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MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE

The Council of the Cree Nation of Chisasibi extends their condolences following the passing of Charly Washipabano:

“The recent outpouring of love and grief for Charly Washipabano gives only a small glimpse of the enormous impact he made in our Nation. Charly’s untimely passing has left our community shaken, heartbroken, and in utter disbelief.

Losing Charly – a beloved community member who made a mark so profound in *Eeyou Istchee*, our region, and in the hockey world – is a painful reality we will learn to adapt to as a community. Charly had so many cherished qualities: a magnetic presence, a wonderful personality, a contagious smile, and a pure passion for hockey. Not only was he a great friend; he was a fierce competitor and a player you would always want on your team.

Throughout his life, Charly dedicated so much of his skills and talent to our community and *Eeyou Istchee*. His experience playing at an elite level taught many of our Youth teamwork, perseverance, commitment, and dedication. As a coach, mentor and ambassador for our Nation, he consistently demonstrated a strong work ethic, initiative, and encouragement. All around, he was and continues to be an inspiration to young Cree athletes who wish to pursue their goals in competitive sports.

In 2022, *Eeyouch* were thrilled to see Charly participate in the Montreal Canadiens’ development camp. With this in our thoughts, it was touching to see his life honoured at the Montreal Canadiens game last night. Charly was also honoured across the territory through candlelight vigils, hundreds of social media posts, the display of hockey sticks at our front doors, and with all flags at half-mast.

Charly’s life can teach us so much. Follow your dreams. Hard work pays off. Keep pushing forward, no matter what. May others pick up where he left off by engaging with our Youth and always reminding them that anything is possible with hard work and determination.

We send our love, our thoughts, and our deepest condolences to Charly’s partner Lily, their children, and the entire Washipabano family. We also extend our sympathies to the friends, neighbours, teammates, and colleagues who had the privilege of knowing this incredible man.

Charly, *Eeyou Istchee* will not be the same without you. You are loved, you are missed, and your legacy will live on forever. Your smile may no longer light up the rink, but your memory will forever shine brightly in our hearts. Rest in peace, #97.”

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF

Wednesday, November 15, 2023

“Building a strong and vibrant community for Chisasibi Eeyouch, today and aayaanischa.”