

Penguins assistant creates unique summer camp

By Kevin Allen
USA TODAY

Pittsburgh Penguins assistant Troy Ward's idea for a parent-child hockey camp was born out of fear that he was at risk of not being the parent he wanted to be.

He was a college assistant at Denver when his oldest son, Taylor, was born eight years ago. That summer, he was

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working at a summer hockey school when a thought hit him as hard as any bodycheck he had ever received.

"I left my wife and newborn son in Denver that summer, and I had been gone all winter," Ward recalled. "As a college recruiter, I had been gone all winter. I was always on the road. I flew my wife at the halfway point and about that time I said, 'Pretty soon we will have another kid, and I have to spend time with my family in the summer or my marriage isn't going to last and I'm not going to be a good dad.'"

That led to his idea that he needed to operate a summer camp where he could be with his family and still be around hockey. He trademarked the name "Hockey & Sons" and came up with a logo immediately, but it has taken him until now to come up with the financial backing and personnel. He will unveil his camp July 7-11 on the campus of Shattuck-St. Mary's in Faribault, Minn.

Ward's sons, Taylor, and Nathan, soon to be 4, will be with him. His coaches include Penguins coach Kevin Constantine, current Chicago Blackhawks Ed Olczyk, former NHL players Joe Mullen, Mike Eaves and J.P. Parise and current University of Minnesota associate Mike Guentzel. All will have their sons with them.

"These guys won't be afraid to sit around at 9 o'clock and share what they did when they were growing up," Ward said. "They will be able to tell you what they would do if they had it to do over again."



Troy Ward: His camp will feature fathers and sons.

who have finished above .500 on the road in five of the last six years, are 11-17-3 away from home this season.

Buffalo: Though the Sabres are projected to lose \$15 million this season, that doesn't preclude them from going after a high-priced star. "The ownership will make a commitment, but the commitment (that) will come will be based on sound reasoning," GM Darcy Regier said.

Carolina: Before D Adam Burt was traded to Philadelphia, he was one of only 11 current players who had spent 11 or more seasons with his team. F Andrei Kovalenko, who arrived in the Burt trade, scored in his debut Monday.

Florida: Paul Laus and Peter Worrell rank second and third in the league in penalty minutes. According to the Elias Sports Bureau, the last time teammates finished No. 1 and No. 2 was when Dave Schultz and Andre "Moose" Dupont did it with Philadelphia in 1974-75.

Montreal: A one-game benching last month might have jump-started D Vladimir Malakhov. He has four goals and 11 points in his last 11 games. "When he's carrying the puck like he is now, he's enjoyable to watch," teammate Brian Savage said.

New Jersey: The Devils might be different under Robbie Ftorek than when Jacques Lemaire was their coach, but don't try convincing Toronto captain Mats Sundin. "They try to take the emotion out of the game," he said. "They put everyone to sleep, then get one or two goals and sit back and protect it."

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Although the on-ice training will be designed to improve the player's skill, even that is designed to bring about a closeness between parent and child. The parent and child will be on the ice together twice a day.

"Parents will get the idea what's most important for kids to learn," Ward said. "They get a chance to try it themselves and see how difficult it is for a kid that age to do it."

The parents will hear Ward's ideas. "I'm trying to follow my dad," he said. "He kept me close enough to hockey to make me want to succeed, but he didn't let me overindulge myself so I had burnout."

He knows sports has changed since he was a child, so he is prepared to listen.

"Hopefully, we can have an open forum," he said. "Let's look at what's wrong and what's right. It's a different world now. They are telling me my 8-year-old should be playing spring hockey. Geez, I want him to play baseball."

Why did he pick the name Hockey & Sons?

"Growing up, my favorite show was *Sanford and Son*," he said. "It made me laugh."

The rest of the East:

Boston: The Bruins are about to embark on a critical portion of their schedule. After Tuesday's win over Florida, Boston plays three consecutive and five of its next six games on the road. The Bruins,

N.Y. Islanders: The Islanders' lack of toughness was apparent Sunday, when New Jersey's Scott Stevens got nose to nose with Tommy Salo, but no Islander came to his goalie's defense. "Actions speak louder than words, and I guess we have to make some actions," coach Bill Stewart said. "Or transactions. I know one thing — Scott Stevens wasn't scared."

N.Y. Rangers: C Wayne Gretzky will be out at least another week because of a neck injury. Gretzky, out since Feb. 26, will get a cortisone shot in the next two days.

Ottawa: Lightning coach Jacques Demers had high praise for the Senators after they overcame a 2-0 deficit to rout Tampa Bay 9-3 Monday. "You are not going to out-muscle or outwork them," he said. "Jacques Martin should be considered for coach of the year."

Philadelphia: D Eric Desjardins (stomach virus) missed his fourth consecutive game Tuesday night. The Flyers are 0-3-3 without him.

Tampa Bay: Tom Wilson, pointman for new owner Bill Davidson, denied rumors that Detroit Vipers coach Steve Ludzic has been promised the coaching job with Tampa Bay next season. Wilson said no decisions for next season have been made, but he likes the direction under coach/GM Jacques Demers. Davidson also owns the Vipers.

Toronto: C Alyn McCauley, out with a concussion, is getting better. Team therapist Chris Broadhurst says McCauley's progress is "very encouraging" and he thinks he will play again this season.

Washington: D Sergei Gonchar has eight goals in his last 11 games. All have come on the power play.