

ROYAL REFLECTIONS: SPEAKING WITH LA KINGS ALUM JEFF GIULIANO

👤 Ryan Cowley 🕒 April 5, 2017



Image credit: Ryan Cowley Original photo credit: Spokeo

It's a profession that can take you anywhere in the world. For some, the options are as far as the eye can see and for others, it's slim pickings. Regardless, there's always been something special about professional athletes having the privilege of playing in or near their hometown. For one former member of the **Los Angeles Kings**, not only did his pro career start just outside of his hometown but he has since returned there for his coaching career.

Born in Nashua, New Hampshire, **Jeff Giuliano** countered his disappointment in not being drafted and turned it into an opportunity that led to being signed by the **AHL's** newly-formed **Monarchs**, located just 15 minutes north of his hometown in **Manchester**.

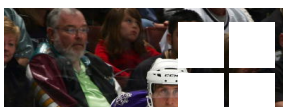
To say that good things come to those who work hard could not be more fitting than for Jeff Giuliano.

Standing at a diminutive 5-foot-9, Giuliano's size, as skeptics would believe, did not mix well with his undrafted status as far as his chances of making the pros went. But, after a solid collegiate career at nearby **Boston College**, who he helped win a **National Championship** in 2001, Giuliano was determined to get his foot in the door of the professional ranks any way he could. That's when the Monarchs, with just a year of existence under its belt, came calling.

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In addition to his play with the Monarchs, Giuliano also had to endure life in the **ECHL** where, during the 2002-03 season, he played for the Kings then-affiliate, the **Reading**





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Harry How

Royals for a total of 38 games. Over the course of the next five seasons, though, Giuliano would have the opportunity to be a full-time player just outside of his hometown. However, as exciting as it was to suit up for the Monarchs, it was even more thrilling to get the chance to play in the **National Hockey League**. For Jeff Giuliano, that chance came during the 2005-06 season when the Los Angeles Kings called him up.

In 2008, though, Giuliano took his career across the Atlantic where he played a year in the **KHL** and six seasons in Germany with the **Iserlohn Roosters** before retiring as a player. But, the end of one career marked the beginning of another as Giuliano tried his hand at coaching, joining the staff of the ECHL's version of the Manchester Monarchs in 2016.

In this week's edition of **MakeWay's 'Royal Reflections'**, we speak with Jeff Giuliano who reflects on his time with the Kings organization, including what brought him to both versions of the Monarchs and how excited he was to join the clubs.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is Jeff Giuliano.

Hey Monarchs Fans! From Jeff Giuliano



Make Way for the Kings: After finishing your collegiate career at Boston College, you went on to play for the Manchester Monarchs. Being a native of nearby Nashua, New Hampshire, how exciting was it to suit up for the Monarchs and what were the circumstances that brought you there?

Jeff Giuliano: First off, it was pretty incredible to be able to play pro hockey 15 minutes from where I grew up. It all kind of happened after my senior year [at Boston College]. My senior year was the first year the Monarchs were a pro team and I thought how cool it would be if I ever got to play for them. So, my senior year went by and in the summertime, I actually started talking to the Monarchs and their ECHL affiliate, the Reading Royals, so I wound up signing a two-way contract with Manchester and Reading.

So, I had a very good camp [with the Monarchs] but [I] was the last one sent down by coach **Bruce Boudreau** to Reading. I was up and down four times from Reading to Manchester and then stayed up [in Manchester] at Christmas for the rest of the year and obviously never went back there to Reading.

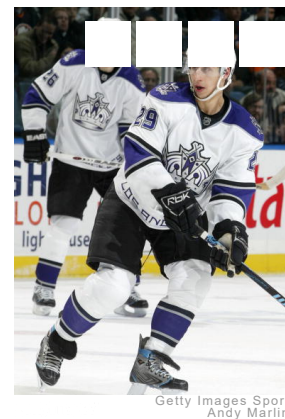
So, yeah, it was pretty awesome, pretty surreal. Obviously being a hometown guy, [the local media] kind of made a lot of stories about it, was on the news and whatnot, had a couple of bobbleheads one year *laughs* and I was on a scratch ticket. So, obviously, playing pro hockey was awesome in itself, but being able to do it right where you grew up, that's kind of indescribable. It was awesome.

MW: After a few years in Manchester, you joined the Kings in 2005-06 where you scored three goals and four assists in 48 games. Could you take us through the circumstances and even the emotions involved when you were first called up by the Kings?

JG: You know, I'll never forget it. It was a Wednesday night in Manchester when I got a phone call, and I actually hung up because it was unknown number. One of the operations guys called to tell me that the Kings had just called me up. They called me three times and finally, I called them back. They were saying [on the voicemail] that this is urgent, that we're trying to call Jeff Giuliano and I couldn't believe it. Then, yeah, I flew out to Phoenix that Thursday and [then-Kings forward] **Jeremy Roenick** was sick, so I did warmups but he ended up being okay, so he played and I didn't end up playing that night. But then, I flew home Friday, or Thursday night after the game and then Friday after [Kings] practice, [then-Kings head coach] **Andy Murray** said I was playing Saturday and yeah, I'll never forget it. I played the whole game against the Nashville Predators, my first game. It was just an unreal feeling and to finally say that I've made it, that all this hard work paid off in the gym and on the ice, all the hours you put in, but it finally paid off and to be able to do it for the Kings, such a great organization, was awesome.

But, that first year I was [in Los Angeles], there were a lot of veteran guys — [**Luc Robitaille**, Roenick, [**Craig Conroy**, **Mattias Norstrom** — a lot of those older veteran guys treated me just like I was a regular guy on their team even though I was a call-up. So, it was a pretty cool feeling to be looked at as a regular teammate by those all-stars.

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MW: You would join the Kings again in 2007-08 where you played in 53 games. What was the atmosphere like during that time as opposed to your first stint? For instance, by that time, Dean Lombardi had replaced Dave Taylor as the club's GM. How did you feel about the direction of the team as opposed to a couple years earlier?

JG: For me, it was– the team was younger, so I– not that I could relate to the guys more but they were more my age. I mean **[Anze] Kopitar** was young but **[Jason] LaBarbera**, **[George] Parros**, you know, all those guys that are– **[Patrick] O'Sullivan**— it was a younger team and it was my second year in the NHL, so I felt more comfortable around those guys being at that level. But, I thought **Dean Lombardi** was doing a great job and he was starting to turn everything around then. I had **[Marc] Crawford** as a coach then, I liked him. He was one of the more hard-nosed, tough coaches but I just tried to go out there and, you know, keep my mouth shut and work hard and everything worked out.

Overall, both years– I mean, yeah, I don't know how many people really complain about being in the NHL but I can't say that I had any complaints. I had a blast playing [in Los Angeles] and it was great.

MW: As mentioned, during the 2007-08 season, your coach in Los Angeles was Marc Crawford. How did you find him as a coach and how did he treat you and how do you feel he treated the team as a whole?

JG: Like I said in the question before, Crawford was– you know, he could yell; he was a hard-nosed coach but I think his resume speaks for itself. He's won where he's been and I was honestly always that type of player that came to the rink every day, worked hard, kept my mouth shut and just wanted to work, to give the best effort and to be the best player I could be every day and I think Coach Crawford, he liked that. So, Andy Murray and Coach Crawford, I think they both liked having me, seeing me giving that solid effort every night. Unfortunately, the team wasn't doing as well as our expectations and that's when they start firing people and stuff like that. But, the coaches are the easy ones to get rid of since there are 24, 25 other players and you can't get rid of all them. So, unfortunately for him, it didn't work and obviously, it's the players' faults for not performing on the ice, so it was a shame to see him go. But yeah, he's had a great career and I enjoyed him as a coach.

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Jeff Vinnick

MW: After playing in Germany for six years, you retired in late 2014 and returned to Manchester where you were hired as an assistant coach for the ECHL's Monarchs. How did you feel about returning home and how have you enjoyed your coaching career thus far?

JG: To be honest, it's just like my playing career where I was extremely fortunate to play for the Monarchs and being so close to home. So, from Nashua, 15 minutes away and having played in Manchester for many years,

so– I met my wife and I have a family now and in the off-season, we would live in Manchester. We have a house and lived [in Manchester] even when I was playing in Germany. So, to be able to come home– you know, I live two miles from the arena, so to come home and walk into a coaching position right down the street at a pro level is a surreal feeling; I’m very fortunate for that.

Obviously, my playing career didn’t end the way I wanted as I had concussion problems. I got my last concussion on November 14, 2014 and that was the last shift I ever took, so it wasn’t the way I wanted it to end but I say everything happens for a reason and if I didn’t get that concussion, I would have played a couple of more years and maybe I wouldn’t have been able to go walking into this position coaching the Monarchs.

As far as coaching goes, I think it’s incredible. You still get those highs and lows you did as a player. It sucks losing but you feel awesome when you’re winning, so it’s nice to have that and be around the group of guys in the locker room. Yeah, I really enjoy it. I worked hard as a player and I work hard as a coach trying to teach these guys what I learned and what I did to get to the NHL and [we’ve had] a lot of guys called up to the American league, which is very satisfying and that’s a big part of the satisfaction as a coach. Obviously, you get it when you win but obviously, at our level, when guys get called up and move on, you get just as much satisfaction out of that.

*Photo courtesy of
Giuliano Pro
Performance
(www.g2phockey.com)*

So overall, it’s been great. I can’t complain and I also started a little business of my own, **Giuliano Pro Performance**, where I’m getting involved with the youth as well. So, I feel like I’ve learned so much from my career and now coaching-wise as well, I want to give all this information back not only to my players but also to young kids in the area who play the game.

Roosters FanTV - Saisoneroöffnung - Jeff Giuliano



Since I was a young child, Nashua, New Hampshire, has always held a special place in my heart.

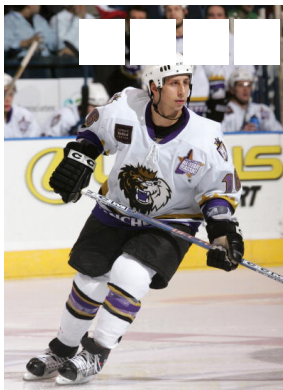
Every spring, and sometimes fall, our family would take the drive from Ottawa to visit our aunt in Nashua, taking that drive through the quiet old-fashioned streets of upstate New York and then through picturesque Vermont, making for one of my most favourite childhood memories.

As a sports fan, though, I loved being in Nashua as, like most of New England, it was the territory of my beloved **Boston Red Sox**. But, in 2001, another team was added to the mix, if you will, and that team just happened to be affiliated with the Los Angeles Kings.

While the road trips to Nashua were special to me, so were the talks I had with my aunt, rest her soul, and, while her sports knowledge was limited, she knew who my teams were. Yet, while we primarily talked about the Red Sox, we would soon start talking more about the Kings with special emphasis on Nashua's hometown boy who had made the team.

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Jim McIsaac

Jeff Giuliano's **career with** the Kings lasted 101 games where he scored three goals and 10 assists during that time. But, the former left winger's contributions to the Kings organization go beyond his time in Los Angeles.

Giuliano made the best of his time with the Manchester Monarchs, **spending** six seasons with the club while scoring 78 points (30 goals, 48 assists) over that stretch. Now, Giuliano is back in Manchester, serving in his first year as assistant coach for the ECHL club who, just this past weekend, **clinched** a playoff spot.

He was a diminutive forward but he was nonetheless a talented one. That, to go in hand with his leadership skills and tremendous work ethic, is what led to a successful career in professional hockey for Jeff Giuliano, which ultimately led to his induction into the **New Hampshire Hockey Hall of Fame** in October 2016.

It was never easy for the Nashua native but that didn't stop Giuliano from achieving his dream, playing professionally for 13 years before moving behind the bench.

With the advent of the Manchester Monarchs came a solid farm system for the Los Angeles Kings, who only got better from a developmental standpoint thanks to their new AHL affiliate. Jeff Giuliano was, and still is, a contributing factor to the success of the Kings' farm system and for his time with this proud organization — whether at the AHL, ECHL or NHL levels — we tip our caps to Jeff Giuliano: the pride and joy of nearby Nashua, New Hampshire.