

Center Ice

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR AND BY THE MEMBERS OF THE MMBC

February Meeting Features Cheryl Abbott

Cheryl Abbott, Monarchs Community Relations Director, was our guest speaker at the February meeting. She gave us some insight into what she does, and how her job differs from Mike Kalinowski's. She coordinates most of the Monarchs' player public appearances, and described, for example, what the "Goals for Success" program is all about.

In "Goals for Success," Cheryl accompanies two players to a New Hampshire elementary school where the players talk to the students about setting goals and making good decisions in their lives. They talk for a bit, and answer questions from the youngsters. A multimedia presentation is shown, and the students also are able to have their pictures taken with the players and get autographs. The students learn something from the players while enjoying their time spent together (and we're sure they enjoy the time away from class studies!).

Lunch was Fun, Dessert was Not!

BY KAREN HEATON

MMBC members hosted a busload of rowdy Wolf Pack fans at TR Brennan's before the game Sunday January 19th. The buffet table was loaded with salad, veggies, meatballs, pasta, and BBQ ribs. Many people went back for seconds and some loaded up on thirds!

This was a special opportunity to socialize with hockey fans of both teams before the game that afternoon. The Hartford fans were quite appreciative of the free meal. Many of them were heard thanking different MMBC members for our hospitality. Those we let cut in line even declared we were their new best friends!

Much to our chagrin they also had plenty to cheer about at the game and were not shy about making their presence known in our arena. I am sure I wasn't the only one thinking maybe we should have sent their bus in the opposite direction as their cheers resounded throughout the Verizon. They were pleased to meet some Manchester hockey fans, free hot lunch, free bobblehead doll, and a victory.

Next time we host a team I suggest we serve a dessert that isn't so sweet at the arena...



"Us" and "Them" when we visited Hartford, following our lunch of enormous deli sandwiches, chips, cheese puffs, drinks and desserts!

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CLUB BUSINESS

Presidential Tidbits

Yes!!! It has been pretty cold outside for the last month. Yes!!! People complain about the weather. The good news is when it's cold outside, we know that the hockey season is still upon us and the Monarchs are still entertaining us. Unfortunately for Monarchs fans, the team has played a lot of games recently on the road. For people who do not travel to road games, it makes for a long dry spell and—potentially—hockey withdrawal.

The team is in the midst of 11 of 13 games on the road. As I write this article, they are at the All-Star break. Starting Wednesday, the Monarchs will be on a six game road trip. Fortunately for us Monarch fans, they play 5 of the six games in New England (Worcester, Providence (2), Lowell and Portland), so fans will be able to drive to some of them, if they choose to.

The only game outside New England is in Albany, NY. The great thing about this game is that it is on the MMBC Bus Trip Schedule and will be attended by 43 Monarch fans. It is always fun visiting the opponent's arena. Monarch fans seem to feed off the fact that we can out cheer the home team fans, like what happens when visiting booster club's come to the VWA.

Since I am on the subject of trips, on behalf of the MMBC, I would like to thank the Hartford Jesters for hosting us while we were in Hartford on January 24-25, 2004. The food spread was great and the company you provided was superb. It was much appreciated and we had a great time.

A special thanks goes out to Chris for helping us secure 17 rooms at the Quality Inn in Vernon, CT

(about 9 miles north of Hartford) at a special group rate.

On another topic, the AHL Booster Club Convention is scheduled for September 10-12, 2004. This is the best opportunity to meet many AHL fans from around the league. Information on this event will start coming in anytime now and you should consider attending. This year's Convention is scheduled for Worcester, Ma. Last year's Convention was attended by over 275 booster club members from all over and it was held in Syracuse, NY. Two were from Manchester!!!

As of the All-Star Break, I am aware of only one more booster club that will be visiting. The Reading Royals Booster Club will be hosted by the MMBC on February 28, 2004.

One last thing, in my January Tidbits, I had a trivia question. I asked you how good your memory was. The long awaited answer is: At the MMBC Holiday Party, I changed shirts 4 times and the order was Wolves shirt, purple Monarchs jersey, tan polo and blue polo. There were several people who noticed the shirt change, but they probably thought I just liked to do laundry. The most observant person in the MMBC is Marlene Lein. She was the only person to get the order correct. She wins a \$10 gift certificate to Applebee's. Congrats!!!

Bill Walch

MISSION STATEMENT

The Manchester Monarchs Booster Club (MMBC) is a social organization for hockey fans. It will: provide a more formal means for Manchester Monarchs Hockey Club (MMHC) fans to meet and communicate their interests in the Club; assist MMBC members in sharing their ideas and views about the Club; perform civic activities in the community and establish financial support for local charities, including a scholarship for a child to attend the Manchester Monarchs hockey school; find ways to promote the MMHC and to be a civic organization that is responsible in the community; encourage and support good sportsmanship among all fans and players who attend Monarchs home games, as well as away games; do the best we can to promote good sportsmanship at all the games we attend.

Center Ice

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February 4 Meeting Highlights

Raffle tickets were sold and player of the month voting was done before the meeting began.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The reading of last month's meeting minutes was waived, and we launched into the Treasurer's Report. Our starting balance: \$6353.75; Period Income : \$3369.00; Expenses: \$4308.10; Gross Income: \$5415.65; Liabilities: \$3489.00.... leaving our Net Income: \$1925.65

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Katie reported that we currently have 97 members, with 35 members present at the meeting.

NEWSLETTER REPORT

Susan announced that the February newsletter will be coming out towards the middle of February. Katie Kemp won the AHL trivia contest that was in the January newsletter, and was presented with an AHL lapel pin.

Rene Therrien and Marlene Lein won the word find contest in the January issue.

FUNDRAISING REPORT

Noelle said the Fundraising Committee has tossed around the idea of doing a cookbook with recipes from team.

The committee also talked

about doing a bowl-a-thon, but decided this might be too much if we are doing golf tournament in the spring.

It was reported that Jeff Eisenberg wasn't sure this spring was going to be a good time to put on a tournament with players because we can't be sure when season is going to end, and then of course the players leave the area for their "other" homes.

Noelle asked that anyone who has any ideas should email them to her at dreamonnh@yahoo.com.

TRIP REPORT

Hal noted that while Hartford was not a bus trip, everyone that went had a great time (even Hal himself, whose car broke down).

pot luck was brought up. Several members thought a potluck or a BBQ would be a good idea, especially during the "off" season.

We will be hosting some people from the Reading Royals on February 28th.

We were hosted by the Hartford Wolfpack when several MMBC members and other fans went to Hartford (photos are elsewhere in this issue).

VOLUNTEER REPORT

Deb will be coordinating the essentials basket for FIT. She will be getting in touch with FIT and then letting the membership know what they can do to help.

MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS

The AHL Booster Club convention is scheduled for September 10,11,12 (week-end after Labor day) in Worcester this year. The final cutoff will be in late July with a small, non refundable deposit due in June. Prices and more information are available at the MMBC website as well as at www.ahlbcc.com.



Look at the size of these sandwiches!!! Thanks to the Hartford Jesters for a great lunch.

PLAYER OF THE MONTH & YEAR

Mathieu Chouinard won player of the month, with a great majority of the membership's votes. Bill Walch won the raffle to present the Player of the Month Award to Chouinard.

The Player of the Year award and Booster Club Member of the Year award were discussed. Criteria will need to be set up for these awards as well as the process for deciding on a winner.

The Albany trip for February 14 is on, with departure from Macy's parking lot at 11:30 am on that Saturday.

Hal will get the hotel information for Hershey and get it out to everyone interested.

SOCIAL REPORT

Mary Beth was not at the meeting, but the idea of having an end of the season party or summer

**Welcome,
New Members!**

**LYNDA FIELD
DENNIS MARTIN
JOHN TEBBETTS**

TEAM NOTES

Thanks, guys, for being willing participants in our survey!

Tomas Zizka

Tomas is another of our team members who grew up in the Czech Republic, in the town of Zlin.

He told us that when he was 5 years old and took his first step onto the ice, he felt as though he was destined to play hockey, and his parents felt it as well.



As a youngster and a teen, he had a lot of hockey heroes, and he would watch the young guys playing hockey and try to learn something from them as well as the experienced veterans. He never really had one "hero" on the ice, but watched the league in Zlin and, in his eyes, saw a lot of heroes.

Tomas's father figured largely as a personal mentor in his life. Now that he's reached adulthood, he is also inspired by his girlfriend, Paula.

He studied economics in college, but isn't sure if he will pursue that career path once his hockey career comes to an end.

When he's not playing hockey, Tomas enjoys playing golf, which is a fairly new interest of his. He also likes to play tennis and soccer, and enjoys television and driving his car.

He likes to have a full house at the arena, and says that the fans create a great atmosphere for the players.

Although he's not sure what advice he'd offer to kids living in the world today, he is sure of what he'd say to kids who were contemplating a career in hockey, or even just pursuing hockey as a leisure-time inter-

est: "Take it seriously and work hard."

If Tomas were given 10 million dollars, what would he do? He'd throw a huge party in Las Vegas, but more importantly, he'd give a lot of it to charity.

And finally.... what is one thing that we perhaps don't know about Tomas Zizka that might interest us? He has an English Bulldog named Sofia!

Steve Kelly

Steve Kelly grew up in the town of Westbank, British Columbia, a small town about 3 hours north of Vancouver in Canada.

When Steve was being drafted by the Edmonton Oilers, he was only 18, and he recalls that time in his life as his "15 minutes of hockey fame." He has always liked Detroit Red Wings team member Steve Yzerman and considers him a great hockey player.

Steve considers his parents his mentors on and off the rink. "[My parents] drove me all over the country to play in tournaments and got up at awful hours to take me and my friends to practice," he remembers with gratitude. He credits his parents by offering this advice to youngsters growing up today: "Follow the values your parents taught you."

To young hockey players, he offers similar advice to what we've heard from other players in these surveys: "Have fun, and if it is something you really want to do, give yourself every chance to do well and be the best that you can be."

The fans, he says, are a huge advantage for the team, especially at home games.

In his time away from the rink, Steve loves fishing, and being in or on the water, skiing, tubing, and just being at his lake at home, Christopher Lake.

Steve would buy properties all over the world and probably a few nice cars, as well, if he were given 10 million dollars.

He says there's nothing about him that people would really be surprised to know. "I'm a pretty straight-forward person.... just ask my wife."

Scott Barney

Scott grew up on Oshawa, Ontario, but now resides (when he's not in Manchester) in Peterborough, Ontario.

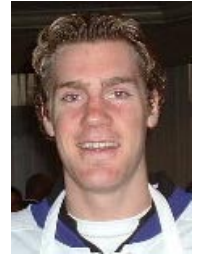
He recalls his being drafted by the Peterborough Petes of the OHL when he was 15 as his "15 minutes of hockey fame."

Sounds like good things came to Scott in "15s!"

Mario Lemieux was Scott's hockey hero, and he says he still is. Off the ice, Scott says his father was always there for him and always had great tips that helped him to become the player he is today. In fact, to young people today, he says: "Attend school regularly and make sure you listen to your elders."

Scott attended college and studied business administration, and believes he might pursue that direction when hockey is no longer an option.

To kids who are considering hockey for fun or professionally, he says they should enjoy themselves



SURVEY...continued on page 8

Where Are They Now?

BY JEN KEMP

Do you ever wonder what happens to Monarchs after they leave the friendly confines of the Verizon Wireless Arena? Be sure to check out the **Where Are They Now** column in each edition of Center Ice to see what your favorite Monarch has been up to since last donning the purple and gold.

Derek Bekar

To me there will only be one number 23 for the Monarchs, Derek Bekar. Dan Welch might wear the 23 this season and I am sure many more players will don the Monarchs number 23 uniform. However, to me number 23 will always conjure up memories of Derek Bekar.

THE INAUGURAL SEASON

I can't imagine there is a Monarchs fan out there who doesn't know who Derek Bekar is. Bekar spent time in Manchester during the first two seasons of the franchise. The Kings signed Bekar as a free agent on September 25, 2001 and following training camp he was assigned to Manchester. During that first season he did earn one recall to LA in November but never appeared in an NHL game before being returned to Manchester.

In that inaugural season Bekar led all Monarchs with 27 goals while adding 20 assists. He also played in all five playoff games that season contributing with one goal and four assists as the Monarchs were knocked out in the first round by the Hartford Wolf*Pack. Bekar had a great training camp in 2002 and beat veteran Steve Heinze out for a roster spot to be-

gin the season in LA. Through the season he played in 6 games for the LA Kings. Due to the recalls and a serious finger injury he only played in 51 games for the Monarchs in the 2002-03 season but still managed 19 goals and 19 assists for 38 points.

After the 2002-03 season the LA Kings decided not to re-sign Bekar. He departed the Monarchs organization having played in 125 regular season games and eight playoff games. Over the two seasons, including playoffs, Bekar contributed 47 goals and 43 assists.

REMEMBERING UNH HOCKEY

For me the story of Derek Bekar starts long before anyone ever imagined having a professional hockey team in New Hampshire. To many hockey fans in New Hampshire UNH Hockey is like a religion. After high school I really started becoming a fan of UNH hockey. These were the days that players such as Derek Bekar, Jason Krog, Eric Boguniecki, and Eric Nickulas proudly wore the Wildcats' uniform. I quickly became a fan of Bekar and have never stopped cheering for him since.

I watched as Bekar left UNH after his junior year and went on to play his rookie season in the AHL with the Worcester IceCats. In November of 2000 Bekar was traded from the St. Louis Blues to the Washington Capitals organization and assigned to Portland of the AHL. I was able to travel to Portland and see him play on occasion during that season. Getting our own hockey team in New Hampshire was very exciting for me and to be able to have Bekar playing in New Hampshire again was incredible.

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

In September of 2003, since the LA Kings felt it was time to part ways with Bekar, he signed as an unrestricted free agent with the New York Islanders. While he has played in four games with the Islanders this season he is currently on the Bridgeport Sound Tigers roster and made his return to the Verizon on Friday, January 30th. Bekar scored the game-tying goal in his return. No surprise there, he is a goal scorer! He is second in goals on the Sound Tigers this season, second only to currently injured Jeff Hamilton.

Much to the chagrin of people around me I cheered when Bekar scored on Friday night. After all I have been cheering for him for much longer than I have been rooting for the Monarchs. I have been lucky enough to have the pleasure of seeing Bekar play in four games this season and he has in fact scored four goals in those four games. No matter where he is or who he is playing for this fan will be cheering for Derek Bekar.

Congrats to Mathieu Chouinard

Manchester Monarchs
Booster Club
Player of the Month
for January 2004

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gratitude to the
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HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

PLAYERS ARE LISTED IN BOLD BLUE. MMBC MEMBERS LISTED IN ROMAN BLACK.

* = gone but not forgotten!

March Birthdays

Chris Schmidt	3/1
Phil Abbott	3/2
Rochelle Richard	3/6

Linda Carrier	3/7
Bob Rainville	3/8
Mike Messer	3/9
Robert Dion	3/13
Jared Aulin	3/15
Mary-Lynn Belforti	3/16
Susan Rains	3/19
Richard Provencher	3/21

Brian Lavoie	3/22
Allyn Fay	3/23
Maxim Kuznetsov	3/24
Scott Barney	3/27
Greg Phillips	3/27
Leon Hayward	3/29
Esa Pirnes	3/31

The AHL Corner Collection

BY THE AHL HOCKEY NUT

I thought this would be a good time to reflect on several individuals that have made significant contributions to the AHL. They are, David Andrews, the current President & CEO of the AHL, Jack Butterfield, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the AHL and our own Bruce Boudreau, Coach of the Manchester Monarchs.

As you all probably know, David Andrews starts his 10th year as President & CEO of the AHL. During his tenure the league has grown from 16 teams to the current 28. Attendance has grown substantially during this period of time and each year over the last 15 years the AHL has surpassed its total attendance record. And of course, Monarchs fans can claim a significant contribution to this continual growth, as we have been the leader in attendance over the last two years.

David was also instrumental in bringing back the AHL All Star Game in '94/'95 and it continues today as a premier sporting event

that is now broadcast over major TV networks in North America. He has also developed good corporate relationships that have brought significant sponsors to the AHL in marketing their products.

However, the person that laid the foundation for all this recent AHL growth was Jack Butterfield. Jack was the AHL President for 28 seasons from 1966 to 1994. He continues to make his contributions to the league as Chairman of the Board, a position he's held since he left the President's office.

Jack was the key to keeping the AHL on track during the major expansion years of the WHA and the NHL. He revised the AHL constitution and by-laws to reflect the growth of the sport. He also re-structured the AHL's joint affiliation agreements with the NHL parent clubs that directly led to a more stable player environment for the AHL clubs. He was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame and the Calder Cup MVP award bears his name and both are fitting tributes to an individual who's contributed so much to hockey.

And for those of you who

missed the January meeting with Coach Boudreau, here are some interesting facts about his contributions to the AHL as a player.

The coach is tied with Bill Sweeney for the most 100+ point seasons with 3. He is 11th in all time points scored, 13th for the most goals, and 10th in the most assists. He is one of 45 players to score 50 or more goals in a season and he's the highest AHL scorer of the '80's decade. Just thought you should know.

Well we finally had a winner to our trivia question last month. Congratulations to Katie Kemp who guessed Rich Brennan as one of three players to play in 6 AHL All Star games. And for this month's trivia question...how many AHL teams did Coach Boudreau play for during his career? As a tie breaker (if needed), can you name them?

Congratulations to the 4 Monarchs players selected to the AHL All Star teams; Steve Kelly, Pavel Rosa, Noah Clark, and Bryan Muir. We had better representation than most!

UNTIL NEXT MONTH...

TRIPS

Day	Date	Bus Leaves	Game Time	Opponent	Member Cost	Non-Member Cost
Sat	Mar 6	11 am	2:05 pm	Portland Pirates	\$37	\$47
Sun	Mar 14	11:30 am	4:05 pm	Bridgeport Sound Tigers	\$42	\$52
*Sat	Mar 27	8 am	7 pm	Hershey Bears	\$100+	\$110+
Sun	Mar 28	—	6:05 pm	Philadelphia Phantoms	—	—
Fri	Apr 9	4:45 pm	7:05 pm	Worcester IceCats	\$35	\$45

* Denotes a ONE night stay in the Hershey area. Price does not include hotel, meals or incidentals. Price does include bus fee and one game ticket to Hershey & Philadelphia.

+ Denotes that the participant will be responsible for the hotel costs incurred for him/herself.

► **SURVEY, continued from page 4**

and have fun because if you aren't having fun, there is no point in playing. Good advice, Scott.

He says that at the games, it is a great help when the fans are cheering, and the louder the better.

In his spare time, Scott likes to be with his friends and family and his dogs. He also enjoys fishing, golfing and just plain "hanging out."

If he were given 10 million dollars, what would he do? He'd buy cars and homes and investments... basically anything he came across.

He thinks we fans would be interested to know that prior to his time with the Monarchs, he hadn't played hockey in 3 years, due to a back injury.




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MLS Million Dollar Club

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who represented the Monarchs
on the All Star teams.
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