

Ice Dog Families,

Welcome to our new web site and to an exciting Spring Hockey season. We have added all kinds of new features to our Spring Program structure and have filled our rosters quickly, so we see that the Ice Dogs are eager to keep skating! We will use this space to keep you up to speed on your Board's activity and other events.

As I mentioned, Spring Hockey this year is different than prior years. Games are more organized, skill sessions will be better planned, more players will be engaged, and everyone should get more "touches" on the puck. We invite your feedback as the Spring Season progresses. With your input, we will continue to improve our product.

This last season went very well with maximum participation at the Learn-to-Play (LTP) and within our 8U Hockey Programs. A shout out to the 8U parents and coaches for the wonderful program they put together. Our LTP Program put over 200 kids through the curriculum, with nearly 100 taking advantage of our partnership with the Washington Capitals for free hockey equipment for our skaters. Our Travel teams did well in many age groups as did our women's teams, which continue their track records as the 'teams to beat' in the area. Our House teams completed their seasons with the CCHL Tournament over the weekends of March 3 and March 10. In all, we were pleased with how the year went.

As we plan for the next season, starting in August, there are some issues that we are watching closely: First, available ice. We have been in close contact with both Fairfax County Parks and Recreation Authority (FCPA) concerning a second sheet of ice at Mount Vernon. A few of us spoke at the recent FCPA council meeting with a message that we could fill the second sheet with players tomorrow if we had it. We've also followed Fort DuPont's plan for a second rink. Both rinks still have plans for expansion. Mount Vernon is awaiting the allocation of funds, while Ft DuPont has a Request for Proposal on the street for eventual award and ground-breaking this fall. The Fort DuPont staff is very aware of our concerns over parking during construction. I'll let you know as soon as we do. Also, when the time is right, we'll ask folks to contact Fairfax County to promote the second sheet, but for now it's a little early for that. We have also been in contact with The Saint James concerning ice time in Springfield. As they get up to speed on their business model, they've promised us a conversation soon to see what options exist. Of the three locations, the only one with potentially new ice for the next season is the Saint James. We'll keep you updated.

Additionally, we are assessing last season's goalie training with Wolfe Hockey Development. We welcome your feedback as to how you thought it went. Quick reminder, for next season, Travel tryouts are in early May and House registration is in June.

That's it for now. More soon, as the year progresses. Any questions or issues, do not hesitate to let us know. Thanks again for a great year and wonderful support.

John