

AMAZING HOCKEY STORIES

NATALIE SPOONER

Lorna Schultz Nicholson
Illustrations by David Bishop



Scholastic Canada Ltd.

To Mel Davidson, who has done so much for women's hockey.
— *L.S.N.*

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SHE SHOOTS, SHE SCORES

At the very first awards ceremony for the Professional Women's Hockey League, Natalie Spooner sat in the crowd with her family and her Toronto teammates. She had been nominated for the Billie Jean King MVP award, along with Marie-Philip Poulin from Montreal and Alex Carpenter from New York.

Natalie had dominated the PWHL's first season in 2024. She played hard in the corners and was solid in front of the net, constantly battling to find the puck. Game after game, Natalie cleverly used her 5'10" frame to move her opponents out of the way and give herself a fighting chance at that precious tip. When that didn't work and the puck was loose in front of the net, she dug and dug. And scored!

In fact, Natalie was the league's top scorer. She finished the inaugural 24-game PWHL season with 20 goals — 9 more than any other player — and 7 assists, for 27 points. And she did all this after having a baby a little over a year before the start of the season.

When the MVP award was announced, Natalie's name was called as the winner! She broke into a huge smile and headed to the stage on crutches, due

to a late-season injury, to be given the inaugural award by Billie Jean King herself.



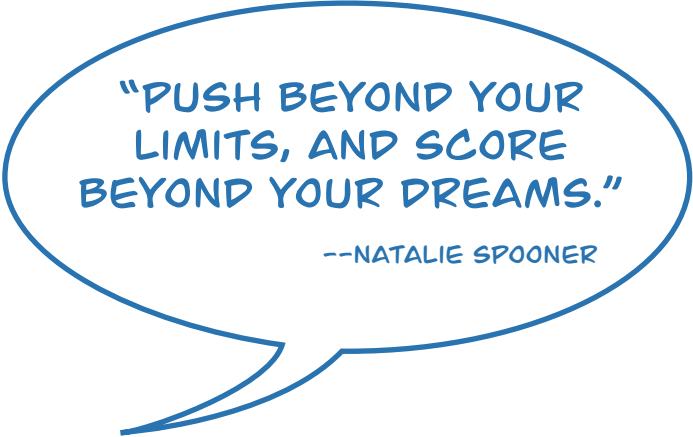
TENNIS AND WOMEN'S
SPORTS LEGEND
BILLIE JEAN KING
PRESENTING NATALIE
WITH THE PWHL'S
FIRST-EVER MVP
AWARD.

There were more awards for Natalie that night at the Great River Ballroom in Saint Paul, Minnesota, including Forward of the Year and First All-Star Team. Then, later that June, she was named the International Ice Hockey Federation's 2024 Female Player of the Year.

During a hockey career that has spanned decades, including many other awards and medals, Natalie has worked tirelessly to hone her skills as a power

forward. She has her own brand of hockey. She's known for gritty goals, and some pretty ones, too. Most of all, though, she's known for her high energy and positive outlook. Natalie has always believed there were two things she could control in any situation: her attitude and how hard she worked, and she's made the most of both.

Even with some twists and turns in her career, and women's hockey in general, Natalie still enjoys being on the ice, being the bubbliest one in the dressing room and playing the sport she's loved since she was a little girl.



**"PUSH BEYOND YOUR
LIMITS, AND SCORE
BEYOND YOUR DREAMS."**

--NATALIE SPOONER