



NO BENCH WARMERS: Partners Brant McDermott and Kristopher Perraton joined the team in 2009

The NCHL, a recreational hockey league that started as a hobby, quickly grew into a business. In just four years, a group of six rec teams had grown into a 60-team operation with year-round ice times. "Suddenly we knew we were onto something," Young says. "We just needed to backfill it." There are 115 teams playing in the NCHL this year. Today the league employs 12 full-time staff and has formed a real estate division with plans to develop an arena.

"We suddenly had 3,000 players that were playing at 2 o'clock in the morning on February 13th at minus 30."

For most Canadians, hockey switches from participant to spectator sport in adulthood, a trend the NCHL is keenly aware of. Young fits that demographic. He played hockey until the bantam-midget level and some intramural hockey in university. Still, the business partners were surprised the market demand for a non-contact adult hockey league was so strong. The league also runs an intro-to-hockey program for adults, like partners McDonald and Levandovsky, who did not grow up playing minor hockey. "The big thing that blew my mind was that we suddenly had 3,000 players that were playing at 2 o'clock in the morning on February 13th at minus 30," says Young.

Three different revenue streams keep the founding partners' Canadian dream alive. The league's primary revenue source comes from team dues, which range from \$9,000 to \$10,000. Beginner and skill-development

programs are a growing source of revenue for the league, that, along with tournaments, McDonald would like to see contribute 50 per cent of the league's revenue.

While other leagues operate in the same market, Levandovsky, Young and McDonald are confident the Calgary market isn't yet saturated and are considering opening chapters from Regina to Vancouver. This year, the league expanded to Edmonton. Levandovsky led the marketing effort and there were six teams on the ice in October. "The most effective way to do this was to create as many personal connections as we could," he says. The league also advertised through Google and Facebook.

This month, six more teams will join NCHL Edmonton, and Levandovsky expects the league's numbers to balloon. In a hockey-mad country, these three think they have a winning product.

In the Know | Working Comfortably

■ **"THERE'S NOT ONE BEST WAY TO SIT,"** says Diane Stinson, Canadian certified professional ergonomist and senior consultant for Calgary's HealthWorks. Finding the correct ergonomic setup changes from one employee to the next. — *Stephanie Sparks*



Take a Seat

Sitting with your hips at a 90-degree angle is only one way to practise proper ergonomics, says Stinson. A sitting position that allows the hips to open to a greater than 90-degree angle relieves compression on the discs in the spine. Recline back slightly or tilt your chair so your knees point down.



Stand and Deliver

Standing to work places the least compression on the discs in the spine. To stand and perform computer work, ensure you're working at your approximate standing elbow height (where the elbow bends at 90 degrees from a standing position).



Adjusting to the Situation

"Some people will have their chair and set it for life," says Stinson. "If you understand how to use the adjustments on your chair, you can change those." Adjust your chair as much as needed throughout the day.



Work Practices

It doesn't matter if you're equipped with an ergonomist's dream workstation. If you've developed the mindset to sit all day, you'll likely continue to place stresses on your body. "If you're sitting all the time, then stand up periodically to work," says Stinson. "We even suggest to people to stand while they're on the phone."