



How Polar Bears Learn to Run

Powerskating expert Shawn Killian teaches Icehockey Champions how to skate faster

Cole Jarrett looks skeptical. In front of him a man in a light blue sweat suit makes markings on the ice. Then he skates elegantly and pretty fast between the points - forward, backwards; left and right. The defender of EHC polar bears is supposed to copy what Shawn Killian just showed him. Jarrett appears a bit clumsy, he has to continue practicing.

The very thing, the defender is not comfortable with is supposed to make him faster. Killian shows him how ice skating is done. But the 23 year old who has already played in the NHL, has been skating since he was very young. And in Berlin he is taught by an American all the things he needs to change to become a better skater. The suspicion toward the coach seems understandable.



But good skaters are valuable to the icehockey champion. We are glad that we finally have Shawn here says manager Peter John Lee. For a year now the Berlin team has been trying to hire the 37 year old who has a full agenda.

What Killian is coaching is called powerskating. By using an improved technic, I try to make the skating style of the players more efficient and more powerful and therefore faster says the American. He spent 3 days on the ice with the Berliners all age groups, six to seven hours daily.

Killian found that with a lot of players in order to go fast and efficient, the length of their stride and their skating phase is too short. Besides their center of gravity is too high. A player stands better on the skates if he is squatting lower.

With younger players he sees success even after a few practice exercises. But when the players are older, it is difficult to stop the mistakes. They have developed their style for many years. But they have to understand the components of the individual movements and learn to use their body properly Killian says.

His commitment makes sense because the skating technique is often neglected in the icehockey training. Coach Lee explains where the work of a powerskater can lead with the name: Shawn watched Eric Cole as junior. Cole had been chosen later in the NHL because he wasn't a good skater. When we saw him in Berlin he was a fantastic skater. Cole even won the Stanley Cup with the Carolina Hurricanes.

The Berliners also like the work of Shawn Killian. Player Christoph Gawlik has already asked when the trainer will be back. The agenda of Shawn Killian will determine that. We are thrilled with Shawn's teaching and want to continue in this direction, says Coach Lee. Cole Jarrett will also benefit from it.