

Carly Haggard

Carly Haggard has been the head coach of the Shawnigan Lake School Female U18 Prep team since 2016. Prior to that, she was an assistant coach with the University of Guelph women's hockey team from 2009-2012. Originally from Port Alberni, BC, Haggard played four seasons in the NCAA for Dartmouth College, captaining the team her final season in 2002/03. In 127 NCAA games the forward tallied 204 points, finishing first in team scoring three times, and second once. She led the NCAA in scoring in 2001/02 while being named a NCAA Top Female Collegiate Player (Patty Kazmaier Award) Finalist in back to back seasons. In 2005/06 she would play in the NWHL-CA for the Oakville Ice, finishing first in team scoring and sixth in league with 39 points in 36 games.

JM: So, to start here, we're starting to trend the wrong way again, but the world was kind of back to normal for a little bit. What was the first thing you were excited to do when COVID restrictions started to ease up?

CH: I was excited to take my four-year-old to sporting activities again.

JM: Nice, what sports does he play?

CH: He plays soccer and hockey.

JM: So, you just mentioned your son. Paint a little bit of a picture for me of the family and pet's situation? Where you grew up? Where you live now? That type of thing.

CH: Yes. So, I have two sons. Charlie is four and Joshua is two. My wife's name is Gemma, and we have two dogs. A Jack Russell Shitzu and a Jack Russell Pomeranian named Tinker and Ruby.

JM: Okay. Nice. Where are you living now and where did you grow up?

CH: I grew up in Port Alberni BC, and now in Shawnigan Lake BC.

JM: What's the first thing you would do if you won the lottery?

CH: I would take my family back to New Zealand to visit our in-laws because it's been two years.

JM: Is that where your wife is from?

CH: Yeah.

JM: So, she obviously grew up there?

CH: Yes. Grew up there.

JM: Oh, that's pretty cool. Favorite animal? It doesn't have to be one of your pets. Just a favorite animal in general.

CH: I like lions.

JM: Okay. That's a good choice. Any reason for that?

CH: Just because they're fearless.

JM: Biggest pet peeve?

CH: When people complain about things but they don't do anything about it.

JM: That's a good one. If you could go back in time, what year would you travel to and why?

CH: I think I would go back to 1999. That was the year I graduated high school, and I would just tell myself to enjoy my twenties, university, and not to have so many cares. Just kind of live a little bit more freely and not worry so much about everything.

JM: Interesting. I just talked to Cassea Schols there at Okanagan the other day and she had a very similar idea to go back into her first year at university to tell herself, basically, the same type of message. So, that's interesting. Do you have a go-to karaoke song?

CH: Anything by Celine Dion. She's my favorite and I just feel like you can just belt it out.

JM: That's a good one. What's something about you most people from around the hockey world don't know, that you think is maybe interesting or just a big part of your life.

CH: I don't really know actually. Most people around the hockey world think that I'm probably pretty tough and I'm actually not. I'm pretty sensitive and emotional. I guess I'm a lot more sensitive and emotional than probably people would think when they see me.

JM: Do you feel like you just kind of have to put on a brave face or a strong face, I guess, in the rink?

CH: No. I just feel like that's the impression I give off, but people who know me well, I mean, I cry at commercials and I cry at pretty much any video that has a dog in it or TV shows. So, people probably wouldn't guess that about me.

JM: What do you like to do away from the rink? Usually, there isn't much of an offseason, but maybe in the summer and spare time?

CH: I like to do anything with my family. Camping, swimming at the lake. Basically, anything that involves hanging out with my boys, especially.

JM: How did you get involved in your current role with Shawnigan?

CH: I was actually living in Australia. I was finishing my teaching degree over there, and a family friend contacted me and said, "Shawnigan Lake School is starting a female hockey team. We think you'd be a great fit as a teacher and a coach," so they encouraged me to apply. I got in touch with the school and one thing led to the next.

JM: So, you went to university in Australia?

CH: No. I went to Dartmouth. I did my undergrad at Dartmouth. I was just doing my one-year teaching degree over Australia.

JM: Oh, cool. How did that come about?

CH: That's where half of my wife's family is living in Australia. So, we were living in Guelph ON, at the time I was coaching at the University of Guelph. My wife said, "If I have to do one more winter in Ontario, we're going to get a divorce. (laughs)" I've always wanted to do my teaching degree, so it was great. We went over there for three years and got to spend time with her family, and I got to do my degree there.

JM: That's awesome. What about the CSSHL model do you like most?

CH: I love that it's school-based. I say this to everyone. "You're a student first, and you're an athlete second." I think that sometimes gets forgotten in youth sports. To me, especially, as a teacher myself, it's so important that they know that and they have that. I think the CSSHL does a really good job focusing on that and giving awards for that academic base and really promoting that side of things.

JM: Okay. That's a pretty common answer. What classes do you teach or do you teach everything at Shawnigan?

CH: PE Teacher.

JM: What's the best piece of advice you've ever received in life? It doesn't have to be hockey related.

CH: If you want change, then, you have to speak up. No one's going to fight or advocate for you, so have to do it for yourself.

JM: So, that's kind of similar to your biggest pet peeve there, I guess.

CH: Yes. Exactly, it kind of goes hand in hand now.

JM: So, last one here for you. Your favorite or funniest hockey memory? So, just looking back on the game. Something that kind of stands out to you.

CH: Oh, man. This is probably going to sound a little bit cheesy, but my favorite hockey memory as a coach is just seeing all these girls that I've coached just kind of reach their goals. When they achieve something and you see the smile on their face and know how hard they worked for it, to me that memory and that feeling never gets old.