

Cody Anthony

Cody Anthony is the current head coach of the Mount Hockey Academy U18 Prep #1 team. Now in this third season with Mount Academy, Cody spent six years playing in the Nova Scotia Junior Hockey League (NSJHL) the for the East Hants Penguins.

JM: What was the first thing you were really excited to do, and it doesn't have to be hockey-related, once things really started to ease up in relation to COVID restrictions?

CA: Just general traveling. After spending a year kind of locked on Prince Edward Island, last year we couldn't even leave our little island. Not even just for hockey. I have a couple of good buddies out west that had to move their weddings and stuff that I wasn't able to get to do in the last couple summers. So, just kind of looking forward to just being able to generally travel anywhere you want again.

JM: That's perfect. You mentioned obviously you're in PEI. But tell me where you grew up, where you live now, your family situation, if you got any pets. Just kind of paint that picture for me.

CA: So, I originally grew up just outside of Halifax and a small little farm town called Shubenacadie. It's 45 minutes outside of Halifax. But I come from a sports family. I have three other brothers. Actually, my oldest brother currently right now he's the assistant coach for the Cape Breton Eagles in the QMJHL. But all my brothers, all four of us, we all grew up playing hockey. We all grew up playing fastpitch in the summers and golf. So, my entire family is a very sports-centric family. So, I kind of grew up just my whole life knowing sports and that's kind of doesn't matter what the season was there was always some sport to be played. But now, currently, I live in PEI.

JM: What is one thing that you're not good at that you wish you were?

CA: Skating. I'm not the best skater in the world. I wish I was a good skater because it'd be easier to look good out on the ice but I'm not the best skater in the world.

JM: If you had to eat one food or one meal for every meal for the rest of your life, what would it be and why?

CA: One meal for the rest of my life. I think it's probably one of the things I miss most from traveling down the states, but it'd probably be a burrito from Chipotle. That's the one meal I could probably do every day for the rest of my life.

JM: Burritos are good call. I've never had Chipotle before but I've heard it's amazing.

CA: Yes. You're missing out. Any time you're down in the states you need make a trip to go get it. It's definitely the best burrito spot.

JM: Alright. I'll have to do that. Favorite subject in school, whether that was junior high, high school, elementary, or university.

CA: I'd say biology. And that's just simply because it was my major in university. I mean, that's kind of why I majored in it. I was just fascinated by biology and how kind of everything works. So that would be my favorite subject.

JM: Okay. Where do you go to university?

CA: I went to Dalhousie. I majored in biology and economics.

JM: Okay. In baseball you have a walk-up song, wrestling or boxing you have an entrance song. What would be your walk-up or entrance song, if you had one?

CA: Back when I played fastpitch, my walk-up song was 'Back to Back' by Drake.

JM: That's a good one.

CA: Yes. That was my walk-up song.

JM: So, were you still playing ball pretty recently, then?

CA: Yes. So, I lived in Alberta for three summers. So, I actually have a couple of good buddies that I'm still friends with, out there. One of them coaches Midget AAA in Alberta. Another guy, he actually plays for Seattle. So, I'm still pretty close with those guys. But I actually played for the junior national fast pitch team for Team Canada and went to the World Championships in 2012. And then I when I started getting more serious about coaching hockey and stuff, I kind of stopped and turned to a full-time golfer in the summer. I haven't played for a few years now, but I played pretty seriously for a while.

JM: If you could spend one day living as a different person, who would it be and why?

CA: One day as a different person? Probably, I'd say Tiger Woods. I just would like to see what his day-to-day is, just what goes through his head, how he prepares mentally, and stuff like that for whatever he's doing.

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

CA: One thing that people wouldn't know about me is probably that I am a fairly educated person. It kind of gets lost a little bit in the hockey world sometimes. But I do have a four-year degree from a pretty prestigious university. And I did well in school and not a lot of people would assume that about me. Because, you know what, when they think of a hockey coach and stuff-- I don't have the biggest playing background but I definitely learned a lot in terms of maturity and discipline and stuff like that just from going to university and being able to complete my degree.

JM: Usually, you don't get much of an offseason as a coach with recruiting and whatnot, but what do you like to do away from the rink in the offseason? In your spare time? Obviously, you mentioned baseball and golf.

CA: Yes. I'm an avid golfer. I try and get three to four rounds in a week in the summer when we're away from the rink and stuff. Just generally spending time with different people, just trying to get away from the game as much as you can in the summer months. Like again, in U18 and working at an academy you're always kind of recruiting and on the phone and stuff. But any chance that I can get to go to the golf course that's always a good day for me in the summer.

JM: Awesome. How did you get involved in your current role with the Mount Academy?

CA: So, I actually came over to Mount Academy with the director here, Olivier Filion. We were together for three years at another academy in Dartmouth. We actually got started together. I was in my last year at my degree and my oldest brother was a coach and teacher at that academy. And he knew I was kind of looking to get into coaching once I finished my degree and stuff. I started out there as a volunteer assistant coach and it kind of turned into a full-time job after my degree. Olivier and I coached together for three years there. And then the school actually went bankrupt and stuff. The school at Mount Academy called Olivier and gave him the job as Director over here and I've kind of been his right-hand man for the last five years. So, he brought me with him. That's kind of how I got started here.

JM: What about the CSSHL model do you like?

CA: I just love the flexibility that it offers. For students that are looking to get the most out of their education and athletics and be able to combine it under the same roof. I mean, I love seeing kids that can excel at both because it provides equal opportunity to both your athletics and your academics, right? With the smaller class size and the more one-on-one coaching. The fact that we can build relationships outside of the rink is big for me. Do you know what I mean? A lot of U18 or Midget AAA coaches, they only see their guys at practice or game time, right? But over here, we get to kind of see how they interact with teachers, the kind of respect they have for different people around the school and we get to see them in a different environment. So, it can kind of help build that kid on the ice because you kind of see how he kicks off the ice as well. And the first thing I explain to teachers is that a lot of the kids are the same. If they're having a problem in class it's going to normally bleed on ice. Or it might be something similar, whether it's attention to detail or whether it's a respect thing or whatever it might be. Just that aspect that it's all under one roof. That's the one thing I really love about the CSSHL model.

JM: I actually coached in the league for three years myself. So, that's a huge one for me. Having gone from minor hockey to that. And just the difference in your relationship you build with the players is pretty crazy.

CA: Yes, exactly. I billet kids too. There are four kids that go to the school that live with me too. And just being able to see and just being able to know their different interests and just letting them know there's more to life than just playing the game of hockey. I know that everybody here

loves it. And I love it. And I do it for a living. But there's still a lot more there to life. So, it's cool seeing them outside, too.

JM: Yes. Absolutely. What's the best piece of advice you've ever gotten in life? And it doesn't have to be sport-related.

CA: Best piece of advice? I mean, that's a tough one. My dad told me when I was young that most sports are mental and you can always get a lot further using your brain. So, I just, basically, knowing that in most sports, you never want to make mental mistakes. Physical mistakes are going to happen, right? Like when it's on the ice, you're going to miss a bad pass. You're going to miss an empty net and stuff. But the guys that are mentally prepared and don't make the mental mistakes, whether it's a coach, player, no matter what, if you can make sure that mentally you're prepared, I think you're always going to be successful.

JM: That's a good one. I like that answer too. Because I find the biggest thing with younger players is that consistency at the mental aspect of their game. So, I like that.

CA: Yes. That's huge, right? That's just natural. Like guys in the NHL they're just better at picking up bad passes and stuff. But mistakes happen. Physical mistakes happen in every sport, right? Baseball guys are going to chase and they're going to strikeout when they shouldn't and stuff. But you know what? If you pick up a ball and you should have thrown it to second base and you threw it to first base or you're on the backcheck and you should have picked up this man, picked up another man when those are things that you can control. So, I mean, physical mistakes are going to happen. But mental stuff, that's the one thing that I try and pride myself and my guys that I coach on.

JM: No, absolutely. What is your favorite hockey memory? Something that really when you look back on the game, makes you laugh or makes you smile or something. Something stands out to you.

CA: My favorite hockey memory, probably was when I was 16 and I was actually playing Junior B. I played Junior B that year because my oldest brother was finishing his Junior career in our hometown. And, you know what? I was a young kid and stuff. But I just look back a lot on that year. We had seven guys that played Junior A or few guys who have played Major Junior or just a bunch of guys that had a lot of experience playing the game. And when I look back on it, other than learning from Olivier and other coaches that I've coached with here, I had a lot of guys that I learned a lot from that year being a 16-year old in the way they treated me. And we ended up winning our league there. We won provincials in Nova Scotia. We went on a run. We won 20 of our last 24 games. Getting to do that with your oldest brother and doing it for your hometown team was pretty special.