

Howran makes U18 team

By Darren Lum

There were tears of joy shed Saturday morning as Bancroft's Tori Howran called her mother Melanie from Calgary about making 2015-16 National Women's Under-18 Hockey Team.

The two cried over the phone, overcome with emotion.

Howran, 17, has maintained regular communication with her parents, calling at least once a day the past few weeks.

Making the 23-member national squad is a dream come true for Howran and her parents, who all made sacrifices, whether it was the missed birthday parties and endless workouts by her or the many hours and miles of driving by her parents.

"It's all worth it. I wouldn't change any of it for anything," Melanie said.

This was also just part of the experience, said her mother.

Howran appreciated meeting the other girls from all over Canada, particularly her roommate from Prince Edward Island. They shared the experience of having played for years on boys' hockey teams. Unfortunately her roommate didn't make the squad.

Howran has played for the Bancroft Jets midget boys' team, the North Hastings High School Huskies and the PWHL Whitby Wolves.

The 5'9" blueliner will play in a three-game exhibition series with the Americans from Aug. 20 to 22 in Lake Placid.

The Howrans are making the trip down to Lake Placid, New York on Thursday to watch their daughter play.

Howran earned her national spot after a two-week tryout that included a field of 43 players from across the country.

The tryout included off-ice dryland training, fitness testing and high performance classroom sessions and intrasquad games from Aug. 6 to Aug. 16.

Although her daughter wanted to tell her entire family Saturday morning, she couldn't because of everyone's different schedules.

Later that morning, Melanie drove into town to let her husband, who was at work, know.

Even with images of her daughter in the team's group photo and one of herself in the Canadian jersey sent a day after the call, Melanie is still taken aback by the news.

"I don't think it's all sunk in at this point," she said.

She adds it's still "surreal."