

AAU Ice Hockey

February 1, 2014

Volume 1, Issue 11

Western States Hockey League (WSHL) AAU Juniors of the United Hockey Union

Usual Suspects atop WSHL

Story by Brent Maranto, WSHL Director of Communications

With an all-time high of 24 teams, competing across four divisions, the 20th season of Western States Hockey League play has been as unpredictable as can be; aside from the four teams currently atop their respective divisions.

The battle for one of the 16 playoff spots has been heated from the get-go and was taken to another level at the All-League Showcase in mid-December, where inter-division games played in front of numerous college hockey scouts brought out the best in every team.

After the two-week holiday break gave players and coaches time to relax with family and recover prior to embarking on the stretch run, 2014 has already begun with a bang, as teams continue to jockey for position.

As they say however; the more things change, the more things stay the same and although playoff positions can change in a hurry, the four teams currently atop their respective divisions aren't much of a surprise at all.

The inaugural United Hockey Union and three-time defending Thorne Cup Champion Idaho Jr. Steelheads came into the 2013-2014 season with a new head coach and a re-tooled roster but it hasn't made any difference, as the "Steelies" currently hold the best record in the league, at 30-3-0 and are running away with the Northwest Division.

The El Paso Rhinos, who have been a force since joining the league in 2005, didn't lose a game until a December 18 defeat at the hands of the aforementioned Steelheads and are currently reigning supreme over the rest of the Midwest Division. Cory Herman's hard-hitting squad is already a shone-in for the 2014 Thorne Cup Finals, as El Paso will host the event for the second time in three years but don't expect that to slow them down one bit.

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Sports for all, Forever



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The Fresno Monsters have had their share of post-season struggles over their four seasons of WSHL play but this year's squad looks like they will be able to carry their regular season momentum over. With a throng of veterans combined with highly skilled newcomers, Bryce Dale's team looks more poised than ever to get the job done, as they continue to cruise atop the Western Division yet again.

The Phoenix Polar Bears were WSHL royalty for nearly a decade, winning Thorne Cups and National Championships regularly. Just a few years ago, ownership and management changed hands and re-named the team the Knights. After two up and down seasons, the Knights have risen to power in year three, with former Polar Bear Tyler Ramsey at the helm. The Alberta native recruited hard over the summer and brought in a number of players from his home province, which he combined with a core of veteran returners. Although they are a completely different organization now, the Knights have given many around the league flashbacks to the Polar Bears of yesteryear.

With most teams still having about 15 games left on their regular season schedule, anything can happen but you can be sure that the four top dogs won't be going down without a fight, as there's a reason they've been there from the first puck drop in September.



Sofie Alexandra Kitterød

Photo Courtesy of Sofie Kitterød

New York State Club Hockey tournament

The High School Hockey League of Nassau County will be hosting all 3 divisions of the New York State Club School Hockey Tournament this year on February 28th through March 2nd. The tournament includes Large School, Small School and Open Divisions.

Both Large and Small are for clubs from one school district. These divisions are broken up by population. The Open Division is for teams from multiple districts, or teams with kids from districts that do not have teams.



Award Patches Available Soon

AAU Hockey award patches will soon be available for order by clubs. The 3 award patches shown below were designed by Kara Cutting, one of our Hockey Illinois members who volunteered her time and talents to this effort. These iron-on patches measure 3" X 2.5" and will be available for Zero Goals (Shutout), Playmaker and Hat Trick awards at \$3 each.

In addition to the awards patches, AAU Hockey will also be offering AAU Shield patches (measuring 2" X 1.5") at \$1.50 each, as well as Helmet Stickers.

Watch for ordering information and order form at: www.aauicehockey.org



Hockey Illinois - Plans for Spring & Fall

Following their outstanding inaugural regular season, **Hockey Illinois** has made several announcements concerning their expansion and growth, finalizing this season, continuing through Spring and for next season.

1. The Hockey Illinois - Frozen Four AAU Illinois Mite A State Championship will be held March 14-15, 2014.
2. Title Sponsor for the State Championship and AAU 2014 Spring Season is Rosebrook Pools.
3. The Hockey Illinois Spring League is already planned.
4. During the 2014-2015 regular season, Hockey Illinois will be adding Squirt level classifications to their Mites and 6U.

For information on **Hockey Illinois**: www.aauhockeyillinois.org

Hockey Michigan - Plans for Spring & Fall Tykes, Mites, Squirts & Juniors

As **Hockey Michigan** prepares for their 3rd annual State Championships (held on March 14-16th 2014), plans are well underway for the Spring and the 2014-2015 Fall season.

Hockey Michigan expects to expand their Full-Ice Mite program beyond the 56 teams that were fielded during the current season. Intending to provide opportunities for:

1. Tykes (6U player born 2008 or later)
2. Squirt (10U Atom) classifications.
3. Junior B league. It is hoped that the Junior B classification will provide additional playing opportunities for 20U players (primarily for players ages 17-20).

For information on **Hockey Michigan**: keith@hockey-michigan.org

Michigan Amateur Youth Hockey League (MAYHL) hosts a planning meeting regarding further expansion

On **February 5th 2014 @ 6:30pm**, the MAYHL will be hosting a meeting at the Dearborn Ice Skating Center (**DISC**) in **Dearborn Michigan**. In order to further develop plans for their Spring League and for the 2014-2015 AAU Hockey season.



Hockey Michigan - Attempting to change the culture

The AAU National Office provides FREE Coaches' Education for all AAU Non-Athlete members. This program is administered by Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA), using their Double-Goal Coach online courses. A Double-Goal Coach has two goals: the first is to win, but the second and more important goal is to teach life lessons through sports. All of our AAU coaches and managers are required to pass these courses.

The very first rule adopted by Hockey Michigan required that “All Coaches, Managers and Referees shall practice the Positive Coaching Alliance - Double-Coach principles of Honoring the Game.” We hope to change the culture of hockey in Michigan. Adopting these PCA principles was an important first step. We are not merely providing another youth hockey within our state. Our goal is to provide a superior environment for children to play to learn and play hockey. To this end, our AAU Hockey Michigan coaches are asked to apply the Positive Coaching Alliance - Double-Coach principles of **Honoring the Game** during our AAU practices and games. Each Head Coach has a responsibility to assure that the Assistant Coaches, Managers and Volunteers from their teams understand their proper roles in this effort as well.

One issue that has arisen in Michigan involves the use of Parents and/or Coaches to work as Timekeepers/Scorekeepers and/or to work in the Penalty Box. Obviously, there isn't anything wrong with this practice. This can be handy for filling in when a Scorekeeper doesn't show or even to cut costs. Yet it can also lead to problems when these adults don't understand their duties. Some adults have gotten into arguments with coaches from the opposing teams, when they continue acting as a fan or coach.

Each head coach is responsible for the conduct of his/her team and those adult volunteers utilized by their team. The head coach must supervise all of these adults. Adults who cannot be impartial and objective, as well as detach themselves from acting like a fan or coach cannot be permitted to fill in as scorkeepers, participate within the Penalty Box or be permitted to disturb or interact with opposing players and/or coaches.

Parents and/or coaches serving as Scorekeepers: When a parent or coach serves as a scorekeeper, they have become a game official and they are required to be impartial and objective. Adults who can not accept this responsibility cannot be permitted to act as scorekeepers-timekeepers.

Parents and/or coaches that serve within a Penalty Box: Similarly, when serving within the Penalty Box, they too are no longer fans, coaches or part of their team. They have become a game official and they are required to be impartial and objective.

In both of these situations the Parents and/or Coaches are no longer a fans, they are now working for the Referees (whether they are being paid or not). Referees control the game activities, calling of penalties, awarding of goals and assists and all interaction and/or discussions with either coaching staff.

Scorekeepers only control the clock and scoresheet under the supervision of the Referees. Historically, the Penalty Box has often been a problem because sometimes teams will allow an additional coach or parent to operate within the Box. However, their proper role is merely to swing the door under the supervision of the Referees. Parents or Coaches should not be in a Penalty Box unless they understand that they should never ever argue with or criticize a Referee or a scorekeeper. And they should never have any discussions or arguments with members of an opposing team. Parents and/or coaches who become unruly and/or cannot maintain their impartiality should be removed by their team's head coach and/or the referee.

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BATTLE OF THE BISCUIT

MiteA/MiteAA/Squirt A Spring AAU Hockey Tournament

Travel Division Teams with birth years 2005, 2006 & 2007

April 4 - 6, 2014

- 4 Game Guarantee
- \$850 per team with early registration and full payment received by February 28, 2014 (**400.00 non-refundable deposit due asap to reserve your spot**)
- \$925 total due if paid in full after February 28, 2014
- All games played at the DISC - Dearborn Ice Skating Center
14900 Ford Road
Dearborn, MI 48126
(313) 943-4098

All payments due by March 20, 2014 and are non-refundable

Contact Joan Greig to register:

Email: 2005cobras@gmail.com

Phone: 313-903-5599

HOCKEY COLORADO

ELITE SPRING LEAGUE 2014

MARCH 22 - JUNE 8

BIG BEAR ICE ARENA · 11 GAME SEASON

BOYS & GIRLS

- *New league offers a one-day-a-week hockey game experience*
- *Designed to appeal to 7-18 year old players who enjoy playing the game & want continue after winter season*
- *Organized, fun, non-threatening, no-check hockey*
- *Certified officials for all games and team standings are kept*
- *Players are encouraged to bring their friends and play on the same team*
- *All games late Saturday & Sunday afternoon or early evening*
- *Registration open to both full teams & individuals*

**TEAM FEE - \$2,600
INDIVIDUAL FEE - \$260**

Register online @ <https://hockeycolorado.sportngin.com/register/form/856639221>

For more information, contact Vassiliy Larchenko, League Director, 303-343-1111 · vlarchenko@bigbearice.com

COACHES/PLAYERS: Strive To Think And Compete As A FIVE-PERSON Unit!

I recently read a comment by current Detroit Red Wings coach Mike Babcock referencing the team's preparation efforts for an important home game against St. Louis and to paraphrase he said the following: "We have to get to competing and playing as a five-man unit as much as possible. When we move up and down the ice like that, we have the most success."

Very cool. Why?

It is something that I personally have preached and taught for many years - just haven't heard it from others to often. So to have it come out of a respected leader's (2014 Team Canada head coach) mouth like Mike Babcock - it feels good.

So, what exactly does it mean to be playing "as a five-person unit" and why is it important to strive to do so? Quite simply, what we are talking about is moving up and down the surface playing offensively or defensively in a traditional three forward and two defense-person alignment. You see, doing so gives any team the chance to play the highest potential degree of unified/elite-level play.

Again, why?

Primarily because playing in-concert with the four other players (actually "five" if you have an active and alert netminder that can both urgently pass/clear the puck accurately) on the ice allows for the FINEST hockey - in its purest sense - to be manufactured.

Specifically how?

Well, let's first discuss offense. If all five players are within a proximity that allows for inter-changing of positions at a moment's notice - some wonderful things can take place. Think about it for a moment, if you have two defenseman on the surface that have no qualms about jumping into the play and acting as pseudo-forwards (or vice-versa) then amazing puck-movement will occur. One only has to hearken back to the late 90's when legendary Detroit coach Scotty Bowman assembled the "Russian Five," (Vladimir Konstantinov, Slava Fetisov, Sergei Federov, Igor

Hockey Tips

written by:

Paul Lubanski



Hockey Tips is a column written by: **Paul Lubanski of Hockey Weekly**

Paul's company, "Wilderness Xtreme Sports" creates dynamic new takes on traditional sporting competition-visit www.wxsports.net for information.

HockeyWeekly.com

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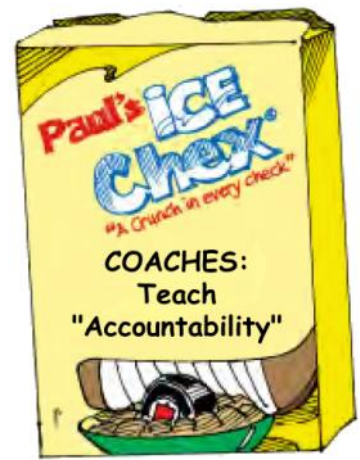
Larionov and Slava Kozlov) to secure a clear picture in your minds-eye of what I am referencing. Five players moving in-and-amongst each other (regardless of the zone) in awesome harmony and with a real, identifiable, scalable sense of purpose. Now - THAT was beautiful hockey as it was "meant" to be played and couldn't have been performed if the players weren't not in the "FPU" alignment/mode I reference.

Defensively - this is even easier. Five-players positioned strategically - all within clear eye-sight and EAR-shot allow for the required COMMUNICATION to take place that fosters switch-offs at a split-second notice. What results when executed efficiently - is a "smothering" effect of the opposition. A "blanketing" (eliminating their time and space through gap control) of any high-powered scoring machine can take place with the "support" created by this style. I have coined this the "SOS Technique" representing SUPPORT, OUTNUMBER and SMOTHER). If your goal is to win via defense-first, this is the way to do it. Always be reminded that when your team possesses the biscuit, you/they are actually playing offense and defense simultaneously - what a concept! What a bonus!

Best of luck.

BONUS TIP

You should also take the time to consider the "five-person unit" theme as it relates to a Power Play breakout. Why on earth would you want to try and stretch the defense with a north-south "bomb-breakout pass" to gain entry in an erratic/unbalanced fashion, when you can crash-in-unison with five players? That sort of trickery rarely results in sound possession and/or effective/efficient nor consistent zone-entry. Quite the contrary. So coaches, play the most intelligent, unselfish and tenacious five competitors on your roster and let them enter the offensive-zone with the simplicity of the "FPU" mindset. It will pay big dividends-trust me.



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AAU Mite-Squirt Qualifier Tournaments

This page will continue to be updated as additional Qualifiers become available.

Qualifying Tournaments have been announced from several AAU Hockey Districts and Regions.

Teams will be selected through a number of pathways including these remaining Qualifier Tournaments and through participation within various AAU sanctioned leagues throughout the United States.

<u>President's Cup</u>	Feb. 14-16, 2014	Tulsa, OK
<u>AAU Pacific Regional</u>	Feb. 14-17, 2014	Riverside, CA
<u>Cleveland Mite Shootout</u>	Feb. 22-23, 2014	N.Olmsted, OH

AAU National Ice Hockey Championships will be held from March 6-9, 2014 in Minneapolis-St.Paul, Minnesota. Mite teams and Squirt teams will compete within several competition level.

AAU State Championships Tournaments

This section will continue to be updated as additional Championships become available.

AAU 2014 Illinois State Championships February 14-16, 2014
Mites & Squirts @ greater Chicago, Illinois (exact location TBD)

AAU 2014 Colorado State Championships February 21-23, 2014
Mites & Squirts @ Denver, Colorado

AAU 2014 Michigan State Championships March 14-16, 2014
7U Open, Mite A and Mite B @ Farmington Hills, Michigan

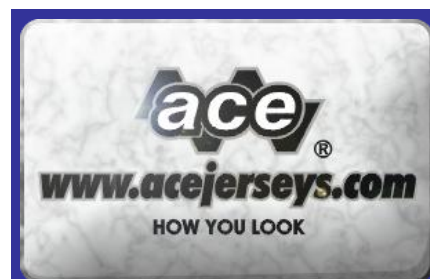


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Proud national sponsor of
AAU Hockey

AAU Mite-Squirt Leagues

This page will continue to be updated as additional league information becomes available.

8U Prep League

www.nsyf.org

Massachusetts. Offering opportunities at the 8U classification.

American Revolution (ARSS) www.americanrevolutionhockey.com

Louisiana, Oklahoma & Texas. Offering opportunities at the 8U through 18U classifications.

Choice League

www.minnesotamadehockey.com

Minnesota. Offering opportunities at the 8U through 12U classifications.

Canadian Independent (CIHF) www.cihfhockey.com

Ontario. Offering opportunities at the 6U through 18U classifications.

Eastern Amateur (EAHA)

www.eahahockey.org

Connecticut. Offering opportunities at the 8U through 12U classifications.

Empire Hockey League (EHL) www.empirehockeyleague.com

California & Nevada. Offering opportunities at the 6U through 8U classifications.

Greater Niagara (GNAHL)

www.eteamz.com/greatniagaraamateurhockeyleague

New York. Offering opportunities at the 6U through 10U classifications.

Hockey Colorado

www.hockeycolorado.org

Colorado & Wyoming. Offering opportunities at the 6U through 12U classifications.

Hockey Illinois

www.aauhockeyillinois.org

Illinois & Wisconsin. Offering opportunities at the 6U through 8U classifications.

Michigan Amateur (MAYHL)

www.mayhl.com

Michigan & Ohio. Offering opportunities at the 6U through 18U classifications.

New England (NEAHL)

www.neahl.org

Maine, Massachusetts & New Hampshire. Offering opportunities at the 6U through 18U classifications.

North East Hockey League

Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island & Vermont. Offering opportunities at the 6U through 18U classifications.

Redline Metros (RLAC)

www.rlacmetros.com

Maryland, Virginia & greater Washington DC. Offering opportunities at the 6U through 18U classifications.

Salt Lake County (SLCYHL)

www.youthhockey.slco.org

Utah. Offering opportunities at the 8U through 14U classifications.

Tulsa Jr Oilers

www.tulsajroilers.com

Oklahoma. Offering opportunities at the 6U through 10U classifications.



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www.aauicehockey.org

Scholastic

WNYHSCHL: www.eteamz.com/wnyhschl
Long Island, NY: www.longislandhshockey.net

Junior

MWJHL: www.mwjhl.com
NSHL: www.northernstateshockey.com
WSHL: www.wshl.org

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A single low cost AAU membership will provide benefits and opportunities for events in over 40 sports including:

