

SZN 3

Snapshot



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE JPHL

FEBRUARY 2025 EDITION



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JUNIOR PROSPECTS HOCKEY LEAGUE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming ID Skates – 2025/26 Season

The 2025/26 season is fast approaching, and several teams are hosting ID skates and tryouts for players looking to compete at the next level. Register now to secure your spot!

📌 Register Here: [ID Skate Registration](#)

Bow Valley HC ID Skates

📍 Location: Cochrane Arena & SLS Centre Totem 2, AB, Canada

✉️ Contact: Ross MacLean – ross@p3sportsinc.ca | (587) 971-6871

15U ID Skate: March 31 – April 5, 2025

18U ID Skate: March 31 – April 4, 2025

14U ID Skate: April 4-5, 2025

South Sask HC ID Skates

📍 Location: Bert Hunt Pla-More, Moose Jaw, SK, Canada

✉️ Contact: Dayle Wilcox – dwilcox@southsaskhc.com

14U ID Skate: April 2 & April 6, 2025

15U ID Skate: April 2 & April 6, 2025

HC Edmonton Tryouts

📍 Location: Silent Ice Center, AB, Canada

✉️ Contact: Shawn Belle – sbelle@hcedmonton.com | (780) 719-7881

14U/15U Tryouts: April 4-6, 2025

Calgary Rockies ID Skates

📍 Location: 7 Chiefs, AB, Canada

✉️ Contact:

14U: Graham Lanigan – glanigan@cgyrockies.com

15U: Roger McDonald – rmcdonald@cgyrockies.com | (403) 669-3390

14U & 15U ID Skates: April 4-6, 2025

Players are guaranteed three games

📌 Don't miss your chance to showcase your skills and prepare for the upcoming season! Register before the deadlines to secure your spot.



LETTER FROM THE COMMISSIONER

BY RICHARD NAULT

As we come out of the holiday season, we find ourselves in the midst of the final stretch of the regular season, it's hard to believe how quickly this year has flown by. It seems like just yesterday we were gearing up for the start of the season, and now, with playoffs on the horizon, it's clear that the excitement and intensity of the season has only continued to grow.

The holiday season was a time for rest, rejuvenation, and reflection—something we know is incredibly important for all of our athletes. After months of hard-fought competition, this is an opportunity for everyone to take a step back, recharge, and, most importantly, reconnect with family and loved ones. It's a time to reflect on the incredible effort each player has put in, both on and off the ice, and to gear up for the challenges that lie ahead in the postseason. I hope everyone enjoyed their break and are ready for the playoffs!

As we look back on the season, we couldn't be prouder of how far the league has come. The growth and development we've seen from both players and teams have been nothing short of impressive. The level of competition has risen, and the brand of hockey we're watching is stronger than ever. We know the future is bright for the league, and we are excited to continue to watch these athletes push the boundaries of their talent.

To all the players, coaches, staff, and families, thank you for your unwavering dedication to the game. As we near the end of the regular season and look ahead to the playoffs, we wish everyone the best of luck. Keep pushing forward, stay focused, and enjoy these final moments before the postseason journey begins. It's going to be an exciting ride.



FEATURE ARTICLE

BY TYREL SPITZER

The Winter Championship has been awarded, and the Christmas/New year breather has come and gone. Its now a sprint to the finish, with every single team having the ability to capture the champions though some have advantages based on season records.

Why does the JPHL allow all teams the opportunity to win?

Great question. Ill answer that, along with some others I frequently hear across the hockey landscape.

Why Does the JPHL Allow All Teams a Chance to Win?

We give all teams an opportunity to compete for the championship because we want to place less emphasis on season wins and more on athlete development. The Winter Championship, held at the halfway point, creates must-win scenario that pushed athletes to step up and contribute to their team's success.

Although regular-season wins are less emphasized, teams may still make strategic lineup changes or adjust ice time to push for a victory. These moments serve as valuable learning experiences helping players understand where they stand among their peers and what their coaches value in key situations.

Junior Teams are locked in for the remainder of the year and now looking towards the future...

What qualities and skills do junior teams prioritize?

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FEATURE ARTICLE

BY TYREL SPITZER

Lets break it down at a high level:

Hockey sense, Hockey IQ or whatever you want to term it, is what ultimately separates players at higher levels. It gives athletes the most long-term potential because it's the hardest skill to develop in a short period.

While I believe it can be improved, it requires self-motivated video work, studying elite players at higher levels, and understanding their intentions in board battles, overall positioning, and play without the puck in both offensive and defensive zones.

Skating ability is next up. It doesn't matter how many points you put up at your current level if teams don't think your skating can translate to the next level, amongst stronger opponents. Having the ability to play at a high pace and have explosiveness in small areas are crucial.

Compete. How does the athlete approach the game?

Do they work hard (when necessary) for the entire shift not just in flashes?

Do they win their battles?

Are they tough to play against?

Are they willing to do the little things to win (e.g., blocking shots, taking hits, making sacrifices for the team)?

Do they encourage their teammates?

Do coaches trust them in key offensive or defensive situations?

A high compete level often allows players to overachieve, which is a safe bet when looking at prospects.

Overall Talent.

Can you make a pass with the right weight to set up a teammate?

Can you receive a pass within your vicinity but maybe not perfectly placed on your forehand?

Can you protect and handle the puck in high checking situations, and give you and your teammates enough time to advance the play?

Is your shot quick enough to beat a goalie from the slot, hash marks, or the top of the circle?

What type of teammate are we dealing with?

Some clues can be seen from game film or from the stands:

How does the athlete respond to bad penalties, cheap shots, or big deficits?

Do they sulk when a teammate makes a mistake?

Do they stay engaged and lead by example?

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FEATURE ARTICLE

BY TYREL SPITZER

Other insights come from coaches and teammates:

Would your coach speak highly of you?

Would they describe you as coachable and eager to improve?

Would teammates say you're a leader in the room?

These may be things to self-reflect when creating your development plan with your coach.

How Important Are Academics?

With NCAA hockey positioning itself as a top development pathway, academics have never been more important. The stronger your grades, the more opportunities you'll have both in hockey and beyond.

Consider this:

If a Junior team is unsure whether you'll meet academic eligibility requirements, they may hesitate to invest in you (billet costs, equipment, travel, etc.). They may prefer the next-best player who has strong academics because they would be more confident in moving that player on to a higher level, therefore celebrating another player movement making their junior hockey program most attractive to the next prospect.

Teams compete to advance players to higher levels. If you're an academic risk, it could hurt your chances. Always remember there is life after sport!

Does Social Media Matter?

Yes. At some point in your hockey career, social media will become a character reference.

At the highest levels (NHL, NCAA), full teams analyze athletes social media history before committing to them. While many Junior teams don't have dedicated staff (Older staff that don't fully understand social media themselves) for this, progressive programs are already using social media as a tool to assess character, professionalism, and maturity.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

BY TYREL SPITZER

Do Points and Stats Matter?

Here is reality. It's a tool.

Its true that a majority of scouts don't even look at stats when scouting athletes, however, in a world with more players than scouts, stats are used as a second-check.

Example:

A player looks highly offensive in a game , and you're thinking this must be a highly productive athlete?

Junior team checks his season stats and sees low production.

Junior team would have to watch multiple times to determine exactly what that prospect might be.

For goalies, the same applies. Stats don't tell the whole story but there are performance thresholds that junior teams look at. Junior teams understand goalies being protected by a stronger team or exposed by being on a weaker team relative to the league.

Coaches are responsible for ensuring stats are accurate. The JPHL, with its online game sheets and top-tier video capabilities, should take pride in maintaining the most accurate player data possible.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

BY TYREL SPITZER

What Role Should Parents Play in an Athlete's Career?

Support your child but don't pressure them.

They are juggling school, hockey, and the everyday challenges of being a teenager. The more people they have in their corner, the more confident they will feel in taking on challenges head-on.

Advice for Parents:

Let your child lead conversations with coaches and Junior reps, this helps them set their own goals and expectations.

If your athlete is "shy", challenge them to make sure they aren't "shy" because they aren't confident in their asks to the coach or Junior team themselves. Let them own it!

The best player promotion comes from coaches advocating for players who are truly ready for the next level. If a coach pushes a player before they are ready, they risk losing credibility for future prospects.

I hope this article helps as we enter the back half of the season, with Junior teams evaluating their rosters and identifying future prospects.



TIP TIME

WITH AMBROSE FIRKUS

Transition

A proficient transition game is integral to a successful hockey team. The ability to shift from defense to offense with speed allows teams to capitalize on unstructured moments in the opponent's defense.

This rapid transition not only maintains offensive pressure but also increases the likelihood of generating high-quality scoring chances before the opposing team can get set in their preferred structure.

Attacking with speed is critical in exploiting defensive vulnerabilities. By entering the offensive zone swiftly, players can catch defenders off-balance which will result in favorable matchups and create high end scoring opportunities.

This high-tempo approach compels opposing players to make rapid decisions, often leading to errors that can be capitalized upon. In conclusion, speed is not merely an attribute of individual players; it is an asset that enhances a team's capability to control the game and maximize scoring potential.



FROM THE BOOTH

BY DEAN MILLARD

While many will argue winters in Canada are too long, since the Winter Championships at the Silent Ice Center in December, it seems like the season is flying by.

We are just two showcases away from the start of the post season, with the Play-Ins at the 14U and 18U divisions.

Like the players and officials, competing and working in the playoffs is the goal for broadcasters as well and we are always evaluating and developing our crews for the upcoming playoffs, where like those on the ice, we must be at our best to bring you the best product.

A big part of that evaluation process was the Winter Championships, from play-by-play to camera positions to our producers, we produced 97 games – counting one Spruce Grove Saints game – in 4 different arenas over an eight-day span!

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FROM ^{THE} BOOTH

BY DEAN MILLARD

Our Sunday coverage for the Winter Championships featured an expanded broadcast with 11 cameras, plus an outside drone. A colour analyst and a host for each championship game, plus replays, which were also used for video review, making sure the calls were correct. It is one of the highlights of the season for our crew, which included camera operators who regularly work at the NHL level and even Olympics!

We will once again expand our coverage for the playoff championship series at the Silent Ice Center – the jewel of the west – from March 14-17th, which will feature the voice of the Surrey Eagles, Jagraj Lalli making his way to Alberta to be a part of the broadcasts!

As they used to say, when I started in television in the late 90's stay tuned, for more developments on Silent Ice TV!



THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!

