

MARK ESTAPA | MICHIGAN ICE HOCKEY Ø<BÒ

My name is Mark Estapa I am on the University of Michigan men's ice hockey team and I'm a senior forward as an athlete You have tons of people that help you to get to where you are Obviously I'm gonna have to mention my dad He's probably been my biggest mentor throughout it all ever since I was young Like he always went the extra mile to just go above and beyond to make sure that I had everything I needed He built the whole ice rink pretty much in our backyard in the basement He decked it out to be a great shooting room The best piece of advice that he's ever given me was hustle beats talent when talent doesn't hustle which basically just means you know you might not be the most skilled or the most talented player out there But as long as you stick to it and keep grinding and working as hard as you possibly can One day you're gonna make it I guess having my older brother he's four years older than me So growing up we were always just competing every single day We'd be competing He was a goalie obviously I'm a forward so I had someone to shoot on every day just a best friend to hang out with and uh to push me every day He would he would come up with different drills and stuff for me At the end of the day it's it's about having a love for the game And if you love doing what you're doing you're gonna work a lot harder at it and you're just gonna do it in your free time So I would say my biggest challenge that I've faced was injuries I guess throughout the last couple of years I had some injuries with my knees and you know when you're when you're when everything's not fine tuned and perfect and and not feeling good on your body you're not gonna be able to perform at the level that you want to So just like preh have and and making sure you do all the little things right every day to keep yourself from getting injured You know here at the University of Michigan we have access to the best professionals in the world when it comes to dealing with your body and and keeping it right So making sure you see those guys and establish a good relationship with them rehab is the best way to stay healthy And if you're healthy the game's a ton of fun And once again when you're having fun you're gonna play great and you're gonna keep getting better I guess throughout my career I always just pretended like somebody was watching and I always gave my best effort when I was out there on the ice afterwards When they come to talk to you You always want to be very respectful especially to your parents You definitely don't wanna you know come off as uh not a good person around them But other than that it's just I guess your skills on the ice and making

sure that you're always just working hard Even when nobody's watching there's so much more to the game of hockey than goals and assists It's it's all the little things like just back checking never taking a stride off listening to your coaches just being in the right spots the right places at the right times can make your game look effortless and then just being a good teammate picking guys up on the bench having juice having energy for me Michigan obviously academically and as far as hockey goes is right there along with the best of any university in the entire nation Also I live an hour down the road So being here at Michigan my entire family has been around One really important thing to me is my grandma and grandpa being able to come to pretty much every game for a young athlete trying to pick what college you go to I would say just look at your options make sure that you're not just jumping to any decisions Uh look at what you really need Uh what will really help best fit you and suit you and then once you pick your college you just it's the best thing in the world right You know where you're going or your future is at but then the road along there you don't want to jump ahead either You got to enjoy juniors um keep getting better every day there I would say when you come into college uh you're coming from juniors you're probably one of the better players where you're coming from if you're you know moving on to college and you know just knowing that guys are bigger and stronger and they're they're grown men pretty much out there So I guess like listening to older guys uh just knowing that they know what they're talking about they've been through it they're gonna give you their best pieces of advice to get you to where they have been and what they've gone through So I'd say just listening to the people around you taking advantage of the resources that you have available are all very important things I try to get as much done as I can as early in the week as possible So Monday night Tuesday night maybe Wednesday night if I've got homework I try to just get it all done I also have some time right now My classes start at 830 I'm done by 11 We start practicing at 330 So I've got about three hours in there to just do work and try to get it to get it done But also like sit back and actually retain the information and you know I I think just going to class is another huge thing and then if you're going to take the time to go to class you might as well learn the information and keep becoming smarter every day as a senior It's my last year before I hopefully can play professionally And you know it's ki it's almost like it's kind of sad looking back and and knowing that all the times are over So just looking back I would just want to tell my younger self to really enjoy every single second and just stick to the process

You keep doing the little things right Everything's gonna work out in the end