

Season Five A Success

The fifth season of the CIRHL was filled with plenty of excitement and entertainment for all those that watched and played this great sport of Roller Hockey.

The league saw six teams take the floor for the second straight season and we also had some new faces brought in. The French Connection, the Lee brothers and another Payette thrown into the mix are just a few of the new faces.

We saw the Orangemen led by Brad Boakes and Todd Bowler jump out to a great start with White Lightning close behind challenging for first overall all season. We had the middle of the pack with the All Blacks and Maroon battling for third place and Teal Steel close behind. Rounding out the six teams was Mellow Yellow who seemed to be saving themselves for playoffs.

The top points race was filled with excitement as Mike Read and Brad Boakes exchanged places every other night. Rounding out the top five were Matt Comeau, Corey Payette, Mark Jennings and Aaron Plant.

The goal scoring race also was tight with Mike Read, Brad Boakes, Corey Payette and Matt Comeau all reaching the 50 goal mark. Honourable mentions to Jeff Wenter with 44 goals and Aaron Plant with 40 goals, both considered sleepers in the goal scoring race.

The goaltenders race was tight as well with Todd Gallant having the best GAA at 7.93. Not far behind was Darryl Dempsey at 8.20 followed by Chris Brown at 8.85 and Aaron Hill at 9.50.

As the playoffs rolled around the talk was all about who could beat the Orangemen. They had been the favourite since draft day. All teams had shown that they could beat them throughout the regular season, so anything was possible.

First round of playoffs would see the Orangemen and the White Lightning with a bye. That left the All Blacks vs Mellow Yellow, and Maroon Baboons vs Teal Steel. Mellow Yellow would get the first round underway and show why they were a team to be reckon with and defeat the All Blacks. Teal Steel with their captain back from injury would defeat the Maroon Baboons.

Second Round of the playoffs Yellow faced the Orangemen and came out firing in the first half but could not keep the momentum going and eventually fell to the Orangemen.

White Lightning vs Teal Steel would be an interesting game as the two teams battled back and forth. As the game continued the Lightning were just too strong on this night for Teal Steel.

The Finals were here and the two teams left standing was the Orangemen and White Lightning. Probably the most exciting game I have seen since the league began was played on the first night of the Finals. Game 1 saw these two teams go back and forth exchanging goals. Although White held the upper hand early on and through the second half Orange just kept coming and manage to get big goals when they needed them. This game is so much about momentum and you could just see Orange gaining more and more as the clocked ticked down. Still down by one with less than a minute White was trying to hang on but it was Orange that would manage to get the tying goal and send this game to OT.

Overtime was equally exciting and as Aaron Hill and I sat by and were hoping for the shoot-out Matt Comeau would be sent in on a break away. It was one of those breaks where the goalie thinks he can get to it but the skater is rushing at it equally as fast. On this day it would be Comeau's and he would beat Dempsey to the race for the ball and tuck it around the outstretched body of the helpless tender. As momentum carries all, it would carry the

Orangemen right through Game 2 and give the team their first Canning Cup. Congratulations Orangemen!

With the end of another successful season comes the planning of an even greater season in 2007. With that being said Four Season Sports, a company I am starting is developing a project to place an outdoor rink outside at the Green Lane Community Complex. It is an exciting adventure and one that will benefit the CIRHL and community leagues all around. I encourage you all to spread the word and be a part of this great adventure.

For those Mudhogs that have played the outdoor game, we all know there is nothing like it! The warm sun beating down, wind blowing through our hair or balding hair I should say. Truly it is something special and something I have dreamed about starting for many years. I thank you all for your support of the Canning Mudhogs Organization (CIRHL), and I look forward to many great successes ahead.

Brock Murray

A New “Hog” Way of Life

With the coming of the fall season, we see the dawn of a new Mudhogs season. The CIRHL has drawn to a close, with a new champion crowned at the yearend banquet on August 29th. The fall brings with it anticipation of the Hog Life events which take place, along with a new tournament season.

September 9th is the start of another Any Given Sunday season. Players will congregate again at “church”; only this church is the Woodman Park Recreation Centre in Brantford. There the teams will be split, and the ball will drop on another 20 weeks of indoor fun, culminating in the 2-on-2 Ironman Tournament which will take place in early March, 2008. October brings not only one, but two Hog Life events. On Saturday, October 7th, the Mudhogs will flock to Gallant Gardens for the annual fall rite of passage known as the Hog Bowl. After spending some time sweeping away the fallen leaves and lining the field with shirts, jackets, hats and boots, practically anything that can be used as a sideline marker, the pigskin will be kicked off. Following the game this year, the guys will march back to Paris, glorious in triumph (or agonizing in both pain and defeat) and enjoy their well deserved post-game party.

The next weekend is not necessarily a “Hog Life” event as per the big four, but it is a big event in the life of a long time Mudhog. October 13th is the day that Brad and Melissa say “I do”. Congratulations to the both of you.

Saturday, October 20th is the date set for the Canning Classic. Due to the non-existence of the famed Woodstock Meadows, this year’s Classic is set to get underway at the Paris Golf and Country Club. Again, following a day on the links, refreshments will be enjoyed by all, along with swapping stories and sharing memories.

Monday, December 24th is the 9th incarnation of the Xmas Eve Classic. With the numbers that this event has drawn over the years, it looks as if this event is going to have to start earlier in the day than previously, just to ensure that all of the games are played before dark. It is anticipated that the 2007 edition will be the largest yet, with up to 8 4-man teams taking part.

In addition to the hog Life events taking place this fall, the Mudhogs will travel to Utica to try and regain their title of champion at the Tour Cup, November 23rd-25th. Good luck to all members attending. You'll make the organization proud.

Mudhogs take 3rd at the Oakville Waterfront Tournament

On June 22nd, the Canning Mudhogs again travelled to Oakville to participate in the Al Lee Waterfront Memorial Tournament. This year the team was looking forward to a high finish, having been disappointed in 2006 with a loss in the finals to the Windsor Spiders. The team started off with a win over the Tour Oakville Coyotes – Black on Friday night. After falling behind 4-1 at the 17 second mark of the second half, the team roared back led by 2 goals from Todd (Tedd?) Bowler and 2 more from Brock Murray, helping the Mudhogs edge out the Coyotes by a final of 5-4.

Saturday saw the Mudhogs face the Tour Oakville Coyotes – Red, which was a much different game. Again the guys fell behind 4-1 by halfway through the first half, but by half time had pulled back to a 6-3 margin. However, Oakville – Black was just a very strong team, and the guys were unable to match their scoring. The final in that game was 12-5. Saturday night was to be the Mudhogs chance at redemption for the loss to the Windsor Spiders in the 2006 tournament, however Windsor had lost their first two games by a combined score of 21-4, and had decided to just call it a weekend and go home. The victory, although it counted as one due to forfeit, was not as sweet as beating the team outright would have been.

Sunday the Mudhogs faced off against the Tour Oakville Coyotes – Black again, this time in semifinal action. The winner would go on to play Tour Oakville Coyotes – Red, who had a bye into the final thanks to the Spiders no-showing. Again the Mudhogs fell behind, and again they tried valiantly to claw their way back into the game. Trailing 3-2 at halftime, and falling behind 5-2 by the 4:33 mark of the second half, the Mudhogs led by their player of the game Brad Boakes tried and tried to get back into the game, but could not overtake the strength of the lead that Coyotes – Black had, and ended up losing 6-5. Unfortunately that proved to be the fatal blow to the Mudhogs team, and they were eliminated from the tournament.

Statistics wise, it was a good tournament for many of the players, however. Game 1 saw Brock Murray, Todd Bowler and Mike Read each record two points. In game 2, Sam Goodfellow showed some flash, notching a pair of goals as well as an assist, and game 4 saw Brad Boakes with a pair each of goals and assists.

Congratulations guys, and better luck next time.

The Hogs Den – redesigned (again)

In a never ending attempt to ensure that thehogsden looks as professional as possible, the site has been completely redesigned from the bottom up. Gone are all the confusing links to try and figure out what is on which page, etc. Added is an interactive photo gallery, a more streamlined navigation system, and a cleaner, sleeker look.

Since you are reading this article, you have obviously figured out a number of things:

- a. That the site has been redesigned

- b. How to find the news articles; and
- c. That you require Adobe Acrobat Reader to read all of the news articles available

We hope that you will find that these are improvements to the site, making your visit to thehogsden that much more enjoyable. The website is the site of all the Mudhogs however, and so we extend to you an invitation to contribute. There are numerous ways to help out and make the site what you would like it to be. You could send an email with an idea, send along some photographs (either in digital format, or give them to Duke or Brock to be scanned if they are physical photographs on paper), keep your own column in the blog, and advertise, advertise, advertise. We want word of mouth to help spread the message that thehogsden is back and looking for contributions.

Most of all, we invite you to critique the site. Let us know what you honestly think. Saying "good job – looks great" is nice, and we appreciate the comments, but adding something like "if you add a Microsoft Word version of the news articles, I would find it easier to read" is the kind of stuff we are looking for.

All comments regarding the website can be sent to comments@thehogsden.com

Mudhogs Take Home Silver

The latest installment of the Canning Mudhogs takes place in Utica Michigan in the hotbed of Roller Hockey at the Joe Dumars Fieldhouse for the Tour Cup. The Fieldhouse is home to some talented Roller Hockey teams many of which play 12 months of the year. These teams have the same passion for roller hockey that we Canadians show for our favourite past time ice hockey.

The Mudhogs playing in a higher division would be short handed in their first game Friday night with two players on the side line. One held up at the border and the other sick with a flu bug. This would prove costly and they lost their first game 9-4. The second game Saturday morning the full roster would be back in action and the team won that game by a close margin of 5-4. The final game of the Round Robin the team would take an early penalty and get themselves into a hole and lose a close one 4-3.

Playoffs were scheduled for Saturday night. After a healthy team dinner and some well needed pre-game naps the team was set for their 11pm match-up which they won 6-2. This was the team's best game of the tourney which they played both ends of the floor near perfectly. Next game the finals Sunday at 2:45pm...

As the Mudhogs have done many times in the past they were back in the Finals. This game would watch the team build a 4-1 lead heading into the third period. It was in that period that something strange happened which can best be described as the Maple Leaf bug. Instead of playing to win the team found themselves playing not to lose. Slowly their opponents would sneak back into the game and tie the game at 4. What could be looked at as a home team call the team from Detroit would find themselves with a two man advantage heading into OT.

A four on two is a tough place to be in and the Mudhogs would give it their all but eventually succumb to their disadvantage. A 5-4 loss and the Mudhogs would take home the Silver - a great accomplishment and something to build upon for March when the team returns to play in the Hyper Nation Tourney.

Members of the team were Mike Read, Todd Bowler, Brad Boakes, Jason Rupert, Duke Rupert, Curtis Brown, Brock Murray, Jeff Wenter and goaltender Aaron Hill.

9th Annual Xmas Eve Cup

The 9th Annual X-Mas Eve Cup will go down in the record books as one of the coldest. But that did not stop it from bringing out 19 players and 3 goalies making it the biggest turnout for this event to date! Six teams, one round with all teams making the playoffs set the stage for some great hockey with lots of excitement. The highlight of the tourney came when Chad Johnson scored 3 goals in less than a minute. The final saw Team Katt Merr face-off against Team Read. Captain Skeeter would lead his team to the win bringing his first win at the X-Mas Eve Cup. Justin Read would win his 5th and Kevin Lee his 2nd with goaltender Todd Gallant between the pipes.

Special thanks to Sara Murray for the great food after the game!