

TRAIN · PILLAR SERIES

STRENGTH IS NEVER A WEAKNESS

For years, hockey players were told that lifting weights would make them bulky, slow, or stiff. The reality couldn't be further from the truth.

Strength enhances every other quality an athlete possesses. A skilled player who gets stronger becomes harder to knock off the puck. A fast player who gets stronger becomes more explosive. A mobile player who gets stronger becomes more resilient. Strength doesn't take away from performance – it raises the ceiling of what an athlete can do.

01 THE BEST PLAYERS ARE USUALLY THE STRONGEST

The players getting the most ice time, winning the most battles, and making the biggest impact are rarely the weakest athletes on the roster. As players move up levels, skill gaps shrink – everyone can skate, shoot, and handle the puck. The difference comes down to who can apply force at high speed, under pressure, late into games. At higher levels, strength isn't a bonus. It's a requirement.

02 STRENGTH SHOWS UP EVERYWHERE

Strength training isn't just about building muscle. Every stride requires force production. Every change of direction requires force absorption and re-application. Every puck battle demands stability and control. Even holding your edge through a tight turn gets easier when your body is stronger. Players focus on the visible skills – strength is the engine that powers them.

03 HARDER TO PLAY AGAINST

Every coach loves the player who always comes out of the corner with the puck, protects possession under pressure, and takes contact without losing balance. Those qualities aren't just skill – they're strength. As competition gets bigger, faster, and stronger, the importance of strength only grows. Strong athletes are hard to handle.

04 STRENGTH KEEPS YOU HEALTHY

Performance is only valuable if you're on the ice. Hundreds of strides, practices, games, travel days, and constant contact add up over a season. Strong muscles support joints, absorb force, and protect vulnerable areas – groins, hips, knees, lower back. In-season strength training isn't just about performance. It's about durability.

05 DON'T LOSE WHAT YOU WORKED FOR

Strength isn't permanent. Stop challenging the body and it gradually loses the adaptations you spent months building – strength declines, power drops, physical advantages disappear. The goal in-season isn't personal records every week; it's maintaining what you built. Athletes who keep training don't just hold their edge – they widen the gap as the season progresses. And if training is making you slower or more fatigued, you're missing the point: a proper in-season approach makes sure fatigue is never the limiting factor.

> **Coach's corner** Skill matters. Skating matters. Hockey IQ matters. But all of it is built on a physical foundation: strength.

TESTIFY TAKEAWAY

THE STRONGEST PLAYER ISN'T ALWAYS THE BEST. BUT THE BEST ARE ALMOST ALWAYS STRONG.

Because strength is never a weakness.