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Lemieux working with Venice Beach trainer

By [Joe Starkey](#)

TRIBUNE-REVIEW

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Mario Lemieux has gone to see the high priest of personal trainers.

Lemieux is in Venice Beach, Calif., working out under the guidance of guru T.R. Goodman.

Goodman's clients range from actor James Caan to NFL linebacker Willie McGinest to a stable of hockey players that includes 41-year-old Chris Chelios, perhaps the best-conditioned athlete in the NHL.

Lemieux, who turns 39 in October, trained under Goodman two previous times this summer, as he gears up to lead Team Canada in the World Cup of Hockey later this month.

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Lemieux is widely expected to be named Team Canada's captain, assuming he survives the lung-burning sessions with Goodman at Gold's Gym, where there is no air conditioning.

"Excruciating is the best word for it," said Lemieux's agent, Steve Reich. "It's weight training, but it's circuit training, so the emphasis is cardiovascular. And another focus is trying to increase the range of motion in Mario's (surgically repaired) hips."

Reich's former agency regularly sent its players to work with Goodman, who puts his clients through two-a-day sessions.

"Guys who think they're working hard have no

idea," Reich said.

Lemieux arrived in Venice Beach on Wednesday and will return next week. He also is skating in Los Angeles.

He will have spent about three weeks, total, with Goodman by the time Team Canada opens camp Aug. 20 in Ottawa. It plays an exhibition against Team USA Aug. 23 in Columbus.

AROUND THE PENGUINS

The Penguins lost one veteran free agent they were interested in yesterday when Brett Hull signed with the Phoenix Coyotes. General manager Craig Patrick called Bobby Hull Jr., Brett's brother and agent, last week to inquire about the future Hall of Famer, but the Coyotes and Dallas Stars were also interested.

- The Penguins are still believed to have an interest in free agent Alexei Zhamnov, but agent Jay Grossman was traveling and did not return a phone call yesterday. Zhamnov was a teammate of Penguins coach Eddie Olczyk with the Chicago Blackhawks in the late 1990s. "I've talked to him," Olczyk said of Zhamnov. "I just kind of let him know my feelings. He's known quite a few guys that have come through here and played. And we want people that want to be here." Zhamnov, 33, made \$4.5 million last season.
- Reich also said this week that client Ron Francis, a free agent, has not decided whether to play another season in the NHL, and that his decision likely would not come until the season appears close to starting.
- Neil Sheehy, agent for Tomas Surovy, said he spoke to Patrick several days ago. Surovy, 22, turned down his qualifying offer for one year at \$522,500 last week. "There's nothing to report except

he,s not signed," Sheehy said, without elaborating on why they did not accept the initial offer. Surovy had 11 goals and 12 assists in 47 games with the Penguins this season and 14 goals and 15 assists in 30 games with the Baby Penguins.

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