

ATC Article Series – Article #5



Interview with Daren Machesney



Rather than have me talk about conditioning for this contribution, I thought we'd get inside the mind of a pro goalie and get some of his thoughts on conditioning. So I put in a call to a friend of mine I've worked with, Daren Machesney.

Daren is a great example for young goalies out there as he wasn't drafted until the 13th round of the OHL draft, didn't get a chance to play on a regular basis until he was 18 and then had to split the goaltending duties that year, not becoming a starting goalie until the age of 19. He still impressed enough to get drafted to the NHL in the 5th round to the Washington Capitals.

He spent his first year of professional hockey in the ECHL, appearing in 15 games for the South Carolina Stingrays before getting called up for 10 games with the Hershey Bears. He also realized every goalie's dream that year when he was called up for 1 game with the Washington Capitals. This year he's 19-10 with the Hershey Bears and continues to personify hard work and perseverance. He's also one of my favorite goalies I've worked with because of his constant desire to get better, so I asked him a few questions about conditioning so you could get his personal viewpoints, one goalie to another.

What things do you focus on in your conditioning?

For my conditioning I focus a lot on legs and core. I don't necessarily do heavy weight, I just try to get good depth and be explosive. Cardio is also key. I like to do intervals often 45 sec on, 30 off, stuff like that.

How does your conditioning change from the summer to the in-season?

Well due to the amount of games we play it's really tough to build muscle during the season but you don't want to lose it either. I try to do a little of everything once a week just to maintain. It's tough to do throughout the course of the year but I find I play better when my body feels good, which is a no brainer.

What was your training like in minor hockey, through junior hockey, to pro hockey? How has it changed?

Well be honest in minor hockey I didn't really do anything, I started hearing about it when I was about 15. Every year I find that I learn more and more plus I learn more about my body, but my training definitely has changed as I've gone up levels. In minor hockey I didn't train much, then in junior I realized I had to get bigger and stronger to compete and then stay stronger throughout the season. Now that I'm a pro it's my job to train and have my body in tip top shape. Plus if you don't, you're really falling behind because the guys are that much stronger and better so you have

to just keep it with, especially when you're a younger guy and now you're playing with men instead of boys. So just every level that you move up it becomes more and more important to improve on your overall skills.

Has the way you think about conditioning changed?

Yeah, it has over the last couple of years really. I realized that I'm not going to be a 200lb goalie. My body is done growing, I know now what weight I like to play at, plus I just know my body way better and I know how I want to feel. So now I work more specific areas, plus I'm just way more intense than I used to be.

How has conditioning affected your career and performance so far? How important has your strength and conditioning been? In what ways?

It's definitely helped me get to the level I'm at. Conditioning is another element to your game that you need to be on top of all the time. Hockey is such a competitive sport and there are so many great players out there that don't make it, for whatever reason. But I think it would really suck if a guy realized he didn't make it because he didn't work hard enough, didn't want it bad enough, or didn't do what it takes to get better. All of that starts in the gym and if you have good habits in the gym you'll have them on the ice too.

Any advice to young goalies out there?

If you want it bad enough then you'll do whatever it takes, meaning trying to improve yourself in every way possible and never giving up.