



Bomersback Breaks The Record!

Bomersback Breaks the AJHL All Time Scoring Record!

On Friday, January 31st, 2003, I attended the Alberta Junior Hockey League game between the Canmore Eagles and the Olds Grizzlies. The price of admission was only \$8 dollars... generally a "good hockey value" but definitely a "great hockey value" on this particular evening! The Canmore Recreational Centre was packed! The sell out crowd expected a 24 year old record to be shattered by a very talented 20 year old player named Mark Bomersback. In 1979, Marty Achtymichuk of the Fort Saskatchewan Traders had established the all-time career record of 373 points. The Bomer watch had been on for several games. Mark called by the name "Bomer" was expected to break the record... only one point was required!! "Bomer" did not disappoint the waiting hometown crowd in a very entertaining game... it was a "real good" hockey fix!

I first met Mark and his older brother Darcy with their father Dave when helping to operate a hockey camp in the Czech Republic during the summer of 1997. Both brothers assisted me on the ice with my power skating programs. The family's dedication, passion and love for the game were paramount and obvious to all observers. It was quite easy to see both boys had a great up-bringing. They were very polite, well grounded, hard-working, and honest young lads... a pleasure to work with... to coach and to share hockey knowledge and advice.

Darcy played for Canmore for three seasons and was also captain of the team before retiring from competitive hockey. Mark tried but for Canmore as a 16 year old, played one exhibition game with his older brother but was sent back to Midget "AAA" during the 1998 – 1999 season. There were many family tears of sadness in the fall of 1998 when Mark got cut!! However, Mark was determined to make the Canmore team the following season and to make a name for himself in the league! He played the 1998 – 1999 Season with the Foothills Bisons and scored the winning goal in the Mac's Midget tournament. The following season Mark accomplished his goal of making the Eagles team. During his rookie season, he recorded 69 points, added 104 points in 2001 and last year 107 points. For the 2002 – 2003 campaign, the Canmore captain is currently leading the league in scoring with 98 points and will have another 100+ point season.

Yes, "Bomer" did not disappoint the packed crowd on January 31st! He picked up an assist on a Canmore goal at 12:21 of the first period. The building rocked and the game was delayed for a special league and town presentation to Mark and his very supportive family. The tears of sadness from his release in the fall of 1998 were replaced just four short years later by tears of joy from family members! However, this was just the start of a very entertaining and emotional game. Mark had lots of gas in the tank! And added two more assists during regulation time. The teams went into overtime tied at four. After playing four on four for the first five minutes in overtime and without an overtime goal, the teams faced off for the second five minute overtime period playing three on three... AJHL rules... great action! With approximately four seconds left on the clock Mark took advantage of a turnover at the Grizzly's blueline... skated in on a breakaway... looked up at the clock... only two seconds remained... wired a shot under the crossbar to notch the game winner at 4:59 of the second overtime period! The Bomersback's family (a large contingent) including Mother and Father were viewing the game from behind the Grizzly's net... what a feeling of jubilation and emotion! Yah Hoo! The family and loyal "Bomer" supporters went nuts! What a clutch goal... on a very special evening! The price of admission is a good deal on any given Alberta Junior league game but "Bomer's" night was truly special. His coach, Bob Miller beamed after the game saying over Mark's four year Junior playing career..." He never had a bad game... he never had a bad shift!"

Recently in NHL circles, after the Florida All-Star game shootout success...many individuals have lobbied that tie games should be settled with a shoot-out. After watching the Canmore / Olds Junior A hockey game, my recommendation is play three on three to decide a winner... it's great entertainment!

"Bomer" has great technical skills... skating, passing and shooting... but his greatest asset is the way he sees the ice and reads the play. Over the past few years, Mark Cromie and Dan Heatley have graduated from the AJHL to later star in the NHL. Mark's hockey aspirations are to win the AJHL title and the National championship as well as to attend Ferris State in Michigan next fall and later play in the NHL.

I strongly believe this young man, who is a better person than hockey player, will star in the NHL. So pro scouts and fans of the NHL remember the name "Mark Bomersback"... he's a rising star in the hockey world!!

Go "Bomer" Go!!

Yours in Hockey,
Coach Rex