

FROM THE PHOENIX COYOTES LOCKER ROOM

Wilson runs with the pack

Stan Wilson is one of the original desert dogs. The Coyotes equipment manager, who joined the franchise back in 1990 when it was in Winnipeg, is embarking on his nineteenth season with the team. We caught up Wilson, a Saskatchewan native, as the 2008-09 campaign began:

THN: You moved with the franchise when it relocated. How do you like Phoenix?

SW: It's a great place, awesome. The weather, of course, is fantastic. It's a big city, but it has a Western-style friendliness to it. And there's a good bunch of hockey fans here.

THN: How would you describe this year's Coyotes team?

SW: We have a great young group, even younger than last year. It's a fun bunch – there's lots of enthusiasm. But we have a nice mix of veterans too.

THN: Do the young guys get awestruck around (coach) Wayne Gretzky?

SW: To a degree, we all do. It doesn't matter who you are. I've been working with him for seven years, and I still catch myself thinking, wow, that's Wayne. But for the younger players, especially, yeah, they do.

THN: Will the NHL's new

schedule, which features more games against the opposite conference, affect the team's travel?

SW: It will. We have two more long trips this season because of the new schedule. It's a bit more of a challenge for us logistically, but I think it's great



**STAN
WILSON**
EQUIPMENT
MANAGER



for the fans, who get to see more of the teams. And for me, it's going to allow me to see the other equipment guys in the league more frequently. It's always good to catch up and compare notes.

THN: Are there any special dates on the calendar you're

looking forward to this season?

SW: Well with us, with Wayne being the coach, we're often part of ceremonies around the league. We were there for all the big Edmonton number-retirement ceremonies, like Mark Messier's a couple of years back. We were there for Luc Robitaille's ceremony in L.A. too. And this year, we'll be in Edmonton for Glenn Anderson's. Those events are always special.

THN: Do any of your players have unique ways they like their skates sharpened?

SW: Olli Jokinen, who joined us this year, likes a very flat radius, as flat as I've ever had. Most guys have a 9- or 11-foot radius, but Olli uses a 13-foot radius.

THN: Do you use Blademaster skate sharpening machines?

SW: Yes, I do. They're great machines, I've had nothing but good experiences with them.

THE CHOICE OF PROFESSIONALS

BLADEMASTER

Introducing the
World's Most
Advanced Skate
Sharpening
System Ever!

