

New Canaan Winter Club Spring/Summer 2020 Newsletter

Mixed emotions about what appears to be a nice turn in the weather over the past couple of weeks – Spring seems to finally be here in time for Summer, but it also means we are a long ways from the next season. It was certainly an incredibly unceremonious end to the 62nd year of The New Canaan Winter Club, but even with the curtailed schedule, it was another amazing journey, and The Club only seems to get better, and more unique, with age. From figure skating to SHL to travel hockey to MHL, every program had some epic moments, and what's most important is the environment you have all created as members. It's true, the last couple of months seems like a grind, and watching Coach Jones play hockey, he is clearly more of a fancy stretch perimeter player, but sometimes you have to just dump and chase, work the cycle deep in the corners, and eventually, the puck will find its way to the front of the net, where inevitably "good things happen" – keep grinding, and as Coach Jones has been preaching throughout, we will all "Get There".

Sincerely,
C. Stephen Tusa, Jr
May 26, 2020



Pre-Game Notes

Before starting, we need to acknowledge the team that transforms a concrete slab surrounded by chain link fence into the milky white ice (also surrounded by chain link fence). Justin Bartolo (NCWC), John Ruggiero (NCWC/DIH), Bruce Bartolo (NCWC), Rick Keeler (NCWC), Larry Keller (NCWC/DIH), Jason Cable (NCWC), Peter Baritz (NCWC), and Alex Oliveros (NCWC).

On behalf of Lis Baird and the House Committee: We had a great season! Our opening party was a blast, as always, and well attended by about 650 members! Chaperone duty was another success. Members did a great job not only showing up for their time slots but no incidences were had. Thank you for that!!! A reminder prior to tryouts (whenever they may be) to make sure "Consent to Treat" forms are filled out (one per family) and that form can be found online. Thank you all for a great season and looking forward to next season!

Lastly, we welcome our new 2020-21 class! We have a great new class coming in with lots of young families and skaters. As a reminder from Amanda Zorumski, please support our special place and sponsor or write a supporting letter for a new family. Our membership is the livelihood of the Club!

If there are ever any questions you can reach out to anyone on the membership committee: Amanda Zorumski, Allie Thompson, Katey Ryan, Ashley Williams and Gil Rotchford*

**Note: Starting next week, Gil Rotchford is unavailable through Labor Day due to golf commitments, so please contact him soon.*

Skating: The NCWC Group Skating Program filled its 2020-2021 season with fun and great progress across all skating levels. Wow! Young skaters took their first glides on the ice and began to earn their early badges, intermediates learned their crossovers, advanced skaters perfected their moves in the field, and hockey players powered up.

Several highlights defined the season. Over 20 skaters — from Intermediate to Advanced levels — showcased their talents in the New Canaan Winter Club's annual competition against the Greenwich Skating Club, held this year on February 8 in Greenwich. Dressed in stunning costume attire, these skaters culminated weeks of hard work into performances that wowed the judges and spectators. The next big event: NCWC's Year-End Group Skating show on March 1. Our pros once again got our skaters performance ready and choreographed a fabulous "Around the World" show. Through their performances, skaters across every class level took us on a fun-filled journey from Africa to the Middle East, Alabama to Home. Finally, our season culminated with USFSA tests on March 2. Congratulations to our top 10 skaters that participated in these high level assessments! With four outside judges traveling to NCWC to critique these skaters' skills, it was a formal process that put these skaters to the test after a winter of hard work. That put a wrap on our 2020-2021 season - we'll be back with our .

-Elizabeth Vigiano and Christine Gammill



Senior House League: This was a big year for SHL with several highlights. We held the first ever SHL ALL-STAR game on February 8th during Super Saturday festivities at the Club (picture attached), while SHL open hockey skates were another successful addition to the program and well attended, providing some good instruction and opportunity for skills improvement. Finally, the Rangers defeated the Maple Leafs in the championship game for the second straight season. Congratulations to head coach James Frey and his Rangers team! Can they win 3 in a row to become a dynasty?

-Paulie D



Travel Hockey/MDP: It was a banner year for the Winter Club hockey program. From MDP all the way to Midgets the player's development was extraordinary. Because our players stuck to the process the results followed at all levels.

The Mite C season was marked by steady improvement throughout the year culminating in their final game of the season at the Greenwich Skating Club. During that game the kids started to put together all the skills they learned over the year. The team was passing the puck around to open teammates, skating to open spots and firing the puck into the back of the net. They also had a strong showing at the Sound Tigers Jamboree. Mite B's showed tremendous improvement throughout the entire season this year. By the end of season, they were working the puck around, fore-checking and back-checking hard, but most importantly playing as a "team." We wish them luck with their progression of the game and continued growth next season. Inspired by their locker room anthem "Dance Monkey," the Mite A1 squad made significant progress with an emphasis on skill development throughout the year under coaches Jon Wyson and Sean Hurley. The squad represented the club admirably in the inaugural Mite Jamboree at DIH, took home the title in their division at the Sound Tigers Jamboree at Harbor Yard, and even ended the year playing against teams up a division in the state tournament. "Rarely do we see a group as dedicated at this age level," said Coach Hurley, "It was extremely satisfying to watch them get better as both individuals and as a cohesive unit". The Mite As had a multitude of memorable moments, with the highlights the win over Darien in the Fairfield County Cup, defending their home ice in a physical nail biter, followed closely by a thriller against Wonderland in the State Tournament where the team battled to tie the final game with under a minute left. Our Squirt B's won Gold in Lake Placid, Gold in Falmouth, and won their State Championship. The Squirt A1's claimed Silver in Lake Placid, were quarterfinalists in Philadelphia, and were Tier 4 State Quarterfinalists. The Squirt A's won Gold in Lake Placid, finished the CHC regular season 22-1-1 and #1 in the State, State Tournament runner up, and New England Regional qualifier. The Pee wee A's won Gold in Lake Placid and finished the CHC regular season 14-5-3 and ranked #2 in the State. The Pee wee A1's claimed Bronze in Lake Placid, semifinalists in Philadelphia, and were Tier 4 State finalists. The Pee wee B's claimed Bronze in Lake Placid, Gold in Falmouth and were State Semifinalists. The Bantam A's battled through injuries and finished the regular season ranked #7 in the state. The Bantam A1's won the Liberty Cup, and were Tier 4 State Runner up. The Bantam B's won Bronze in Lake Placid, Silver at the Clipper Cup, and won their State Championship. And New Canaan High School with tons of former NCWC players won the FCIAC Championship.

What a year! Thank you to our coaches, managers, schedulers, and all the volunteers that helped make this an incredible season!

-Clark Jones

**see following pages for pictures*

NCWC Travel Hockey Teams Pics!



More NCWC Travel Team Pics!



More NCWC Travel Team Pics!



Men's House League: Another successful season for MHL, where there was a new acting commish, Frank Granito, who, finished the season strong herding the cats for a feverish finish and a multitude of make up games – well done Frankie! There was a new champion crowned, inevitable with the break-up of the Bacon Strips, whose epic run, officially documented for the last time in this newsletter below (yellow jerseys) will never be forgotten, as checkered as it was. Also not to be forgotten was the crowning of that new champion, “Hatrack Swayze”, the highlight an OT win on Super Saturday on a blistering shot from the point off the stick of John Mori, the assist from Steve Tusa, who had the foresight to get rid of the puck as quickly as possible. Of note, Artie Collins, MHL veteran, and former Bacon Strip, won his fourth straight championship. James Frey captained both the SHL and MHL winner and Jamie Baird made sure the “refs” knew about every missed call, while sniping bar down in game 1 of the season to set the tone. Fans will also always remember a MHL finals soundtrack that featured plenty of Shania Twain and Natalie Merchant, spun expertly by DJ-J-Bone which, as the great Dickey Dunn would say really, “captured the spirit of the thing”.

