

Local hockey star striving to become an Olympian

By Sara Gottardi

Bancroft's vigilant up-and-coming hockey star Tori Howran sat with Bancroft This Week to talk about her new opportunity after being scouted out of some 50 girls for the Under 18 team across Canada. She has been scouted by several schools and next season will be playing with the Bancroft Midget Boys and the Jets, as well as affiliating with the Whitby Junior Wolves.

Howran referenced the very quote that she says keeps her going, "Somewhere behind the athlete you've become, the hours of practice and the coaches who have pushed you is a little girl who fell in love with the game and never looked back... Play for her." Affirming this on the daily as she pushes herself to the limit every practice - six to seven times weekly and travels to games all over. "I love traveling," she says.

Her unique skating style came from being involved in figure skating for a good three years, lending itself to her unique ice time and is to be envied by others. In a forthright determination Howran said, "I tried out for the Under 18 team Canada strength and conditioning camp this week, I'm just waiting to hear back in July if I progress further."

Regardless of the outcomes Howran says, "if I don't [get in], then I just know I have to work that much harder to get into it." She has full confidence and staying power saying, "if I get into it I know I do have motivation to obviously keep going and hopefully to progress into the Olympic teams."

Very optimistic and strong willed Howran says she believes that "practice makes perfect." Working her absolute hardest in training and practices with coaches as if it always were a real game, but never lacking in humble character. Howran says, "I'm hoping to get into criminology or sports psychology [for University], then hopefully work with professional athletes on the mental side of whatever sport it is."

The entire family joins in on the fun and games sometimes. Howran says, "it's nothing competitive though." She said, "it's an honour to be selected out of 50 girls from all across Canada," being recognized out of thousands of girls across Canada is a huge accomplishment and she hopes to be "selected again to continue in hockey Canada."

With a "great support group around" like family and friends, Howran is continually motivated to succeed and with coaches like Duane Wlitsch she says, "he's helped me through a lot. He's become like a second father to me." Howran says that her "proudest moment is getting a scholarship for hockey." Saying, "it's a hard hill to climb. You just have to work at every skill." She said, "you just have to repeat everything over and over until it becomes second nature to you."

Howran has been involved with hockey since she was five and said she'll never be able to quit the game as it's a huge part of her life and will always be no matter where she goes. After the Under 18 participants have been selected they'll be sent to the conditioning camp and be chosen to progress into the Women Under 22 team if they meet judges standards.

"You gotta still train and work hard and get selected for the Olympic team," Howran says as she strives to achieve her goals continually without rest but with plenty resilience. Howran continues to bring her perseverance and ambition into the game, her claim to success is destined and everybody is aware as she is champion needless to say with her strength. The strength and conditioning camp will only broaden her horizons into her ultimate goals to develop her skill and passion further.