

THREE TIMES A CHARM

That's how the Hyper Canning Mudhogs felt this past weekend in Oakville at the Kelsey's Kup (July 9&10). The Niagara Horns or Kanata Kowboys or whatever name it is they choose to call themselves on that given weekend were and have been for some time, the challenge at hand for the Mudhogs.

The Hogs started the tournament on Saturday morning still looking to get their feet back under them and initiate some of the newest members to the Elite Squad. Matt Kerr, Jeff Wenter, Jon Zombeck and Kris Martin were called upon for this tournament and it was those players that would rise to the occasion in this opening game against the defending champions Synergy. Kerr would lead the way with a couple key goals and assists as the Jeff Wenter and Kris Martin played very strong defensively behind him. Let's not forget to mention that the Mudhogs were down 4-1 and would rally with about 6 minutes left to play to win the game 5-4.

Game two saw the Hyper Canning Mudhogs up against the Niagara Horns. This game would be a see saw battle that in the end would have the Niagara Horns coming out on top. But not without showing some bright spots for the Mudhogs as Aaron Hill would make some big saves in preparation for things to come.

Game three would bring an opponent from Pittsburgh that the Canning team would have their way with right from the get go. Jon Zombeck played a great defensive game in this one and would just narrowly miss notching a couple goals to go along with a solid all around effort.

Now through the round robin it was on to the semi-final against Synergy from Oakville, ON. This fast paced game would see both sides jockey for position but the strong horse from Canning would build a commanding lead and cruise to a 9-6 victory thanks to the great goaltending of Aaron Hill.

Finally onto the much anticipated final Hyper Canning vs. Niagara Horns. After some heated conversations in the round robin game between these two teams the final would not disappoint. This game would have the veterans leading the way with Jason Rupert, Mike Read, Justin Read, Brad Boakes, Warren Gallant and Brock Murray showing why they are the backbone of this team. Canning struck first and set the tone building a 4-1 lead. But as it is in many roller hockey games the tides can change very quickly. And so they did as the Horns tied the game at 4 and would look to take control. Not this time however as the Mudhogs never let them get close enough and would walk away with the win, redemption and a great deal of pride!

XMAS EVE CUP

When the winter months roll into town and bring in the holiday season there is one tradition that sticks out in all of the Mudhogs minds and that is the infamous X-Mas Eve Cup. This Christmas Eve will mark the 8th season of this Mudhog holiday tradition. Such a popular event for the group that it is even honoured in a painting that graces many of the Mudhog living rooms and offices today. This game of ball hockey is played at the old stomping grounds for the Mudhogs members, Gallant Gardens. It truly is a historic site for the team and I can say that on this one day of the year when we step on their to play this game I really feel like I am back where it all began over 10 years ago.

A TIME TO LOOK BACK

After years of practice, close calls, hardships, enemies, victories, and experience, the Canning Mudhogs Roller Hockey Organization illustrates an astounding accomplishment. We are now at a point of not just anticipating what tournament or event to be a part of, but to reflect on what we have been through as a group. How could this have been done? How could just a small, fun game of road hockey create such a strong organization and group of friends? These few questions seem to be taken for granted.

There is a great deal of pride and commitment within this organization and it is demonstrated at each and every event that the Canning Mudhogs participate in. As a professional organization we realize that nothing should come free. Many years of planning, dedication and straight up hard work is essential for any organization! Upon our up and coming 10-year anniversary, we will have had many triumphant victories and honorable defeats that reflect the character of the organization we have become. It has actually become a part of who we are today.

Furthermore, the Canning Mudhogs tradition isn't over yet. We will continue throughout the years to fight for the title of champion. We can now realize how lucky we are to have evolved with the people we have met throughout the years. Over time, we have all individually played a number of team sports, but not one could match up to this organization's strength. There is nothing better than getting together with the team to play inline roller hockey or any other sport that involves some type of competitive challenge. One thing is for sure within this organization. That is the lifelong friendships and unforgettable memories all made possible by the MUDHOGS. Now, it is up to you to come and experience the magic.

Warren Gallant

A TRIBUTE TO HYPER HOCKEY AND THE CANNING MUDHOGS

Over the past three years it has been a real honour to wear the Hyper name alongside our Canning Mudhog logo.

During this 10 year journey our team went many years without a sponsor and when you finally gain the recognition from one it's a real exciting moment.

Each tournament we participate in our team strives to make not only a lasting memory for the Mudhog Organization but also for Hyper Hockey.

The Hyper Canning Mudhogs would like to extend a big thank-you to Gus Sanchez of Hyper who has provided the team with impeccable service and dedication over the past three years.

So it is with great pleasure that we celebrate this 10 year Anniversary alongside Hyper Hockey. To show our appreciation we have added the Hyper logo to our 10 Year Anniversary Logo. We hope that this will be a relationship that continues on for years to come.

QUEST FOR GOLD

With the AGS League (Any Given Sunday) almost near its end the Mudhogs is gearing up to venture to Detroit once again. This coming Easter Weekend the boys will be looking forward to the challenge of yet another solid competitive tournament at the Joe Dumars Fieldhouse.

The Mudhogs hone their skills every Sunday at the North London Optimist Center. These are not just your typical pickup games. They are fast paced and intense bringing the best out of all the players. The games are just like game situations and help prepare them for the challenge they face at tournaments. Easter weekend will be another adventure filled with great times and memories to last a life time.

The Mudhogs will be looking to rise up to the challenge in the bronze division and take the gold. With finishing second last year at the Hyper Crusade the team can only get better and improve. The Hyper Canning Mudhogs will be sending yet again another solid team with each guy bringing something different to the table. All the different attributes that each guy brings will come into play at some point in the tournament. Teams will have a hard time trying to play the Hogs as they are not a one man team and any guy can burn you at any given time. Whether it's with blinding speed, digging in the corners, sweet hands, outlet passes, goalies standing on their heads or letting the boomer go(well except for me).

The Mudhogs are one team out to rise to any challenge they face and overcome it and hopefully come home with the gold. With each guy having each other's back the result will be golden for the Hyper Canning Mudhogs and leave the competition with a BLACK EYE.

By Jon Zombeck