

Hall of Famer Bryan Trottier feels right at home in Acton

Hockey camp big success may repeat

by Chuck Tysoe

The Acton arena ice is in two weeks early; a visitor at once notices the energy of a quiet excitement suffusing the lobby's ample vault. Somewhere on the ice, among a couple of dozen kids, is Bryan Trottier, seven-time Stanley Cup winner (six as a player); member of the Hockey Hall of Fame since 1997; native of Val Marie, Sask., population "maybe 150...now," he tells the New Tanner.

He is, says Philip Marzo, who with son Nathan operates "Inside Edge" sports, "the one with the white gloves." A fashion Mr. Trottier would have abhorred during his days with the New York Islanders, the team he led, with Mike Bossy, Denis Potvin, Billy Smith and a host of dedicated and relentless teammates, to four Stanley Cups during the 1970's.

Today, one of many ventures, he represents Rebellion, a sporting goods manufacturer featured by the Marzos and maker of the gleaming gauntlets. Business brought the parties together, resulting in warm personal relationships and leading to Mr. Trottier's first visit to Acton last year for an autograph session at "Inside Edge."

Hockey camp

On the ice today, the Islanders dynamo is enjoying play of a different kind as the featured instructor in "Bryan Trottier's Inside Edge Pro Sports Hockey Camp," midway through its five day run last week in Acton. The camp put 132 local hockey players ages 5-16 their paces on and off the ice, including Christian Trottier in goal pads, underaged at just four.

Whether diagramming the next drill as befits the current Islanders' director of player development, running a group through its routines, having a gentle word in the ear of two youngsters, or sharing his thoughts with host Jennifer Valentine and the viewers of CITY-TV's "Breakfast Television" – or just taking a few moments alone to glide around the ice with a puck, Mr. Trottier seems



HOCKEY KNOWLEDGE: Bryan Trottier explains how to win the Hart Trophy while one youngster with his own ideas pays close attention to a puck at last week's hockey camp. *Chuck Tysoe photo.*

completely relaxed and at home in the busy environment. That, and the beaming smile occasionally breaking his quiet, serious demeanor, are a stark contrast from his deadly "Leaf Killer" persona of the '70's.

Acton made a very favourable impression on the small town kid who played midget hockey at age 12. He was drafted by the Islanders before his 18th birthday and went on to win the Calder, Hart, Art Ross and Conn Smythe trophies in 18 playing seasons, scoring 1425 points and winning the Cup twice with Pittsburgh in

addition to his Islanders' trophies, once more (with Colorado) in ten coaching seasons.

"I love it here," he says, adding he enjoyed the arena, its atmosphere, and talking with many people curious about his career. Will he be back? He'd like to, but says, "like any other venture, we'll evaluate at the end of the week and go from there."

Marzos delighted

The Marzos were delighted with the outcome. Nathan Marzo said he "never heard a negative word the entire

week," adding that the whole enterprise hinged on the absolute dedication of many local people who were committed to seeing the project succeed. In total, about 29 staff were required. At the same time, said Mr. Marzo, on careful review there are



TV TIMEOUT: Hockey legend Bryan Trottier chats with City-TV's Jennifer Valentine for "Breakfast Television" during morning session at his Acton Hockey School last week. *-Chuck Tysoe photo.*

a number of things the staff thought could be improved and "We will improve them." Meaning? Only scheduling of the key individuals, ice availability and possible changes in Mr. Trottier's role with the Islanders, need to be worked out to see a repeat of the school next year.

A dual citizen of the US and Canada, Mr. Trottier resides in Pittsburgh but his love for Canada and his hockey roots remain strong.

He strongly believes hockey is "the backbone of our culture."

Hockey, he says, "is Canada's gift to the world." At the same time, Mr. Marzo, who billeted the Trottiers (including wife Jennifer and two of his four children, said it would be hard to find a nicer group of people. The dignity, class and work ethic Mr. Trottier brings with him are his own gift to the game and its people.

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