

The Journey

By: Jack Gethings (Hamden High School '18)

As a young boy, Hamden High hockey players were my super heroes. I was privileged enough to grow up and watch players like; Jackie Vets, C.J. Carignan, Mike Pierne, P.J. Vakos and many, many more. I watched many of the greatest games CT high school hockey might ever see, most notably Hamden's second state championship of their two back-to-back state championships. Being granted such opportunities lead me to set hockey goals based off of the success of the Hamden High Varsity Hockey team not the NHL or college hockey like most hockey players would. Now here in 2016, I am a sophomore on my 'Dream Team' Hamden High Varsity and let me tell you it has been a process, a long, up and down journey. Yet through it all, I couldn't be more proud to call myself a Dragon.

After making the team my emotions were at an all time high. I was so excited to finally live my dream, to have accomplished my goal. The fact that all my hard work on the ice, the work outs off the ice and all the focus I had embedded in my goal had all been worth it gave me feelings words can not describe. With all that being said, being satisfied with just being on the team is not the person I am. I started the season, not surprisingly on the 4th line. I understood what went into the decision, as I knew I still had much to prove. Now in mid season I have been going back and forth from playing the whole game or not playing at all. As the person I am and the confidence I instill in myself and based off of my performance when I do play I can not find any sensible explanation as to why there is so much unknown with my playing status. Confusion, frustration, tears, anger have all filled my head and consumed my train of thought. I am doing what I love to do and for the team I have always wanted to play for yet there is so much unknown. Balancing the fact opportunities are limited and the drive you have to embark your own history into such a historic program is quite a difficult task. There are times I just want to say screw it and not care anymore but I refuse to give up. After reflecting on everything I come to a constant conclusion...

I play for a program, a fraternity, a family, a town that has more history than any other in the state of Connecticut.

I play for Todd Hall, Hamden high alum, former professional hockey player. I have green and gold in my blood and confidence within myself. I know the history and when I get my chance I will make the most of it. Hockey and the town of Hamden means too much to me to just give up. I pride myself on being from Hamden and carrying the reputation of being a Hamden hockey player on and off the ice. When I run out now, I make sure to high five every little kid because I was once them. I am lucky to be a part of Hamden Hockey. All the frustration, all the confusion will just make everything so much more worth it. There truly is no better program to be apart of. Playing for Hamden represents so much more than just our school. We represent our town, or families, the history, and all those who played before us. I am not satisfied but I am grateful and humbled.

Emotions have been at all time highs and lows this year. Questions, doubt, anger have all come across me but every time I manage to flip it. I remember that little kid I used to be, I evaluate who I am now, and I still want to be a Hamden Hockey Player. There is no better title, no better accomplishment, no better responsibility then being a Hamden Hockey player.