

**Agenda**  
**St. Clair Shores City Council Study Session Meeting**  
**Monday, March 14, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.**  
**Municipal Building, 27600 Jefferson Circle Drive, St. Clair Shores, MI 48081**  
**(586) 447-3303**

The agenda will be as follows:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Audience Participation on agenda items (2 minute time limit)  
[Submit form to City Clerk prior to start of meeting]
3. Minor League Hockey at Civic Arena
4. Discuss LED lights on businesses
5. Audience Participation (5 minute time limit) *"The Views and Opinions Expressed Under Audience Participation are those of the Individual Citizen Only and Do Not Necessarily Represent the Views and Opinions of the Mayor, City Council or Administration of the City of St. Clair Shores."*
6. Adjournment

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Individuals with disabilities or impairments who plan to attend this meeting need to contact the City Clerk's office at (586) 447-3303 or via Michigan Relay Center at (800) 649-3777 (771 from TTY) if auxiliary aides or services are needed. Anyone requesting items to be placed on the agenda must submit the request in writing to the City Clerk (12) days prior to the meeting.

Published: 3/9/2016  
Posted: March 4, 2016

To: Mayor Walby and City Council Members

From: Gina Rheaume, Recreation Sports Manager

CC: Mike Smith, City Manager  
Greg Esler, Parks and Recreation Director

Date: March 11, 2016

Re: Study Session-Minor League Hockey at Civic Arena

We are seeking approval to bring a Federal Hockey Semi-Pro Team to the City of St. Clair Shores and Civic Arena for the 2016-2017 hockey season. The logistics of game times, practices and off ice needs can be met, with no displacement of current renters. As outlined, games would be played at Civic Arena on Sunday afternoons at 4:30 p.m. and Friday evenings at 7:30 p.m. Game ice times will be played on sheets that St. Clair Shores Hockey was negotiating to return to the arena as non-usable, therefore the purchase of this ice time will not generate "new" revenue. Practice times have been outlined on ice that is not currently being used. This will result in additional new revenue of approximately \$25,000 annually. The team is seeking a five year agreement to establish themselves within the community. In addition the St. Clair Shores Hockey Association has agreed to purchase an additional \$27,000 annually of spring ice that will generate revenue that has previously not been used for spring for the 2016 and 2017 seasons.

The team is in need of a dedicated locker room to leave their equipment on site, beer sales to generate ticket sales, hard-wired internet to stream games live and for video review. The fitness room will be used for off-ice conditioning during morning practices in exchange for fitness equipment upgrades or a nominal fee.

In an effort to accomplish the above requests, we are proposing the following plan of action:

St. Clair Shores Hockey Association is presenting a \$247,000.00 locker room plan that will build out four locker rooms in the west side of the Gardens Arena. The hockey association will currently commit \$197,000.00 to the project immediately breaking ground with completion date September 1, 2016. Further, the St. Clair Shores Hockey Association is requesting a reduced hourly rate for spring ice sessions in 2016 and 2017 in the amount of \$25,000 each year. Federal Expansion Team agrees to partner on this project in the amount of \$50,000, \$25,000 in 2016 and 2017 in exchange for ice time. The City of St. Clair Shores will purchase project materials in a sum of \$50,000 through the normal purchasing policy.

The St. Clair Shores Concession Company is seeking a joint liquor license with the City of St. Clair Shores for 36 Federal Hockey home games and up to 10 special events where the participants on the ice are over the age of 18. These would include restricted special events approved by the City Manager, and the Recreation Sports Manager; such events might include a Red Wing Alumni game and or future events to be planned at the St. Clair Shores Civic Arena.

The enclosed packet is filled with information pertinent to bringing the Federal Hockey Team to the City of St. Clair Shores with the probability of enjoyable, fair priced, family entertainment and allows for much needed improvements that will last for future generations.

Federal Hockey League  
2016-2017



at

St. Clair Shores Civic Arena

**Federal semi-pro team to SCS Civic Arena September 2016-2017**

Federal Hockey.Com Schedules, media, sponsors and information

Expansion Franchise granted to move to SCS contingent on agreement

Current League in operation 6 years-8 teams will be in division with SCS

Danville Dashers-IL

Port Huron Prowlers-MI

Berlin River Drivers-NH

Danbury Titans-CT

Watertown Wolves-NY

Dayton Demolition-OH

Brewster Bulldogs-NY

\*TBD-St. Clair Shores-MI

\* Discussions on Naming within the community

**Brandon Contratta Associate Head Coach & General Manager**

**Dave Debol Associate Head Coach & Team President**

**Mike Kolarik Recruiter and LLC Franchise Holder**

**Ken Thomas Director of 3 Junior A Teams-GMHL Jr. A Tier II**

Greater Metro Hockey League Jr. A Tier II Teams Already under Ownership of the above group

Parry Sound Islanders

Seguin Huskies

Kingsville Kings

67 Call Ups to the NHL from these programs

Average ticket price \$10-\$12

Average attendance 320-400 to break even

Brewster lowest attendance at 300

Port Huron attendance at 920

Dayton attendance at 980

3-5 years to gain and maintain a fan based - contract discussions 5 years

Local Players drafted to increase fan base and attendance

Local Players will be housed in St. Clair Shores

18 players on the roster

Marketing Plan

Sr. Night, High School Night, Pay what you Can Night, Police/Fire Night

Armed Forces Night, SCS Youth Hockey Night etc

\$350,000 brought into the community in food/shopping in 27-36 home games

Commitment from SCSHA Youth Hockey to partner with team

Team will do free summer camp Skate w/Santa and public sessions





# FEDERAL HOCKEY LEAGUE

## Directory



**Berlin River Drivers**

15 Hillside Ave  
Berlin, NH 03570  
(603) 752-4100

info@riverdrivershockey.com  
Website

Roster  
Tickets  
Facebook  
Twitter



**Brewster Bulldogs**

63 Fields Lane  
Brewster, NY 10509  
(845) 302-0077

info@brewsterbulldogshockey.com  
Website

Roster  
Tickets  
Facebook  
Twitter



**Danbury Titans**

1 Independence Way  
Danbury, CT 06810  
(203) 942-2003

info@danburytitans.com  
Website

Roster  
Tickets  
Facebook  
Twitter



**Danville Dashers**

100 W Main St  
Danville, IL 61832  
(217) 474-2511

info@danvilledashers.com  
Website

Roster  
Tickets  
Facebook  
Twitter



**Dayton Demolition**

1001 Shiloh Springs Rd  
Dayton, Ohio 45415  
(937) 985-9143

info@demolitionhockey.com  
Website

Roster  
Tickets  
Facebook  
Twitter



**Port Huron Prowlers**

701 McMorrin Blvd  
Port Huron MI, 48060  
(810) 966-0396

info@porthuronhockey.com  
Website

Roster  
Tickets  
Facebook  
Twitter

## RECENT HEADLINES

- Tyler Gjurich Named Pro Hockey News Player of the Month
- Donovan Named Pro Hockey News Goaltender of the Month
- Scordia Named Pro Hockey News Rookie of the Month
- Danbury Titans Acquire Henderson from Dayton
- Dayton's Vanwynsberghe Named Sons of Hockey Star of the Week
- Dashers Fall to Demolition in Weekend Finally
- Alex Vazzano Earns Return to Reading
- Dashers Survive Late Surge by Demolition
- Turgeon Gets Call to Evansville
- McGrath Shines in Win Over River Drivers



# FEDERAL HOCKEY LEAGUE

G+1

## LEAGUE ATTENDANCE

TEAM	YESTERDAY	TOTAL	Games	AVERAGE
Danville		25,599	24	1,066
Port Huron		21,159	20	1,057
Dayton		15,681	20	784
Danbury		12,839	18	713
Berlin		11,331	20	566
Brewster		5,207	21	247
	TOTALS:	91,816	123	746

POWERED BY 

## Port Huron welcomes new hockey team

Joseph Hayes, Times Herald 7:28 p.m. EDT April 2, 2015



Buy Photo

(Photo: JEFFREY M. SMITH / TIMES HERALD)

Welcome back to Port Huron, professional hockey.

A steady stream of onlookers flowed into the McMorrان Memorial Room Thursday as Port Huron's newest professional hockey franchise was announced.

A feeling of excitement could be felt in the air as new owner Barry Soskin, 57, of Arlington Heights, IL; spoke of his vision and new five year agreement with McMorrان Arena to bring a Federal Hockey League team to Port Huron.

"I didn't want to go into a market and have the fans think we were going to be 1-and-done," said Soskin, who owns a sporting goods store and gun range in Illinois. "They proposed a three year lease — I wanted to show people that I plan on being here for a while and a five year lease was the minimum I wanted to deal with."

In the next month, Soskin said he hopes to name the team and also find a coach to run it. At the team's new website [www.porthuronhockey.com](http://www.porthuronhockey.com) you can submit your own suggestions for what the team should be called.

The Port Huron team will be the third team Soskin owns in the FHL. In addition to the new Port Huron franchise, Soskin also owns the Danville Dashers and the Dayton Demonz.

The FHL played a neutral site game at McMorrان on Jan. 31 that drew over 1,700 fans featuring Danville and the Danbury Whalers. The fan support stemming from the game excited the FHL and allowed commissioner Don Kirnan to really hone in on Port Huron.

He hopes to see his league expand to seven or eight teams by October, when the 56 game season begins.

"This is an owner that has owned professional teams for 20 years," said Kirnan, who started the league in 2009. "Most situations that don't last very long are with inexperienced ownership."

"We have done select games in four or five places to try to gauge community interest. Obviously it was a win for everyone here. We were delighted with what was here and it worked out very well."

McMorrان General Manager Rob Churchill helped secure the deal after Port Huron went without a hockey team this past season for the first time since 1995. The FHL however will be somewhat different from the North American Hockey League.

The league will feature young veterans that are already removed from playing juniors and college hockey and could be overall, more well rounded players.

"This owner has been around 25 years in this game," Churchill said. "He understands the value of entertainment. In the past, it was just a hockey game. We need the entertainment that goes with it."

"I definitely think the federal hockey league is a rough, tough type league. We kind of knew that minor professional hockey was the route we wanted to go. In the past pro hockey teams had a lot of older guys. You will see a lot of young guys."

Contact Joseph Hayes at (810) 989-6268 or at [jahayes@gannett.com](mailto:jahayes@gannett.com). Follow him on twitter @jhayes1136.

Read or Share this story: <http://bwne.ws/1Vubh0>

2015-2016  
SAMPLE Schedule

### Federal Hockey League Schedule

All times Eastern

November 6, 2015	Port Huron Prowlers 4 at Dayton Demolition 3	Final (SO)
November 6, 2015	Danbury Titans 6 at Brewster Bulldogs 1	Final
November 6, 2015	Berlin River Drivers 2 at Danville Dashers 4	Final
November 7, 2015	Berlin River Drivers 5 at Dayton Demolition 7	Final
November 7, 2015	Danville Dashers 6 at Port Huron Prowlers 0	Final
November 7, 2015	Brewster Bulldogs 6 at Danbury Titans 5	Final
November 8, 2015	Berlin River Drivers 9 at Port Huron Prowlers 8	Final
November 13, 2015	Dayton Demolition 2 at Port Huron Prowlers 11	Final
November 13, 2015	Danville Dashers 6 at Brewster Bulldogs 2	Final
November 14, 2015	Danville Dashers 6 at Berlin River Drivers 3	Final
November 14, 2015	Dayton Demolition 6 at Port Huron Prowlers 7	Final (OT)
November 14, 2015	Danbury Titans 3 at Brewster Bulldogs 4	Final (OT)
November 15, 2015	Danbury Titans 5 at Berlin River Drivers 2	Final
November 20, 2015	Port Huron Prowlers 6 at Dayton Demolition 0	Final
November 20, 2015	Brewster Bulldogs 1 at Danville Dashers 4	Final
November 21, 2015	Brewster Bulldogs 2 at Dayton Demolition 6	Final
November 21, 2015	Berlin River Drivers 2 at Danbury Titans 6	Final
November 21, 2015	Port Huron Prowlers 3 at Danville Dashers 1	Final
November 22, 2015	Brewster Bulldogs 2 at Danbury Titans 8	Final
November 22, 2015	Dayton Demolition 1 at Danville Dashers 3	Final
November 25, 2015	Danbury Titans 4 at Berlin River Drivers 3	Final (OT)
November 25, 2015	Port Huron Prowlers 1 at Danville Dashers 2	Final
November 27, 2015	Danville Dashers 2 at Dayton Demolition 1	Final (OT)
November 27, 2015	Danbury Titans 3 at Port Huron Prowlers 6	Final
November 27, 2015	Berlin River Drivers 6 at Brewster Bulldogs 5	Final (OT)
November 28, 2015	Brewster Bulldogs 5 at Berlin River Drivers 9	Final
November 28, 2015	Danbury Titans 4 at Danville Dashers 2	Final
November 29, 2015	Dayton Demolition 4 at Brewster Bulldogs 3	Final (SO)
November 29, 2015	Danbury Titans 6 at Danville Dashers 5	Final
December 4, 2015	Port Huron Prowlers 5 at Berlin River Drivers 8	Final
December 4, 2015	Brewster Bulldogs 3 at Dayton Demolition 2	Final
December 4, 2015	Danville Dashers 0 at Danbury Titans 5	Final
December 5, 2015	Danville Dashers 5 at Berlin River Drivers 4	Final (SO)
December 5, 2015	Brewster Bulldogs 5 at Dayton Demolition 8	Final
December 5, 2015	Port Huron Prowlers 6 at Danbury Titans 5	Final
December 10, 2015	Brewster Bulldogs 4 at Danbury Titans 3	Final
December 10, 2015	Berlin River Drivers 4 at Danville Dashers 5	Final
December 11, 2015	Berlin River Drivers 3 at Port Huron Prowlers 5	Final
December 11, 2015	Danbury Titans 11 at Brewster Bulldogs 3	Final
December 11, 2015	Dayton Demolition 3 at Danville Dashers 8	Final
December 12, 2015	Port Huron Prowlers 6 at Berlin River Drivers 1	Final
December 12, 2015	Brewster Bulldogs 1 at Danbury Titans 6	Final
December 12, 2015	Dayton Demolition 3 at Danville Dashers 5	Final
December 13, 2015	Port Huron Prowlers 6 at Brewster Bulldogs 3	Final
December 17, 2015	Port Huron Prowlers 6 at Dayton Demolition 4	Final
December 18, 2015	Berlin River Drivers 4 at Dayton Demolition 7	Final
December 18, 2015	Danville Dashers 9 at Brewster Bulldogs 6	Final
December 19, 2015	Berlin River Drivers 2 at Port Huron Prowlers 5	Final
December 19, 2015	Danville Dashers 6 at Danbury Titans 3	Final
December 20, 2015	Port Huron Prowlers 6 at Dayton Demolition 5	Final
December 20, 2015	Danbury Titans 3 at Brewster Bulldogs 2	Final (SO)
December 23, 2015	Port Huron Prowlers 4 at Danville Dashers 6	Final
December 26, 2015	Brewster Bulldogs 6 at Berlin River Drivers 5	Final (OT)
December 26, 2015	Danville Dashers 3 at Port Huron Prowlers 0	Final
December 26, 2015	Danbury Titans at Dayton Demolition	Ppd.
December 27, 2015	Brewster Bulldogs 5 at Berlin River Drivers 7	Final
December 27, 2015	Danbury Titans 6 at Danville Dashers 2	Final
December 28, 2015	Danbury Titans 5 at Danville Dashers 3	Final
December 29, 2015	Port Huron Prowlers at Berlin River Drivers	Ppd.
December 30, 2015	Danbury Titans 2 at Berlin River Drivers 3	Final
December 30, 2015	Port Huron Prowlers 5 at Brewster Bulldogs 1	Final
December 30, 2015	Dayton Demolition 0 at Danville Dashers 5	Final
December 31, 2015	Dayton Demolition 5 at Port Huron Prowlers 7	Final
January 1, 2016	Danville Dashers 2 at Dayton Demolition 0	Final
January 1, 2016	Berlin River Drivers 7 at Brewster Bulldogs 3	Final
January 2, 2016	Danbury Titans 7 at Berlin River Drivers 1	Final
January 2, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs 3 at Port Huron Prowlers 7	Final
January 2, 2016	Dayton Demolition 1 at Danville Dashers 6	Final
January 3, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs 2 at Danville Dashers 5	Final
January 8, 2016	Danville Dashers 6 at Berlin River Drivers 5	Final (OT)
January 8, 2016	Danbury Titans 2 at Brewster Bulldogs 3	Final
January 9, 2016	Berlin River Drivers 3 at Brewster Bulldogs 5	Final

**2015-2016  
SAMPLE Schedule**

January 9, 2016	Danville Dashers 4 at Danbury Titans 2	Final
January 9, 2016	Dayton Demolition 2 at Port Huron Prowlers 4	Final
January 14, 2016	Danville Dashers 3 at Danbury Titans 5	Final
January 15, 2016	Danbury Titans 9 at Berlin River Drivers 5	Final
January 15, 2016	Dayton Demolition 2 at Port Huron Prowlers 6	Final
January 15, 2016	Danville Dashers 5 at Brewster Bulldogs 4	Final
January 16, 2016	Dayton Demolition 3 at Port Huron Prowlers 4	Final
January 16, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs 3 at Danbury Titans 4	Final (SO)
January 16, 2016	Berlin River Drivers at Brewster Bulldogs	Ppd.
January 17, 2016	Danville Dashers 5 at Brewster Bulldogs 6	Final (SO)
January 17, 2016	Berlin River Drivers 3 at Danbury Titans 4	Final
January 21, 2016	Danville Dashers 1 at Dayton Demolition 3	00:00 1st
January 22, 2016	Danbury Titans 2 at Brewster Bulldogs 5	Final
January 23, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs 3 at Berlin River Drivers 4	Final (OT)
January 23, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers 2 at Danbury Titans 3	Final
January 24, 2016	Danville Dashers 2 at Dayton Demolition 3	Final (OT)
January 26, 2016	Danbury Titans 5 at Dayton Demolition 4	Final
January 26, 2016	Berlin River Drivers 3 at Port Huron Prowlers 5	Final
January 29, 2016	Berlin River Drivers 5 at Dayton Demolition 1	Final
January 29, 2016	Danbury Titans 2 at Port Huron Prowlers 4	Final
January 30, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers 5 at Dayton Demolition 3	Final
January 30, 2016	Danbury Titans 7 at Brewster Bulldogs 6	Final
January 30, 2016	Berlin River Drivers 3 at Danville Dashers 6	Final
January 31, 2016	Dayton Demolition 5 at Port Huron Prowlers 3	Final
February 4, 2016	Berlin River Drivers 7 at Danbury Titans 6	Final (SO)
February 5, 2016	Danbury Titans 6 at Berlin River Drivers 9	Final
February 5, 2016	Danville Dashers 5 at Dayton Demolition 7	Final
February 5, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers 2 at Brewster Bulldogs 6	Final
February 6, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs 6 at Berlin River Drivers 7	Final (SO)
February 6, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers 4 at Danbury Titans 5	Final
February 6, 2016	Dayton Demolition 5 at Danville Dashers 2	Final
February 11, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers 3 at Danville Dashers 6	Final
February 12, 2016	Dayton Demolition 5 at Berlin River Drivers 7	Final
February 12, 2016	Danville Dashers 2 at Port Huron Prowlers 3	Final (SO)
February 12, 2016	Danbury Titans 5 at Brewster Bulldogs 3	Final
February 13, 2016	Dayton Demolition 3 at Berlin River Drivers 4	Final
February 13, 2016	Danville Dashers 2 at Port Huron Prowlers 5	Final
February 13, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs 1 at Danbury Titans 7	Final
February 14, 2016	Dayton Demolition 6 at Danbury Titans 11	Final
February 15, 2016	Dayton Demolition 4 at Brewster Bulldogs 6	Final
February 18, 2016	Danbury Titans 6 at Port Huron Prowlers 5	Final (OT)
February 19, 2016	Danbury Titans 5 at Port Huron Prowlers 5	Final (OT)
February 19, 2016	Berlin River Drivers 6 at Brewster Bulldogs 4	Final
February 20, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs 2 at Berlin River Drivers 3	Final
February 20, 2016	Danbury Titans 4 at Dayton Demolition 5	Final
February 20, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers 4 at Danville Dashers 8	Final
February 21, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs 6 at Berlin River Drivers 11	Final
February 21, 2016	Danbury Titans 4 at Dayton Demolition 2	Final
February 21, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers 3 at Danville Dashers 7	Final
February 25, 2016	Berlin River Drivers at Dayton Demolition	7:30 p.m.
February 26, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs at Danbury Titans	7:35 p.m.
February 26, 2016	Berlin River Drivers at Danville Dashers	8:00 p.m.
February 27, 2016	Dayton Demolition at Danville Dashers	8:00 p.m.
February 28, 2016	Dayton Demolition at Danville Dashers	8:00 p.m.
March 4, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers at Dayton Demolition	7:30 p.m.
March 4, 2016	Danville Dashers at Berlin River Drivers	7:30 p.m.
March 4, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs at Danbury Titans	7:35 p.m.
March 5, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers at Dayton Demolition	7:30 p.m.
March 5, 2016	Danville Dashers at Brewster Bulldogs	7:35 p.m.
March 6, 2016	Berlin River Drivers at Danbury Titans	8:05 p.m.
March 10, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs at Port Huron Prowlers	7:30 p.m.
March 11, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs at Port Huron Prowlers	7:30 p.m.
March 11, 2016	Dayton Demolition at Berlin River Drivers	7:30 p.m.
March 12, 2016	Dayton Demolition at Danbury Titans	7:35 p.m.
March 12, 2016	Berlin River Drivers at Brewster Bulldogs	7:35 p.m.
March 12, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers at Danville Dashers	8:00 p.m.
March 13, 2016	Dayton Demolition at Brewster Bulldogs	8:05 p.m.
March 13, 2016	Berlin River Drivers at Danbury Titans	8:05 p.m.
March 13, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers at Danville Dashers	8:00 p.m.
March 17, 2016	Dayton Demolition at Port Huron Prowlers	7:30 p.m.
March 18, 2016	Danville Dashers at Dayton Demolition	7:30 p.m.
March 18, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers at Brewster Bulldogs	7:35 p.m.
March 18, 2016	Berlin River Drivers at Danbury Titans	7:35 p.m.
March 19, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs at Berlin River Drivers	7:00 p.m.
March 19, 2016	Danville Dashers at Dayton Demolition	7:30 p.m.
March 19, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers at Danbury Titans	7:35 p.m.

**2015-2016  
SAMPLE Schedule**

March 20, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers at Berlin River Drivers	2:00 p.m.
March 24, 2016	Port Huron Prowlers at Dayton Demolition	7:30 p.m.
March 25, 2016	Danville Dashers at Port Huron Prowlers	7:30 p.m.
March 25, 2016	Dayton Demolition at Danbury Titans	7:35 p.m.
March 25, 2016	Berlin River Drivers at Brewster Bulldogs	7:35 p.m.
March 26, 2016	Dayton Demolition at Berlin River Drivers	7:00 p.m.
March 26, 2016	Danville Dashers at Port Huron Prowlers	7:30 p.m.
March 26, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs at Danbury Titans	7:35 p.m.
March 27, 2016	Berlin River Drivers at Danbury Titans	5:05 p.m.
March 31, 2016	Danville Dashers at Dayton Demolition	7:30 p.m.
March 31, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs at Port Huron Prowlers	7:30 p.m.
April 1, 2016	Berlin River Drivers at Danbury Titans	7:35 p.m.
April 1, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs at Danville Dashers	8:00 p.m.
April 2, 2016	Danbury Titans at Berlin River Drivers	7:00 p.m.
April 2, 2016	Dayton Demolition at Port Huron Prowlers	7:30 p.m.
April 2, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs at Danville Dashers	8:00 p.m.
April 3, 2016	Danbury Titans at Berlin River Drivers	2:05 p.m.
April 3, 2016	Danville Dashers at Port Huron Prowlers	3:00 p.m.
April 3, 2016	Brewster Bulldogs at Dayton Demolition	5:00 p.m.
April 4, 2016	Berlin River Drivers at Brewster Bulldogs	

**Federal Hockey Schedule**

2016-2017

1	8:00pm	Friday	November 4th 2016	
2	4:30pm	Sunday	November 6th 2016	
3		Friday	November 11th 2016	
4		Sunday	November 13th 2016	
5		Friday	November 18th 2016	
6		Sunday	November 20th 2016	
		Friday	November 25 2016	Thanksgiving Tourney
		Sunday	November 27 2016	Thanksgiving Tourney
7		Friday	December 2nd 2016	Silversticks
8		Sunday	December 4th 2016	Silversticks
9		Friday	December 9th 2016	Silversticks
10		Sunday	December 11th 2016	Silversticks
11		Friday	December 16th 2016	
12		Sunday	December 18th 2016	
		Friday	December 23 2016	
		Sunday	Dececeber 25 2016	Closed
		Friday	December 30 2016	
		Sunday	January 1 2017	Closed
13		Friday	January 6th 2017	
14		Sunday	January 8th 2017	
15		Friday	January 13th 2017	
16		Sunday	January 15th 2017	
		Friday	January 20 2017	Silversticks
		Sunday	January 22 2017	Silversticks
17		Friday	January 27 2017	
18		Sunday	January 29 2017	
19		Friday	February 3rd 2017	
		Sunday	February 5th 2017	Superbowl
20		Friday	Feburly 10th 2017	
21		Sunday	February 12th 2017	
22		Friday	February 17th 2017	
23		Sunday	February 19th 2017	
24		Friday	February 24th 2017	
25		Sunday	February 26th 2017	
26		Friday	March 3rd 2017	2016 MHSAA Regional
27		Sunday	March 5th 2017	
28		Friday	March 10th 2017	
29		Sunday	March 12th 2017	Super Sunday
30		Friday	March 17th 2017	Ice Show
31		Sunday	March 19th 2017	Ice Show
32		Friday	March 24th 2017	
33		Sunday	March 26th 2017	
34		Friday	March 31st 2017	
35		Sunday	April 2nd 2017	

**35 Dates to play 27 games**

Silver Stick Dates TBD

## Agreement proposal

This agreement is between the city of St. Clair Shores, Michigan (the "Arena") and --- Elite Hockey Enterprise LTD and is dated this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2016.

Elite Hockey Enterprise LTD, owner of 3 Jr. A hockey clubs, Parry Sound Islanders, Seguin Huskies and Kingsville Kings, is looking into purchasing an expansion professional hockey team playing in Federal Hockey League and would like to spend their next 5+ seasons in St. Clair Shores, using the Civic Arena as their home rink, starting October 2016. This contract would approximately bring in \$175,000 in arena ice rental revenues during this period and additional \$200,000+ a year for the community in form of:

- rent money spent by the team to house the players \$21,000 {12 - 14 out of town players, 3 houses, 7 months}
- bus rental \$30,000
- wages to local coaches, trainers and EQM \$10,000
- timekeepers, game staff salaries \$5,000
- use of local services: skate sharpening, gym rentals, lawyers an accounting services, bank services etc. \$15,000
- players spending money - groceries, restaurants, gas, entertainment etc. \$52,000 (15 players, \$125 per week per player for 7 months)
- team's/player's guests, parents - local hotels, restaurants etc. \$10,000 (\$500 per player per season on average)
- out of town staff rent, groceries, restaurants, entertainment: \$21,000 {3 staff members - \$1000 a month for 7 months}
- hospital, doctor's fees – \$20,000

The team would like to pay The Arena \$10,000 up front, and The Arena deducts The Team's monthly expenses as approved by The Team. Once those monies run out, The Team would give another \$10,000 to The Arena to put towards The Team's expenses.

### Proposed Rates and Ice Rental Terms:

The Team would like to see ice rental rates at \$140/90 min on none peak ice hours 3+ times a week to use as their practice ice time.

The Team would like to see ice rental rates at \$205.00/hour on Fridays and Sundays to use as their home game times. The team is guaranteed 35 home game nights to be played on Fridays, 7:30pm or Sundays, 4:30pm.

### *City of St. Clair Shores Benefit:*

Spending approximately \$175,000 at The Arena for the duration of this contract on fees associated with The Team.

**Sponsorship:**

The Team is allowed to sell sponsorship opportunities to be put on rink boards and or banners on the walls as well as display banners in the lobby {removable, used just during the game nights}. The Team has agreed to cover all expenses associated with the sponsor. The Arena will receive 7.5 percent of every sponsorship secured by The team, additional 7.5 percent of any arena sponsorship will be donated to Minor Hockey Association. The Team agrees to not approach current arena sponsors secured by The Town or other user groups.

**Locker Room:**

The Arena has agreed to designate 1 locker room for The Team that will accommodate 20 players. The Team is allowed to build player's stalls in the designated locker room to accommodate 20 players. The Team is responsible for any cost associated with building inside of the locker room and all fixtures added to the room will remain regardless of how long the team remains at the arena. The Arena agrees to clean designated locker room at zero cost to the team. The team is also allowed to use the office space and video room at a time approved by The Arena.

**Entry to Arena:**

The Team needs to be able to get into the rink after hours once returning from the away trips. The Team agrees to only have 2 keys made and they stay with The Head Coach AND General Manager of the Team at all times.

**Internet:**

The Team requires a strong wireless internet connection during all hours of the day in order to record and stream each and every home game.

**Fitness room:**

The Team commits to purchase additional equipment {bench press, squat rack etc.} for the fitness room and will be in exchange allowed to use the fitness room at zero cost.

**Beer Sale:**

The Team is allowed to sell beer during all their home games in cooperation with the Minor Hockey Association. The Team and the Minor Hockey Association will share the profit equally at 50/50 rate with the Minor Hockey not for profit organization controlling and operating all sales.

**Insurance:**

The Team will purchase their own liability insurance as they have experience doing in their current ventures in other arenas. This will include a \$2 million liability coverage within the building and will have the The Arena named on the policy itself.

			LAKERS	2016-2017
1		Saturday	12-Nov	
2		Saturday	19-Nov	
X		Saturday	26-Nov	Thanksgiving Tourney
X		Saturday	3-Dec	Silversticks
X		Saturday	10-Dec	Silversticks
3		<b>TUESDAY</b>	13-Dec	
4		Saturday	17-Dec	
X		Saturday	24-Dec	Closed
X		Saturday	31-Dec	Closed
5		Saturday	7-Jan	
6		<b>THURSDAY</b>	12-Jan	
7		Saturday	14-Jan	
X		Saturday	21-Jan	Silversticks
8		Saturday	28-Jan	
9		Saturday	4-Feb	
10		Saturday	11-Feb	
11		Saturday	18-Feb	
12		Saturday	25-Feb	
<b>TBD</b>				Regional Semi
<b>TBD</b>				Regional Final

**2015-2016  
SAMPLE Schedule**



**SCS Unified Lakers**  
Varsity Ice Hockey  
2015-16



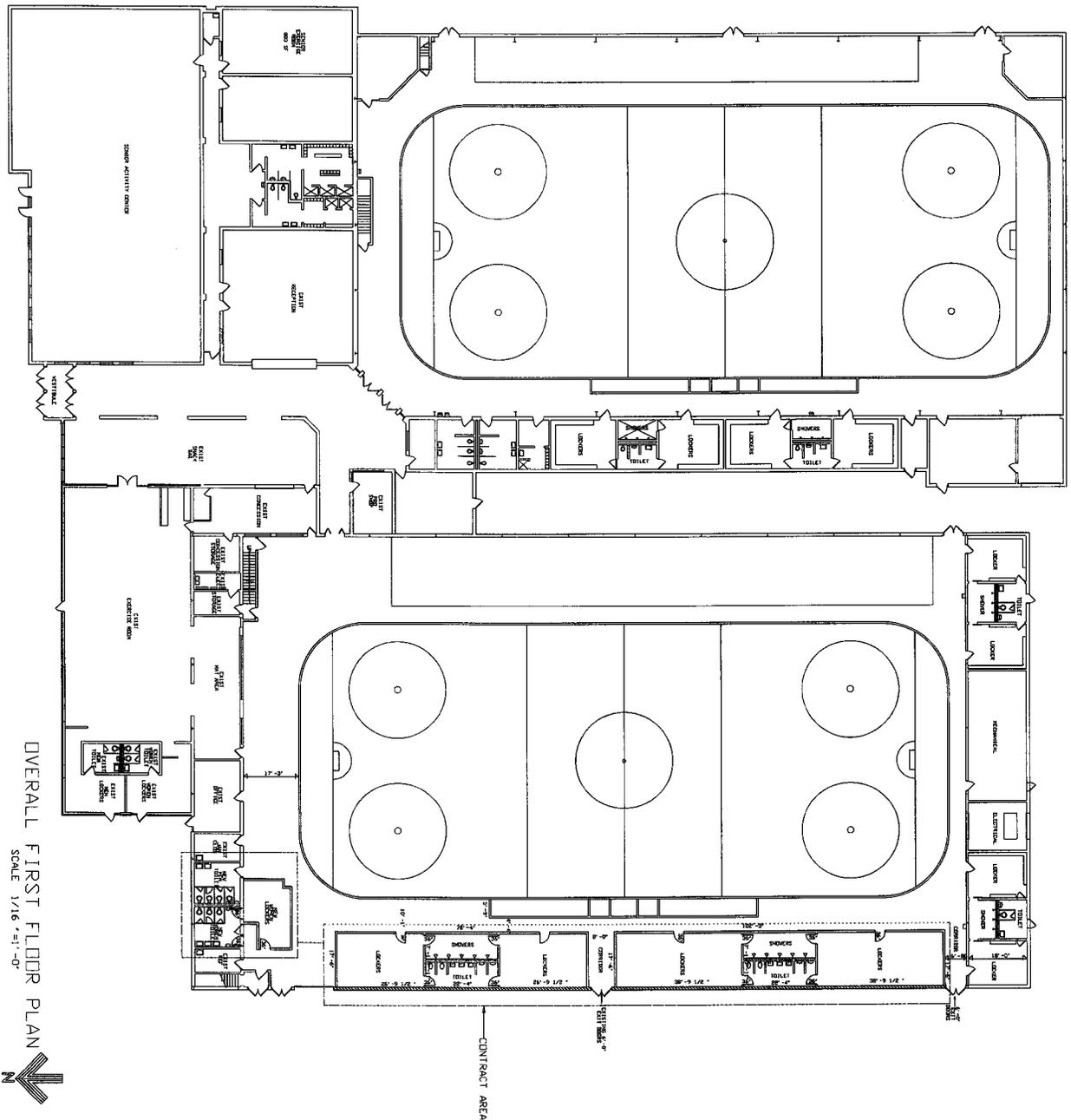
Day	Date	Opponent	Arena	Time	Bus Time
Thursday	11/19/2015	Warren Mott	Hazel Park ( scrimmage )	3:30pm	2:15pm
1 Saturday	11/21/2015	Birmingham United	Birmingham	8:30pm	6:30pm
2 Friday	11/27/2015	Southgate Anderson	Georgetown Ice Arena	5:00pm	No Bus
3 Saturday	11/28/2015	Grandville	Georgetown Ice Arena	2:30pm	No Bus
4 Wednesday	12/2/2015	Royal Oak	Royal Oak	8:00pm	6:00pm
5 Thursday	12/3/2015	Marysville	McMorran	8:15pm	6:00pm
6 Monday	12/7/2015	Fraser	Fraser Hockeyland	7:45pm	6:00pm
7 Saturday	12/12/2015	Romeo	Macomb Suburban	4:00pm	2:15pm
8 Friday	12/18/2015	<i>Cabrini</i>	<i>Civic Arena</i>	<i>8:00pm</i>	
9 Saturday	12/19/2015	Notre Dame	Troy Sports Center	7:15pm	5:15pm
10 Saturday	12/26/2015	<i>L'Anse Creuse North</i>	<i>Civic Arena</i>	<i>5:30pm</i>	
11 Sunday	12/27/2015	<i>Fraser</i>	<i>Civic Arena</i>	<i>5:30pm</i>	
12 Tuesday	1/5/2016	<i>Utica</i>	<i>Civic Arena</i>	<i>8:00pm</i>	
13 Friday	1/8/2016	<i>Romeo</i>	<i>Civic Arena</i>	<i>8:00pm</i>	
14 Saturday	1/9/2016	Eisenhower	Macomb Suburban	5:50pm	4:00pm
15 Wednesday	1/13/2016	Grosse Pointe North	Fraser	6:00pm	4:15pm
16 Friday	1/22/2016	Dakota	Mt Clemens	6:50pm	5:00pm
17 Wednesday	1/27/2016	Bloomfield Hills	Chelsea Arctic Coliseum Arena	5:00pm	2:30pm
18 Saturday	1/30/2016	East Grand Rapids	Chelsea Arctic Coliseum Arena	8:15pm	
19 Sunday	1/31/2016	Lowell	Chelsea Arctic Coliseum Arena	2:15pm	
20 Tuesday	2/2/2016	<i>Royal Oak Shrine</i>	<i>Civic Arena</i>	<i>8:00pm</i>	
21 Friday	2/12/2016	<i>Eisenhower</i>	<i>Civic Arena</i>	<i>8:00pm</i>	
22 Saturday	2/13/2016	<i>Anchor Bay</i>	<i>Civic Arena</i>	<i>8:00pm</i>	
23 *Saturday	2/20/2016	<i>Milford</i>	<i>Civic Arena</i>	<i>8:00pm</i>	
24 Wednesday	2/24/2016	Cabrini	Allen Park	7:10pm	5:00pm
25 Saturday	2/27/2016	<i>Dakota</i>	<i>Civic Arena</i>	<i>8:00pm</i>	
26 Monday	2/29/2016	<i>Dakota</i>	<i>Civic Arena (Regional-semi)</i>	<i>8:00pm</i>	
Friday	3/4/2016	<i>Troy/Ike/Mott</i>	<i>Civic Arena ( Regional Final)</i>	<i>8:00pm</i>	

**Home**

**\*Senior night**

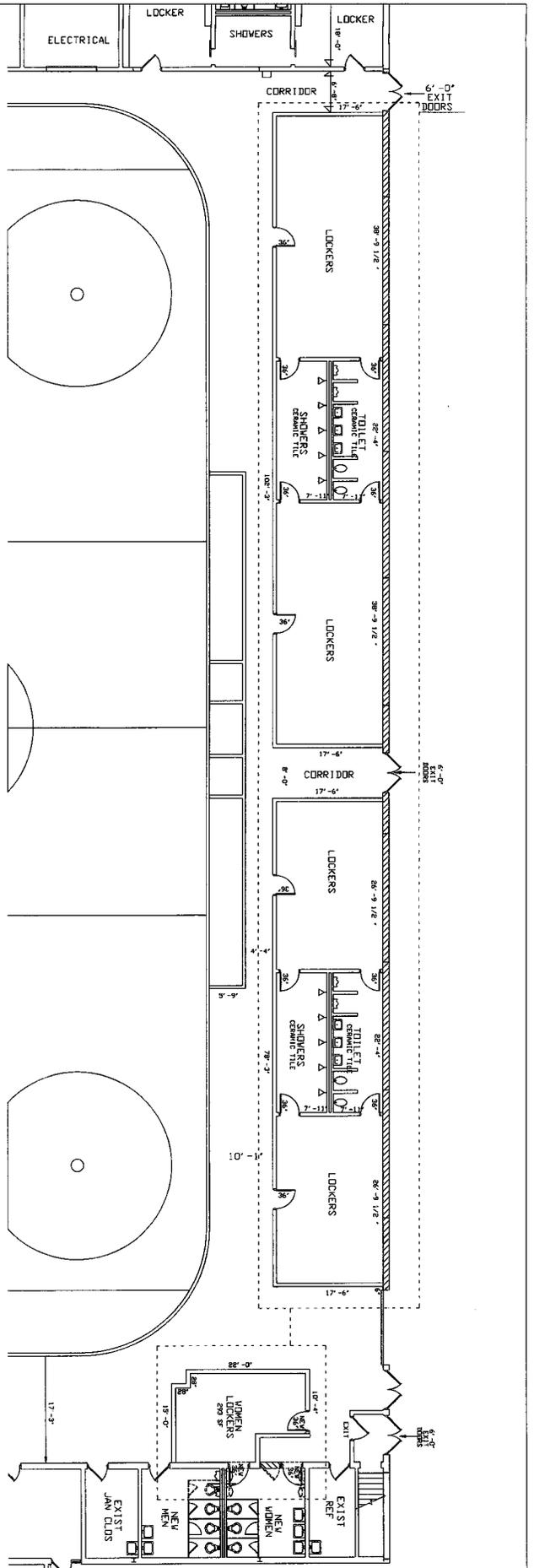
Updated 1/27/16

- ARCHITECTURAL NOTES**
1. THE CONTRACTOR AND ALL SUB CONTRACTORS, VENDORS AND ORDINANCES SHALL COMPLY WITH ALL APPLICABLE CODES AND ORDINANCES.
  2. ALL WORK SHALL BE PERFORMED IN A WORKMANLIKE MANNER TO CONFORM WITH STANDARD CONSTRUCTION METHODS AND TECHNIQUES COMMON TO EACH RESPECTIVE TRADE.
  3. ALL CONTRACTORS SHALL VISIT THE SITE, INSPECT ALL EXISTING CONDITIONS AND VERIFY THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED BY HIS TRADE.
  4. EACH CONTRACTOR SHALL VERIFY HIS WORK WITH THE OWNER, ARCHITECT, ENGINEER AND WITH THE OWNER AND GENERAL CONTRACTOR OFFICE TRIMMED AND WITH THE OWNER AND GENERAL CONTRACTOR OFFICE TRIMMED WITH SECTION WORK.
  5. ALL EXITS SHALL BE EQUIPPED WITH A PANIC EXIT DEVICE AND EQUIPMENT AND BE SUBJECT TO INSPECTION.
  6. EACH CONTRACTOR SHALL REMOVE AND DISPOSE OF HIS OWN MATERIALS AND DEBRIS.
  7. EACH CONTRACTOR SHALL SCORE AND PAY FOR PERMITS AS REQUIRED.

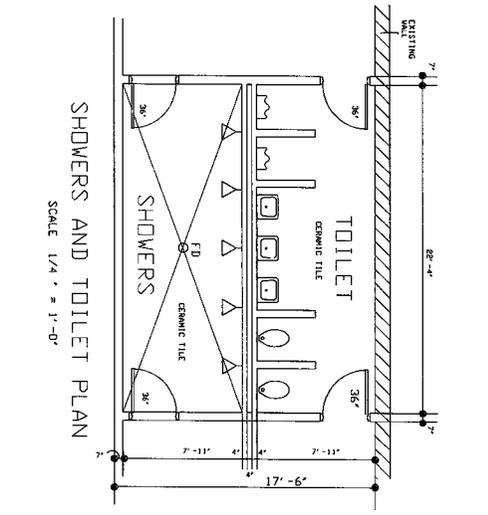


OVERALL FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE 1/16" = 1'-0"

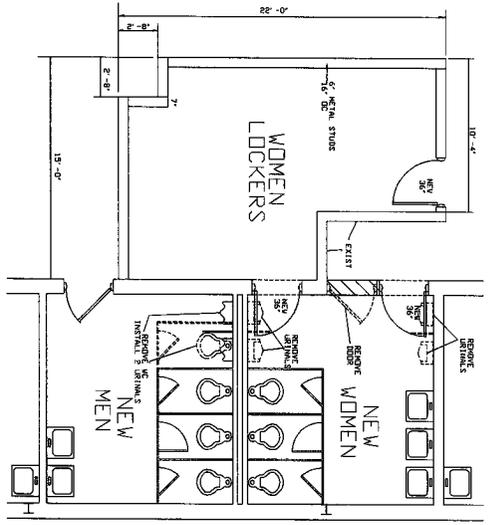
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ISSUE		PREL. INQUIRY		CODE COMPLIANCE:	THIS BUILDING SHALL BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE 2015 MICHIGAN BUILDING CODE, MECHANICAL CODE, PLUMBING CODE, ELECTRICAL CODE AND THE		
DATE	1-05-2016	PREL. INQUIRY		SHEET TITLE:	OVERALL FIRST FLOOR PLAN		
SCALE	AS NOTED	1-05-16					
JOB NO.	15000	3-8-16					
SHEET	1	REVISED BY					
OF 4 SHEETS							



LARGE SCALE PARTIAL FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"



SHOWERS AND TOILET PLAN  
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



PARTIAL PLAN WOMEN LOCKERS  
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

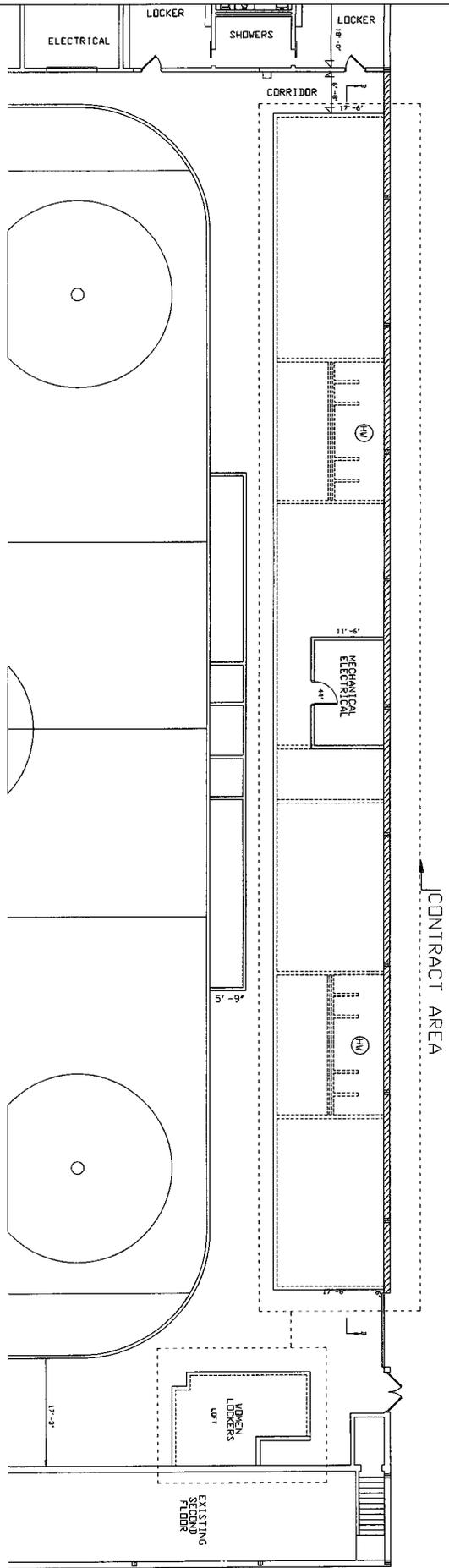
DATE	ISSUE
10-27-15	PRELIMINARY
11-20-15	PRELIMINARY
1-20-16	PRELIMINARY
3-24-16	REVISED PER OWNER COMMENTS

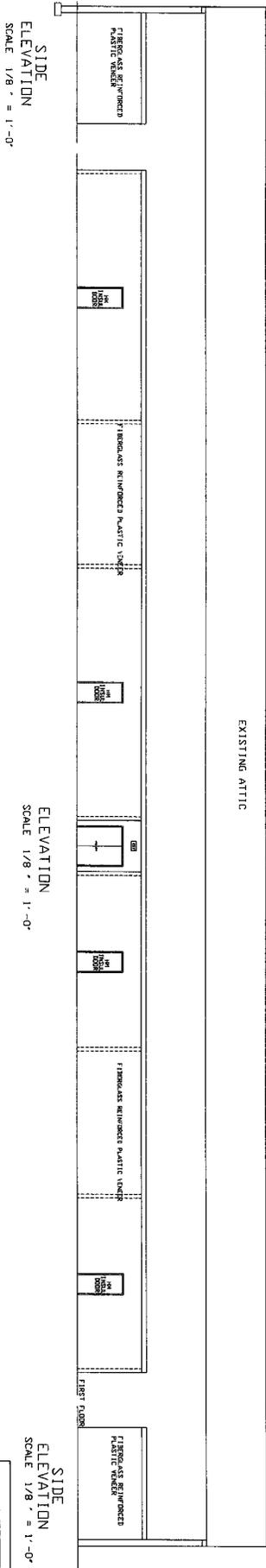
PROJECT:	LOCKER ROOMS ST. CLAIR SHORES ICE RINK
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ARCHITECT:	AUGUST L. CARINGI, AIA 38350 JAMES DRIVE CLINTON TOWNSHIP, MI. 48036 586-422-6921

DATE	1-20-2016
SCALE	AS NOTED
DWG NO.	15800
SHEET	2
OF 4 SHEETS	



LARGE SCALE PARTIAL LOFT FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"



SIDE ELEVATION  
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

ELEVATION  
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

SIDE ELEVATION  
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

DATE	10-25-15	ISSUE	
	11-03-15		
	1-05-16		
	3-9-16		
PROJECT	LOCKER ROOMS ST. CLAIR SHORES ICE RINK		
CLIENT	ST. CLAIR SHORES CIVIC ARENA 50000 STEPHENS STREET ST. CLAIR SHORES, MI. 48080-3109 586-445-5351		
ARCHITECT	AUGUST L. CARING, AIA 38350 JAMES DRIVE CLINTON TOWNSHIP, MI. 48036 862-762-0871		
DATE	1-05-2016	SCALE	AS NOTED
APP. NO.	15000	SHEET	3
OF 4 SHEETS			



NHL PROVIDES WOMEN  
A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN

LONG TIME TRAINING  
FIXTURE WITH U.S. TEAMS

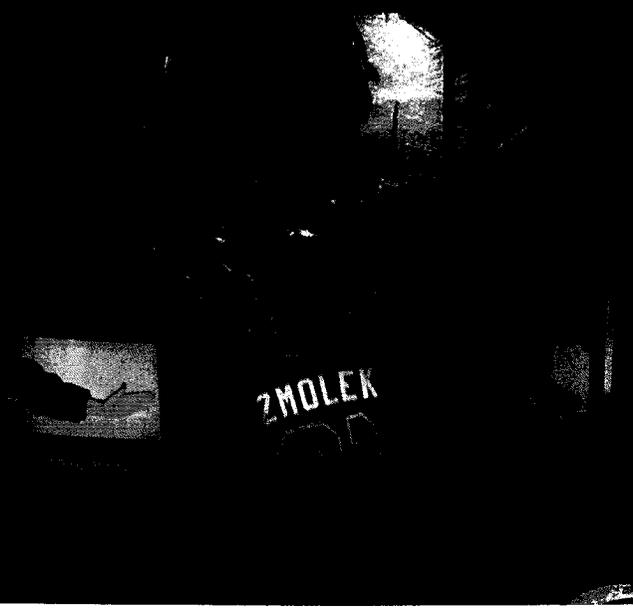
WOMEN ARE ON FAST  
TRACK TO NHL STARDOM

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## FRIDAY NIGHT ICE

JUNIOR HOCKEY IS WOVEN INTO THE  
FABRIC OF SMALL TOWN LIFE

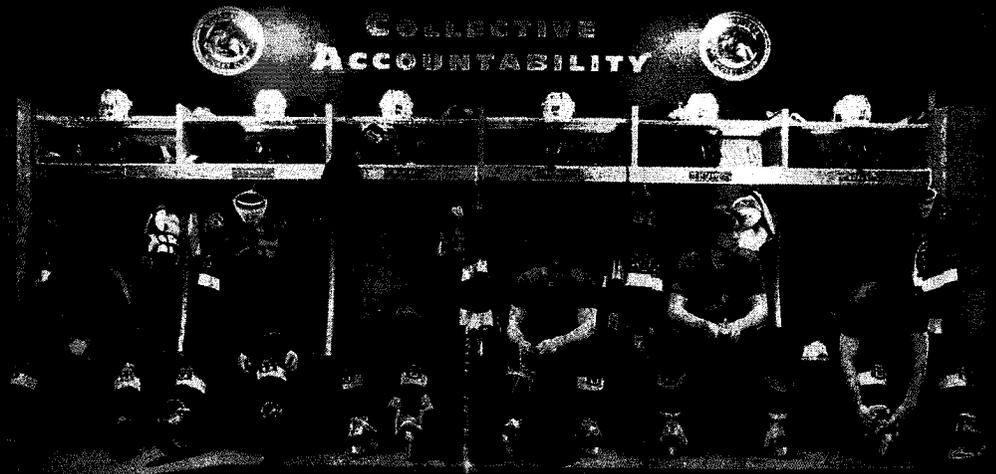


# FRIDAY NIGHT ICE

**JUNIOR HOCKEY** IN CEDAR RAPIDS  
IS WOVEN INTO THE FABRIC OF  
SMALL TOWN LIFE

By JIM LEITNER

Photos By ACKERMAN + GRUBER



**T**he history of the Cedar Rapids RoughRiders franchise comes to life every Friday and Saturday night at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena, better known in these parts as The Stable, located in the heart of what has affectionately become known as Ridertown, USA.

The community loves the RoughRiders, who have averaged nearly 2,800 fans per game over the past five seasons. Game night brings a buzz that also goes beyond hockey and features fun off-ice entertainment and a big-league feel.

Fans traverse a concourse lined with photos of alumni while wearing a variety of green, black and white jersey styles the team has fashioned since its inception in 1999.

And many of those not dressed in Riderwear proudly display the NHL colors of such players as Justin Abdelkader, Alec Martinez, Alex Stalock, Tommy Wingels and Jayson Megna, who all called Cedar Rapids home before moving on to NCAA Div. I programs and the professional ranks.

Cedar Rapids fans actually root for two teams—the current group of RoughRiders and the hundreds of former players who parlayed their time in Eastern Iowa into greater opportunities in the game.

The bumper stickers and billboards throughout the city show just how much the RoughRiders have woven their way into the fabric of a community without an extensive hockey history beyond the 21st century.

To the fans, the RoughRiders are more than just a hockey team. They are a vital part of the community.

### **BOYS TO MEN**

Mark Carlson oversees so much more than just the development of young hockey players as the head coach and general manager of the Cedar Rapids RoughRiders. He only considers his job complete if those same players continue to develop into quality human beings during their time in the United States Hockey League.

Over the course of the season, Carlson might only see his players, who range in age from 16 to 20, for a few hours per day.



**"I THINK I GET JUST AS MUCH OUT OF [THE ROUGHRIDERS' OUTREACH PROGRAM] AS THE KIDS DO. IT'S KIND OF COOL TO SEE THE LOOKS ON THEIR FACES."** -ROSS COLTON

So, in addition to developing their skills on the ice, the RoughRiders place their players in welcoming billet homes and keep them busy with a variety of off-ice programs, including high school, community college, part-time jobs or community outreach programs depending on their age and academic pursuits.

"We want them to improve as people and aid the job their parents have been doing for 15, 16, 17 years," said Carlson, the only head coach the RoughRiders have known since

entering the USHL in 1999.

"For us, as coaches in the USHL, the best compliment we can get is when parents tell us their boy grew up and developed into a young man while they were here with us. In the end, that's what it's all about."

**RIGHT AT HOME**

Callahan Burke, Matt Filipe and Sam Sternschein all grew up on the East Coast. But they fit right in with the Doug and Janelle Banowetz family in Cedar Rapids.

"Moving away from home can be tough, especially if it's your first time, but they do a great job of making us feel at home," said Filipe, who hails from Lynnfield, Mass.

"They encourage us to bring some of our own ways from back home and get us involved in decisions, like what we'll eat for dinner. They understand that it can be tough to be away from home."

While the players learn a level of independence, they still must follow the rules of the house. That includes the chores that few teenagers enjoy.

"A big part of playing in this league is living away from home," Sternschein said. "So, it helps a lot to be treated like their own son while you're here."

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## BOOKS AND PUCKS

The RoughRiders' roster includes seven students enrolled at Washington High School. The players attend school in the morning and practice in the afternoon. Like other USHL teams, the RoughRiders employ academic advisors to keep players on top of their studies.

"Our schedule can be pretty tough, especially when you have to miss school because of road trips, but it teaches you responsibility," forward Hugh McGing said. "You have to communicate with your teachers more often and work with them. It's nice to know, too, that the support is there to keep you on task."

Callahan Burke, who will be heading off to Notre Dame next season, has been taking classes at Kirkwood Community College this season.

"It's only a couple of classes a semester, so it's not too tough, but it keeps me in the mode of going to school while I'm playing hockey," Burke said.

"The nice thing is, everyone on the team knows the importance of keeping up with your schoolwork. That support makes it a lot easier to stay on top of things."

## ELEMENTARY WORK

Ross Colton, the team's leading scorer, is one of many players who take part in the RoughRiders' outreach program, which includes reading to elementary school children and serving as a positive role model.

(Far left). Like other USHL teams, the Cedar Rapids RoughRiders pride themselves on their community involvement. In return, the community supports players like Ben Blacker (33) and Jacob Hayhurst (20).

(Center and right). Friday night hockey games at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena are an event as everyone gets in on the fun and excitement.



"I think I get just as much out of it as the kids do," Colton said. "It's kind of cool to see the looks on their faces, knowing that they might not have the same opportunities we have."

"Some guys might feel a little awkward or might not like public speaking that much. But, seeing the kids and how they respond to you makes it a lot easier."

## WORKING RESPONSIBILITY

Mitch Reinke spends his Tuesday and Thursday mornings working a part-time job at Batteries Included in Cedar Rapids. His responsibilities include deliveries, office work and sweeping floors.

"It's kind of nice to get away from hockey a little bit and be a regular kid for a while," Reinke said.

"It's not real tough work, but it teaches you responsibility. It's another example of the team helping you prepare for life outside of hockey." ★

*Jim Leitner is the sports editor of the Dubuque (Iowa) Telegraph Herald.*

**Greg Carter**  
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# BRIDGE BUILDER

By SCOTT POWERS

USHL Plays A Vital Role In Preparing Players For The Next Rung On The Development Ladder



LIKE ANY GOOD YOUTH HOCKEY COACH, Omaha AAA Hockey Club coach David Wilkie is all about the future success of his players.

Wilkie's goal is to first develop and maximize his players' abilities within the framework of the Omaha AAA Hockey Club. Once that is reached, Wilkie's next goal is find a landing spot for his players to continue their development and gain further exposure to college and professional scouts.

Often, that spot has been in the United States Hockey League. The Omaha AAA Hockey Club is one of the many youth hockey programs throughout the United States that feeds its top players into the USHL, the country's only Tier 1 hockey league.

"When players are ready, they need to make the next step, bottom line," said Wilkie, a former NHL player. "The USHL is the top Tier 1 Junior league in the country and they have the right to take those players. It's our job at AAA to develop them, so they can get to that point.

"Nobody wants to be a AAA player their whole life. They're trying to get to the next

**"THERE ARE ONLY 425 PLAYERS IN OUR LEAGUE, AND EVERY PLAYER WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A FEW GET A D-I SCHOLARSHIP."**

step and the next step and the next step."

Wilkie's own son, Chris, is one of the many success stories in the USHL. Chris played for the Omaha AAA Club, went on to play three seasons in the USHL, committed to the University of North Dakota and was selected in the 2015 NHL Entry Draft by the Florida Panthers.

Chris Wilkie's path is an example of the major selling points the USHL provides for youth hockey programs. The first one is that the USHL finds Div. I programs for its players. Youth programs feed into the USHL and the USHL feeds into college hockey. Ninety-five

percent of USHL players commit to Div. I hockey programs.

"There are only 425 players in our league, and every player with the exception of a few gets a D-I scholarship," said Muskegon Lumberjacks general manager and director of hockey operations John Vanbiesbrouck, who is also on the USA Hockey executive committee.

"Whether they have a D-I scholarship coming in, the whole thing gets validated when they get to our league. So nobody can validate a launch of a player ... like the USHL. One of the main sources that everybody is going to focus on is that path [of] making it to D-I

For players like former Waterloo Black Hawk Broc Boeser, playing in the USHL allows them an opportunity to develop skills that will serve them well at the next level.



hockey comes through the USHL. And the numbers all support that."

The other major selling point is how the USHL can be a player's path to the NHL. That has become more true in recent years. In 2009, the USHL had 18 current and past players selected in the NHL draft. Since 2011, the USHL hasn't had fewer than 37 players taken in a draft. It had 51 players selected in 2014 and 47 in 2015.

"Part of the pitch is simply getting guys to recognize that if you want to be an elite player, the USHL more than likely is going to be a stop for you along the way," USHL commissioner and president Bob Fallen said.

"That doesn't mean it's an absolute must, but it's something you want to consider if you go talk to the NHL scouts and college scouts and everybody else. This is a league that has the respect of their personnel scouts."

While the NHL draft has become a significant promoting tool for the USHL, Fallen has also attempted to share some of that spotlight with the Junior programs that began the development process.

"Our league and Junior hockey in general is only as good and only as strong in America as the developmental leagues underneath us," Fallen said. "Whether it's high schools in Minnesota or Midget teams in Michigan or club teams all over the country, we want to support them.

"[Our players are] part of the American development system. We want to salute that and promote that. That's what we're a part of. We're the top end of the food chain.

That doesn't mean we're the only thing that they eat."

As a former college assistant coach, Jason Lammers has been involved in recruiting USHL players to college hockey, and is now recruiting players from youth programs to the USHL as the first-year head coach and general manager of the Dubuque Fighting Saints.

"I think [the USHL's] really become a goal for the U.S. player," Lammers said. "They want to play in the USHL and those [youth] coaches at those levels are letting the USHL have their players.

"I think it's a healthy situation for both sides."

Fallen has heard the concern that the USHL sometimes tries to recruit youth players before they're ready to make that jump. It's something he spoke to his general managers about recently.

"I said as much as we want the best players in our league, we want to emphasize the notion that kids should come to this league only when they're ready," Fallen said. "I also think we need to do a better job in the future of recognizing that we can't undercut the developmental model below us. We should be supporting those guys.

"I think there's a movement afoot that might see a higher draft age for the NHL that might slow down the race a little bit.

"Personally, I raised my kids in Minnesota. I like the Minnesota high school model. I don't like to see kids leave before they're physically and mentally prepared to play Junior hockey." ★

*Scott Powers is a freelance writer based in Chicago.*

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# NAVIGATING THE JUNIOR HOCKEY LANDSCAPE

By JIM LEITNER

Asking The Right Questions Can Provide The Right Directions Up The Ladder Of Development

→ **THE JUNIOR HOCKEY LANDSCAPE** in the United States stretches from Alaska to Florida and includes more than 200 teams spread across a dozen leagues. And it's not always an easy landscape to navigate.

*USA Hockey Magazine* posed the top 10 questions about Junior hockey to a panel of experts—USA Hockey director of Junior hockey Marc Boxer; Vice President, Junior Council John Vanbiesbrouck; USHL Commissioner Bob Fallen; and NAHL director of communications Alex Kyrias.

Here is some advice they offered to help every player take the next step up the ladder of development:

## **What are the levels of Junior hockey?**

USA Hockey sanctions three tiers of Junior hockey. The United States Hockey League plays at the Tier I level, and the North American Hockey League competes at the Tier II level. The Tier III level consists of the Eastern Hockey League, the

Metropolitan Junior Hockey League, NA3EHL Independents, the NA3HL, Northern-Pacific, Rocky Mountain and U.S. Premier. Tier I and Tier II rosters are limited to 23 players per team, and Tier III teams carry 25 players.

## **What is the difference in costs for the three tiers?**

Teams at the Tier I level pay for all costs involved with playing, including equipment and housing. Players in the NAHL pay for housing and some equipment. Tier III is pay-to-play and costs for billeting, ice time and coaching vary depending on location of the franchise.

## **What questions should I ask before deciding which tryouts I should attend?**

There are fees involved with participating in tryouts, so players and parents should do their homework before deciding where to try out.

They should ask other questions as well: How many veterans will be returning? How many roster spots are available? Where do players go after they 'graduate' from the program?

There is also a big difference between a recruiting pitch in April and how things might play out during training camp in September. Similar questions should be asked before signing to play for a program.

## **When is the right time to play Junior hockey?**

This is more of a family decision because the majority of Junior hockey players must move away from home to play. Again, players must ask a variety of questions before making a decision.

Is the player mature enough to handle the responsibilities of living away from home and handling the hockey, social and academic elements of Junior hockey? What are the player's goals, and how realistic are those goals?

Keep in mind, on average there are 225 college scholarships available each year, and Canadian and European players are also vying for them, so competition is fierce.

## FANS IN THE STANDS

(Attendance for 2014-15 season)

### UNITED STATES HOCKEY LEAGUE

Total attendance - 1,384,820 fans  
Games - 510  
Average attendance - 2,715

#### Top Draws:

- Sioux Falls Stampede (191,280)
- Fargo Force (106,299)
- Green Bay Gamblers (102,485)

### NORTH AMERICAN HOCKEY LEAGUE

Total attendance - 1,012,204 fans  
Games - 720  
Average attendance - 1,405

#### Top Draws:

- Corpus Christi IceRays (94,890)
- Wenatchee Wild (88,240)
- Amarillo Bulls (73,989)

### EASTERN HOCKEY LEAGUE

Total attendance - 42,780  
Games - 418  
Average attendance - 102

#### Top Draws:

- Philadelphia Little Flyers (8,932)
- Boston Junior Rangers (6,325)
- Connecticut Oilers (3,665)

### Do I have to play Junior hockey at an early age to advance my career?

It's not a bad thing to stay home and play high school hockey or Midget hockey if you're not quite ready to handle all that goes along with Junior hockey. Teenagers develop as players and people at different rates. There are advantages to excelling at the high school or Midget level for an extra year before moving on to play Junior hockey.

### Where does education fit into the life of a Junior hockey player?

Because Junior hockey is considered a gateway to college hockey, teams at all levels should be placing emphasis on the educational component. That's why they develop relationships with high schools, community colleges and four-year institutions to make sure their players have educational options.

Even though Junior teams are not directly affiliated with a school, there are often consequences for failing to meet academic requirements. Coaches will take away ice time for missed assignments or grades that do not meet the standards they establish at the beginning of the season.

Most USHL teams employ academic advisors to make sure their high school or



The current landscape of Junior hockey in the United States provides talented players with opportunities to improve their skills along with their chances of advancing in their hockey careers.

college players maintain their academic standings and to help them prepare for college entrance exams and understand what to look for in a post-high school institution. This varies by team and should be considered when considering your options.

### Aside from playing hockey, what can a player expect from the Junior hockey experience?

The hockey component actually makes up a small percentage of a player's day, so teams seek opportunities for players to develop away from the rink as well. Off-ice training is required of all players. Most teams require their players to attend high school or community college, hold a part-time job or participate in the team's community outreach programs.

Players who move away from home to play Tier I and Tier II Junior hockey are assigned to billet families, who are screened by the teams to make sure they provide a stable environment. Players competing at the Tier III level who are under the age of 18 are required to live with a billet family. While living in billet homes, players are subjected to the same house rules as other teenagers.

### What do I need to be aware of when it comes to drafts or signing tenders with a team?

Drafts are league-specific events that determine teams' rights to players who wish to play in that league.

The USHL and NAHL give their teams the option of signing a limited number

of players to tenders before the draft, and those teams forfeit draft picks in lieu of the tenders. A tender is an agreement to play for a team, and it eliminates your other options within that league.

The majority of Tier III teams use contracts, which are different from tenders. Contracts for the following season may not be signed before the end of USA Hockey's National Tournament series. A contract binds you to one specific team and prevents you from moving to a different team or league, unless your rights are either released or traded.

### How will participating in showcase events help me get recognized by Junior programs?

There are a variety of pre-draft combines and showcase events that promise exposure to Junior and college programs. This is another area in which you should do your homework. Ask those teams if they plan to attend and how often they find players at these events.

### Where is a good place to start 'doing my homework' on Junior hockey?

You can glean quite a bit of information by visiting [USAHockey.com/juniorhockey](http://USAHockey.com/juniorhockey), which includes a directory of leagues and teams as well as other helpful information. You can get a feel for the talent level for most teams by watching their games on [FASTHockey.com](http://FASTHockey.com). Perhaps the best advice comes from parents and players who have experienced Junior hockey and are willing to share what they've learned along the way. ★

ON THE

# FAST TRACK



Dylan Larkin showed off his speed by breaking away from local crowd favorite Roman Josi of the Nashville Predators before eclipsing a 20-year mark in the Fastest Skater event during the NHL All-Star Skills Competition.

# Time And Effort Spent At The NTDP Helped Dylan Larkin Make His Mark In The NHL

By HARRY THOMPSON

**A**s Dylan Larkin raced around the Bridgestone Arena ice on his record-setting run during the NHL All-Star Skills Competition, he had more than his family in the stands and Detroit Red Wings fans everywhere cheering him on.

Back in his home state of Michigan, coaches at USA Hockey's National Team Development Program were beaming with pride as another of their accomplished alumni was making his mark on the game.

And no coach was prouder of Larkin's record-setting effort than Carrie Keil, who has spent the past 16 seasons helping NTDP players improve their skating skills.

"If you look at Dylan and how he beat that record, those are some pretty nice stride mechanics," Keil said after the 19-year-old shattered an All-Star record older than he is in the fastest skater competition.

"He's just effortless, and that's what happens when you do a lot of training and lay down those foundations and motor patterns as early as possible. It's poetry in motion. Dylan is not thinking about anything, that's just the way he skates."

As any coach will quickly point out, it takes more than great coaching to become an all-star. It takes players willing to put in the time and effort to improve their already considerable skill set. For the talented youngsters at the NTDP, that's the mindset the minute they walk through the door.

"One of the things that I talk about a lot is the fact that skill development is so important regardless of how old you are," Keil said.

"So while we may get some of the best

kids in the country for their birth year, they really do develop quite a bit. I don't think that any of those 16-year-olds are ready for the NHL at that point. Fortunately, they're quite focused and enjoy the development as much as we do."

Over the years Keil has worked with a number of high-level players who have gone on to NHL stardom, including Patrick Kane, Phil Kessel and Jack Eichel to name a few. It's a matter of pride for her to turn on any NHL game and see the fruits of her labor shining on the NHL stage.

"We've had the privilege of working with many talented young kids and helping hone their skills and helping them become successful NHL players," she said. "Turn on any NHL game there's always two or three players who have come through our program. It's just so enjoyable to watch. It's a very prideful thing."

Like many of the heralded prospects who join the program, Larkin used his time in Ann Arbor working with the coaches to get bigger, stronger and improve all facets of his game, including his skating skills.

"He worked so hard when he was with us at the NTDP," Keil said. "He's just one of those humble, blue collar guys who just shows up and soaks everything up like a sponge. It's paying off for him now. He's obviously having a fantastic rookie season. We're very happy for him."

After two seasons in Ann Arbor, where he amassed 84 points, Larkin spent a year at the University of Michigan before turning pro with the Red Wings, who selected him with the 15th overall pick in the 2014 NHL Entry Draft.

His rookie season has been beyond anyone's greatest expectations as his 33 points in his first 48 NHL games have not only propelled him near the top of the rookie scoring race but also punched his ticket to Nashville, as the Red Wings sole representative.

"When I was at Ann Arbor I dreamed of

[being an All-Star] and grew up watching All-Star Games, but I didn't think it would come this fast," Larkin said as he walked the red carpet.

If Larkin was nervous about his first NHL All-Star appearance, he sure didn't show it. The Red Wings rookie looked right at home among the game's elite players. In addition to his big splash in the skills competition, he dished out three assists in the opening game of the 3-on-3 All-Star competition. But in the final game, he was blanked, along with his Atlantic division teammates, by the Pacific division goaltending tandem of Jonathan Quick and John Gibson with \$1 million on the line.

"I'm glad I got to be here," Larkin said afterward. "The whole weekend was a lot of fun, a celebration of how my year is going."

"I was able to just kick back, relax, meet the guys and have as much fun as I can. It was a no-pressure, fun weekend."

Spoken like a man on the fast track to NHL stardom. ★



During his two seasons at the National Team Development Program, Dylan Larkin worked on all aspects of his game.