

**TEAM USA JUNIOR WOMEN WIN FIRST EDITION OF JUNIOR INLINE HOCKEY
WORLD CUP IN HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA
JULY 6 - 9, 2010**

Report by: Andy Datlo, USA Team Coach, Glen Head, New York

Team USA Junior Women for 2010: Selected from Junior Women Team USA trials in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania were the following players:

#6 Sarah Dahms, Fort Worth, TX; #52 Katie Dalton, Frederick, CO; #17 Jenna Datlo, Glen Head, NY; #15 Olivia Douglas, Loganville, GA; #41 Jill Horan, Canonsburg, PA; #77 Katrina Knapp, Cary, NC; #27 Rebekah Lucas, Feasterville, PA; #2 Jennifer Maffei, Broomall, PA; #83 Rachel Munoz, Redding, CA; #60 Elisa Pogu, Corona, CA; #29 Emily Moore - Goalie, Pittsburgh, PA; #25 Caylie Robertson - Goalie, Allen, TX;
Coach Andrew Datlo, Glen Head, NY

This team of young women showed great heart and determination in taking a tortuous path to the First Junior Women World Cup gold medal. They reminded me of the Philadelphia Flyers against the Boston Bruins in this past 2010 Stanley Cup. Like the Flyers they were down, but they never knew the word quit. Team USA faced three other opponents in these inaugural World Cup matches: New Zealand, Great Britain and Colombia. The all-star players representing Team USA, consisting of players from a dozen different teams, certainly had their work cut out for them. I knew that our opponents had been working together as teams for six months to a year. Team USA had only an hour of practice time together as a team since the girls were selected at the World Cup trials a few months earlier in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. We collectively had major adjustments to make to be contenders. I knew a few of these players from previous tournaments, but making them over quickly into a successful team would not be easy.

Our first game was against Great Britain, a team that I had faced as coach many times in the past. I knew they were going to be aggressive and that they had played together as a team for years. The USA girls came out skating hard and scored quickly on a goal by Katrina Knapp, assisted by Olivia Douglas. But the girls from Great Britain were not going to go down easy. The game immediately became physical with 14 minutes of penalties. The British girls quickly answered with 3 goals of their own. The U.S girls wouldn't quit! They skated hard and kept constant pressure with numerous good scoring opportunities, but couldn't get the puck past the British goalie. With only 2 minutes remaining in the game, Rebekah Lucas, assisted by Elisa Pogu, at last got the puck again past the British goalie. The USA girls saw that there was hope and at the 1:05 mark, Team USA added another goal to even the score at 3 - 3, this time by Jennifer Maffei, assisted by Rebekah Lucas. Crowd excitement was incredible. We pulled our goalie and applied tremendous pressure on the British girls with just 11 seconds remaining. Jenna Datlo passed the puck to Jill Horan, who roofed the puck past the British goalie. USA fans went wild as our team performed the impossible, scoring 3 goals in the final 2 minutes to win the game. It was one of the most exciting hockey games I had ever seen in over 40 years.

Team USA would now face who I thought was the Team to beat in the tournament. Team New Zealand, who had just beaten Team Columbia in their opener by a score 11 to 2. They were a big, fast team with a lot talent. This was going to be a real challenge. Goal tending was great on

both sides, with each team managing to score only one goal each, with the game ending in a tie. Emily Moore was our goalie for this game. The girls forechecking was great, so much so that Team New Zealand had a real problem getting the puck out of their own zone. The sole goal scored by Team USA was by the previous game winner Jill Horan, assisted by her line mate Jenna Datlo.

The third and final game of the round robin was against Columbia. This team was well coached and played their positions very well, but lacked the speed that the previous teams had. I spoke to their coach before our game and he told me they play outside on a cement surface, so they also had a lot of adjusting to do. The USA girls started off real slow, playing like a different team from the night before against New Zealand. Colombia got the jump on them and were ahead 3 - 0 without a serious threat from USA. It wasn't till midway through the first period that the girls for Team USA would get on the board, with a goal by Rachel Munoz. Then it took another 5 minutes till USA would get their second goal by Jenna Datlo, assisted by Jill Horan. But just a minute later Columbia would score their fourth to end the first period with a score of 4 to 2.

We did a goalie change and the second period we started skating much better applying much more offensive pressure. Olivia Douglas would get USA our third goal, and 3 minutes later Jenna Datlo, would get her 2nd of the game, assisted by Jennifer Maffei to tie the game up with 7:38 left in the game. Could USA do it again, with another comeback? It looked like Team USA had the momentum. But with only 2:09 left in the game Colombia scored again, ruining chances for another miracle comeback, and Colombia won with a 5 - 4 victory. Team USA, posted 1 Victory, 1 Tie and 1 Loss for a third seed position going into the medal round.

We had to face the same team in the Semi Finals, so we had to shake off the loss to Colombia. We had a good pregame talk, and the USA team came out with fire and from the start of the game didn't have a thought of losing in their minds. Jenna Datlo started the scoring with both of the team's first goals assisted by Katrina Knapp, and Jill Horan. Then Olivia Douglas scored the first of her two goals assisted by Jill Horan. Rebekah Lucas would finish the scoring assisted by Rachel Munoz. At the end of the first period the score was 5 to 0. In the second period Team USA continued their dominance and scored a sixth goal by Katrina Knapp. They applied constant pressure and made it difficult for Columbia to get out of their zone. USA went on to win 6 to 0, and kept a shutout for goalie Emily Moore.

Team USA would now face New Zealand for the Gold Medal, because the Kiwis had won their Semi-Final by a 3 - 0 shutout over Great Britain. The two finalist teams lined up and New Zealand assumed the lead in the first period with a goal by Rebecca Smith 8 minutes into the game. With 5-1/2 minutes left in the period, New Zealand scored again through Renata Gottgroy's goal to lead 2 to 0 over USA. Thirty seconds later Team USA scored their first goal by Rebekah Lucas, assisted by Rachel Munoz and Katrina Knapp. But New Zealand added another of their own, ending the first period with a 3 - 1 advantage. Team USA started the second period in a familiar trailing position. But they had not lost heart. This team was determined not to lose. USA's climb out of the hole began 4 minutes into the second period with a score by Jill Horan, assisted by Jenna Datlo to narrow the margin 3 to 2. Team USA brought the score even at 8:43 remaining in the game by a goal from Olivia Douglas, aided by a great assist from Rebekah Lucas. An now, with 6:38 left in the game, Jenna Datlo took a great pass

from Jennifer Maffei, skated past 2 defenders, and beat the New Zealand Goalie to put the USA ahead of New Zealand 4 to 3.

A frantic ending to the game occurred when Jenna Datlo of Team USA received a penalty and New Zealand would finish the game on a power play. The USA couldn't clear the puck from their zone, and USA goalie Emily Moore nearly stood on her head to make some incredible saves and secure the victory for Team USA, 4 - 3.

As the Coach of this team, I am so proud of all the girls, and it was a real privilege to be associated with such a talented crew. They definitely got my blood racing and probably made me age a bit, but with the positive outcome and watching their desire and determination, these girls provided a coaching experience that I will never forget.

FINAL STANDINGS - FIRST WORLD JUNIOR WOMEN INLINE HOCKEY CUP

GOLD MEDAL - United States of America

SILVER MEDAL - New Zealand

BRONZE Medal - Great Britain

4th Place - Colombia