

2019/2020 SWSA CLUB REPORTS

AVENGERS SLEDGE HOCKEY CLUB (REGINA SLEDGE HOCKEY CLUB)



The Regina Avengers started their season with a special activity that we were very privileged and thankful to be a part of: The Heritage Classic. Honda Canada ("Honda Loves You Back" program), along with the NHL and the Calgary Flames, provided us with an experience of a lifetime!! It started at a Thursday evening practice - Honda Canada reps came out to film the team for a promotional video; at the end of practice they surprised the players with tickets to the Heritage Classic!!! Friday evening, we were special guests at the Calgary Flames practice and were given Heritage Classic hoodies. Players were very excited when several of the Flames players came over to sign autographs and take some photos. Saturday was VIP treatment at the Heritage Classic game in Mosaic Stadium - a suite with inside and outside seating and non-stop food! Special guests Mike Vernon and Gary Bettman came and visited with players. Our players were treated like celebrities and it was an experience players will remember forever! From our little superheroes, to our big guys, and our parents.... everyone had a blast! We are very thankful Honda Canada for this wonderful experience.

We had 30 players registered for our season and also had a few "drop-in" participants throughout the year. We had ice time every Sunday afternoon at the Mahon Arena in Regina. Our player age range was 5 to adult. We divide the ice and practice as two groups so that everyone is challenged at their own age/skill level.

Our season was busy! The Avengers entered two teams in the Kindersley tournament in November; both teams played well and had a blast! Our Junior Avengers enjoyed home and away games throughout the season against Melville Sled Dogs and the Swift Current Ice Breakers. Intermediate Avengers organized a game in Wynyard mixing players from four Sask intermediate teams. A group of University of Regina kinesiology students organized an opportunity for the Avengers to showcase sledge hockey at a U of R Cougars hockey game to celebrate "International Day for Persons with Disabilities." And Campbell Collegiate hockey players came and experienced a game of sledge against our Intermediate crew.

Another season highlight was once again hosting our annual tournament in February. Nine Saskatchewan teams showcased their talents and had a lot of fun! Intermediate standings were: Kindersley Klippers, Bruno T-birds, Regina Avengers, Sask Ice Tornadoes. Junior division standings were: Kindersley Klippers, Swift Current Teal, Swift Current White, Regina Avengers, then Melville Sledge Dogs. It was nice to fill the Cooperators Centre with so many sledge hockey athletes and spectators!

Unfortunately, our season ended a little early and very abruptly due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The "Matt Cook Western Canada Sledge Hockey Tournament," which we were planning to attend in Calgary, was cancelled as well as our remaining couple of practices/games.

We are hoping that with safety guidelines put in place, we will be able to return to play for the 2020-21 season. Regina Sledge Hockey would like to thank the Saskatchewan Wheelchair Sports Association for their continued support and commitment to our sledge hockey program.

Respectfully submitted by:

Bobbi Bolianatz

Regina Sledge Hockey Coordinator

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BRUNO T-BIRDS SLEDGE HOCKEY

Bruno T-Birds Sledge Hockey Had another great year of hockey. We attended as many tournaments as we could and enjoyed. Of course the year ended oddly as COVID kicked in. We ended it by attending Hepburn's Winter Festival to demonstrate sledge hockey. They were super enthusiastic. A couple of our hometown kids now live there with their family and they wanted to educate the community on sledge hockey as not many knew what it was. They invited us back for 2021 but who knows now how that will go.

Our team continues to practice on Sunday mornings. We usually have about 10 people that come out each week.

We had applied for the Sask Grant so we are looking forward to having that completed and ordering some new equipment.

Until next year..

Joan Manderscheid

CLUB '99

No Report Submitted

CUTKNIFE SLEDGE HOCKEY CLUB

The 2019-20 season started off uncertain. The ice rental agreement we entered into was being changed last minute. We were being cut back on ice time compared to previous years despite paying the same amount. We had to argue that our team was unique in that we were not using allotted game slots and that certain times would be used as practice instead. Initially there was not a compromise and our club decided to withdraw our funds and simply rent ice time elsewhere. Eventually the rink agreed to treat the sledge hockey team as a minor hockey team rather than an adult recreation team and lowered our fees and accommodated 2 practices per week. The funds returned were used to rent ice time in another communities to showcase the sport.

The team attended a pick up games in Wynyard and Wilkie, joined the Regina team at the tournament and were able to hold sledge hockey demos in Saskatoon, Spiritwood, Prince Albert, Wilkie, Battleford and Hillmond. For a few demos we were able to work with Sask Hockey. We finished the season with 9 players (2 players still travel from Spiritwood), and were able to connect with over 200 new-to-sledge players.

The Battleford Immigration Resource Centre Demo was especially rewarding as we not only had participants new to sledge hockey, but new to ice! It was a very rewarding demo.

The Fairley Family (Heath, Mia & Hayden) provided their trailer and truck along with their time to create the sledge demos. They hope to continue doing more demos in the upcoming season, and are considering looking for sponsors to help offset costs related to travel and vehicle maintenance.

Mia Fairley

Cut Knife Sledge Hockey Club

CYCLONES ATHLETICS

See Athletics Report

ICE TORNADOES SLEDGE HOCKEY CLUB

The Ice Tornadoes Sledge Hockey Club had a great season with 15 full time participants; this membership amount remained the same from last season. We held a 'have a go' sledge session in October and had 12 scheduled practices on Sundays, from November-March, that were held at Merlis Belsher Place; due to the COVID19 Pandemic, we could not complete our practice season and could not attend our last two scheduled practices in March. Three of our players joined up with the Regina sledge hockey club and attended the Kindersley sledge hockey tournament at the end of November; not enough of our own team members were able to commit to register as our own Ice Tornadoes club. We attended the Regina sledge hockey tournament in February, and had also planned to attend the Western Canada Sledge Hockey tournament Calgary at the end of March; due to the COVID19 Pandemic, this tournament was cancelled.

We continue to have very good feedback from our club members in regards to the facility and accessibility at Merlis Belsher Place, our home ice, in Saskatoon. The early start time, 7:30am, for practices continues to be challenging for a few members of the club. We were able, however, to schedule half of our practices at a later start time of 8:45am. Neal Renwick continued as our Coach, Gene Layton as Assistant, Ted Carter as Equipment Manager, and Ted will now also cover the role of Manager/Coordinator of the club. Brenda Carter remains as treasurer.

On behalf of our entire sledge hockey club, I would like to thank you, SWSA and Sask Sport, for your continued support with this sledge hockey club. We are always very thankful and appreciative for your MAP funding, grant opportunities, and continuous communication.

Brenda Carter
Ice Tornadoes Sledge Hockey Treasurer

KINDERSLEY KLIPPERS SLEDGE HOCKEY CLUB REPORT

The Kindersley Klippers had 22 registered players aged 7 years to 17 years old. We are a mixed team consisting of 11 Junior aged players and 11 Intermediate aged players.

Our season started out on October 20, 2019 and ended abruptly due to Covid-19 on March 8, 2020.

We hosted our 5th annual tournament in Kindersley on November 22, 23 and 24, 2019. We had 12 teams in total attending the tournament. The Junior teams were the Kindersley Klippers, the Swift Current Ice Breakers White team, the Swift Current Ice Breakers Teal team, the Regina Avengers, the PSA Blades (Edmonton), Medicine Hat Hounds and the Calgary Venom. The Intermediate teams playing were the Kindersley Klippers (we combined with some Cut Knife and some Medicine Hat players), the Regina Avengers, the Bruno T-Birds, the Calgary Stingers and the Medicine Hat Hounds. We ran a two tier tournament with juniors and intermediates playing against their own level in 3 games. We ended up with odd team numbers (5 intermediate teams and 7 junior teams) so in order to have everyone play 3 games – both the Kindersley Klippers junior and intermediate teams played four games. We had a fantastic weekend and it got us started off to a great season.

After talking to a few players and coaches at our tournament, our club decided to try to field an Intermediate "B" team. There are 3 teams now in the Western Canada Sledge Hockey Tournament and they are all in Alberta. We feel that there are many players here in Saskatchewan that can and should play at this level if possible. We had many excited players that wanted to join the team. We had 6 players from Kindersley, 3 from Saskatoon, 2 from Cut Knife

and 3 from Medicine Hat. My Intermediate "C" players from Kindersley were going to join the Medicine Hat Hounds so they were still able to play in the Westerns Tournament.

Our players attended the Regina tournament on February 8 & 9, 2020. The junior team played against the Swift Current Ice Breakers Teal team, the Swift Current Ice Breakers White team, the Regina Avengers and the Melville Sledge Dogs and the Kindersley Klippers once again came out on top with 1st place. The Kindersley Klippers were able for the first year ever – field a team on our own! We played against the Saskatoon Ice Tornadoes, the Bruno T-Birds and the Regina Avengers. We won the first two games but lost the third game to Bruno. We came back on Sunday stronger than before and beat Bruno 5 to 2. The teams had a great reason to celebrate!

While at the Regina tournament the Saskatchewan teams met with Saskatchewan Wheelchair Sports for a club meeting. We all talked about the opportunity of creating our first ever Saskatchewan Provincial Sledge Hockey Team. There were many opinions and questions that were brought up but in the end we decided we would like to try to form a team. There are many players here in Saskatchewan that are ready for the opportunity to play in a competitive environment above any that is played here in Saskatchewan. We were able to create the team with 4 players from Kindersley, 5 from Saskatoon, 3 from Regina, 1 from Cut Knife, and 3 from Manitoba. We had coaches from Kindersley, Saskatoon and Manitoba. Manitoba joined the Provincial Team because they are just starting out and did not have enough players for their own team. This was a jump start for their team to get started next season. We had practice time set up (Manitoba was going to travel here to practice) and jerseys were designed and about to be ordered when Covid-19 happened.

The Matt Cook Memorial Cup Tournament was cancelled. Nationals were cancelled. Practice was cancelled. Covid-19 shut everything down.

We have not had registration yet for the 2020-2021 season yet and we do not know right now what things are going to look like. We may lose players as there are no games just practice but I believe most of the players will be back because they love sledge hockey. I have not started planning our tournament for this season as we hold it in November and I do not think we will be able to play games yet. If we cancel, we will hold hope that we can still play in games later in the season and then attend Regina's tournament and Westerns in March. If we are only able to practice we will definitely be holding more scrimmage time to keep everyone's skills up.

We are looking forward to whatever this season will bring – but most of all – just getting back in the sleds and joining our sledge hockey family again!

Tracy Lyons
Manager of Kindersley Klippers Sledge Hockey Club

MELVILLE SLEDGE DOGS

2019/2020 was a very exciting year for Melville Sledge Dogs. Only our second year as a team and we had over 20 kids sign up and play with us all year. We had great parents and kids on the team along with a new coach Casey O'Brien who has a great life story of his own (google it to see for yourself). Although he plays stand up hockey, he was keen to get in a sledge to learn the skills necessary to play sledge himself so he could pass his knowledge on to the team help develop their skills and have some fun while doing it!

With the help of SWSA we were able to buy enough equipment and uniforms for all our players.

We practiced weekly and had enough kids to scrimmage during the practices. We showed our skills off to a few minor hockey teams and let them try our sledges out.

We travelled to Regina for a game against the Avengers and they travelled to Melville for a game in our barn! We played in the Regina Avengers tournament. Although we weren't successful in winning any games the kids had a fantastic time.

We were signed up for the tournament in Calgary, not all our players were able to attend, but about 12 of them were super excited to go. Unfortunately, COVID happened and the country was in lockdown rather than playing Sledge hockey in Calgary. Every single phone call I made to the team ended with disappointment when they heard the news that we wouldn't be able to go to Calgary.

We had a fantastic year, and hope to have the opportunity to do this again.

Tracy Delainey
Manager,
Melville Sledge Dogs

NRG MINI WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL CLUB

The NRG Wheelchair Basketball Team had another successful season. At the end of September, we held our annual Basketball Sundae. At this event, we had a fun afternoon where new and current mini-aged athletes had an opportunity to try wheelchair basketball in a fun non-competitive environment. We started our regular season at the end of October. In December, we held our annual Christmas Festival. In February, some members of our team travelled to Edmonton for their annual Mini Wheelchair Basketball Tournament. It was an exciting weekend for everyone who attended. Then in March, we were able to host our own Mini Basketball Tournament prior to having to shut down practices due to the pandemic. Even though our season was cut short by a few weeks, we still had a great year. We are looking forward to the day when gyms are available for rental again so that we can start the 2020 – 2021 season.

Submitted by,
Joelle Buckle

SWIFT CURRENT ICE BREAKERS

2019/2020 was the 3rd season for the Swift Current IceBreakers. We had 28 participants. Thanks to an equipment grant received, we ordered more sleds and sticks to help accommodate for players growth. We also utilized a Club Development grant to help fund an additional ice time, as we split our groups into an under 12 and over 12 for our weekly practices. As a club, we put on a Beer & Burger fundraiser night at a local pub.

Because we had such a large number, again we split the kids into 2 even teams. Teams traveled to two tournaments in Kindersley and Regina. Due to covid, we were unable to go to westerns. Our teams also participated in Hockey day in Saskatchewan in Gull Lake, which was a great way to showcase our sport!

To help continue to grow the sport of sledge hockey - our coaches did 3 have a go clinics- one in Swift Current and 2 in surrounding communities - in Lucky Lake and Lorburn.

We are so thankful for Sask Wheelchair Sport Association for all their help over the years! They are always ready to help with grants, equipment etc.

Jenn Berg
Club Coordinator

TRAILBLAZERS**Cross Country Skiing with Snobuddy Clubs (Snobuddy is part of SASKI Skiing for Disabled)**

See Cross Country Ski Report
