

NIGHT OF CHAMPIONS

Alicia Ogoms - Volleyball

Alicia was playing professional volleyball in Poland when COVID-19 hit. Her league was determined to finish the season, but then abruptly postponed it. Alicia was able to snag one of the last flights home before planes were grounded the next day. Since she couldn't play volleyball, Alicia had to shift her focus on what she could control: her body and mind. She treated her chronic injuries and started working with a sports psychologist. She redefined herself as a person and learned how not to rely on volleyball. Alicia started reading more, enrolled in courses with Queen's University, meditated and journaled more regularly. Alicia started going on walks, running on the treadmill (which she used to hate), and jumping rope for cardio. Instead of lifting with her team, her mom and brother became her new lifting partners and they pushed and encouraged Alicia, which led to her making some major strength improvements this year. She also secured a training opportunity in Richmond, BC with the National Team, and then departed overseas to continue her professional volleyball career.

Elijah Rempel - Hockey

Elijah was 10 years old when the pandemic hit and his hockey season came to a sudden end. He depends on the spring season and the ability to travel from Arborg to Winnipeg for training to accomplish his hockey goals. This was altered because of the pandemic, but Elijah did not let this stop him. From the first day of shutdown, he got out on the outdoor rink every day. He would create drills for himself, make himself do a bag skate each day, and incorporate dryland training and workouts. Of course Elijah missed working out with teams and training in a centre, however, he always has a positive attitude and used this time to train even harder. During this time, Elijah was also dealing with personal family matters, proving to be an additional obstacle to a challenging year. Through all the highs and lows, when hockey started back in the fall, Elijah was ranked as a top '09 player in his region. Elijah also made several Kids World Records for various stick-handling tricks during the pandemic. Today, you would never know he was born with severe health challenges, as life's obstacles never slowed Elijah down.

Diane Anderson - Baseball

Diane has been the long-standing President of Charleswood Baseball. Not only does she keep the entire organization running by performing her duties, but she helps coordinate team selection, registration, coach recruitment, and several other duties. Diane is Winnipeg South's

RAMP (online registration program) admin extraordinaire. She has provided countless convenors and other volunteers with guidance with the new registration system that has allowed seven of eight of the clubs to use RAMP efficiently. With the challenges brought forward by COVID-19 in 2020, Diane, along with her husband Mike, visited every Charleswood diamond to mark benches and spots along fences for coaches and players to ultimately ensure their safety. But it isn't only the time and work put into this endeavour that is impressive, it is the fact that Diane did it for the wellbeing of her baseball community. She volunteers for the love of the game and fulfills a huge community volunteer role. Diane was named the 2020 Winnipeg South Minor Baseball Association Volunteer of the Year.

Kevin Dawe - Figure Skating

With COVID-19 restrictions beginning in March 2020, arenas and other facilities closed for three months and then reopened, all at different times and with different conditions before closing entirely in November 2020. With each change, Kevin worked tirelessly with his team to adjust schedules, often multiple times a day, and develop innovative training opportunities within Public Health guidelines. During 2020, Kevin became a mentor and provincial leader for online off-ice skating coaching. With his understanding of integrated training, Kevin pivoted more quickly than others. He also recognised that not all coaches were comfortable with technology, or had no experience coaching off-ice jump and spin classes, and welcomed other coaches to observe his classes and for their skaters to participate. With ice available for only seven months in 2020, it's a challenge to lead skaters to increase their self-confidence and motivation, make significant progress for skill acquisition, and establish their competitiveness nationally. Yet, Kevin did precisely this. Leading by example, Kevin taught his skaters resiliency, flexibility, and perspective by emphasizing setting goals based on available training opportunities. Kevin balanced coaching multiple classes daily, plus volunteer positions on Skate Manitoba committees, with full-time frontline work as a Physician Assistant at CancerCare. He met the challenges of COVID-19 not only as a healthcare worker, but also as a leading coach.

Billy Keane - Hockey

In July 2020, it was announced that Billy was hired as Head Coach and General Manager of the OCN Blizzard. Billy had his work cut out for him as the Blizzard finished second last in the 2019-2020 season. The 2020-2021 season would prove to be no easy task either, with a roster consisting of 14 rookies. In the years prior to Billy arriving, the Blizzard experienced a lot of coach turnover, so a team culture or leadership group had not yet been established. On a personal level, this position would require Billy to move to The Pas during the season, which is quite the challenge itself. The pandemic resulted in the selection camp, development camp,

practices and team meetings being delayed or altered completely. Billy helped work with OCN Public Health and Beatrice Wilson Medical Center to create a detailed Return to Play plan specific to the Gordon Lathlin Memorial Center, their home rink. Through diligent planning and working closely with the Province of Manitoba and Hockey Manitoba, the Manitoba Junior Hockey League was able to start their season in October 2020. However, by early November, the season was postponed along with all hockey programming.