

Carroll Named MSU Male Athlete of the Century

Edina native led hockey team to national title in 1980, three other NCAA playoff trips

By Jim Rueda
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MANKATO — He's a two-time All-American, a national champion and a member of the Minnesota State University Athletic Hall of Fame.

The accolades have been numerous for former MSU hockey goaltender Steve Carroll, but this week he received the most prestigious honor of all when he was named MSU's No. 1 Male Athlete of the Century. Carroll's selection caps MSU's Top 10 countdown of athletes of the millennium.

"It's a big-time award, no doubt about it," Carroll says. "I've been keeping track of the countdown through the MSU Web site. I guess I thought I had a shot at it. "I think the fact that I played on teams that went to four national tournaments had a lot to do with it. And we helped put Mankato State on the map when we won the national championship in 1980."

Carroll, a four-year letterwinner at MSU from 1977-81, led the Mavericks to one national title, a second-place finish and two thirds. He was a finalist for the Hobey Baker Award in 1980-81 as the top collegiate hockey player in the country (all divisions) and was the national tournament MVP in 1979-80.

Carroll still holds the MSU

records for games played by a goaltender (104), most career victories (82), most career saves (3,570), most saves in a season (1,090) and most victories in a season (29, 1979-80). He accomplished all that despite getting cut from the team his freshman year.

When Carroll arrived at MSU in 1977 he was one of five goalies in camp. At the conclusion of the

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- Coach Don Brose

preseason, Carroll was informed by coach Don Brose that the team was keeping four goalies and he wasn't one of them. "I thought I had a pretty good fall," Carroll remembers. "And I thought I had played well in the Purple-Gold scrimmage, but Brose told me I didn't make the team.

"Obviously that opened my eyes. I had played for a good high school program [at Edina]. We reached the state finals my senior year. Getting cut showed me that it doesn't matter what you've done in the past, only what you're doing in the present. "I guess I was a little naive. I had taken it for granted that I was just going to keep playing."



Carroll was a four-year starter at Mankato State University.

Carroll's exile from hockey did not last long.

By the time Christmas break rolled around, two of the MSU goalies were leaving the team. One had academic problems, and Grant Bosiner decided he had to work more hours to pay some bills.

Carroll was called back to practice over the break. When the season resumed, he initially shared playing time with Dave Pilot and Mike

Pilkington before earning the starting job in January.

"Steve Carroll is the epitome of what you call a gamer," Brose says. "The more pucks he saw, the better he got. And he played his best in the toughest games. "He was not a practice player. He let a lot of pucks go in in practice, and that's why it took him a while to get into the lineup. Once he showed he could play in games, he stayed in there. "He was very mentally strong and fundamentally strong. He had the best feet for a goaltender I've ever had."

Brose says Carroll is very deserving of this most recent honor. "All great teams have people who stand out. We had a lot of standouts on that national championship team, but he made it for the rest of us. That's how good he was."

Carroll, 40, lives in Richfield where he works as a national sports specialist for PR Newswire. He also runs the Steve Carroll Goalie School during the spring and summer. His family includes his wife Val, and children Dave and Paul.

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