

Meagher, Terry

Meagher part of Bowdoin's NCAA success

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When Terry Meagher graduated from Boston University in the spring of 1977, he had a decision to make. Would he accept one of the several offers to move into professional hockey, or continue his education and eventually move into coaching?

Meagher chose coaching while brother Rick, another standout at Boston U., chose to play pro hockey. Nearly 10 years later it appears both made the right decision.

The Belleville natives have both found success along their chosen routes, Rick in the National Hockey League, and Terry coaching NCAA hockey in New England.

Last year Terry Meagher guided the Bowdoin College hockey team to the NCAA Division II championship, gaining coach of the year honors along the way. The team, based in Brunswick, Maine, posted a 22-5 regular season record and then swept through the playoffs. The college arena was filled to capacity nearly every night, something that hadn't happened since the 1960's.

"When I graduated in 1977 I had a few pro offers, but my interests always tended toward education and coaching, and with the 'Big Bad Flyers' the reigning NHL team at the time, pro hockey didn't seem the



TERRY MEAGHER

Sports digest

route for me," Meagher said recently.

Terry Meagher was one of four brothers to make a name for themselves in hockey in Belleville. Terry played for the Belleville Junior B's, both the Bobcats and the old Fairways. Brothers Rick and Tony also played for the Cats, while Kevin Meagher was with the Belleville Bulls during their Tier II days.

"You don't forget your roots, no matter where you go, I'll always believe that my experiences in Belleville helped me when I moved on," Meagher said.

After graduating from Boston U., Meagher moved on to Clarkson College, a Division I school, where he coached and continued his education. Four years ago he was named head coach at Bowdoin.

"The school is very selective academically, the atmosphere is similar to that at Harvard, Yale or Princeton. Scholarships are decided on need and academics, we get hockey players who are students too," Meagher said.

One of Bowdoin's most famous graduates is Joan Benoit, winner of the gold medal in the women's marathon at the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles.

"I had dinner at Joan's place the other night, and she still chuckles about the Bowdoin banner she saw during the marathon in L.A.," Meagher commented.

Meagher says Bowdoin College does much of its recruiting in the New

England area, a hotbed for hockey in the United States. He says basketball remains the number one sport in the U.S., but hockey is big in the Northern states.

The Bowdoin coach runs a hockey school in Maine for two weeks each summer, and is also on the faculty at Bowdoin. With a wife and two children, it means the former Bobcat doesn't have much free time.

"I don't have much of an opportunity to get back to Belleville, except for a couple of weeks in the summer. When I get back, it's great to see the people who helped me develop, like Snipe Matthews, Doug Murray, Russ Soule and Larry Mavety," Meagher said.

Meagher says Bowdoin College isn't developing players for the pros, although Fred Ahern did play with the California Seals after graduating from the school. He says most players interested in a pro career go to the Division I schools, while Division II schools stress both academics and athletics.

The Belleville native says he watches brother Rick play with the St. Louis Blues every chance he gets, and says their father, Al, is happiest when a Blues game is on the family dish.

Meagher was an all-star several times at Boston University, but he was also a fine fastball player. He starred with the Devolin Motors team in the old Quinte Fastball League and also with the Belleville McDonalds of the Ontario Fastball League.