

Denham nets memorable experience with Flames

Scores twice at Calgary's development camp

By Steve LeBlanc
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Brandon Denham admits his summers usually aren't too eventful — with work and training taking up most of his time.

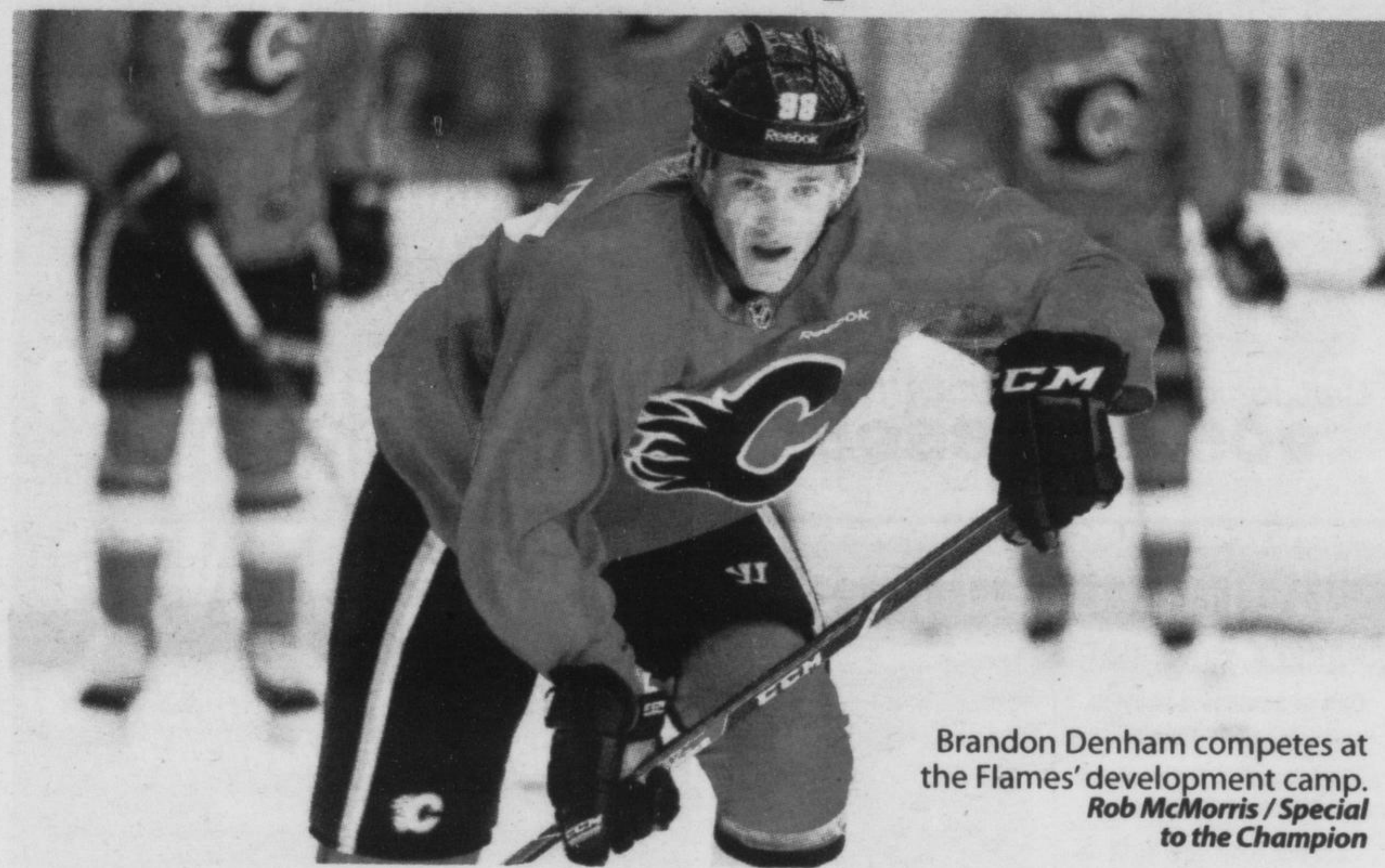
But even the most lavish or exotic of vacation plans would have been quickly nixed once the Flames came calling.

"Absolutely," the 22-year-old Milton right winger said with conviction, when asked if he'd have canceled a previously-scheduled trip upon being invited to Calgary's development camp, held earlier this month at WinSport's Markin MacPhail Centre. "It's a great opportunity."

One that the 6-foot-4, 205-pounder seemed to make the most of.

Coming off a rags-to-riches sophomore season with Pittsburgh's Robert Morris Colonials — which was capped with an Atlantic Conference championship after a horrendous 2-12-2 start — Denham wasted little time proving himself worthy of the invite.

Camped out in front of the net in the second



Brandon Denham competes at the Flames' development camp. Rob McMorris / Special to the Champion

half of the first scrimmage, he buried a cross-ice feed from Hobey Baker winner Johnny Gaudreau of Boston College to help Team White prevail 2-0.

Closing out the camp two days later, he'd light the lamp once again — in similar fashion during full-ice three-on-three play — in a 3-3 stalemate.

Said Denham, "It felt pretty good, to prove I belonged and could fit in. It's great to be able to contribute like that. I think I did pretty well overall. Little things with my timing and passing were not quite where I wanted them to be at times, but I feel I proved myself."

"With two years left (at Robert Morris), I didn't have that pressure of making a team. It was

just a good learning experience and great to be able to take in everything. It prepared me for any other opportunities down the road."

The camp comes at an ideal time for the local winger, who as one of a strong nucleus of returning players with Robert Morris will have high expectations riding on him to help with this season's conference title defence.

"There's definitely going to be more pressure now that we won. Everyone's watching how you do and teams play you harder now," said Denham, who like his Colonials got off to a slow start last year before ending up fifth in team scoring with 11 goals and 14 assists. He added a goal and three helpers in the play-offs. "That's a real challenge and I think the camp will help me be a step ahead and excel come the start of the season."

Along with scrimmages and practices, Denham said he picked up some useful advice regarding strength training and nutrition.

While not able to pin-point any specific favourite moments from the trip, he said he was impressed with how much is taken care of for players at the NHL level.

"It lets you just focus on playing and being the best you can be."

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MFC gets back on track with big win

Distancing themselves from an Ontario Cup third-round humbling earlier this month, Milltown FC battled back from an early deficit to down Universe FC 4-2 Thursday in Mississauga.

Scoring machine Jake Evans powered the victory with a hat-trick — lifting his season tally to 20 — to help MFC improve to 6-0-1. That's good enough for top spot in the Peel-Halton

Soccer League.

"It was a character win for us," said head coach Omar Jbahi.

Evans netted the first, second and fourth goals, while Nikola Sisovic rounded out the scoring. In net for the win was Mike Szewczyk. MFC are back at home Sunday at 8 p.m. to host Mississauga Croatia at Milton Community Park.

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