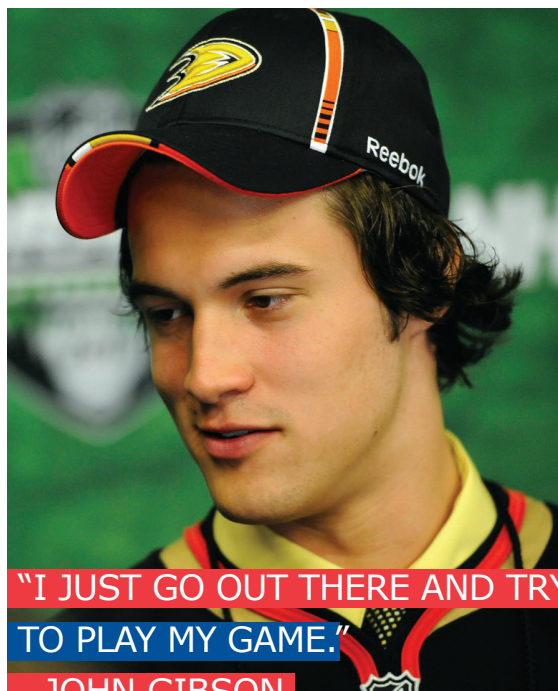


BEYOND THE BLUE

OFFICIAL ALUMNI NEWS OF THE KITCHENER RANGERS



SPRING 2014 EDITION



"I JUST GO OUT THERE AND TRY
TO PLAY MY GAME."

- JOHN GIBSON



John Gibson, Anaheim Ducks

THE EVOLUTION OF JOHN GIBSON

It was an early April night when the hockey world was introduced to John Gibson, who turned the heads of many by recording a shutout in his National Hockey League debut.

Called up from the Norfolk Admirals (AHL) for the clash with the Vancouver Canucks, the 20 year old from Pittsburgh, PA made 18 saves in his first career start, moving his Anaheim Ducks one game closer to a Pacific Division title. And while many fans in Kitchener missed the late-night West Coast contest, few were surprised to see their former netminder excel.

After all, in two seasons with the Rangers, fans watched as the standout American led the Ontario Hockey League in save percentage (both in the regular season, and the playoffs). When the team opened its 50th Anniversary season in 2012-13, the youngster made it memorable, shutting out the Mississauga Steelheads on the road to set a winning tone for the landmark year. Gibson was twice recognized as the Rangers' Most Valuable Player in the postseason, earned league accolades, including CHL Goaltender of the Week and even found himself on the front of a Shreddies box.

But through all the success, the teenager showed a level-headed

modesty that belied his talents. Even through his highest highs, John echoed a similar refrain, claiming that he was just out to do his job.

"I just go out there and try to play my game: don't try to do too much, don't get too high or too low. I'm always relaxed, and that's my personality. I don't overanalyze things, I just like to have fun and it seems to work out for me."

Saying it's 'working out' is an obvious understatement. A graduate of the US National Development Team, he also played at the Under-17 World



**"IT WAS A TEAM
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Hockey Challenge and was the top goaltender at the 2011 Under-18 World Championship, where the Americans took home the gold. Gibson was golden again in 2013, setting a USA Hockey record for best save percentage in a World Junior Championship and earning MVP honours. Back in Kitchener with a medal around his neck, he was as unflappable as ever.

"I don't really think about it. I get a lot of credit, but in my eyes, a lot of the credit belongs to the team. They made me look better than maybe I really was. It was a team effort and I really think that's why we won – we were a family. We came together on Day One and it was one of the closest teams I've ever been a part of."

After the curtain closed on an exceptional junior career, Rangers fans have watched their graduate write a new act with just as much success. Fresh out of the OHL, John was named to the American roster for the 2013 IIHF World Championship and soon moved from the bench to the crease, and finished second amongst goaltenders with a 1.56 goals against average and .951 save percentage. He became the second-youngest netminder in world championship history to win a playoff game with an 8-3 victory

over Russia in the quarterfinals before backstopping Team USA to a bronze medal shootout win over Finland. In recognition of his stellar season, USA Hockey named Gibson the winner of the Bob Johnson Award, given annually to recognize excellence in international hockey competition during a specific season of play.

To anyone paying attention, it was clear that the 6-foot-3, 210 pound goaltender was destined for the spotlight, regardless of his reticence to stand in it. A solid season in Norfolk kept him on Anaheim's radar, and as the season came to a close, the playoff-bound Ducks decided it was time to give the kid a shot.

"This was just like old hat to him," Ducks coach Bruce Boudreau told NHL.com after the game.

"If it was me at 20 years old... I would've been smiling from ear to ear. He was just very relaxed. That's just the way he is."

Calm and collected on the ice, Gibson continues to demonstrate the same quiet confidence that Rangers fans grew accustomed to during his time at The Aud.

His stoic demeanour remained unchanged, even as the Ducks called him up to his biggest stage yet – the Stanley Cup playoffs. Pressed into service for Game 4 of a second round series with the

Los Angeles Kings, the Pittsburgh kid shut the door, stopping all 28 shots he faced and becoming the youngest goalie in history (20 years, 330 days) to record a shut-out in his playoff debut. And after the game, he was as unflappable as ever.

"It's obviously exciting, but we haven't won anything yet. I think we'll be excited if we win. That's the time to celebrate. Obviously you enjoy this for a bit, but you got to get back to work," the shaggy haired netminder told the gathered media, echoing the same mantra he had as a junior in Kitchener.

"I just play my game. You have to worry about one year at a time – one day at a time really. If you can do that, then you'll be successful. You can't worry about what's already happened in the past, you can't worry about what's going to happen in the future."

The Ducks fell in Game 7 to the eventual Western Conference Champion, closing the door on the 2013-14 season, but not on the career of a young American goaltender who captured nationwide attention. The consensus now is that Gibson has a long, bright future ahead – something Kitchener fans have known for years.

RANGERS RECRUIT NEW TALENT

ADAM MASCHERIN - RANGERS' 2014 FIRST ROUND PICK

After a long regular season, the work continues for the OHL's General Managers in the form of the annual Priority Selection. And after a rocky year at The Aud, the Rangers found themselves picking from the cream of the crop of available talent when they made their selection in the number two slot.

The choice proved an easy one for GM Murray Hiebert and his scouting staff. With the second overall pick in the draft, the Rangers snapped up Adam Mascherin, the stocky forward with a scoring touch who averaged two points a game playing minor midget for the Vaughan Kings. Named the 2013-14 Greater Toronto Hockey League Player of the Year, the standout centre was at league headquarters when the announcement was made, but soon made the quick trip to The Aud with his family in tow.

"It's been amazing – to be able to share this with them and to actually make the trip down to this amazing rink and I'm excited to hopefully be playing here," the ruddy faced teen said, turning a tour of the team's facilities, before

cracking a modest smile. "If I end up making the team."

Moments after the selection was finalized, Hiebert explained that Mascherin was a player to be excited about for a couple of reasons.

"Not only was he a dominant player in minor midget, he also played really, really well with the Georgetown Raiders, one of our affiliate teams, and his coach there couldn't say enough good things about him," he shared, also noting the youngster's impressive 16 point contribution during the Kings' playoffs. But there's more to the Maple, ON native than offense.

"We love the way he can put the puck in the net and his size – he doesn't get pushed around – but his combine tests showed that not only is he a real good player, he's also a lot faster than people give him credit for."

Adam is looking to showcase that element of his game when the time comes to compete for a roster spot. With his stats, he knows he's been cast as a goal-scorer, but he's out to prove he's multi-dimensional.

"I think what goes underrated is my work ethic, and that's something that I would first and foremost like to bring to this team come training camp."

Mascherin wasn't the only Rangers prospect getting the grand tour on Draft Day, as this year's Priority Selection featured a distinctly local feel. The three picks that followed all have roots in the Waterloo and Wellington Regions, and made their way to The Aud to celebrate the next step in their young careers.

With their second and third selections, the Rangers welcomed Connor Bunnaman and Sean Allen, teammates with the Guelph Gryphons minor midget program, and champions at the recent OHL Gold Cup Under-16 tournament. Joining them in the dressing room that afternoon was Cambridge Hawks rearguard Connor Hall, and all three were beaming in their newly-pressed sweaters as the cameras rolled.

"It's overwhelming. I'm just so excited to be here, wearing this jersey" said Bunnaman, a forward who averaged nearly a point per game with the Gryphons last season. "It's breathtaking – it's an amazing room, amazing fans,



Adam Mascherin

RANGERS RECRUIT NEW TALENT CONTINUED

amazing team! I've been to tons of Rangers games, love the crowd and I just love being here."

Rangers fans had their first look at the new crop of talent selected in the 2014 draft (and a number of free agents) during the team's Spring Camp in April, and competition is expected to be fierce come training camp in the fall. The future is looking bright for the team, and Head Coach Troy Smith was undeniably

pleased as the Priority Selection came to a close.

"I'm very happy – I think the scouts did a fantastic job, starting with getting Mascherin in that number one spot. He's an elite goal scorer and then from here we got a lot of different players – some dynamic players, some big players – and I think we filled a lot of roles and that's going to be valuable down the road."



The Kitchener Rangers hockey Club will be hosting its 14th Annual Charity Golf Classic on August 26, 2014 at the beautiful Whistle Bear Golf Club.

Details to be released soon.

We're looking for updated Alumni information. If you have a new address or email please send it to thennessey@kitchenerrangers.com or by phone at 519-576-3700.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

ROBINSON SIGNS WITH RANGERS



Larry Robinson with G.M. Walter 'Punch' Scherer, signs with the Rangers on August 7, 1970.