

Dear Cy-Fair Hockey Membership,

LOOKING BACK, THE LAST 5 YEARS

It seems appropriate, after 5 great years of Cy-Fair Hockey, to take some time to look back on all of our achievements. Because of some very hard work and forward thinking by a small group of people Cy-Fair Hockey was conceived over 5 years ago, and continues to flourish today for many reasons, though mostly because of the strong support of our membership.

Our first two years were played at the old Lone Star Skate Rink off Cypress North Houston. We started our first season with about 120 kids, this past season we had about 160, and last spring we had over 190 kids. The 2008 summer season will be our largest by far. There is no league in Houston that I know of that has these numbers of youth roller hockey players. Actually, right now there are only two leagues, down from 5 just two or three years ago.

While rinks are closing and leagues dissolving we are going strong. The Mason Road Rink and the Dairy Ashford Rink had strong hockey programs in years past but have had to stop hockey because of lack of participation. The Shoot Out rink in Houston closed a few years ago, leaving only Cy-Fair Hockey and the JOPA rink with roller hockey programs in the Houston area. I attribute our continued success to our hard working Board of Directors, Chicks with Sticks, and most importantly our supportive and hard working membership.

While at Lone Star we had a well attended Friday night drop in program where each Friday evening about 12 to 25 kids would show up for 30 minutes of drills and then an hour of good, fun hockey. We held our first clinics at this rink with some ice hockey players as instructors. While skating out of this rink we traveled to Katy and Brenham for some out of league play. This was an eye opener for us, these kids from Katy and Brenham could skate, however, when we returned to Katy a few years ago the results were very different, our kids were playing at a much higher level than when we first visited Katy. We later traveled to the Dairy Ashford Rink where we did quite well.

While still at the Lone Star Rink we had an article written that appeared in the Chronicle, it is still displayed at the Bear Creek Roller Rink in the front showcase. Here we held our first summer league and enjoyed many great moments. This is where we came up with the idea of an end of season party, a tradition that continues today. We started the very successful Aeros night, a major fundraiser for Cy-Fair Hockey. When we learned the Lone Star Rink was going to close we knew there were too many families depending on us for our hockey program and that is when we made the move to Bear Creek Roller Rink, a rink that now has a great hockey surface on which we can play and a nice, clean, family atmosphere.

Out of the Bear Creek Rink we have held several of our own ironman tournaments; these were well attended events that kids and parents have enjoyed. Many of our skaters have played in ironman tournaments at JOPA. We also invited skaters from Round Rock and Austin to come to our rink for some out of league play, we in turn have traveled to Round Rock several times enjoying the travel experience and some more good, fun hockey. Recently Cy-Fair Hockey has been part of Rock the House, a tournament series where our kids get to travel to other cities to play hockey. We have been to Round Rock, JOPA in the Woodlands, and Denton and we travel to Round Rock again in early June and plan on going to Allen, Texas in October.

Over the years we have had many of our roller hockey players make the transition to ice hockey and are playing inhouse ice at the Willowbrook Aerodrome. During the 2007/08 school year we had 18 kids that have played in Cy-Fair Hockey playing on a high school varsity ice hockey team and 5 playing in the prep league and many other skating in the house program. It is nice to see that we have provided the spring board for kids to play a varsity sport. Some of our players have been noticed by travel roller hockey teams and are participating in the travel circuit throughout Texas and Louisiana. A small group of kids are participating in travel ice hockey programs. For the past 2 years we have had a small number of kids participate in State Wars in Chicago. This year we have a larger number of kids going to Start Wars in Cincinnati.

We continue to have skater clinics at our new rink, though now we are using our own coaches to run the clinics, not ice players as in the past. Last year we had a clinic just for goalies, something new to Cy-Fair Hockey. We have started to hold 2 to 3 beginner clinics before the start of each season allowing new comers the opportunity to learn some hockey before the start of the season. For past beginner clinics we arranged for Chilly, the Aeros mascot, to come to the rink and sign the sticks and jerseys of our new, young skaters.

While at the Lone Star Rink we only allowed kids up to the age of 14 to play in our league, but as some our kids were approaching the age of 14 many parents were concerned that their kids would not have a sport to play. So recently we added a new age bracket, 16U to accommodate these older kids that just do not want to leave our program.

The league received a huge boost in 2005 when we formed the Chicks with Sticks organization. They are a large group of dedicated women that support the league and help in so many ways. They are at the rink to help set up, sell tickets, coordinate our raffle baskets, and sell decals or T-shirts. They are invaluable during player registration and helping with the end of season party baskets and what a treat to watch them play the 10U kids at the end of season party.

Another huge achievement for the league is our fantastic website, it is chock full of interesting information and so informative. It is nice to be able to view stats the day after a game, and sometimes the same day. The picture gallery is great and used by many. This is where you can find out about the summer league, sponsors, fundraisers, and much

more. Take a trip down memory lane and view the inaugural season link or view the archived stats from the past 5 years.

During our 5th anniversary seasons we had special anniversary jerseys and were featured in Cy-Fair Magazine. Many of our kids wore their new jerseys to our second annual Outback Steakhouse Burger Bash, a very enjoyable and profitable fundraiser for the league.

During the past 5 years it has been nice to see people donate money to the league, sometimes in large amounts. We have also had parents sponsor kids that have financial needs. It is this type of membership support that has allowed us to accomplish what we have accomplished in these past 5 years and with continued membership support and a dedicated Board of Directors we will continue to be the premier roller hockey league in Houston.

Thank you for a great five years and we look forward to the next five and beyond.

David Bradford, President
Cy-Fair Hockey