

Wednesday, January 14, 2007

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News Release

Office of Public Affairs



For immediate release: November 9, 2006

Acadia University Skating Simulator – SkateSIM® – Purchased by NHL Team

(Wolfville, NS) - A unique skating simulator, developed by Acadia University faculty and students, has been purchased by an NHL franchise for off-ice training and testing. The SkateSIM® is a training device designed to help athletes achieve increased skating acceleration and performance on the ice.

According to Dr. Jonathon Fowles, one of the developers and a professor at Acadia's School of Recreation Management and Kinesiology, the SkateSIM® has been shown to improve skating performance by up to five per cent in elite-developmental athletes.

"Through our previous research, we've shown the SkateSIM® to be very effective at increasing an elite-developmental athlete's performance on the ice; although we felt that the SkateSIM® would produce similar results at the NHL level, we needed evidence to demonstrate that it would work," says Dr. Fowles. "I'm very happy that this NHL team has shown interest in the SkateSIM®. This has been a valuable opportunity for us to gather necessary research evidence, and also an opportunity for the NHL team to improve the performance of its players."

A small increase, even by milliseconds, in skating performance achieved through training using the SkateSIM®, can give a player and a team a competitive edge, especially in the NHL where skating performance is the most important quality of successful players. The SkateSIM® replicates the body angles involved in skating, and gives the ability to increase resistance as the athlete progresses in training. Both features mean that the athlete can increase his or her power without altering skill, so more of the training benefit is transferred to actual performance.

Dr. Fowles and the other Acadia inventors worked closely with Acadia's Office of Technology Transfer and Innovation (OTTI) to commercialize the SkateSIM®. According to OTTI Director Leigh Huestis, the success of the SkateSIM® is a direct result of the vision and commitment of Dr. Fowles and the other key inventors.

"University research is critical to innovation in Canada, although it can be a long road to successful commercialization," says Huestis. "This process is made easier by inventors like Dr. Fowles who truly believe in the importance of research and getting university inventions to market."

Since its inception in 1998, the SkateSIM® has undergone several modifications. The concept of an off-ice skating simulator was originated by Dr. Gary Ness, Director of the School of Recreation Management and Kinesiology at Acadia University. The SkateSIM® idea was further developed by student Amy Simson, and then by Dr. Fowles and former student Matt Price. Dr. Fowles and Price refined the SkateSIM® to optimize its training benefits and to make the design and use of the device marketable to training facilities around the world.

Acadia University, in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, has long been recognized as one of

Canada's premier undergraduate institutions. With its nationally and internationally recognized research initiatives, small class sizes and technology-rich teaching and learning environment, Acadia offers students an experience that includes academic achievement combined with personal growth and development. For more information about Acadia, visit our website at www.acadiau.ca.

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Published by: Office of Communications & Public Affairs



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