



THE MAPLELEAF MONITOR

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JANUARY 2005

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT...

First, let me say a huge **Thank You** to everyone in the organization! You are the reason that Geauga Hockey has become a great place for kids to enjoy the awesome sport of ice hockey and for parents to meet others and enjoy exciting hockey action together. And a very special thanks to those of you who go above and beyond to volunteer as board members, team managers, scorekeepers, fundraisers, website contributors, and coaches! With the reincarnation of our newsletter, we hope to communicate organization and team news to everyone.

Although things seem to run effortlessly, there really is a ton of work to make sure the kids are enjoying their time on the ice and developing into high-quality hockey players. In the future, I'll cover various topics relating to this background work but for this newsletter I'd like to share some initial thoughts on how far the organization has come in such a short time.

Geauga Hockey is healthy financially and growing in number of players. This 2004-05 season, we have nine travel teams (2 Mite teams, 3 Squirt, 2 Peewee, and 2 Bantam) playing in the Cleveland Suburban Hockey League (CSHL), and we also have a **strong** Learn-to-Play program on Saturdays. In addition to that, we continue to build a competitive In-House League of 7 teams in 2 divisions that play on Sunday. Both In-House League and Learn-to-Play are for the beginners and novice players — the most crucial to our future. With the continuing success of that program, it appears we have a solid foundation to build on for many years to come. In total, we have over 200 hockey players registered with Geauga Hockey; not bad for our short seven year history.

It appears that the biggest concern parents seem to have is the stability of the Arctic Freeze ice rink. During the past seven years, we have experienced worse ice rink issues

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BARON'S NIGHT UPDATE

We had a very successful night at the Gund Arena on January 8 with over 330 tickets sold -- raising more than \$1,500 for the organization. The Learn to Play and Mite 2 players entertained the crowd during intermissions and acquitted themselves well. If you missed it, you have another chance to get in on the fun on Saturday, March 5 at 7:00 p.m. It's the final bobble head give-a-way night of the season and we will also be having a post-game skate with the Barons! So bring the skates along and get your tickets from your manager!

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than we have now. The rink and management are actually more stable than in the past. That's not to say all is perfect, but we have become accustomed to dealing with similar issues every year and we continue to learn how to solve problems. We have successfully used the Gilmour facility to supplement our need for ice due to the tournaments and high number of high school teams that use our rink. Geauga Hockey is the single largest customer of the Arctic Freeze and our continued growth means a more stable rink. I've recently met with rink management to explain the specific concerns we have with the condition of the rink, lobby, locker rooms, etc. They have been responsive and we are hoping to see improvement.

The other item that I hear discussed is the possibility that we will change our uniforms from the Avalanche colors to Toronto Maple Leaf blue. We've tried them now the past two seasons with a few teams (currently the Peewees are using them for their travel jerseys), and we are learning how well they might be received and what costs we will incur if we change. No decision has been made yet but the Board will be discussing it this spring, so if you have an opinion, please come to our meetings!

We've had a great season so far, and I hope all of you are having fun playing and watching. Hockey is a fantastic sport, teaching lots of life lessons and developing new skills. The most important thing that I ask every one of you is to remember – **positive things happen to positive people!** Keep speaking positively and carry a positive attitude concerning our organization and our rink.

Watch for upcoming information on Spring Hockey and the end-of-season Awards Party.

Jim Revak

WHERE DOES ALL THE MONEY GO?

When you start to wonder if there is a more expensive sport for your child, thank your lucky stars he (or she) didn't fancy yacht racing or polo as their activity of choice. The cost of a new racing yacht can run over \$1,000,000 for the boat and that's without sails. And the price of polo ponies has really skyrocketed of late. All of a sudden \$200 skates seem fairly manageable.

You're probably saying, "Yeah, but I only paid \$60 for summer baseball and my kid got a jersey!" Well, hockey is a little different than most sports when it comes to costs. We have to play on ice and it costs a lot of money to keep the ice frozen 24/7. GYHA pays \$215 for every hour of ice we buy...and we buy a lot. This is obviously the largest expense of the organization but there are others that you may not be aware of. For example, did you know that it costs between \$15 and \$25 per referee per game? That's right; we have to pay our striped friends. And, NO they won't accept a performance based compensation program...we tried. The ref fees are paid through our dues to the Cleveland Suburban Hockey League (CSHL) which

also cover scheduling costs and administrative fees for them. (Columbus is a suburb of Cleveland, so don't bother asking!)

GYHA is also a member of USA Hockey and, as such, we must register each child in our organization (another fee) for which they provide supplemental insurance for each player while on the ice, during games and practices. They also provide liability insurance for the organization.

Some of your fees also go towards coaching education. USA Hockey has mandated a certain level of coaching education for each volunteer coach before molding young players into future Gretzky's. These fees begin at \$45 for beginning level classes and grow in cost to cover full weekend courses for the more advanced levels. Some of the interesting topics covered are safety, first aid, positioning, vocalization maximization and how to yell SKATE in 14 different languages. Water bottle throwing and anger management are studied in the more advanced classes.

GYHA is a non-profit organization and last year actually ran a slight deficit. Luckily we had some reserves from the previous year to get us through. I would like to urge parents to support all fund raising activities that the organization sponsors. We would also like to see money come in from outside the well tapped pockets of the GYHA families. So, go hit up the neighbors, co-workers, grandparents, babysitters, mailman, etc. And please keep your eyes and ears open for potential sponsors for the organization. The more funds we raise, the lower the fees we have to charge. It's that simple. So please volunteer whenever possible and share your ideas with any Board member.





LEARN-TO-PLAY & IN-HOUSE

FINAL WEEKS OF L2P ?

You may be surprised to know that the 2004/05 L2P 20-week session only has 4 more weeks:

January 22	8:20am
January 29	8:20am
February 5	8:20am
February 12	8:20am

But most of you have not had enough hockey yet, so we will be offering an "extension" which will extend the L2P program an additional five weeks, to March 19th. The cost for this extra five weeks is only \$45.

To participate, please drop off a check at the registration table, and write in the memo line "L2P Extension."

IN-HOUSE EXPANSION

Due to the increasing sign-ups in the age **8 & Under** division, we are expanding that group to four teams. The new team is *Abanaki*, a local manufacturer and an in-house team sponsor last year.

This will allow us to have all four teams playing every week (i.e. more fun for the kids) by having cross-ice games going at both ends of the rink. This will be hectic, but we've done it before. We will need even more help from the Dads getting the cross-ice boards and four nets into position, not to mention the scorekeepers (Moms can help, too). So, please feel free to jump in and help!

Any questions? Email **Gary Petre** (gpetre@lanly.com)



*Geauga Learn-to-Play and In-House League
train future hockey heroes and heroines!*



MITE 1

MITE 1 TEAM HAVING A CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON!

The Mite-1 team is having a good season so far. Having only lost one regular season game, they are battling for first place in the A1 division. In November, they won the Mite Championship in the Mentor Thanksgiving Tournament. This big win included beating a AA-division team twice!

They also just won the Martin Luther King Sports Weekend Tournament. Goalie **Kevin Henderson** earned the tourney MVP (his second MVP in the last two tournaments) by allowing only one goal in four games.

The Mites were also on the ice during the recent Barons game (attended by more than 300 Geauga fans) during player introductions and the playing of the National Anthem. What a thrill and honor!



Thanksgiving Champs!



**Mite Division Champions
2005 M.L.K. Tournament**

L-R Top row: Matt Jewels, Gary Piro, Paul Vago, Bob Henderson, Jack Sabel, Craig McConnell (on skates)
Mid row: Mike Whittier, Jack Jewels, Jack Young, Andrew Leonard, Nick Vago
Bottom row: Steve Sabel, Mike Blum, Travis Sabel, Jack McConnell, Gary Piro
Coach: Vito Vito, Eric Henderson, Karl Farabee



Honoring America at the Gund before the Barons game



MITE 2

MITE 2 TEAM LEARNING AND GROWING

What an exciting year so far! We kicked it off with a “Welcome to the Season” party. The parents had a chance to meet and get to know each other. And the kids were able to get some play time in – off the ice!

The season started with only two of the 13 players ever having played on a travel hockey team. To our surprise, we were placed in the A2 division. This was definitely above where we thought we belonged. But, as a testament to the team, it is becoming a good fit. The players have made tremendous improvement in every facet of the game. From skating skills to position

awareness, and executing drills, they are performing well. They are working hard and having a lot of fun!



Coach Menges has led this team to 11 wins, 5 losses and 2 ties. Nine of the players have scored goals. **Jay Weemhoff** leads the pack with 44 of the 94 goals scored. *“The schedule is heavy at the end of the season. We put in a lot of time, so we may surprise some people with how we end our season”* says Coach Menges.

The reaction from the parents has been positive as well. *“This has been a very fulfilling learning experience – for the kids and especially for the parents”* said hockey parent, **Tony Nero**.





SQUIRT 1

SUCCESS IS CONTAGIOUS ON THE SQUIRT 1 TEAM

The Geauga Squirt 1 team is off to an impressive start midway through the season. They are playing well as a team and are becoming quite the unit off the ice as well. **Coaches Markley and Licata** have apparently nicknamed all the players and the parents are still trying to figure out who is who.

The boys participated in the Euclid Halloween tournament and after a tough tie in the first game, came back to play to win and took the championship trophy and the honor of their first tournament win. The goal can is racking up money as we have seen lots of impressive goal scoring thus far. The Moms are doing their fair share of cheerleading in the stands, although the Mite 1 Moms may be able to give us a run for our money with their level of enthusiasm.

The Tri-County Christmas tourney brought a disappointing loss to the Baron's AAA team, but it was a hard fought loss. The season has progressed nicely with lots of wins and more to come. The speed and skill of this team improves with every game. It is so much fun to watch a rocket come off the stick of **Markley** or **Haluska** for a goal that the opposing goalie could not see coming. The speed of **Mack** chasing down the puck, the defensemen, **Johnny Bravo**, **Silge**, **Lemons** and **Scotty** fighting for the puck in the corners and protecting **Target** in the net, **Maverick**, **Deeter**, **Joseph**, **Devon** and **Mats** all fighting for the loose puck to get a garbage or back door goal make watching every game exciting!

The team cheer of "**Head, Heart, Hustle**" is one that exemplifies the Squirt 1 team and we will continue to see more wins and more success from this great group of boys.



Squirt 1 knows that "practice makes perfect!"



SQUIRT 2

NO NEWS THIS TIME -- STAY TUNED!



SQUIRT 3

SQUIRT 3 CHALLENGING FOR DIVISION TITLE

The Squirt 3 Team is having a great season. We are currently in first place in the Squirt B division. Our record is 7 wins and 2 losses. Our two losses were to Canton-Akron and Winterhurst who are second and third in the division.

Our three remaining games are against Strongsville (twice) and Rocky River. However, we have strong competition from the Canton-Akron team. If we win our last three games and Canton-Akron wins their last six games, we will be behind Canton-Akron by one point at the end of the season. Please feel free to attend an Canton-Akron game and cheer for their opponents. We need them to lose or tie a game to give us an opportunity to win our division.

In addition to our three remaining regular season games, we also have five remaining scrimmages against B1 teams including Garfield Heights (twice), Mentor (twice) and Shaker Heights. These games will help with play-off preparation.

Our team is very excited that we grew by two players in December. **Jason Morel** joined from the In-House League and had his first travel team goal on January 2 against Parma. Our other addition is **Sean Henderson** who is solidifying defense and played travel hockey last year at GYHA.

Our goalie, **Joey Buffano** is playing his first year in that position and is doing an excellent job in goal.

Our team has also registered for a spring tournament in the Detroit area. We will be playing in the Michigan Jaguar Invitational being held March 18-20, 2005 in Fraser. During that weekend the team and their families will attend a **Motor City Mechanics** game. Headquartered in Redford, Michigan, the **Motor City Mechanics** is an AA-Professional Hockey expansion team of the United Hockey League (UHL). An affiliate of Southfield-based Michigan Sports LLC, the new franchise is playing its 2004-05 season home games at the Great Lakes Sports City Superior Arena in Fraser and is coached by former Detroit Red Wing and seven-time NHL all-star, Garry Unger.



Squirt 3 Team faces off against Rocky River



PEEWEE 1



PEEWEE 1 LOOKING GOOD IN THEIR MAPLE LEAF BLUES

The Peewee 1 boys started the season with a bang when they won a decisive Championship at the Euclid Halloween Tournament. They were undefeated and goalie **Ronnie Schwartz** posted a shut-out in their 4-0 victory over Columbus in the Championship game. The team elected **Chad Sanders** their captain and **Mitch Joseph** and **Alex Kuniega** Assistant Captains.

They play in the A2 division and every game has been close. They are currently 16-13-2 (2-4-1 in league play) and have scored 92 goals while only allowing 80. The team recently attended the Blizzard Challenge in Niagara Falls, NY (along with the Squirt 1 team) and although they didn't win, they had more fun than kids should be allowed to have in a snowy and cold Niagara Falls. Thanks to Team Manager, **Debbie Joseph** for organizing meals at the Hard Rock Cafe and for taking good care of all the parents!

The Peewee Moms have been busy with fundraising. **Jan Isakoff** is in charge of our *goal can* and thanks to some great offense, we've collected enough to pay for a tournament. **Polly Manke** spear-headed a sale of cozy stadium blankets in both our Avalanche and Toronto colors! If anyone wants one, there are two left. Thanks to all the Moms who cut, sewed and sold.

The Peewee Dads are always on hand to supervise in the penalty box ("Do you know what you did wrong?"), help keep score, keep the locker room under control (an enormous job...) and be supportive. We are fortunate to have lots of Dad coaches on the ice and are grateful for the time they spend with this team of fine, young men. Thanks especially to our coach, **Mark Schwartz** who, in addition to leading the team, finds the most unique Chinese restaurants in the Cleveland Metro area!

There are two more tournaments on the Peewee horizon -- the Garfield tourney mid-February and the Laurel Tournament in March.



PEEWEE 2

NO NEWS THIS TIME -- STAY TUNED!



BANTAM 1

BANTAM 1 HANGING TOUGH!

The Bantam1 team is having a great season thus far. The team's initial goal was to make the top division and thanks to a strong pre-season effort was able to land in AA. We knew it would be challenging and that we probably would not win a whole lot, but the team wanted to play as high a level as possible, so that the kids would develop into very good high school players. The boys are performing fantastically and over-achieving for a group that is comprised of nearly all first-year players.

By using the Sports Weekend tournaments and lots of scrimmages, the Bantam 1 team has played 45 games thus far, with an overall record of 17-24-4. Their pre-season record in CSHL was an impressive 5-2-1 which put them into AA. In the current AA division, the team's record is 1-5-2. Although the games are always challenging, the players are giving maximum effort and most of the games are very close. The offense is averaging over 3 goals per game and hanging tough with the other teams who are much bigger. There is lots of speed and excellent puck movement by the forwards. One of the primary objectives that we've been working on is having the defensemen be much more aggressive: following up to the offensive blue line very quickly, rotating with wings when pinching in deep, face-off plays featuring shots from the defensemen, and pushing into the

offensive zone much deeper when we have control of the puck. The featured shooter is **Alex Barrett**, who has over 20 goals from his defensive position. The other 3 defensemen, **Garrett Votaw**, **Nick Ugrinic**, and **Rob Borden** have done a super job keeping us in the games and also providing more offense than usual. Each has worked hard on their shot and making good decisions when they are breaking up plays and carrying the puck. Special thanks go out to our 'Defensive Coordinator,' **Gordon Glass** who specializes on coaching defensemen. Great job, Gordy! And our most important defender, our goaltender **Kyle Regan**, has done a solid job taking all of the difficult shots in AA games and keeping the games close for us to have a chance to win. Great job, Kyle!

Early in the season, we had injuries to both of our leading scorers. **Jordan Herrington** has just returned from a broken collar bone, but missed six weeks. And **Kyle Weemhoff** has been practicing and is expected to return to the lineup this week against Strongsville. Kyle suffered a broken femur and had missed about eight weeks. It will be great to have a full lineup again. We are looking forward to the games coming up at the end of January and into February as the CSHL season winds down. We are also planning a trip to Jamestown, NY for a tournament in mid-February.

- Coach Revak -



*Alex Barrett (left) has 20 goals at defense
Coach Revak (right) watches the action!*





BANTAM 2

BANTAM 2 TEAM GETTING STRONGER!

The Bantam 2 team is comprised of 15 hard working young men that play very well together. Led by captains **Brock Jarrell** and **Chuckie Bolt**, the team got off to a slow start but has shown nice improvement over their last few games. Chuckie often switches between offense and defense and is one of the scoring leaders. He is the middle child in a three player family. His older brother plays for West Geauga High School and his younger brother is the Geauga Peeewe 2 goalie.

Brock is a the leading scorer for the team while playing defense. He knows how to score and uses that skill to prevent the other side from getting any scoring chances.

Charlie Moog is the team's goalie. Look up consistency in the dictionary and you'll find a picture of Charlie. We often hear the parents and coaches from opposing teams comment on how well Charlie plays. He recently recorded another one of his many shutouts that he has racked up in his years of playing. Charlie also has two older brothers involved in hockey.

The Bantam 2 team has some challenging games coming up and we will need to build on our recent improvement in order to qualify for a playoff spot.



The team also has a couple of tournaments coming up and the boys always look forward to some out of town travel.

