

# An Athlete's Advantage

The Athlete Factory Newsletter  
January Edition, 2014

## What's Happening this Month...

- 1.1 **New Years Day-CLOSED**
- 1.2 **Extra Energy System Circuit-7pm**
- 1.10 **Performance Testing-6pm**
- 1.19 **Recovery Session-12pm**
- 1.25 **Performance Testing-10am**

### Jamie McDonald

As a child, Jamie McDonald was in and out of the hospital with a rare spinal condition. Also known as, "The Flash", Jamie wants to give back and is running across Canada unaided in support of Children's Hospitals across Canada and the Great Ormond Street Children's Charity and the Pied Piper Appeal in the UK.

The Athlete Factory has a special connection to Jamie. He trains out of Ed Archer's gym in England, and Ed Archer was our Director Paul Balsom's assistant when Paul was Head of Strength & Conditioning for Gloucester RFC in England.

On December 19 our athletes and staff had the special privilege of meeting Jamie as he gave an inspiring talk. Jamie had this to say

about the experience "During the speech...I felt I covered everything I needed to say but at the end Paul Balsom stepped in "I want you to think about what Jamie is doing, I know you all have a dream, everyone has a dream. No matter how big, we have to stay determined and pursue it." Paul was right, I realised it wasn't only Athletes that dream big, because everyone does - we all dream and if we don't, then we should."

A big thank you to Dr. Robinson & our sports therapy clinic for the treatment they gave Jamie during his stay in Calgary, and to all our coaches, especially Aletha Desimone & Robin Bauer for all they did for Jamie during his stay as well. We are proud to help such an amazing individual and his great cause!

Jamie has run over 175 marathons since March 2013 on his journey across Canada. He's currently running through the Rockies on his way to the West Coast.

To follow Jamie and find out how you can support him check out: twitter at @MrJamieMcDonald, or his website: [www.jamiemcdonald.org](http://www.jamiemcdonald.org).

## **Congrats to the following athletes for outstanding work in their sport or at the Athlete Factory:**

A huge congratulations to **Jan Hudec**, alpine skier, for being named to the 2014 Canadian Olympic Team in Sochi! On top of that, Jan was the first Canadian to podium this season with a 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish in the Super G at Val Gardena, Italy and he's had 4 top 10 finishes this so far this year.

Freestyle mogul skier, **Matt Joosten** placed 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> at Canadian Selection Moguls at Apex Ski Resort in Penticton. His 4<sup>th</sup> place finish on the Saturday was the fastest time on the course for the day!

**Luke Ulsifer**, also a freestyle mogul skier finished 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> at Apex Ski Resort in Penticton. His 4<sup>th</sup> place finish was the fastest time on the course for the Sunday session!

**Nick Blevins**, home from his European tour with

“The greatest glory in living lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.”  
-Nelson Mandela

the Canadian National Rugby team, received the Outstanding Achievement Award at the Calgary Rugby Awards

Great job to the swimmers of **Cascade Swim Club** who represented their team all across Western Canada and the United States in December! Special congratulations to **Kirsti Kasko** who came home from the Para Can Am Challenge in Edmonton with 5 gold medals! In Kamloops at the MJB Law Classic, the team finished 2<sup>nd</sup> overall. In Portland at the Thunderbolt Junior International, the team represented well against teams from all over Western Canada, Germany and the United States.

Welcome back to the **Calgary Hornets Rugby Club** and congrats to **Wayde Hodgen** on being named 2013

Alberta Player of the Year!

**Kali Wong, Erica Slavin** of the **Calgary Aquabelles** have been named to the 2013 Junior Team Canada Synchro squad!

**Chase Felguerias** and his team of the Calgary Northstars AA Bantam Kings placed 2<sup>nd</sup> at a hockey tournament in West Kelowna.

Congratulations to basketball player, **Claire Feasby**, for being invited to the Future Dinos Development Camp, led by the U of C Dinos head coach and Britain Senior Women's Head coach, Damian Jennings!

Good luck to the **Mustangs Lacrosse** boys who are down in San Diego competing!

## Athlete Testimonial

We love our athletes and our number one goal is to help them achieve *their* goals. Time to let some of them brag!



**Name:** Jamie Bunka

**Age:** 29

**Sport:** Figure Skating

### **When did you first start figure skating and what inspired you to get into the sport?**

I first started skating at two years old. I saw figure skating on T.V. and told my parents that's what I was going to do. They laughed and thought I'd be in for quite a shock but they still got me skates for Christmas. My first time on the ice I didn't fall, I just started skating around. Guess my parents were the ones shocked!

I skated competitively from 9-18 years old, focusing mainly on ice dance in the latter part of my skating career. I competed in Senior Ice Dance with my skating partner against World and Olympic champions at a national level.

### **What are some recent achievements you've accomplished in your sport?**

Coming back into the sport! I took a 10-year hiatus from skating after my ice dance partner retired. After watching the Vancouver Olympics I realized I wasn't finished with skating and had to figure out a way to get back into the sport again; find a coach and club, get into shape and re-learn a different skating discipline (singles free skating). I hadn't even stepped onto an ice surface in seven years so everything was feeling new and challenging. After my first day back on the ice I had to fall into my car because everything was sore, even the muscles I didn't know I had were aching.

I've now been back in a competitive setting for a year. Having to re-learn how to compete, dealing with competition stress and preparing mentally, eating the right foods to fuel training, and finding balance between training and working have all been a learning experience and an accomplishment.

### **What is your top memory?**

There are too many to list. Some highlight for me since coming back into the sport are: taking a leave of absence from work last year to move down to Detroit, MI to train with Olympic coach Marina Zoueva (she coaches Canadian Olympic Champions Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir), competing at provincials in November and having my best competition performance and results to date, and travelling around Canada and the U.S. to train with different national/world level coaches and choreographers. The people I've met during my comeback are the best part. I've made friends across North America who are Jamie supporters and provide constant encouragement to keep going towards my skating goals.

### **When did you start training at The Athlete Factory and how has it helped in your sport?**

I started training at AF a year ago. Training here has been the best decision I've made since my comeback. When I trained in the States, my fitness coaches had clients in the NFL and NHL, but the fitness training I got there doesn't even compare to what AF provides. With AF I've seen major improvements in all areas of my skating. My speed, core strength, aerobic, anaerobic, vertical jump (gaining an additional 6" on my skating jumps). I would not have progressed as quickly as I have without the AF training.