then, that calling them "student-athletes" is also a grave misrepresentation.

LAST YEAR IN THE JACK

It will be a year full of memories and celebration!

This is Exhibit "F" referred to in the
affidavit of Victoria Goyger
sworn before me, this 11th
day of June, 2016

A commissioner for taking affidavits



CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP
AVAILABLE INVENTORY
2013-2014 SEASON

NIAGARA ICEDOGS

35 Queen Street, St. Catharines
905.687.3641





IceDogs In The News

Pair of IceDogs Ranked in NHL Central Scouting 2013 Midterm Entry Draft Rankings

IceDogs forwards Carter Verhaeghe (122nd among North American skaters) and Anthony DiFruscia (184th among North American skaters) both cracked NHL Central Scouting's Midterm rankings ahead of June's NHL Entry Draft in New Jersey.

Trio of IceDogs Part of Team Canada at 2013 World Junior Hockey Championship

Ryan Strome and Dougie Hamilton were both named to their second straight Team Canada World Junior roster, while Brett Ritchie would also be selected. The trio of Team Canada members would give the IceDogs the most players from a single team on Team Canada for the second straight year.

Ground is Broken on the New St. Catharines Spectator Facility

Another exciting step in the process of the New St. Catharines Spectator Facility took place in December of 2012 when the official groundbreaking was held. The IceDogs new future home is well underway and will be completed for September of 2014.

IceDogs Well Represented in Eastern Conference Coaches Poll

The IceDogs were extremely well represented in the Eastern Conference Coaches Poll once again, being named in seven categories, with a conference best five of those rankings being first place. Ryan Strome led all players by being named in six categories, including four first place finishes, while Brett Ritchie also picked up a first place ranking.

Dougie Hamilton Makes the Jump to NHL Bruins

After being a key member of the IceDogs during the first half of the OHL season, the IceDogs would see Dougie Hamilton make the jump to the NHL once the NHL lockout ended in early January. Hamilton has been a key part of the Boston Bruins during the shortened season and created a great deal of excitement in both Boston and Niagara with his play.

IceDogs Begin Youth Movement in Preparation for New Facility

While the IceDogs may not have enjoyed quite the level of success that they had in the previous two years, they did enjoy a solid season despite making a move towards youth. With their moves at the deadline, the IceDogs finished the 2012/13 season with one of, if not the youngest team in the OHL. The IceDogs featured a league high five 1996 born players on their roster and another eight 1995 born players. With those players continued development over the coming years, combined with what should be another strong group of draft picks, the IceDogs are well situated for their move into the new Spectator Facility in September of 2014.

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AVAILABLE INVENTORY 2013-2014

Market Profile

Population: 431,346 in the Niagara Region

Arena Capacity: 2,741 (Including Standing room - 3,145)

Television Broadcast: TVCogeco

Radio Broadcast: 610 CKTB

Website: www.niagaraicedogs.net

Attendance: The average attendance during the 2012/2013 regular season was 3,046 per game. The IceDogs sold-out both of their home games in the playoffs. Total attendance during the 2012/2013 season was almost 110,000.

TV Coverage: TVCogeco televised 33 of 34 regular season home games and both playoff home games during the 2012/2013 season (other home game was broadcast on Rogers Sportsnet, where the IceDogs were featured a total of three times in 2012/13). TVCogeco has an average of over 70,000 viewers watching an IceDogs game every week.

The Region: There are twelve municipalities that make up the region of Niagara. The Regional Municipality of Niagara receives up to twelve million visitors each year, so there is no shortage of people passing through the area which may want to take in a Major Junior hockey game.

Major Junior Hockey: Major Junior hockey, and more specifically the Canadian Hockey League (CHL), is the most attended Sport Entertainment Property in Canada. In 2011/2012, 8.4 million fans attended CHL games. That was more fans than all of the Canadian franchises in the NHL, AHL, NBA and CFL combined.

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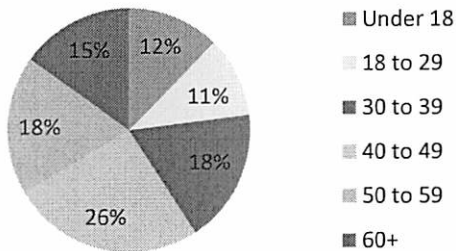




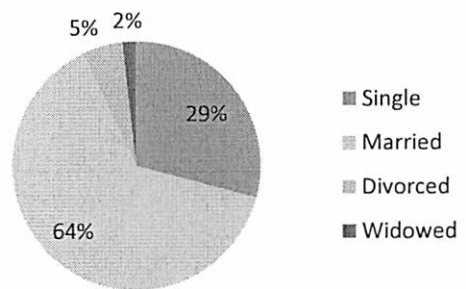
Demographics

The following charts outline the demographics of the Niagara IceDogs fan base. 59% of IceDogs fans are 40 years of age or older. 64% are married and 62% live in a household of 3 or more. 45% of our fans have a minimum household income of \$75,000 and 58% have at least post secondary education.

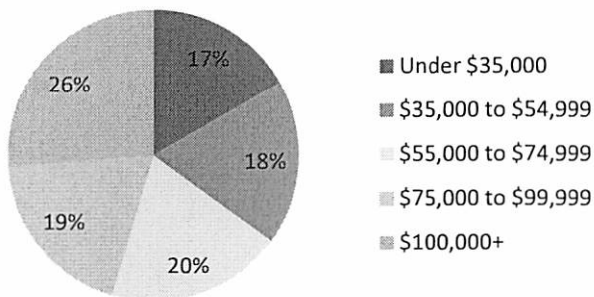
Age



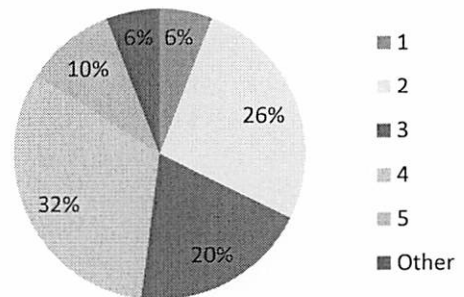
Marital Status



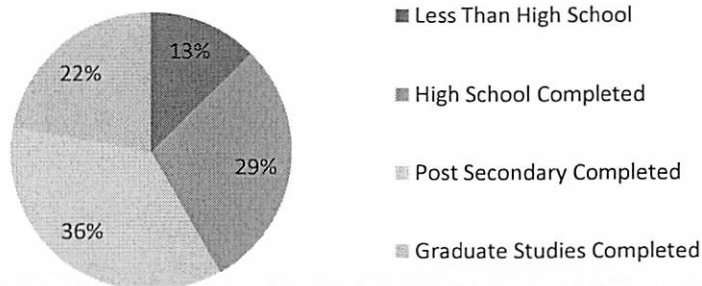
Annual Household Income



Household Size



Education



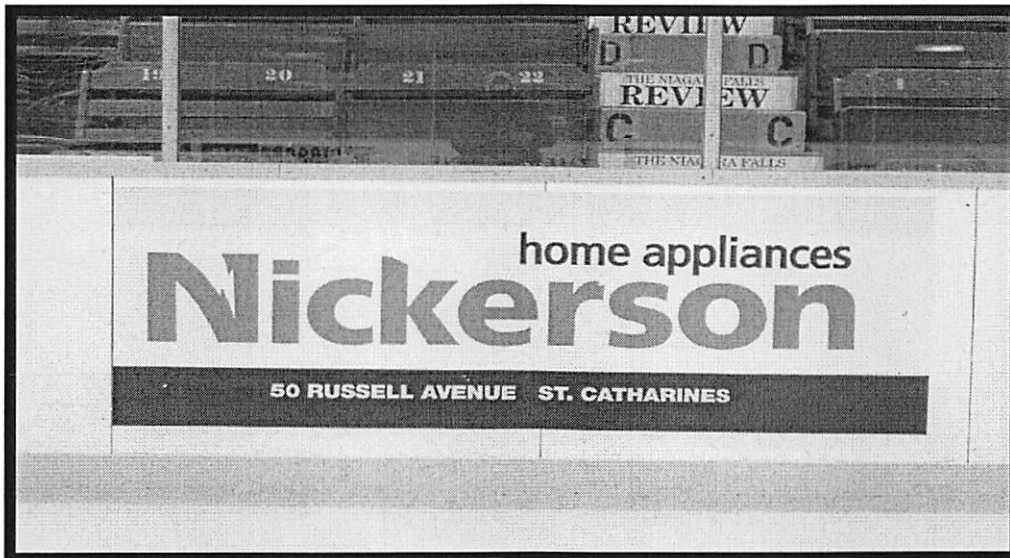
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AVAILABLE INVENTORY

2013-2014

RINKBOARD SIGNS



- Rinkboards remain one of the most popular in-arena advertising properties.
- Rinkboards are the most visible signage located directly in the action with maximum exposure created during games. All IceDogs home games are televised on TVCogeco.
- Rinkboards are also visible during all other ice rentals during the winter.
- Rinkboards range from \$4,000 to \$5,000.

ON CAMERA AVAILABLE: 1

OFF CAMERA AVAILABLE: 4

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AVAILABLE INVENTORY

2013-2014

BACKLIT SIGNS



- There are two options available for backlit signs. The end signs are located above each net, while the side backlit signs are alongside each press box.
- A backlit sign is the most vibrant signage in the arena.
- Backlit signs range from \$2,500 to \$4,000.

AVAILABLE SIDE BACKLIT: 4

AVAILABLE END BACKLIT: 6

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AVAILABLE INVENTORY

2013-2014

SCORE CLOCK



- The score clock is centrally located in the arena and is the spectators sole reference for game time, scoring and penalties
- There are four panels at the top, one on each side, which are visible from all angles inside the arena

Investment: \$10,000

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NIAGARA ICE DOGS
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AVAILABLE IN-ICE LOGO: 1

INVESTMENT: \$8,000

This high profile opportunity at the Gatorade Garden City Complex can showcase your brand in front of a large audience and to the TVCogeco viewing audience.



IN-ICE LOGO



AVAILABLE INVENTORY

2013-2014

PENALTY BOX SIGNS



The penalty box signs are highly visible and highly focused for fans and media coverage. They are located on camera side and can be seen on the TV COGECO broadcasts.

INVESTMENT: \$5,000

AVAILABLE PENALTY BOX SIGN: 1

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AVAILABLE INVENTORY 2013-2014

IceDogs' bench



The signs behind the IceDogs' bench are highly visible and highly focused for fans and media coverage. They can also be seen on the TV COGECO broadcasts.

INVESTMENT: \$5,000

AVAILABLE INVENTORY: 1

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AVAILABLE INVENTORY 2013-2014

GAME DAY SPONSOR



A Game Day sponsorship is a great way to profile your company. With attendance averaging over 2,900 fans per game, your company can be the main attraction throughout the game of your choice.

A Game Day sponsorship includes:

- 50 complimentary tickets
- Kiosk space in the main concourse area
- PA announcements throughout the game
- Access to the video screens (graphics, video)
- Intermission promotion
- Opportunity to do giveaways
- Logo recognition in the IceDogs newspaper ad prior to your game.

INVESTMENT: \$3,000

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AVAILABLE INVENTORY

2013-2014

VIDEO SCREENS



The video screens provide a great opportunity to show your company brand. By sponsoring one of the in-game features we will make an announcement and display your logo during every home game.

If repetition is what you are looking for, these properties should be considered.

INVESTMENT: \$2,000 - \$2,500

Available properties:

Shots on Goal

Best Seats In The House

Out of Town Scores

Groups Announcement

NIAGARA ICEDOGS

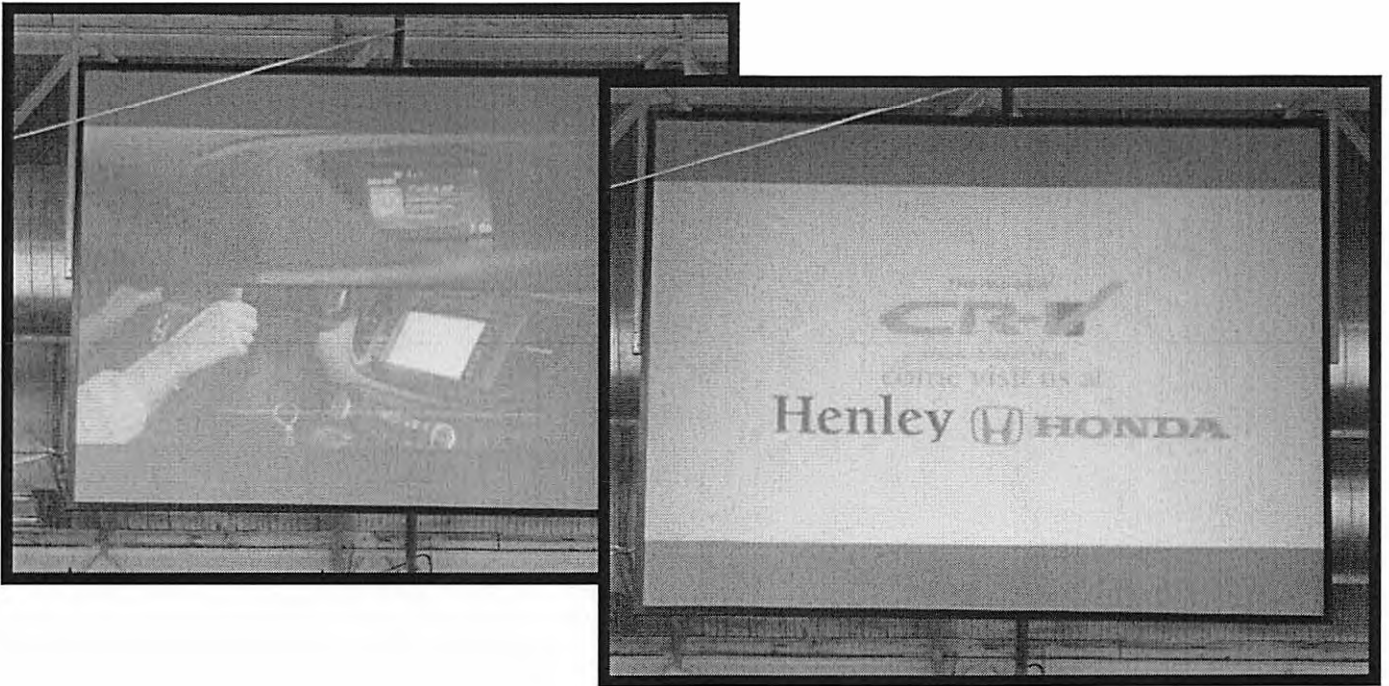
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AVAILABLE INVENTORY

2013-2014

VIDEO SCREEN COMMERCIALS



Use our four highly visible video screens to play your 15 or 30-second commercial during every home game.

INVESTMENT: \$3,000

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AVAILABLE INVENTORY 2013-2014

TVCogeco Play-by-play



TVCOGECO
truly local television

Every Niagara IceDogs home game is broadcast live on TVCOGECO. It represents a great opportunity to market your business to the thousands of loyal fans who tune in for all of the game-day action.

Whether you tie your business to a specific feature or present your selling message during commercial breaks, there are many affordable ways to communicate to the Niagara IceDogs fan in the Niagara Region.

VIEWERS: 70,000 people per home game

NIAGARA ICEDOGS
35 QUEEN STREET, ST. CATHARINES
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TVCOGECO Play-By-Play

FEATURE	DESCRIPTION	INVESTMENT
3-Stars	Exclusive feature which is presented at the end of each home game. Business sponsorship recognition and logo representation.	\$3,000
Starting Goaltenders	Exclusive feature which is presented at the start of each home game. Business sponsorship recognition and logo representation.	\$3,000
Shots On Goal	Exclusive feature which is presented in the intermissions and post-game of each home game. Business sponsorship recognition and logo representation.	\$3,000
Out of Town Scoreboard	Exclusive feature which is presented in the intermissions and post-game of each home game. Business sponsorship recognition and logo representation.	\$3,000
In-period Commercial	15-sec produced commercial for your business. Presented three (3) times during the broadcast.	\$3,000
Intermission Commercial	30-sec produced commercial for your business. Presented two (2) times during the broadcast.	\$3,000

NIAGARA ICEDOGS
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AVAILABLE INVENTORY 2013-2014

OTHER ADVERTISING OPTIONS

FEATURE	DESCRIPTION	INVESTMENT
Ticket Sleeves	Each time a ticket is sold for a home game, it is inserted into a ticket sleeve. Your logo would be viewed by hundreds of people each game.	\$3,500
Pocket Schedule	One of the most highly distributed properties, the pocket schedule is a great means to showcase your company.	\$2,000
Poster Schedule	5000 of these posters will be printed and distributed around the Niagara region, in local stores, restaurants and bars.	\$2,000
Hockey Card Set	A very popular item among fans, the hockey card set is a great way to reach the consumer. Your logo would be displayed on each individual card printed.	\$5,000
Cheer Card/ Noisemaker	These noisemakers are handed out before a given home game for fans to use and make noise during the game. Your logo would be going straight into the hands of the consumer.	\$TBD

NIAGARA ICEDOGS
35 QUEEN STREET, ST. CATHARINES
905-687-DOG1 (3641)



SCHEDULE "B"
ALLOCATION OF REVENUE BETWEEN PARTIES

- Retail Store IceDogs receive 100% from sales from their retail store.
- Concessions IceDogs receive 50% of net food and beverage revenue collected during the team games and other IceDogs events, from opening of the Facility for each game or event, until closing, including concessions sold in club seats and suites.
- Rink Advertising IceDogs will receive 100% net revenue of advertising in the "bowl", including but not limited to the following:
- Ice resurfacers (i.e., Zamboni)
 - Rink boards (dasherboards)
 - In-ice logos
 - Time clocks
 - Players benches
 - Scoreboard
 - Shot clock
 - walls
- This is Exhibit "G" referred to in the affidavit of Victoria Goyas sworn before me, this 11th day of July, 2016

[Signature]
A commissioner for taking affidavits
- Other Advertising limited to: IceDogs will receive 100% net advertising revenue of the following, including but not limited to:
- Game program revenue
 - Hockey equipment sponsorship
 - Team and OHL/League sponsorship and advertising
 - Back of IceDogs tickets
- In-house Advertising IceDogs receive 50% of net advertising revenue not defined as rink or "bowl" advertising net of the cost of sales and marketing expenses after the initial capital cost has been recovered
- Media Fees IceDogs receive 100% of all media revenues from team games.
- Suites and Club seats IceDogs to receive 50% of the revenue from the sale/lease of luxury suites, club seats and party suites (excluding ticket sales which are referenced in the main portion of the License Agreement) net of the cost of sales and marketing expenses
- Naming Rights/
Building Sponsorships City to retain 100% of revenues from naming rights, including but not limited to, the building, club lounge, box office, theatre configuration, Building exterior signage, etc. In the event naming rights include rinks boards or on-ice logos, the IceDogs shall be reimbursed for such signage space based on their standard signage rates in effect at the time.
- Pouring Rights IceDogs to receive 50% of revenues from pouring rights from alcoholic beverages
- Other Venue
Supplier Sponsorships City to retain 100% of revenues from other venue supplier sponsorships.

Parking Revenue

The City will receive 100% of parking revenues.

This is Exhibit "4" referred to in the affidavit of Victor Gryga sworn before me, this 1st day of June, 2016



A commissioner for taking affidavits

Agreement between [REDACTED]

1. **Disability insurance** : For the whole duration of his Major Junior stay, [REDACTED] commit to assume the cost of a disability insurance of two hundred thousand (200 000\$) in the name of [REDACTED]. This insurance will have to be purchased by [REDACTED] parents and will be refunded by [REDACTED] on presentation of justificatory documents.
2. **Summer training** : For the whole duration of his Major Junior stay, [REDACTED] commit to refund his summer training expenses to [REDACTED] up to two thousand (2000\$) per year, on presentation of justificatory documents.
3. **No-trade clause** : At no time, [REDACTED] can concede [REDACTED] rights to another QMJHL team without his consent.
4. **University scholarship** : [REDACTED] commit to pay to [REDACTED] a scholarship of up to twelve thousand (12 000\$) for his University studies.
 - 4.1 To be eligible to the 4th clause, [REDACTED] must first qualify to obtain the QMJHL scholarship of a total amount of sixteen thousand (16 000\$). http://www.lhjmq.qc.ca/navcache/getcontents.php?currentpath=/root/Éducation/Programme_bourses_20071002.pdf
 - 4.2 If [REDACTED] receive a scholarship from a Canadian University, the amount of this scholarship will be deducted from the scholarship mentioned at clause 4.
 - 4.3 There will be a possibility of a 10% increase to the amount mentioned at clause 4 in case of school fees rise, up until the end of [REDACTED] Major Junior stay.
(In 2008, the University fees for the obtention of a baccalaureate in a Canadian University were 28000\$)
 - 4.4 Every scholarships given by the [REDACTED] throughout his Major Junior stay will be deducted from the amount mentioned at the clause 4.
 - 4.5 At the end of his Major junior stay, [REDACTED] will be able to, for a season, try out for a place in a professionnall hockey league, and this, without compromising the obtention of his scholarships (QMJHL [REDACTED]) as mentioned in the QMJHL scholarship program 4.1.4
 - 4.6 If [REDACTED] signs a professionnall contract, the 4th clause is automatically canceled.
5. **Parents visits**: The [REDACTED] commit to offer [REDACTED] parents (mother and father) the possibility to come visit their son throughout the season. The [REDACTED] will take care of the expenses (transport, accommodation and hockey tickets) for a maximum of 3 stays, totalizing 12 days.

6. **Salary supplement:** [REDACTED] commit to double [REDACTED] weekly salary throughout his Major Junior stay except for his 20-year-old season. The payment of the additional amount will occur with the agent in the form of two annual payments.
7. **Performance bonus** [REDACTED] will reward [REDACTED] with bonus related to his efficiency throughout the year.
- a) **Player of the week QMJHL 500\$**
 - b) **Player of the week CHL 500\$**
 - c) **Player of the year CHL 2000\$**
 - d) **First-team All-Star QMJHL 1000\$**
 - e) **Second-team All-Star QMJHL 500\$**
 - f) **MVP QMJHL 1000\$**
 - g) **NHL draft 1st round 5000\$**
 - h) **NHL draft 2nd round 2500\$**
 - i) **NHL draft 3rd 4th 5th round 1500\$**
 - j) **NHL draft 6th 7th 8th round 1000\$**
 - k) **Membre Team Canada Junior 1000\$**
8. **Confidentiality clause :** This agreement must remain confidential at all time between both party.

Signed in _____ Date : _____ 2008

[REDACTED]
Player

[REDACTED]
General Manager

[REDACTED]
Father

[REDACTED]
President

This is Exhibit "I" referred to in the affidavit of Victoria Gyger sworn before me, this 11th day of June, 2010
A commissioner for taking affidavits

Agreement between the [REDACTED]

1. **Disability insurance** : For the whole duration of his Major Junior stay, [REDACTED]s commit to assume the cost of a disability insurance of two hundred thousand (200 000\$) in the name of [REDACTED]. This insurance will have to be purchased by [REDACTED] parents and will be refunded by [REDACTED], on presentation of justificatory documents.
2. **Summer training** : For the whole duration of his Major Junior stay, [REDACTED]s commit to refund his summer training expenses to [REDACTED], up to two thousand (2000\$) per year, on presentation of justificatory documents.
3. **No-trade clause** : At no time, [REDACTED] can concede [REDACTED] rights to another QMJHL team without his consent.
4. **University scholarship** : [REDACTED] commit to pay to [REDACTED] a scholarship of up to twelve thousand (12 000\$) for his University studies. This amount will be guaranteed as soon as [REDACTED] plays his first game in the QMJHL.
 - 4.1 To be eligible to the 4th clause, [REDACTED] must first qualify to obtain the QMJHL scholarship of a total amount of sixteen thousand (16 000\$).
http://www.lhmqc.ca/naivoache/getcontent.s.php?currentpath=/root/Education/Programme_courses_2007-1002.pdf
 - 4.2 If [REDACTED] receive a scholarship from a Canadian University, the amount of this scholarship will be deducted from the scholarship mentionned at clause 4.
 - 4.3 There will be a possibility of a 10% increase to the amount mentionned at clause 4 in case of school fees rise, up until the end of [REDACTED] Major Junior stay.
(In 2008, the University fees for the obtention of a baccalaureate in a Canadian University were 28000\$)
 - 4.4 Every scholarships given by [REDACTED] throughout his Major Junior stay will be deducted from the amount mentionned at the clause 4.
 - 4.5 At the end of his Major junior stay, [REDACTED] will be able to, for a season, try out for a place in a professionnall hockey league, and this, without compromising the obtention of his scholarships (QMJHL [REDACTED]) as mentionned in the QMJHL scholarship program 4.1.4
 - 4.6 If [REDACTED] signs a professionnall contract(NHL, AHL Europe, the 4th clause is automatically canceled.
5. **Parents visits**: [REDACTED] commit to offer [REDACTED] parents (mother and father) the possibility to come visit their son throughout the season. [REDACTED] will take care of the expenses (transport, accommodation and hockey tickets) for a maximum of 3 stays, totalizing 12 days.

6. **Salary supplement:** [redacted] commit to double [redacted] weekly salary throughout his Major Junior stay except for his 20-year-old season. The payment of the additional amount will occur with the agent in the form of two annual payments.

7. **Performance bonus:** [redacted] will reward [redacted] with bonus related to his efficiency throughout the year.

- a) Player of the week QMJHL 500\$
- b) Player of the week CHL 500\$
- c) Player of the year CHL 2000\$
- d) First-team All-Star QMJHL 1000\$
- e) Second-team All-Star QMJHL 500\$
- f) MVP QMJHL 1000\$
- g) NHL draft 1st round 5000\$
- h) NHL draft 2nd round 2500\$
- i) NHL draft 3rd 4th 5th round 1500\$
- j) NHL draft 6th 7th 8th round 1000\$
- k) Membre Team Canada Junior 1000\$

8. **Confidentiality clause:** This agreement must remain confidential at all time between both party.

Signed in [redacted]

Date: [redacted]

2008

[redacted]
Player

[redacted]
General Manager

[redacted]
Father

[redacted]
President

[redacted]

Marketing/ Exposure/ Communication

The Club will use its best endeavors to market, promote and advertise the Player as a potential NHL prospect.

The Club Coach/ GM will willingly and regularly discuss with the Player Representative, the progress of the Player both on and off the ice.

Educational Package

The Club will, according to its standard policies and bylaws, provide to the Player an Education Package (the "Club Package") over and above the "League Package", which will total \$2500 per season (Total \$3500 League + \$2500 Club = \$6000 per season). It is understood that the Player will receive the educational funding known as the "League Package" on an annual basis during the term of this agreement to a maximum of 5 years, for a maximum total of \$30,000 (Thirty Thousand Dollars). The QMJHL educational package is currently valued at \$3,500.00 CAD (Three Thousand Five Hundred Dollars) per season played. In addition to the "League Package" money, a total of \$2500 CAD (Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars) per season played shall be kept in escrow for the Player. This money will be held for the purpose of satisfying the "Club Educational Package" mentioned above. If the Club Educational package increases in any of the seasons mentioned in this agreement, the total Educational Package shall be adjusted upward for the Player to reflect team policy. While playing for the Club, all educational expenses are the responsibility of the Club, and should not be deducted from the "Educational Packages".

Once the Player plays ONE QMJHL game for the Club, the Full Value (\$30,000 CAD) of the Educational Package shall be guaranteed by the Club from that date forward. If the Player is traded at any time by the Club, the Full Educational Package shall remain the responsibility of the Club.

If, during the term of this contract, the Player signs an NHL contract that will pay him in excess of \$100,000.00 USD (One Hundred Thousand Dollars) total Signing Bonus, the Club will be released from the "Club Package" obligation, but the "League Package" will remain in effect. In any other situation, the Educational Package shall remain available to the Player for two years (24 Months) following the immediate September 1st following

the end of his Junior eligibility.

In order for the Player to be eligible to receive the "Club Package" or the "League Package" he must qualify under the QMJHL Scholarship Criteria. The Player will educate himself on the rules of the QMJHL educational package prior to entering into an agreement with the Club.

In-Season Education Costs

The Club will cover and provide the enrollment costs of the Player attending a suitable academic institution, including, if necessary, reasonable costs of a tutor, during the term of this agreement.

Living Accomodations (Billeting)

The Club will provide to the Player, for this entire period of stay, a suitable billet family.

It is understood that what constitutes being suitable is in the Player and the Club GM's discretion and includes, but is not limited to: the billet family being bilingual, non-smoking and having internet access.

In the event that the Player and his family will move to the Club's city, the Club shall be responsible for reasonable moving expenses, including transportation and travel. If the Player resides with his family during the QMJHL season, the Club shall reimburse the Player's family in the same manner it reimburses all billet families. If the family does not move to the Club's city, the Club will offer 3 Season tickets to the family.

Medical

SAMUEL BERG
Plaintiff

-and- CANADIAN HOCKEY LEAGUE et al.
Defendants

ONTARIO
SUPERIOR COURT OF JUSTICE

Proceedings commenced at Toronto

AFFIDAVIT OF VICTORIA GRYGAR
(Motion for Certification)
Sworn June 11, 2016

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