

South Saint Paul Youth Hockey Association

141 6th Street East, Suite 1 South Saint Paul, MN 55075
www.sspyha.pucksystems2.com



Introduction from Your President (Ryan Taylor)

SSPYHA Members,

On behalf of the SSPYHA Board, I would like to thank each and every one of you for a great 2024-2025 hockey season. This was another great year for the association and all of its members.

We completed our fourth year in the IGH/SSP co-op for the squirt, pee wee, and bantam levels, our third year in the Spartacat co-op, and our second year with the integrated mites/U8s. We continue to see improved results and greater success, and it will be great to see where we go in the coming years.

The biggest reason we are involved in the co-op is to get our kids playing at the appropriate levels, and I think this year illustrates those benefits. While we only sent one team to a state tournament (U15B Spartacat team), we had numerous teams receive hardware at multiple tournaments throughout the year. I was able to watch games from each one of our teams and it was wonderful to see the improvements from the beginning to the end of the season. As usual we hosted our two Cowtown Classic tournaments along with the PW B1 sections, PW B1 Regions, PW B2 districts, and the U15A State Tournament. There are always some issues when you're hosting tournaments, but each tournament was successful in its own way. We will look to continue with our Cowtown Classic tournaments but will likely cut down on the number we host for District 8 and MN Hockey as it gets difficult to staff towards the end of the season.

Congratulations to Natalie Fredricks and Dan Seliga for being re-elected to the board. I'd also like to congratulate Tim Kegley on being elected to his first official term on the board. For those of you who didn't get elected, or if you've decided you'd like to be more involved, we'd love to have you so please let me know if you are interested.

I would also like to offer a thank you to Michael Ahern and Skip Longen, who have completed their time on the SSPYHA board. Michael was the Treasurer, led the Dryland room and ran Tournaments. Skip was the Director of Mites and more recently did the scheduling for the association. Both of them will be greatly missed and I wish them the best going forward.

Congratulations and thank you again, it really was a great season!

Hockey Operations – Director of Coaching (TJ Kvilhaug/Dan Seliga)

Going along with last year, our teams all achieved success this season! We continued the Co-Ops with both the boys (w/IGH) and the girls (w/IGH, Eagan). We were able to field teams at each level and allow for the most parity among the teams. We always strive to have kids playing at a level that would promote the most success and competitiveness we can. This year on the boys side, we were able to field two bantam teams (B1/B2), three PeeWee teams (B1/B2/C), and three Squirt teams (B1/B2/C). On the girls side, we were able to field a 15B, three U12 teams (A/B1/B2), four U10 teams (A/B1/B1/B2). South St Paul had players on all of the teams with the exception of the U12A, which is pretty good for our Co-Op scenario.

This year, we also brought in outside training resources for our teams. This was a highlight for many of the kids and coaches. Bringing in these outside resources allows not only the players to learn new skills from a coach besides their own, but also the coaches to learn new skills or even different ways to coach. These resources have become very valuable to our Youth group. For the skaters, we brought in Cal Miska of Miska hockey for another year. He focused primarily on skating and overspeed type drills. For the goaltenders, we brought in Mike Moline. Mike has been a very successful goalie coach and continues to coach in our girls High School program. The attendance for both coaches was very good, which means our kids want to get better! Both instructors received excellent reviews from families. Our Squirts had skills through the Inver Grove side. They were able to secure Mira

Jalosuo (Asst. Coach from the PWHL Frost). They worked edge work as well as puck handling and shooting.

Our Bantam level proved to be a bit more difficult this season. With smaller communities, our High School teams (SSP and IGH) at times will have a need for players depending on the numbers at their V/JV levels. This season had more demand than we have seen in the past. IGH graduated almost an entire team, so their need was very high. Our SSP team did have a need for a couple as well. The leadership from both SSP/IGH met with the High School teams and discussed needs and what that would look like. We came up with an initial guess on how many players would move to the High School level. We formed two teams after tryouts, thinking that we would lose a couple players (B1/B2). Once the High School tryouts happened, the youth ended up losing more than initially assumed, which caused a void in the youth teams. We ended up shifting kids to fill gaps in the Bantam teams where they could compete the best to their abilities. This was a difficult scenario, and we tried to navigate it the best we could. During the season the boys played well against some tougher competition but didn't let the circumstance define their success. I am very proud of this group and expect them to do very well whether they age to High School or come back for Bantams. Our Bantam B1 ended 1-15 and our B2 went 1-14-1. The records don't show how hard they worked. They stayed in every game and competed all the way through the end.

We had three PeeWee levels, A/B/C. Our "A" PeeWee began as a B1 team but after several dominant performances, it was discussed with District 8 to move that team to the "A" level. These moves are not taking lightly and are very difficult to do but it was approved, so they set out on an "A" schedule the remainder of the year. They continued playing very well and ended with an 8-0 record, scoring 57 goals in those eight games while only letting in eight. PeeWee B2 (11-4-1) had a great season as well. They battled every game, having eight different games tallying five+ goals. Our PeeWee C (4-12) had a great season of growth also. They had great wins against some of the top teams in their district, which was great to see, especially earning a 3rd place finish in the IGH Tournament.

Our Squirt B1 (14-1-1) ended the season on a high note with 3rd place in districts, while also securing 2nd place in both West St Paul and Inver Grove tournaments, and 4th in Breezy Point. Squirt B2 (4-11-1) also played well this season. They had tremendous growth with having over half of their team as first year squirts. The season included being the Cowtown Classic Bronze Cup Champs as well as Maroon bracket District Champs. Squirt C (2-14) had a season of growing as well. They improved each game and capped it off with a 4th place finish in the Maroon Pool District Tournament.

In the 2nd year of the girls SpartaCats Co-op, partnering with IGH, and Eagan the girls had lots of success and strong development. The Co-op brings together over 100 girls playing at 3 age levels (U15, U12, and U10) and allows us to provide A, B1, and B2 teams. This is something we could not do alone and is critical for our players' development. The SpartaCats Co-op is committed to developing and having a team for every girl at every level of play. The SpartaCats offer skill training twice a month along with shooting and skating treadmill twice a month. The Co-op plans to continue making these investments in our girls while finding ways to improve our training.

U15

The U15B level had a strong season finishing 15-0-1 in district play. The team also did very well in tournament play throughout the season, earning a spot in the State Tournament. Next year the Co-op plans to host U15A and U15B teams.

U12

The U12 level hosted three teams 12A, 12B1, 12B2 and all the teams had good seasons and earned tournament hardware. 12A finished with a district record of 10-4-2. 12B1 finished with a district record of 7-7-2. 12B2 finished with a district record of 10-5-1.

Vice-President's/D8 Rep Report (Andy Gross)

Minnesota Hockey has not yet proposed any major rule changes headed into next season. Officials will continue to monitor that neck guards are worn.

New for next year, MN Hockey is promoting the World Hockey Showdown, which will be an international youth tournament played throughout the metro from Dec 31 – Jan 4. This looks to be a unique experience with more information available at worldshowdown.com.

Treasurer’s Report (Mollie Knudson)

The Association continued our approach to our finances this year, with simplified registration fees and mites playing for free. While there still are a few months left in the fiscal year, we are projecting a slight surplus for the year, which is better than how the year was budgeted. Our approved budget had us essentially breaking even for the year.

The Association made over \$40,000 on tournaments this year. That money goes directly toward offsetting Association members’ registration fees. Put another way, our tournaments reduced each player’s fees (including mites) by over \$450 this year. This is why it is so important for folks to show up and help out at these tourneys!

We also greatly benefited from our gambling (pull-tab) revenues, as we were able to cover most of our ice time with those revenues this past year. Given the profitability of gambling over the past twelve months, we expect that we will be able to realize that benefit in the 2025-2026 season as well.

In total, we finished the year with approximately \$210,000 of revenues, \$201,000 of hockey-related expenses, and \$36,000 of administrative expenses. These numbers do take into consideration approximately \$133,000 in gambling revenues and ice expenses that were paid by our gambling account.

Total net for the year ended up essentially at break-even, and we finished the year with the following reserve funds:

Cash and savings in the bank:	\$244,000
Program Endowment Restricted Funds:	\$25,000
<u>Program Endowment Unrestricted Funds:</u>	<u>\$89,893</u>
 Total Association Funds:	 \$359,000*

*\$25,000 Restricted Funds were donated to SSPYHA specifically for the Endowment, and must stay in the Endowment

Sponsorship Report (Ryan Taylor)

Thank you to all of our sponsors, we appreciate the support and dedication they provide. It is because of our great sponsors that we are able to keep costs down. PLEASE support them to keep them as sponsors – you can find them at our website.

The 2024-2025 Sponsor summary was as follows:

- 4 Gold + sponsors
- 3 Gold sponsors
- 2 Bronze sponsors

Mites/U8/MiniMites (Natalie Fredricks)

This year our mite and U8 program partnered again with IGHYHA. This was once more a great experience. We were able to have four different teams for our mites: one Level 3, two Level 2, and one Level 1. The boys participated in three different jamborees. SSPYHA had 20 boys in all, with three coaches. Our U8 program had three different teams this year, Level 3, level 2, and Level 1. We participated in three jamborees and had a total of 12 girls with five coaches. All in all, this was a great season for our U8 & Mites.

The SSPYHA Mini Mite program remained in house and we hope to continue this going forward. We had a total of

20 players and six coaches. They continued to use ADM stations, and all had a fun season. Our SSP boys & girls varsity teams were helpful this year with most practices. Next year it would be nice to have more participation from them, as the youth look up to these players. This again was a successful season.

Tournaments Report (Andy Gross)

We hosted seven tournaments for the 2024-2025 season:

- Squirt B2 and C Cowtown Tournaments in December. 12 teams per tournament.
- Peewee B2 and C Cowtown Tournaments in January. 12 teams per tournament.
- Peewee B1 District Tournament in February.
- Peewee B1 Region Tournament in Feb/Mar.
- Peewee B2 District Tournament in March.
- 15UA State Tournament in March.

Thank you to all of our volunteers this season. This was a very busy season and a lot of people put in a lot of time to keep our tournaments running smoothly and profitably. These efforts help keep registration costs down.

A special thanks to the staff at Doug Woog Arena, Patrick Gellerman, and the box crew that worked the Peewee B1 District Tournament game that went into 6 overtimes.

Website (Ryan Taylor)

Everything went well with the website this season. We continue to use SportsEngine and while we've looked at a couple of other options, SportsEngine continues to be our best option.

DIBS (Ryan Taylor)

Due to challenges in previous years, we needed to institute the check turn-in program this year. This turned out to be just what was needed as we had the best year for DIBS in a long time. I'd like to thank you all for your help, it really was great!

Events (Ryan Taylor)

We had a busy year of attending different events and activities. We ended summer seeing so many kids at the Splish-Splash-Bash and the Parent Connect at both Kaposia and Lincoln Center. It was great to see so many faces before the season started. We attended the Trick or Treat on Marie Ave in October - thank you to our families that helped with that. As the season progressed, we hosted a skills camp at Woog for our Squirt and Pee-Wee teams with the Minnesota Gophers Men's Hockey Team. Afterwards, there were autographs and activities for the kids. It was a success and a memory sure to remember for the kids. Our SpartaCat teams had a busy season playing and practicing, but also volunteering at Feed My Starving Children and making blankets for shelter animals up for adoption. Our mini mites ended their season with cupcakes and received pucks for their hard work. They had a blast this year and it was so fun to see their progress advance every week. After the season, our South St. Paul Youth Girls were invited by e.l.f Beauty and the PWHL/Minnesota Frost to attend a Minnesota Frost Game, skate between periods, and get a pep talk from Olympic Gold Medal winner and MN Frost forward, Kendall Coyne! An end of season highlight for many of our girls! We have a few things planned for this summer and the coming year already, we hope to see you all there!