

Athena Hauck

What are you studying in school?

I am currently in the Bachelor of Health Science program and hoping to become a research scientist of health in the future.

When did you start playing? Do you remember why you started playing?

I started playing hockey when I was five years old. I always thought that the reason I started playing was because of my dad and his love for the sport, but it actually turns out I joined because of one of my best friends. He was neighbour and we did everything together, so when he started to play, I guess I had to start too. He is why I started playing but he was not the reason I continued to play.

Where did you play your minor and elite hockey before you went on the play at University or College?

I played boys hockey up until my bantam first year when I moved to the female side and played for the Bantam AAA Peace Country Storm in Grande Prairie. I played in Grande Prairie all of bantam and Midget Elite for my first year Midget. ~~At that point our AAA program got cut so I was only able to play Midget AA (or elite)~~, After that year I finished my last two years in Okotoks for the Midget AAA Rocky Mountain Raiders.

Did you play other sports in the off season that helped you develop skills for hockey? If so, what are/were those sports?

Yes, my second/summer sport is Canoe/Kayak Polo. I have been playing this sport since I was seven years old and am still trying to continue with it. It is such a great sport to play, it is so much fun and is very different from hockey. I found this is one of the reasons I love it so much and why it makes me a better hockey player. This is because it allows me to think in a different way over the summer and it makes me miss hockey. I played on the national team twice; once for the World Championships, on the U21 in 2015, and once for the Women's team in 2016. This is a big motivator for me and makes me push myself more and more in my goal setting. One of the other big benefits that Kayak Polo gave me was strength, it gave me the upper body strength and mobility to do so much more in hockey.

Who was or is your biggest influence in your hockey career?

I would have to say my parents are my biggest influences in my hockey career, they helped me through a lot over my years, whether that not making a team or fighting through injury.

What's your favorite part/thing about playing hockey?

My favourite part of hockey is the relationship that are built and going through such special moments with this people. Your hockey team isn't just your friends they are your family.

Which female hockey player did you look up to currently (or as kid growing up) and why?

Tas Hemmingway was the female hockey player that I always looked up to. There weren't a lot of females playing hockey at this point, or at least it wasn't broadcasted as much as it is today. She played on the midget AAA team when I was in peewee

How did playing in the AFHL prepare you for playing in Canada West?

The AFHL was an amazing experience for me because of the competitiveness and the multiple opportunities for a post-secondary experience with hockey.

In your spare time, you are also an official, when did you start officiating?

I started officiating when I was twelve years old and have been doing it ever since.

How has officiating helped you as a player? Would you recommend officiating to other current players?

I really believe that officiating has helped me as a player, it has allowed me to have a better understanding of the game and understand what it is like to be in a different aspect of the game. It allows more time on the ice and also allows me to go back to the camps and experiences that I had once experienced before. For example, I played in the 2015 ATB Challenge cup with the North Predators and won the finals. Just last year I participated in the same games, but this time as one of the officials in the gold medal game.

You recently made Team Alberta that will compete in the 2020 Arctic Games, what do you hope to gain from that experience?

I am really hoping to have a really fun time at my last Hockey Alberta event, with a bit more of a leadership role. I am really hoping to get more girls from the North into high level hockey and have the great experiences that I have. I want to give them the experience that I had all throughout my years of hockey and be someone they look up to.

What is the biggest thing the game has given you (to this point)?

The biggest thing the game has given me is memories and experience, it has also given me a goal and something to strive for. In a way it has given me an education and a future by giving me the opportunity at Mount Royal University.

What advice would you give to girl starting out playing hockey and why?

Every mistake or negative experience you have, you have to look at what you learned and how it made you better; not only as a hockey player but as a person. Everything happens for a reason.