

THE WORLD-Spectator

Page 21 • March 3, 2025

Rocanville hosting Seattle Kraken watch party to cheer on Jessica Campbell March 22

BY ASHLEY BOCHEK

Jessica Campbell grew up in Rocanville and is now the assistant coach of the National Hockey League's Seattle Kraken, the first woman to hold that role with an NHL team.

Andrea Logan, the Rec Director for the town of Rocanville, says the community is excited for Jessica's accomplishments and is hosting a watch party to show their support.

"Jessica is an inspiration to the community of Rocanville," she says. "Rocanville is not a very big community and so when we see somebody who has made something of themselves become accomplished, it is an inspiration because I think sometimes maybe people in smaller communities forget there are big opportunities for them as well, and in the hockey world for young girls to see that there is great opportunity for them to go far."

Logan says the community has taken a huge interest in following Jessica's career.

"Watching the Kraken versus Winnipeg in Winnipeg, there were so many people from Rocanville in the crowd that night. I definitely think that there are a lot of people taking an interest in the Seattle Kraken because of Jessica."

Stellar career

Campbell has had a stellar career in hockey.

She led Canada's national under-18 team to a gold medal at the 2010 IIHF Women's U18 World Championship. She was team captain, led all players in scoring, and scored the game-winning goal in overtime of the gold medal game against the United States. She was named Most Valuable Player by the tournament directorate and was selected as a top-three player for Canada by the coaches.

After retiring from the Canadian national team in 2017, Campbell began coaching.

In 2021, she was an assistant coach for the Nürnberg Ice Tigers, and also served as an assistant coach for the German national team at the men's world championship. She was the first woman to be a coach at the men's world championship.

In July 2022, she was hired as assistant coach of the Coachella Valley Firebirds, the top minor league affiliate of the NHL's Seattle Kraken. In her new role, she became the first woman to be employed on a full-time basis as a behind-the-bench coach in the AHL.

Last year, Campbell was hired to be the assistant coach for the Seattle Kraken, making her the first female coach to be behind the bench in NHL history. She made her debut as assistant coach during the team's regular season opener in October.

Highway sign in the works for Jessica

The town painted a mural of a quote in honour of Jessica at the rink and is planning to unveil a highway sign for the community later this month.

"We painted a quote, 'You can, and you will' from Jessica on our rink wall at the skating rink and then we are going to do this watch party, and then we have also ordered a 'Home of Jessica Campbell' sign for the community, and it should be showing up soon. Hopefully, if the sign shows up in time, we will be unveiling it at our watch party on March 22," says Logan.

"The sign is going to be displayed outside of Rocanville, so you will see it when you are coming into Rocanville. The sign is in the process of being made and as long as it is here in time, we will be unveiling it at the watch party so we will just show it and then there will be another day or time that it will be put up for the town."

Watch Party at Community Hall

Logan explains the watch party the community is hosting at the Nutrien Community Hall on Saturday, March 22.

"The watch party is a family-friendly event. We are not charging a door fee, we just want to encourage as many people to come as we can. So, no door fee, there will be a cash bar and there will also be lots of food. We are doing it potluck-style because we just thought that would be kind of fun for people to bring their favorite appetizer to share.

"There will be a penny arcade and a 50/50 and we will have the game streaming up on the big screens at the hall. It will be kind of a simple event, but I think fun and enjoyable and a great way for the community to come together, cheer on Jess and the Kraken, or the Oilers, whichever you choose.

"We tried to pick a date that wouldn't maybe be as busy. During the winter months everyone gets so busy running to hockey tournaments and games so we thought maybe toward the end of March would be a little less busy for families and I do believe there are lots of Oilers fans in Rocanville, so then we thought that would be a game to interest people to come out to.

"It is great to let Jessica know that the community is proud of her and that we recognize that this is a big accomplishment and that we support her and her journey. It is also great to bring the community together and do something as a community and the watch party kind of checks all those boxes," Logan said.

Logan says the community has been planning the watch party for the past month and they have had lots of feedback from the community so far.

"The Rocanville Economic Development Organization has taken on the role of planning the watch party. We have been working on it for about a month now and getting it out to the community. We have had lots of good feedback so far. It is going to be a simple event, but a fun one."

An inspiration to younger kids of Rocanville

Logan says she hopes the watch party will remind the younger kids in the community that they can accomplish amazing things too. "It is just a reminder to the young kids in our community that there are big opportunities for them as well. If they really want to do something, they can. They are just as capable of achieving their dreams. They can have these amazing things happen for them as well."



Jessica Campbell in her role as assistant coach of the NHL's Seattle Kraken.



