

June 2009
Disabled Hockey Report
Antonia Boelter

Disabled Hockey:

With great help from Barry Ford, Jeff Cook was able to attend our year end celebrations for Sled Hockey and Special Hockey, as well as visit with our Stand up Amputee representative Lonnie Evans and his daughter. Jeff captured on video the heart of soul of disabled hockey in Minnesota and created a video for us to use to promote the program throughout the State. You can view it on You Tube by searching **Minnesota Disabled Hockey**. We are hoping to show the video at our Fall Minnesota Hockey Board meeting.

At the USA Hockey Board meeting this year, it was decided that the USA Disabled Festival will take place in Minnesota in March/April of 2011. The exact dates at March 31st-April 2nd and will take place in Blaine at the Schwanns Super Rink. Disabled hockey will be approaching the Minnesota Districts, referees and Chairs for support to create the greatest festival they have ever had. More information will be coming out in the next few months.

Disabled Hockey again thanks the Districts, Associations and individuals who have pledged and sent donations to continue to make our program work. Last year we had over 120 registered players in Minnesota. Each time they step on the ice, you can feel good about supporting people to play the sport, regardless of their ability. You are my personal heroes.

Screening: Because disabled hockey is home to both minors and vulnerable adults, we are working with USA Hockey legal to create a system that not only respects our players, but also keeps them safe. More information will be shared at the fall meeting.

Minnesota Wild Fun Fest: Thursday, June 25th is Minnesota Wild Funfest. This even occurs each year in Rice Park, downtown St Paul, MN. This year, Minnesota Hockey has chosen Disabled hockey as its highlight program, and will feature each active program as the main event during the festival. Participants will visit the booth and be greeted by players, participants and members of disabled hockey in Minnesota, with sleds, sticks, videos and registration information available.

Direct Mail/Presentations: Disabled Hockey in Minnesota is beginning a mass marketing/promotional campaign that will send video/letter/presentation information to both financial and player support contacts throughout the state. The goal is to increase both corporate/private/individual support for disabled hockey in Minnesota along with researching and contacting future players for the sport throughout the state. The intended goal is to increase both the financials support for the game as well as increasing the number of players/teams. With the possible addition of a Midwest sled hockey league, future support for travel/tournaments will be essential. We will be sending

promotional materials to contacts and associations in the next month with the intent of presenting our program and requesting additional assistance, both financial and player development, to our contact list.

Sled Hockey:

Mid-west Sled Hockey League: Sled hockey will be joining forces with sled teams from Illinois and Wisconsin to form the Mid-west Sled Hockey league. This will allow our teams to have more opportunities for games throughout the year.

The National Sled Hockey Camp will take place in Rochester, New York from June 25th to July 1st, 2009. Minnesota will be sending 2 players to this camp. It is a national development camp that is attending by individual's throughout the country and can assist players in taking their game to the next level. In addition, it is a great opportunity for all players to participate in a camp experience and we are hoping to offer scholarships to more players next to give them the opportunity that most typical players are afforded.

Over the summer, Sled hockey will be creating a marketing campaign that is focused on both recruiting new players to the program as well as developing a philanthropic program to continue our success regardless of the financial barriers. If you know of an organization we could contact, please e-mail me at tboelter@minnesotahockey.org.

For more information on Minnesota Sled Hockey, visit www.mnsledhockey.org.

Special Hockey:

Growth of the program: Minnesota Special Hockey will welcome 2 new teams this year in International Falls and the Roger/Alexandria areas. We are also hoping for a new team in Moorhead and looking to next season, another team in the Duluth/Cloquet area. That would give Mn Special Hockey 7 teams. In addition, we are hoping to also expand south in the next 2-3 years.

Summer events: There is a lot happening this summer for MN Special Hockey! As you will see many are seeking volunteers for many events. This is a great opportunity for you to get more involved with MN Special Hockey and a great way for us to say thank you to the organizations that make us possible.

June 22 - In May, Eagle Street Grille partnered with Golden Leaf Smoke Shop to offer an event. The proceeds of the event \$1600 are being donated to MN Special Hockey. They are holding a Check Presentation at the <http://goldenleafsmokeshop.com/> <<http://goldenleafsmokeshop.com/>> (in St. Paul) on Monday, June 22 at 6:30 pm. We would like to take a photo and they would like to give the players some dairy queen.

Please let me know if you and your skater are able to make it. I would love to get about 10 players there to show our appreciation.

June 25 - Minnesota WILD Funfest: June 25th, 2009. 5p-9p. This year Minnesota Hockey will have a tent at the WILD Funfest that will be dedicated to Minnesota Disabled Hockey. We are looking for family members and players who would be willing to volunteer at the tent this year. Come for a 2 our shift and enjoy the funfest the rest of the time. Please e-mail <mailto:tboelter@minnesotahockey.org> by June 10th (or as soon as possible) to let Toni know if this is something you would be interested in doing. It is held in Rice Park and there will be players, food, and lots of fun!!

June 27 - 5-8 pm at Eagle Street Grille, (<http://www.eaglestreetgrille.net/> <<http://www.eaglestreetgrille.net/>>) they are going to have another fundraiser for MN Special Hockey. Eagle Street has become a great resource for MN Special Hockey. They also assist with the Section 108 Golf Tournament.

Summer skate! We will be skating 3 times this summer. The flyer is attached. We hope to see as many of you there as possible.

July 24 - 2nd Annual, MN Special Hockey Saints Game. Join us on Friday, July 24th, 2009 as we enjoy a picnic dinner and then sit back to watch our St. Paul Saints take on the Lincoln Salt Dogs. Dinner will be served inside the park beginning at 6pm, with a game time start of 7:05pm. Please RSVP if you would like to attend and the number of tickets you will need to your respective team coach. Cost for this event will be \$8 per person, which will include your meal and ticket into the game. Hope to see you all there!

Eagles: Toni Boelter tboelter@minnesotahockey.org

Polars: Chris Winkel Christopher.Winkel@target.com

Stingers: Cheryl Caffrey chery.caffrey@target.com

RSVP's must be received no later than July 1st. For further questions, please contact Toni Boelter at tboelter@minnesotahockey.org or by cell at 651-307-0660.

August 1 - Equipment swap. We will be offering an equipment swap to our players with Disabled hockey only on Saturday, August 1st from Noon to 4pm. Come after our summer skate (see next item) and browse through the shed for new and used equipment. I have seen it...it is a gold mine! More information will be posted on the Minnesota Special Hockey website in the next few weeks.

August - Summer skate! We will be skating 3 times this summer.

<http://www.mnspecialhockey.org/2009SummerFlyer.pdf>

We hope to see as many of you there as possible.

August 22 - Section 108 Golf Tournament, information will be posted soon. <http://www.section108golf.com/>. We will need volunteers to help with registration and selling raffle tickets.

October 25th - Mark your calendars for our kick off skate on October 25th - 2 - 3:30 p.m. at Mariucci. More information to follow.

Special Hockey International Festival: Minnesota is looking to host the International Special Hockey Festival in either 2011 or 2012. They will submit a proposal to the committee in the next few months and will make plans based on the decisions of the committee. Games will undoubtedly be played at then Super Rink in Blaine, MN with dorm accommodations available for players and families.

Stand Up Amputee:



The Stand Up Amputee program in Minnesota has been dormant for the past few years. We have a coach/manager who is ready to take on the program in the metro area. During the summer/fall months we will be contacting the hospitals and wounded warriors/vets programs to advertise/recruit/fund the program in the State of Minnesota. Our greatest obstacle at this time is the number of players who are playing typical hockey and not self identifying as a stand up amputee. Given our new marketing strategy in the state, we hope to create 2 teams during the new 12 months and will slowly grow the program within the state.

So with that Disabled Hockey will pack up the skates and the sleds for another season. We cannot say thank you enough to all of our volunteers and family members in addition to districts and associations for their continued support, both on the ice and off. You are all truly helping to make people's dreams come true, one sled, one stick and one smile at a time. See you all next year!

For additional information, or to schedule a presentation to your group, please contact Antonia O'Brien Boelter at tboelter@minnesotahockey.org or 651-307-0660.