

Three RiversREPORT

Wednesday, January 30, 2013

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Ranahan helps Team Canada win U18 gold in Finland

By Jerome Turner
Hazelton/Interior News

Alexa Ranahan became the latest Hazelton-born player to win a gold medal for her country on the international stage.

She was one of 22 girls on the victorious Under-18 hockey team that went to Finland last month.

Ranahan was initially in shock after finding out she had even made try-outs for the team, but she had some help from her present coaches, Rebecca Russell and Gina Kingsbury.

Both have played for Canada at the national level.

"They definitely helped by

letting me know what to expect in tryouts," Ranahan said.

Ranahan is currently captain of the Okanagan Hockey Academy (OHA) in Penticton, but she remembers her first few years in Hazelton as part of what enabled her to succeed.

Before moving to the Okanagan when she was 10-years-old Ranahan had to overcome some challenges.

"There was hitting in Pee-wee then and it was a bit scary," Ranahan said.

"But I really didn't have too much trouble playing with the boys."

Ranahan also remembers other girls she played with in Hazelton, such as, Natasha Tait, Montana Johnson and

Mercedes Wright.

After leaving Hazelton Ranahan focused on improving in hockey by cutting out other sports and it has served her well.

She played on Team B.C. at the Under-18 national championships the past two years and was assistant captain in November when her team was an overtime victory away from a bronze medal.

"Making the provincial team is the only way to get picked for a chance at the national level," Ranahan said.

Steadily improving through hard work has enabled Ranahan to look forward to a bright future in hockey.

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Alexa Ranahan (left) with teammate Kimberly Newell after winning gold in the Under-18 world hockey championships in December 2012.

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The Interior N

THREE RIVERS REPORT NCAA next stop for Ranahan

GOLDEN from B1

By this time next year Ranahan may be hoisting an NCAA trophy in the U.S.

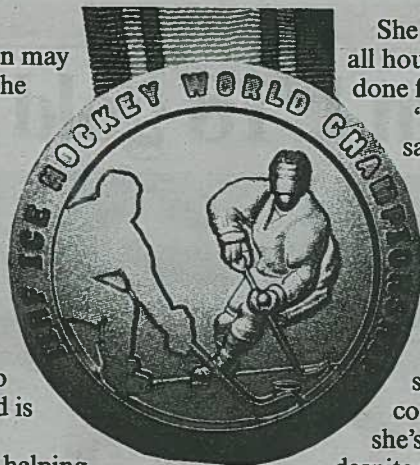
She has committed to Ohio State University and will join the Buckeyes for the 2013-2014 season after graduating from Penticton secondary school.

"I'm really excited and nervous," she said.

"But I know it will be good."

The university has advanced to playoffs in the last three years and is losing six players to eligibility.

Being part of Team Canada is helping her to set goals and stay focused.



She has to record every meal, all hours of sleep, what training is done for every day.

"It's kind of intense," she said.

In the more immediate future Ranahan will be competing with her OHA teammates for the Junior Women's Hockey League championships.

She will have to miss some school, but isn't concerned about grades as she's doing well in every class despite missing two weeks while in Finland.

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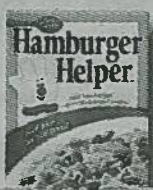
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