

Glory Days *by: John Peters*

I get up from my bed and look at my phone. The time reads 9:35, my game is in 25 minutes. I walk out of my dorm room, into the hallway and down the stairs. I grab my hockey bag from the common room and begin



the walk to Schneider
Arena, Providence
College's campus rink. It's
cold out so I have my East
Catholic varsity jacket
from my senior season on,
and I put my shoulders up
against the wind. It's
January and only a year
ago I was playing at East

Catholic, in front of friends, family, coaches, all cheering along the glass at Champions in Cromwell. Now, I'm walking in sweatpants and my old jacket to an intramural game that no one will watch, that doesn't matter, with many people who don't even know how to skate and are just out there to have fun. A year ago the game wasn't about fun. A year ago, the game was about winning, about getting to Yale, about taking the national anthem in front of 5,000 people to play for a state title. It's a place I've been twice, my sophomore and junior year, and it's a feeling that's incomparable to anything I've ever felt. The best feeling in the world.

I throw my bag down, even though I got to the rink 10 minutes before our game was supposed to start only a few people are here. I recognize some of my teammates from last week's game and say my hellos. I sit down in the locker room and get dressed. Unlike the locker room we had at East Catholic, this one is not my own stall, does not have my nameplate on it, and is not roomy at all. I throw on my jersey, not even wearing shoulder pads, and walk out to the rink. I take a small warm-up lap and shoot around, which is a lot more of a warm-up than anyone on my team, most of them standing and talking by the bench. Some are bracing themselves on the bench, simply because they have never skated before. We play the game, lose 7-2 and I walk back into my locker room, get undressed and head home to my dorm.



It's a lie to say that I enjoy it. I mean hockey's hockey I guess. But I can't help but remember all the games I played in an East Catholic sweater, and feeling like I was part of something bigger than myself. It's a tough contrast, being in college and not doing anything competitive. I miss the

feeling of being in front of the crowd, with my team, my brothers that I played with for four years. I miss those days so much. I have a few pictures of myself on my desk at college from my playing days at East Catholic, and a picture of Senior Night with my parents and me. I'm ribbed by my friends at Providence for being a wash up, and it's something that I joke about as well, but it's something difficult to come to terms with. Realizing that you are washed up is the first step. When you do that, you realize you can joke about your high school career, the ups and downs and maybe make a few "I was nasty in high school puck" jokes at your own expense. When that happens remembering your days go from being sad to being fond. I look back on my days in a high school hockey jersey and am thankful for each one. And even though I've moved past, I would still give anything to take the blue line at Champions, sit in my locker room with Alex Manner on my left, Tommy Usseglio on my right and listen to one more pregame talk from Coach Clarkin.

An empty Schneider Rink vs. Ingalls, full of Eagles' faithful.

