

FROM THE COLORADO AVALANCHE LOCKER ROOM

Miller has worked with the best

The expression 'success starts close to home' holds true for Mark Miller, equipment manager for the Colorado Avalanche. His hometown of Plymouth, Min. topped a list of America's Best Places to Live in 2008, and Miller topped all equipment managers when he won the 2001 Stanley Cup with Colorado. That event is Miller's greatest NHL moment, but he was working with legends well before that during his 11-year stint at St. Cloud State University and recalls his best college memory was, "Working for Herb Brooks my first year (1986-87)." While no one bats an eyelash at Minnesotans toiling away in hockey careers, especially a guy like Miller who played the sport until he was 16, his education was in a very different field. He explains, "Biology was just

my degree. I wanted to get my degree and then move on to hockey. That was what I wanted to do for a living." And he's managed to do it for 24 years, also working with the Louisville River Frogs (ECHL) and the Nashville Ice Flyers (CHL). "I was only there for seven weeks," said



MARK MILLER
EQUIPMENT
MANAGER



Miller, "but I enjoy our trips there every season." Having been in the business over two decades, Miller has noticed differences over the years, notably, "A lot has changed in every sport obviously. But in hockey there are a lot more equipment companies out there, a lot

more choices for players." While that's a boon for players, it means equipment staff have to put in extra time to keep up, all part of the job for Miller and his assistants. Another crucially important task is keeping blades in perfect condition, something Miller relies on Blademaster to help out with. "Our sharpeners at both the game rink and practice rink are Blademaster. The skate sharpening for the Avalanche is split between three people. Kurt Harvey handles the majority of the sharpening and myself and Cliff Halstead do the others." When he isn't ordering sticks, dealing with suppliers or honing blades, Miller indulges in another passion shared with many players, golf. "During the off-season, I try to play five times a week. I never get out during the season, at least on the road."

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