

Amy Nixon

Sport: Curling

Born: September 1977

Residence: Calgary, Alberta

Birthplace: Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

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My proudest moment in sports was when my team won the 2005 Canadian Curling Trials to become the 2006 Canadian Women's Olympic Curling Team. We were in Halifax and it was the first time I had competed in a trial event. My dad, Daryl Nixon, was our coach.

It was both the biggest adrenaline rush and the most shocking, unbelievable experience when our skip, Shannon Kleinbrink, made her last shot. I'm pretty sure I jumped about three feet in the air and then I'm pretty sure I repeated the word "unbelievable" continuously from the podium. The best moment was when my dad ran out and I said, "We got our maple leaf, Dad!" and he said, "Thanks, Amy." It was pretty cool stuff.

My parents are a huge influence in my life—they're my heroes. They married young and raised two kids. I had a wonderful childhood, and parents that believed in me whether it was pursuing my dreams in curling or going to university to be a lawyer.

I really look up to my parents. My mom because she faced two brain surgeries to deal with a tumour almost six years ago. My dad because he always encouraged me and instilled in me a belief that I could be a great player.

For me, being a great player has its challenges and makes an average day in my life a bit different from many Olympians. I'm a lawyer and, for a curler, I am by no means an old player. It's a challenge to balance paying the mortgage, developing a career and giving enough to my team and my sport.

I've learned a lot, especially about leadership. Leadership is about setting an example others want to follow, both when it comes to the administrative aspects of sport and the emotional aspects. Good leadership is about organization, scheduling, patience and humour. You need all of them.

It might sound cheesy, but when I talk to young people about what it takes to be an elite athlete, I tell them anything is possible. I believe it's not always the most talented athletes who succeed, it's the most stubborn—the ones who find a way to put a little bit more into their sport than the next person.

Other milestones: Married to Mike Westlund in 2005

School: holds degrees in kinesiology, women's studies and law from the University of Calgary

Career: admitted to the Alberta Bar in 2006; works for the prosecutions section of The City of Calgary's law department

Trains at: National Training Centre for Curling in Calgary (Calgary Winter Club)

Other sport highlights:

- Amy and teammates Shannon Kleinbrink, Bronwen Webster and Chelsey Bell won the 2009 Canada Cup and were named the World Curling Tour's top women's team in April 2009.
- Runner up (with Shannon, Bronwen and Chelsey) 2008 Canadian Nationals
- Earned bronze medal at the 2006 Olympic Winter Games in Torino, Italy; played as third with skip Shannon Kleinbrink
- Played third with skip Shannon Kleinbrink on 2004 Alberta women's championship team