

February 29, 2000

Solid future for Regehr

By **MARK MILLER** -- Calgary Sun

Robyn Regehr couldn't believe it.

"It's been one year already?" he said. "It feels like so much has happened."

It has.

One year ago, Robyn Regehr was a Colorado draft pick playing junior hockey in Kamloops when he saw the Theo Fleury trade announcement on television.

He didn't know for a few days that the future considerations contained in that deal were Robyn Regehr.

Since then, he's battled to the WHL finals with Kamloops, survived a head-on car crash that killed two people, completed an amazing rehabilitation, played his first NHL game and established himself as a regular at just 19 years old.

"What a roller coaster ride it has been," Regehr said yesterday.

Regehr has already demonstrated he may be just what the Flames expected when they made him part of the trade.

"We felt Robyn was one of the top two or three defencemen in Canada last year in junior. And he has certainly proven himself beyond anyone's wildest imagination," said coach Brian Sutter.

"His work ethic and fundamentals, and willingness to be better everyday shows.

"He gets better all the time.

"He is going to be a real player in the NHL for a long time. This is a player who lost 10 pounds of muscle in the accident he hasn't regained. My goodness, he's fun to be around now and imagine how much better he could be with that much more strength."

After 38 games in his rookie year, he's a plus-3 and a growing physical force on the blueline.

And showing signs he may one day make Flames fans forget Fleury.

"Obviously, with a player of Fleury's calibre and what he has done for the team here and the city, it was tough at first," said Regehr. "I think I can be the player people expect. It's my goal to be that.

"As long as I am improving, I will be happy and if that happens, I think I can move into that spot down the road."

Considering how far he has come in one year, it's hard to imagine Robyn Regehr being anything less.

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