

according to him

# FORWARD THINKING WITH 'S TEEN SENSATION - MATT DUCHENE

The scouts dubbed Matt Duchene the best player available in the draft. And felt certain he'll be the next big NHL superstar. At just 18 years old he was dreaming of playing for his favorite team and then suddenly he was on it. Straight from training camp to the 2009-2010 roster as a high scoring forward for the Colorado Avalanche. Stephanie Riggs talked to Duchene about living the dream.



**Riggs:** Was it overwhelming when the Colorado Avalanche called your name?

**Duchene:** Yeah, a little bit. At 18 years old coming into an NHL training camp, seeing guys you grew up watching.

**Riggs:** You grew up in Canada meaning you learned to play ice hockey before you learned to walk, right?

**Duchene:** Pretty close, you're right. I had my first set of everything at two! I was just learning to skate. I wasn't really playing hockey until five.

**Riggs:** Who was your inspiration then?

**Duchene:** Patrick Roy was my first favorite hockey player ever.

**Riggs:** Are you harder on yourself because you are so new?

**Duchene:** Yes, I am my biggest critic and harder on myself than anyone. I am so passionate about the game and so competitive and driven, sometimes it's almost too much. I want to win the Stanley Cup, I see guys not much older than me winning it and think that has to be the most amazing feeling.

**Riggs:** What about the guys on your team, you have some impressive veterans. What kind of advice have they given to you?

**Duchene:** I live with Adam Foote. He is 20 years older than me and has been through the battles, so he knows.

**Riggs:** Do you think the veterans get a kick out of you?

**Duchene:** Yes, but I also think I get on their nerves. That's OK, they can handle it, they have kids!

**Riggs:** Do you understand how many kids are watching your every move and want to be just like you?

**Duchene:** Yes, I do, it wasn't that long ago, I was that kid watching Roy, Sakic and Forsberg. I understand the responsibility of being a role model and saying the right things,

doing the right things. When a kid comes up to you and says, you are my favorite player, that makes it all worth it. Because you were that kid, it's definitely humbling, that's for sure.

**Riggs:** What do you tell yourself, when you are out there living your dream?

**Duchene:** Well, I kind of wish I could go back, and enjoy it more. I had so many anxious feelings about it all. I was so nervous, trying to fit in with the guys and find my way. There isn't a handbook for that so you have to figure it out on your own and you make mistakes.

**Riggs:** I told some friends I was going to interview you and they texted me to ask if I saw your first fight in the NHL. What is really going on with those fights?

**Duchene:** A lot of times you are just two competitive guys, you get into each other's personal space and guys just go off. Obviously, it's that male testosterone that we have. The competitiveness of the game. It's just guys having a fire for the game, it's great.

**Riggs:** What do you like to do besides work hard to win the Stanley Cup?

**Duchene:** I am kind of a home body. I really like to just hang around the house.

**Riggs:** So if you were to go out on a date, what attracts you?

**Duchene:** Well, I am a high-maintenance guy because of my lifestyle. So I need someone who is as low-maintenance as possible, a rock. No controversy, no drama, so my day can just be solid.

**Riggs:** Did you just say, you are looking for a female, who is low-maintenance, no drama?

**Duchene:** Let me rephrase then, as little as possible!

**Riggs:** What could you eat every single day?

**Duchene:** Pasta,

**Riggs:** Favorite movie?

**Duchene:** The Rocket - When you watch that movie you will know the reason I wear number 9. It's the story of Quebec's most famous hockey player, Maurice "The Rocket" Richard and the struggles of a French Canadian in the NHL.

**Riggs:** Favorite music?

**Duchene:** I play guitar and drums and I love country and rock. My favorite band is Green Day and for country Brad Paisley.

**Riggs:** One word that sums you up personally and professionally?

**Duchene:** Passionate.

**Riggs:** Coolest person you've met in Denver?

**Duchene:** Outside of my team, Carmelo Anthony. He is an elite athlete, he is one of the best basketball players in the world. When I met him, he actually asked me to trade jerseys with him.

**Riggs:** What's the best professional advice you have ever been given?

**Duchene:** A close family friend who coached us in high school told us something I remember to this day. He said, "When you win say little, when you lose say less." ☺

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