



Feb, 2009

NZ Masters Games 2010 will welcome a dozen teams

It was exactly one year ago when the ice hockey finals for the 2008 NZ Masters Games finished in a flurry with a goal mouth scramble to the buzzer. The underdog Dunedin Penguins came just shy of squeezing out the equalizer against a very tired but determined Rusty Blades team from Brisbane. It was a gut wrenching finish for the local heroes as they fought to overcome the 1-0 score. The game had inadvertently turned into a NZ versus Australia final to the delight of the many fans gathered to witness the outcome.

“The tournament was by open invitation so we were all quite surprised the way it turned out,” said Larry Wheeler, the goalie for the Dunedin team. There were six teams total in 2008 with three from NZ and an equal number from Australia. “The New Zealand versus Australia final game was just the luck of the draw,” Wheeler added, “but what a great game it turned out to be for players, fans and NZ Masters Games organizers. Maybe it was the beginning of something special to come,” Wheeler added prophetically

Wheeler may be proven right if Aaron Joy the Director of the NZ Masters games for the DCC has his way. The 2010 event will be bigger and better as the ice hockey championship has been provided an extra day and a half of ice time. Steve Jackson, the Captain of the Dunedin Penguins who visited his Canadian home this past year predicted that a team from Southwestern Ontario is considering making the trip. DIHA Head Coach Jenel Bode has also been in contact with a team from Western Canada will may be likely to attend. Al O'Connor who played on the USA Hockey over 50's National Championship Team from Florida says that his alma mater are considering the trek. The NZ Masters Games is a must play in 2010.

Be there or be square.



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"I know my players don't like my
practises, but that's OK because I don't
like their games." - Harry Neale.



Social Oldtimers Hockey leads the way in adult program

After a summer of slip, slop, slap and wrap, Dunedin Oldtimers Hockey resumed play this past week on Tuesday February 24th, 2009 at 830pm. The Oldtimers Social Game is a huge hit with last year's inaugural season being followed up this year with more players and more games. Serious recruiting was done over the Christmas period and many newcomers are anxious to join in the fun.

"I haven't played since I was 9 years old," gleefully stated Kathy Young of Otago University, "I'm a former pond skater from the State of Maine, USA where we had a lot of fun playing tag on ice on the frozen lakes and rivers around home." In fact to underscore how keen Kathy is to play, she added, "I went out to public skating last Saturday just to see if I remembered how to skate. Thankfully it's like riding a bicycle, once you learn you never forget how to do it, although you do get a little rusty over many years of being away from it."

Oldtimers will expand the program to include a competitive level A/B game each week on Saturday nights. Based on skill and commitment selected Oldtimers will be invited to step up the speed and complexity of play without sacrificing the fun involved in Oldtimers hockey. Players with a higher skill level who have been playing Oldtimers Social hockey will be invited to join the Saturday night game that once again will be balanced before each game to make the game even.

"I'm stoked," says Captain Steve Jackson, "I have been waiting a long time for my defense partner Mike Sam to make the Oldtimers competitive hockey league and this year he finally made it." These two stalwarts will anchor the blue line for the Ancient Mariners Team. Larry Martin also chimed in from his forward position. "I'm chuffed," he crowed, "I didn't expect to make the big leagues so quickly after Jenel Bode's power skating classes but it just shows you what a great coach she is." Larry Martin will be supported by team mates Larry Wheeler and Mark Bingham on defense.

This game will be much more competitive than the social game. We will learn to up the intensity without the eruption of emotions that sometimes come with it. Controlling ones anger is a skill. In Oldtimers we find it right up there with controlling our bladders in degree of difficulty. We will take the level of play in the Oldtimers game to the next level. "You have heard the expression from good to great," asks Mike Cop the poet laureate of Oldtimers hockey. "We like to think of this competitive Oldtimers game as moving from perfection to reflection."

We have no idea what Mike is saying but we love the way it sounds.

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"Last season we couldn't win at home and we were losing on the road. My failure was that I couldn't think of any place else to play." - Harry Neale

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Lake Tekapo Oldtimers emulate Erewhon Cup Mana in Hosting Tourney

The New Zealand ice hockey classic, The Erewhon Cup, has been played annually since 1937. This historic beginning for ice hockey in NZ was first played in Opawa located here on the South Island. The host Opawa team competed then against rivals from Irishmens Creek, Albury, Fairlie, Mt. Barker near Geraldine and a team from the Lake Tekapo ice hockey club. Of all these ice hockey clubs that participated on the day and in that era, now sadly only the Albury Ice Hockey Association remains active. All this however may change on Friday August 7th, Saturday August 8th, and Sunday August 9th when 12 games of Oldtimers hockey will be played to decide the best of the gracefully aging players on the South Island.

Karl Buscher, the Director of the Winter Park where this inaugural annual Oldtimers tournament will be held is the visionary and entrepreneur who brought hockey heaven to life. "Of the Oldtimers who are left up here we will put together a pretty competitive squad," Karl challenged other teams with tongue in cheek. "Our core Oldtimers team will be comprised of passionate players like Owen Hunter, Bill and Pete Anderson, Neil Glass, Rit Fischer and about four others." Karl added that some of the up and comers like Lane Helmrich, Brett and Ben Iness, Alistair Pye all of whom still need a sprinkling of Oldtimer's seasoning may be ready to make the big leap to Oldtimers play. Karl, considered by many of us a youngster in Oldtimers play at the age of 40 this year, will anchor the Lake Tekapo team. "My job will be to manage the historic rivalry between towns up here that is fierce with spirited competitors like Sam Pye and the Andersons."

Karl is considering a few teambuilding events before the tournament in order to harness and focus his all-McKenzie and South Canterbury team.

The Flatliners are here!!!

After months of talking and idle threats the team is finally together. The old men of Auckland have the first Old Timers team to play in the regular SNC league as well as have our base for our touring team. It's an exciting time with our first outing on Sunday March 1st and from there we have a great year planned, with a trip to Tekapo August 7th, 8th and 9th to try and put some pressure on the South Island teams.

We will be hosting our own tournament this year in October, 2009 and the format for that series will be finalised before the next news letter, but rest assured it will be an exciting and fun weekend of hockey. This is a great time for us Old Timers with many players coming through who want to play with us and to be a part of this great hockey brother and sisterhood.

So keep an eye out for more news on how we are doing in the league and how the tournament is progressing. Keep those skates sharp, cause at our age. Not much else is!!

See ya soon

Roy Burgoyne Captain Auckland Flatliners

