

5/8/2006 - Where are they Now - Anthony Donskov

When it comes to wide smiles, no other Cotton King is thought of over Anthony Donskov. He provided smiles to the faces of children while also displaying his own smiles when he scored goals. His former coach Tracy Egeland always said he loved when “Donny” scored a goal because he would always get a kick out of watching Donskov celebrate.

Kids were always smiling around Donskov and it was not only because they were talking to a hockey player... it was because they were talking to a friend. Donskov, who played two seasons (01/02 – 02/03) with the Kings after a four-year college tenure at Miami of Ohio, would make weekly visits (sometimes three days a week) to area hospitals visiting children while with the Kings. Those visits turned into friendships and after the 01/02 season, Donskov sought a way to assist his newfound friends. Donskov returned home to Ohio and learned about the Columbus Blue Jackets charity program called “Hats for Heroes,” which raised funds from profits of specialty hats sold at hockey games to benefit local hospitalized children in the Columbus community. Donskov brought the idea to Lubbock and created the “Caps for Courage” program. The program sold specialty hats with proceeds (and hats) benefiting South Plains area children battling cancer. The program was a huge success and Donskov became the first Cotton Kings player to receive the CHL “Man of the Year” honor. The program was adopted by the CHL the following season and today spans more than just the CHL.

Donskov spent his entire pro career playing in Lubbock and registered 25 goals and 20 assists for 45 points in 90 games. He comes from a hockey family, which saw all three Donskov brothers (Misha and Matt are his brothers) compete at the collegiate level and attempt pro careers, and his mother Debbie and father Paul each go in together to help operate an ice hockey programs in Ohio. We had an opportunity to chat with Anthony about his Lubbock career and what he is up to now.

1.) Are you still involved with the Caps for Courage program?

- I am still involved with the Caps For Courage charity. The charity that I started while in Lubbock will always be very dear to my heart. I still communicate with both Duane Lewis and Tim Zemens regarding ideas on how to grow and raise monies for this charity. I also remain in touch with a few of the young heroes (Garrett Admire) that I met while visiting the hospitals in Lubbock. I will forever be thankful to the fans in Lubbock for their constant support in embracing me as a player, and the Caps For Courage charity.

2.) What did the CHL Man of the Year honor mean to you?

- I firmly believe that it is, and will always be one of my proudest accomplishments. The Man of The Year award is not about goals, assists, wins, losses its about giving back and helping the communities young men, women and families. The memories and relationships built through this charity will last forever. Paul Fioroni should also be congratulated for his continued community awareness.

3.) Where have you been since Lubbock?

- I was briefly in Rio Grande Valley signed to play with my younger brother. Unfortunately things didn't work out and I decided to retire. I currently reside in Westerville, Ohio.

4.) What did you miss from playing in Lubbock?

- I miss being a part of a close-knit family. Our team was very close and I miss the guys tremendously. Unfortunately in our sport, change is constant, and my friends are spread all over the world (Canada, USA, Slovenia). I also miss our fans, the BEST fans in the CHL. Night in and night out, they were always there for support. Thank you FANS!!! I miss you!!! Last but not least, I miss the Lubbock community, and the relationships I built through Caps For Courage charity. Doug Halcomb our team chaplain, Amy Peck the child life specialist at Covenant Hospital, Larry Williams.... And the list goes on!

5.) Do you keep up with any former teammates?

- I still keep in touch with Blaz Emersic my roommate and best buddy. He played in Europe this past season and we speak via e-mail. I have also spoken with Fioroni and Dave MacIntyre through e-mail as well.

6.) What are you doing career wise and what do you look to be doing in the upcoming future?

- I currently instruct and operate our family run hockey school. The "OV" Hockey School, L.L.C. (www.ovhockey.com). Our school has been regarded as one of the most respected in the nation! I also own a training business called Apex Fitness Inc. I currently train several NHL players, Div 1 Ice hockey players and both junior and high school players as well. My future plans include growing my business and training a greater number of elite athletes. We, as a family would also like to expand our Hockey School into other areas of the Mid West... Maybe even Lubbock Texas!