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Rink Rat

Nearly three decades later, Winny Brodt Brown continues to leave her mark on women's hockey in Minnesota and beyond



by [Heather Rule](#) February 17, 2022



Minnesota Whitecaps D Winny Brodt Brown skates the puck up ice during a Sept. 22, 2019 exhibition game against the University of Minnesota at Ridder Arena in Minneapolis. (MHM Photo / Rick Olson)

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Creating the empire that is OS Hockey Training

Besides her playing career, Winny has her hand in so many things surrounding hockey. Perhaps the most prominent for youth players is starting OS Hockey Training. The program is designed specifically with female athletes in mind. Overspeed (OS) training is designed to get players out of their comfort zones, pushing them to the next level.

At its core, OS Hockey is all about growing the women's game, said Pezon, who's on the OS Hockey staff. Winny previously worked at the Superink in Blaine, trying to run girls' programs there. But the boys were always first, leaving the girls' with the worst ice, Pezon said.



Meghan Pezon (15) and Winny Brodt Brown (Photo by Kirsten Burton)

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"So, she started a program to put the girls first," Pezon said. "And that's really what drives the program, is to help out girls."

Slominski's daughter participated in OS Hockey. Slominski enjoys the well-rounded approach Winny takes with the camps, where it's so much more than just showing up to practice. There are tons of different hockey camps out there, but OS Hockey stands out.

"Hers just has the added piece of she's created it for girls and to give them the opportunities that she didn't have when she was younger," Slominski said.

Before joining the Whitecaps coaching staff, Slominski coached the Edina girls' high school hockey team. She enjoyed hearing stories from her players about what it was like to be coached by Winny at OS Hockey.

Years ago, Winny did not envision everything that her career has turned into with her hockey training program.

"Absolutely not," Winny said. "I thought I'd be working for my dad in his insurance company at Brodt Insurance Agency."

Hockey is her path though. She made it all happen with OS Hockey and everything else she does in terms of hockey for the girls' game. She said she did it because there weren't opportunities for girls, and they weren't treated like athletes.

"They were treated like girls," Winny said. "And I'm like, 'no, no, no. When I started my sports, I was treated like an athlete.'"

"I don't care how good or bad you are, it's your attitude and effort. It's the two things you can control. So as long as I could get some kids that believed in that, the sky's the limit."

She's also very much against overtraining and having kids burn out from the game when they're still developing as players, said Lindsey Brown, a goaltender who played for Irondale High school and then Saint Anselm College.

"She figured out what works, how to get through to kids and make them feel like the arena is a fun, safe place to grow," Lindsey said.

What Winny created with OS Hockey, translating her on-ice success as a player into the success with her training program, is so significant that Lindsey doesn't even refer to OS Hockey as a business model, per se.

"I call it the 'evil empire that is OS,'" Lindsey said. "Except it's not evil. I'd be hard pressed to find anyone that has a bad thing to say about her (Winny), or that she hasn't helped someone in some way."

If it's not the hours, the humbleness or the variety of hockey activities Winny does that could convince someone of her hockey dedication, she hasn't taken much of a break from being on the ice over the years – even when she was eight months pregnant.

Yes, expecting her second child didn't stop her from coaching during the summer, according to Lindsey.

Winny was still on the ice coaching, too, until one of the young players "javelined her stick, apparently, and it went right by Winny's face," Lindsey said. That was enough for Winny to get relegated to dryland training with Lindsey for the final two weeks, Lindsey said.

Pezon, OS Hockey summer development team program director and instructor, who's played with the Whitecaps since 2010, started working for Winny and OS Hockey in 2007 when she needed a summer job after her freshman year in college. But she was hesitant at first. She pushed pucks around, was afraid to talk to the kids and even afraid to talk to Winny, whom she didn't know very well at first.

"Just how far I've come personally, working with her and watching her do what she does on a daily basis," Pezon said. "It's been pretty cool."

Pezon is a rare example of a player who wasn't coached by Winny. Pezon actually played against her and the Whitecaps when she was a senior at Eden Prairie High school.

The impact Winny has had on Pezon is huge, Pezon said, and the friendship includes Lindsey, too. Lindsey has a photograph (Winny has one, too) of her, Winny and Pezon at a Minnesota Twins game from a few years back in a frame that reads "Mom and the Kids."


"Because me and Pezon were her kids before she had kids," Lindsey said.

"There's very few people in this world that I respect, if anyone, more than Winny. Just working for

There's very few people in this world that I respect, if anyone, more than Winny. Just working for her throughout my youth and then as I graduated from school and did the after-hockey part, which is a really tough transition for a lot of us, she was so immensely helpful."


Lindsey said she hasn't made a life decision in the past 15 years that hasn't included a conversation with Winny.

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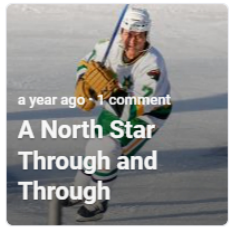
Heather's love for watching hockey started when the Minnesota Wild came to town in 2000. Before that, she caught a few Minnesota Moose games as a youngster, and more recently she's kept up with the Austin Bruins and Fargo Force. She's a writer, freelance journalist and blogger who previously worked as a news reporter in Austin and Fergus Falls, Minn. She enjoys watching sports and closely follows the Wild, Minnesota Twins, IndyCar Series, tennis and prep sports. Heather keeps up her sports blog [Thoughts from the Stands](#). You can follow her on Twitter/X [@hrule](#) or Instagram [@hrule](#).

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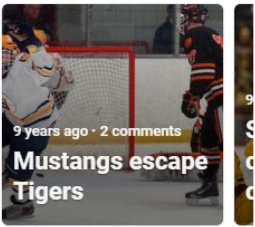


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