



Going for the Gold 2011

- The MWJHL would like to thank the following parents, players, team managers and volunteers for helping in the Bingo yesterday Monday March 14 at Regent Casino.
- They are Coordinator of Fund Raising Linda Benson (Stars/Exec.); Val Officer (parent Stars), Carly Gacek (player Blizzard),
- Kelsey Johnson (player –Ice), Bert Knockaert (parent Blaze) and Paul Richards (parent/mgr– Predators). And for the Silvertips Kirk Kuppers.
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Two teams are vying for the MWJHL Provincial title and they are the Polar Ice, first place finishers for the 2010-2011 season and winners of the Chris Benson Memorial League Cup, and the Prairie Blaze who are last year's champions and ended up 3rd overall in the league this year. They (Blaze) are setting a familiar pattern as last year as they won 6 straight games in the playoffs to claim the title and are now standing at 5 and 0 having defeated the A & W Silvertips and the 2nd place league finishers Western Predators.

The Polar Ice have been a League Champion before and have as their Head Coach Ashley van Aggelen, a motivator and strategist of the game having developed quite a coaching resume in the past few years. Coach Ashley just attended the Canada Games as an AC with the Team Manitoba U17 team that went 6 and 1 at the Games in Halifax. The Ice will bounce back with players like Jayme Deprez, Sherri Clark, Lorissa Klopak, Stephanie Kuffel, Kelsey Johnson, Shanelle Grenier and the other young women in "ice blue". The defenders of the blue line of Shauna Emek, Nicole Leslie, Renelle Labossiere and Teighan Turner play tough on D and the forwards of Candace Janzen, Ashton Thompson, Jayne Heggie, Carly Murray, Nicole James and Lauren Osborne play very good position and are very patient on offense. Goalies Stacey Mikolayanko and Tonya Cardinal are solid goaltenders who were also the reason for the successful season. Manager Laurie Deprez has assisted as the manager for the year adding to their success.

On the other side are two coaches Blair Sachvie and Harlo Larkin who go about their business quietly and then they seem to ignite the players come playoff time. Implementing game plans and demanding results from their players seem to bring out the best in the team. Julie LeBlanc, first year goalie, has had a very strong presence in goal and has handled the pressure well. The run and gun defence players of the Blaze like Courtney Shepell, Nicole Fiks, Amber Kicenko and graduating player and Captain Amanda Fiks create offensive opportunities for the Blaze. Attacking forwards Chantel Jubinville, Danica Knockaert, Tara Abbott, Sahra MacNeill, Holly Penman, Jodie Stewart, Adrienne Chubala, Dani Smith, Taylor Zahayko and Chelsey Shepell work at creating pressure and scoring. And like every team Manager Kerry Fiks is enjoying the excitement only playoffs can bring.

Once the series is over and the Gold and Silver medals handed out it is important to celebrate the success of every team. To the winning, enjoy the moment, because many of us do not experience the joy of winning and congratulations is well deserved. To the other teams, thank you for a great year of hockey. And folks, out on the ice the MWJHL has no rookies (any more) as this year every new player has played with the skill of a veteran player in the playoffs. Congratulations to every player and thank you to all coaches, volunteers, fans, family, managers and executive members for Year 7 in the MWJHL.

Also, a Thank You to the MTS Iceplex staff for their cooperation and support. Great job all!