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FROM THE NASHVILLE PREDATORS LOCKER ROOM

Rogers keeps Preds on prowl

Since Nashville first entered the league in 1998, Pete Rogers has been there, taking care of the team's equipment needs. We caught up with Rogers to discuss the red-hot Preds and life on the road in the Western Conference:

THN: There are a lot of new faces on the team this year. What kind of requirements does that put on you?

PR: The guys who do my job around the league, we all help each other out. For example, when we got Peter Forsberg, I just called up (equipment manager) Harry Bricker from Philadelphia, and we talked about what Peter's needs are, the way he likes his skates, what he uses for sticks, what he uses for equipment. It's simple, but sometimes there's a little break-in period.

THN: Do you sit down with a new guy?

PR: Not usually. When Peter came in, he played right away, so there's really no time to do that. But when we signed Paul Kariya, he asked to sit down and talk, to make sure we knew what he needed. For instance, he likes to change his skate blades every seven or eight games. Also, he uses the black blades, so we had to get a pretty good inventory of those, which Colorado had, so we were able to buy those from them.

THN: Do the longer road trips in the West give teams more opportunities for bonding.

PR: Yeah, when you're in the West, it does seem like you're on

the road a little more. And when you go away, you're going away for longer periods of time too, than in the East.

THN: How long does it take, when you're on the road, once the game is finished, to get everything packed up and on the way to the airport?

PR: We're out of there in 20 to 25 minutes.

THN: C'mon! Really?

PR: Yeah, it's pretty quick. The equipment and jerseys go first, ahead of the team. When the players come off the ice, their bags are open, they just take their equipment off and it gets thrown right in the bag. Two or three visiting team attendants help out. My assistant, Jeff Camelio, has all the equipment we travel with on the truck by the time the game ends. He's busy during the third period.

Then our assistant trainer, Eric Claas, stays back at the rink and gets the shower shoes in a bag. As soon as the last guy is out of his game clothes, we're gone. It's important for us to be there, at the airplane, before the team. For example, in San Jose, there's an ordinance where a plane can't take off after 11:30. So we had a game there that ended 10:15, and we were in the air by 11:20.



Pete Rogers
Equipment Manager



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