

Coach Rex's Corner

Tucker Hockey picks Team Canada 2014

The NHL will place its regular season on hold from February 9th to 25th, 2014 for the Winter Olympic break. This past summer 47 Olympic hopefuls were invited to Calgary's Canada Olympic Park from August 25th to 28th for Hockey Canada's orientation camp.

During the four days, Hockey Canada held informational meetings regarding the logistics, travel issues, accommodations for family members and friends, a walk through of the venues, and drug testing policies. Due to insurance costs of \$1.4 million, Hockey Canada did not conduct any on-ice sessions. Off - ice activities to enhance team chemistry and information meetings to get players to understand what to expect were the keys to prepare staff members and players, who have the potential of representing Canada at the 2014 Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia. This will ensure players are well prepared and can focus mainly on giving their best for their country. "Russia is kind of a whole new world compared to what North America is like" said Edmonton Oilers Forward Taylor Hall.

Players will tryout based on their play throughout the Fall 2013 NHL schedule. So much can happen between now and December 2013. Injuries, scoring slumps to just name a couple. Players plan and hope to peak at the right time. There are many questions to be answered. Who will play in net – arguably Canada's weakest / unknown position? Who will play the left side of the team's defence? Will it be a classic battle between Canada and Russia? Remember the European teams always do better on the big ice!

With the international ice surface 200' by 100' – it's 3,000 square feet larger than NHL size, therefore players will need to be quicker and faster, plus require strong skating agility and supreme hockey sense / IQ. In the past Olympics games on the bigger ice, the ability to score has been an issue for Team Canada.

Steve Yzerman, Team Canada General Manager stated "We're not putting together a team for an NHL all – star game...we're putting together the best possible team we

can to compete against the best players in the world and try to win a gold medal". "Part of that comes with players that can do specific things for us." We have enough depth in our country to ice two medal contending teams! It's a very difficult task for the coaches and management team to select the right NHL players to represent Team Canada in Sochi, Russia. Good luck gentlemen with a very difficult task!

We live in a very passionate country when it comes to hockey. Everyone has an opinion; everyone will give their two cents worth from now until long after the completion of the 2014 Winter Olympics. Did we pick the right team?

Let's have a little fun! Here's Tucker Hockey's picks Team Canada:

Team Canada Olympic Team – 2014 Roster

Goalies (3)

Roberto Luongo Carey Price Corey Crawford
Notable: Cam Ward

Defence (8)

Duncan Keith Drew Doughty Shea Weber
Dan Boyle Alex Pietrangelo P.K. Suban
Marc Staal & Jay Bouwmeester
Notables: Kris Letang & Brent Seabrook

Forwards (14)

Chris Kunitz Sidney Crosby John Taveres
Corey Perry Claude Giroux Steven Stamkos
Rick Nash Jonathan Toews Patrick Sharp
Eric Staal Patrice Bergeron Logan Couture
Taylor Hall & Matt Duchene
Notables: Ryan Getzlaf, Martin St.Louis, Jordan Eberle,
Mike Richards & Jeff Carter

Note:

**Team Canada opens round robin play on
February 13th, 2014 against Norway.**