

FROM THE HOCKEY CANADA LOCKER ROOM

McDonald a Hockey Canada stalwart

Robin McDonald, equipment manager for Calgary-based Hockey Canada, has been taking care of the red-and-white for some ten years. All told, McDonald, 41, keeps track of the equipment needs of some 13 different squads, from the under-17 regional teams, to the men's and women's senior teams, to Canada's sledge team. We chatted with the Didsbury, Alta. native about his extensive career:

THN: What are your responsibilities?

RM: I look after every program that wears the Hockey Canada jersey. I pack the uniforms, and make sure the equipment gets to the destinations they're supposed to. I also take care of the skate sharpening on the road for the senior men's and women's teams.

THN: What tournaments are you involved with?

RM: I work the Deutschland Cup, the Spengler Cup, the Four Nations tournament, the men's and women's world championships, among others.

THN: What are some of the challenges in your job?

RM: One of the biggest is shipping equipment and making sure it gets to where it's supposed to go, and coordinating its arrival at a destination and then making sure it gets to another

destination. When the women's world championships were held in China, that was a particular challenge in getting equipment there and through customs.

THN: What did you do before working for Hockey Canada?

RM: I worked for the University



**ROBIN
McDONALD**

**EQUIPMENT
MANAGER**



of Calgary hockey teams for about 11 years before joining Hockey Canada. I earned a bachelor of kinesiology there.

THN: Do you enjoy the travel that's involved with your job?

RM: I very much enjoy it, especially at the beginning of the

season. But as you get to the end of the run – I spend from March to May in Europe most years – you start itching for home.

THN: How do you remember everyone's skate sharpening preference?

RM: I have a really good memory of how everyone likes his or her skates, even if I haven't seen a player in years. What's funny is that I have a much harder time remembering names.

THN: What skate sharpening machine do you use?

RM: We're fortunate to have a great partner like Blademaster.

We have eight portable machines to start the season, four in North America and four we ship to Europe. By the end of the season, the machines get beat up from all the travel, but Blademaster's durability shines through. And it's always backed up by great service and support.

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