



## **Over Fifteen Thousand Female Hockey Players to Descend on GTA for OWHA Provincials Along With The Renowned Canadian Tire WickFest**

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 19, 2024*

**(Toronto, Ontario)** – April 11-14<sup>th</sup> will be a flurry of female hockey activity in the GTA, as the Ontario Women’s Hockey Association draws 652 teams from around the province to play almost 1,200 hockey games. While the OWHA is preparing to celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary next season, it is closing the 2023/2024 season with a record number of participants at provincials and it is also celebrating the launch of the Canadian Tire WickFest, Fuelled by Gatorade, becoming a key offering for the U9s.

OWHA Provincials this year will feature:

- 652 teams attending
- 1,189 games played
- 17 host arenas
- 61 ice pads in play all weekend
- Over 15,000 players and team staff who will cycle through the venues. Over 40,000 attendees including families.
- The addition of the WickFest event – which will be an event-within-an-event

So, while WickFest is hosting the U9 group specifically for its festival-like atmosphere, it isn’t just that group that will get a glimpse of the fun and festivities of a Canadian Tire WickFest. The young women participating in the OWHA Provincials, in all divisions, will also have access to the sessions hosted by WickFest and many of the other components that make it a unique and sought-after hockey experience. Special high-profile guests this year include Jennifer Botterill, Laura Fortino, Danielle Goyette, Mark Fraser, Eric Lindros and of course, Wickenheiser herself.

“We are thrilled to announce the details of the OWHA Provincial Championships that will be a showcase of excellence featuring a record number of participants as we complete a very successful 2023/2024 hockey season and move into our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season. We are extremely honoured to partner with WickFest and Hayley Wickenheiser who is an exceptional role model in hockey, sport and life,” says Fran Rider, President and CEO of the OWHA.

“Together, the two organizations will offer an experience like no other for these girls,” says Hayley Wickenheiser, current AGM of the Toronto Maple Leafs and a practicing doctor in the area.

Wickenheiser continues, “It’s really a weekend for the whole family. Our sessions are open to players, parents and siblings and we host programming that is specifically geared to coaches, parents and

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officials which augment both knowledge and fun. We seek to develop the person, not just the player with WickFest.”

That’s a philosophy that made sense to the OWHA, given its long and impressive history of building foundations for the future of women in sport.

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Photo: A U9 player peeks over the boards to spot one of her heroes on the ice. – Photo by Dave Holland  
*(Photo can be emailed separately, upon request to Ceilidh Price.)*



For more information contact:

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**About the OWHA**

The Ontario Women’s Hockey Association was founded 50 years ago and is the governing body of female hockey in the province. Its mission is to organize and promote female hockey under the principles of fair play, fun, excellence, good citizenship, integrity, honesty and equity.