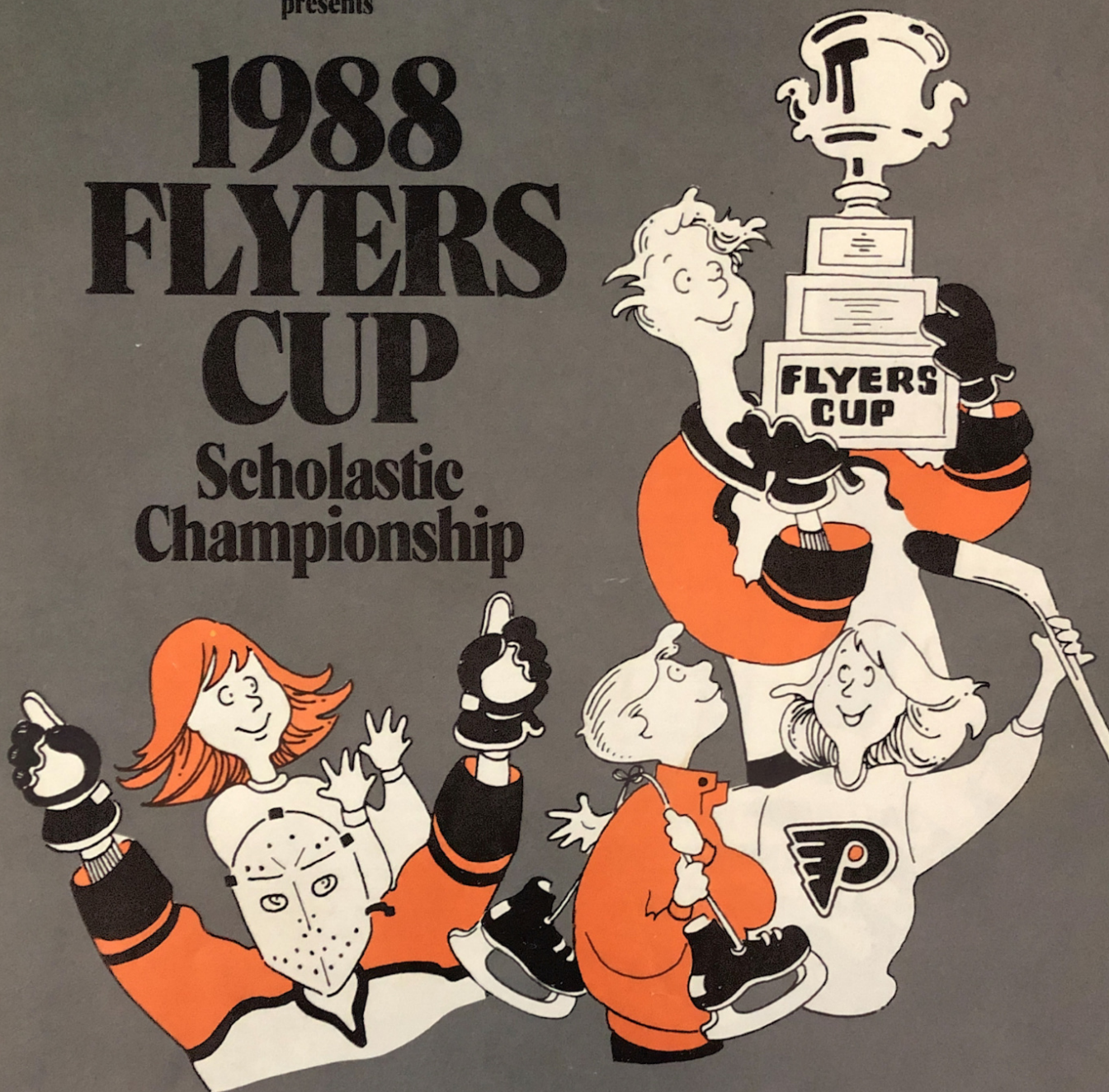


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Andy Abramson Leaves Hockey Central For New Challenge with "Coor's Classic"

By Don McKee
Philadelphia Inquirer

The biggest administrative change in Hockey Central's 12-year history occurred in early March when President Andrew R. Abramson announced his resignation.

Abramson, 28, an alumnus of Northeast High School, was the first full-time employee of Hockey Central when then-Flyers President Ed Snider created the organization in 1976.

Abramson began working as a statistician at Hockey Central while still in high school. He rapidly progressed to doing public relations and media relations work, and eventually, rose to head the organization.

Abramson was the only employee to stay with Hockey Central from its origin to its emergence as a major promoter of Delaware Valley youth hockey, backed by a six-figure budget earned by corporate sponsorship.



Abramson has accepted the position of Director of Marketing for the Coors Classic, one of the world's major bicycle races. The Classic annually tours three western states in an American version of the Tour de France.

"This is the end of 12 glorious years," Abramson said. "But it was time to move on to another chapter of my life. This move will allow me to do more in the growing field of sports marketing."

Abramson is widely credited with originating the Flyers Cup, the annual regional scholastic tournament that made hockey a recognized force among area schools. He also originated the Pepsi Shootout, which aired on Flyers broadcasts in the early 1980s.

He was asked to remain on Hockey Central's Board of Directors by current Flyers President Jay Snider. Abramson has accepted.



Asked to list the accomplishments of which he is most proud, Abramson noted the following:

- "Building Hockey Central into an organization that is widely known, productive and widely respected;

- "Developing the house league concept in the Delaware Valley to provide a place for kids to learn the game at no expense to their parents;

- "And starting Hockey Central's corporate sponsorship program, which has raised the organization to its greatest heights."

But Abramson said his two biggest thrills in his years as a Hockey Central and Flyers employee involved two other special projects.

"The first is the recently completed Celebrity Game," Abramson said, referring to the February 20 event which sold out the Spectrum.

"That was an event a lot of people had very little confidence in. There were a lot of questions: could we get the stars? Could we get the sponsors? Could we sell tickets?

"But we turned a lot of ifs into realities."

"My other greatest thrill came when I served as the production manager of Bobby Clarke's retirement night. (Clarke, now the Flyers General Manager, retired as an active player following the 1984 season.)



"I had the good fortune to create the internal video system with its four-sided screen, so we could show Mike Finocchiaro's wonderfully creative video on Bobby Clarke's career."



Abramson, who also created the souvenir Bobby Clarke coin, said the retirement night was anything but a one-night project.

"I worked endlessly for six months to make that night go off well," he said, "And I did it for one reason--Bobby Clarke.

"That night, to me, was the most memorable in the history of Philadelphia professional sports."

Abramson, himself, has carved a small niche in the history of Philadelphia's amateur sports. He leaves his successor a sturdy foundation on which to build.

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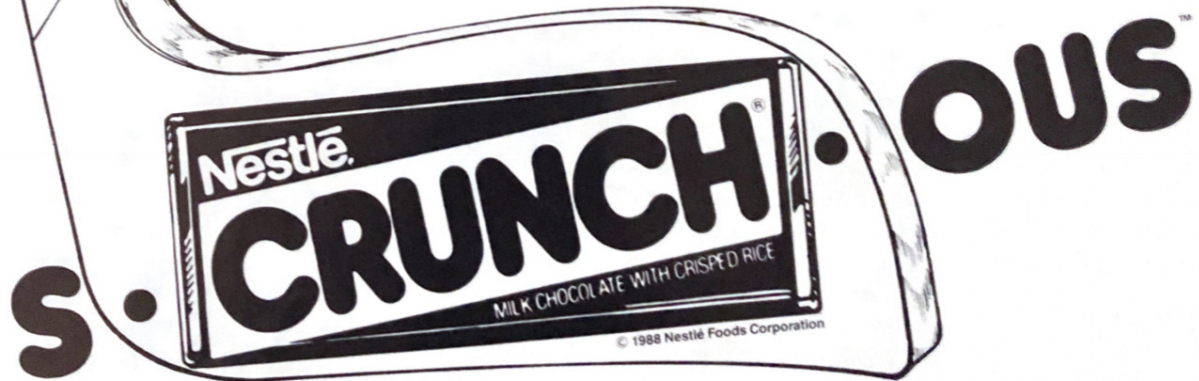
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"Playing in the Flyers Cup was a big thrill," said the University of Wisconsin's goaltender Mike Richter, who, along with his brother Joe, backstopped Germantown

Academy to back to back Flyers Cup crowns in 1982 and 1983.

In the early days of the Flyers Cup there were three leagues in competition for the Cup, the oldest and most established, Inter County Scholastic Hockey League (ISCHL), the Suburban High School Hockey League (SHSHL) and the Lower Bucks County Scholastic Hockey League (LBCSHL). Then the leagues began to split up with the Eastern High School Hockey League (EHS HL) spawning off from the ICSHL and the Northern Scholastic Hockey League (NSHL) developing from the SHSHL.

With the forming of a fifth league, the Flyers Cup Committee decided to admit another entrant, one that had for the first six years of the cup, been overlooked, the Delaware based, new Castle County High School Hockey League.

"The Flyers Cup was organized to recognize the champion of high school hockey in the Delaware Valley," said Moderski. "To ignore the Delaware league, would have been like ignoring the New Jersey schools, not in the best interest of youth hockey in the Philadelphia area."

But this year the growth of the Flyers Cup has a new thrust with a focus on the players and teams in the Flyers Cup itself. Through the combined efforts of the Flyers Cup Committee and Hockey Central, this years Flyers Cup is shaping up to be the best ever.

"All year long we have worked with the major hockey equipment manufacturers and local companies and gotten them behind youth hockey in the Delaware Valley," Moderski said. "Now with the Flyers Cup upon us, we have succeeded in getting them to recognize the accomplishments of the players and teams in the tournament."

"What all this means," Moderski said, "is that the Flyers Cup belongs to the kids and that we, the Flyers, Hockey Central and the leagues, care about the kids who play high school hockey."



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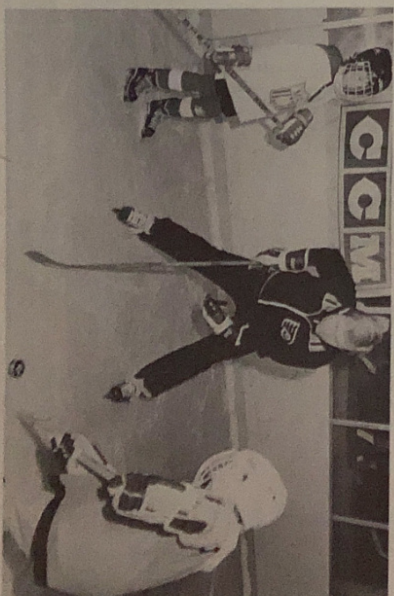
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Flyers Cup Fever Hits Delaware Valley High Schools

By Denny Dyroff

For almost a decade now, there has annually been one goal common to every scholastic ice hockey player in the Delaware Valley. That goal is to win the Flyers Cup.

Now in its ninth year, the Flyers Cup has become more than an annual event: it's an institution. It has been referred to so frequently as "The Stanley Cup of Delaware Valley High School Ice Hockey" that the phrase could almost be viewed as its official sub-title.

The Flyers Cup is the annual post-season tourney which determines which team is the undisputed champion of high school hockey in the Eastern Pennsylvania-South Jersey-Northern Delaware region. Each year, the league champions from the active area leagues (the number has stayed six for the last few seasons) compete in a six-day, nine game tourney at the Skatium.

It is up to each league to select its own policy for determining the champion it will send as its representative to the Flyers Cup.

As of press time, three representatives had already been confirmed, while the remaining three were to be decided by yet-to-be-completed league playoffs.

The first team in is Conestoga, the ICSHL (Intercounty Scholastic Hockey League) representative. The Pioneers were finalists in last year's tourney and Flyers Cup champions the year before.

In the past, the ICSHL, which plays its games at the General Washington Rink in Audubon and Wintersport in Willow Grove, has always sent its playoff champion to the Flyers Cup. However, this year, the Intercounty League has had to postpone its postseason playoffs because of scheduling problems, and has opted to send the regular season titlist to the Flyers Cup.

The Pioneers are led by a potent first line which includes the high-scoring trio of Ross Cowan, Doug Smink, and Gordie Shaw. Conestoga has a veteran squad which will be making its fifth straight Flyers Cup appearance. At press time, the Pioneers were undefeated through their first 15 games this year and they boasted the league's leading goalie in Steve Riley.

Delaware's NCCHSHL (New Castle County High School Hockey League) has been participating in the Flyers Cup since the 1985-1986 season, and in three years, only one team has made the trip north: William Penn High School of New Castle.

This year, the Colonials once again captured the NCCHSHL crown, and once again will be the league's representative at the Skatium. They enter this year's competition with a 10-2 regular season record. William Penn's top defenseman is Chris DeWitt, who also received the league's "Ray Brown" award for sportsmanship. The Colonials also have on their roster, the NCCHSHL's three leading scorers: Dave Tevebaugh, Matt Mower and Mike Charleton.

The LBCSHL (Lower Bucks County Scholastic Hockey League), which plays its games at Face-Off Circle in Warminster and Grundy's Rink in Bristol, sends its regular season champion to the Flyers Cup, and this year that team is Bishop Egan.

The Eagles, who concluded their regular season with a 16-2 record, have played consistent hockey all season, and their only two setbacks have been two powerhouses, Council Rock and Central Bucks East in "crossover" games. (Four of the six area leagues had "crossover" games this season, games against teams from another league. The LBCSHL had an interchange with the SHSHL (Suburban High School Hockey League) and the ICSHL had "crossover" games with the ESHL (Eastern High School Hockey League). The games counted in both league's standings.)

Bishop Egan's top scorer is center Mike DeSantis and

Edwardsville Eagles' success is the stellar play of their goalie Rich Burgess.

"Burgess is world-class," said Council Rock coach Paul Gilligan, whose undefeated team possesses a win over the Egan keeper and his teammates. "All season long, we've scored on about 40 percent of our shots. Against him, we had 58 shots and only had five goals."

Gilligan's Council Rock team is the favorite to be the SHSHL's representative in this year's Flyers Cup. The Indians were 15-0-2 at the conclusion of their regular-season schedule. After a league playoff opening-round series against Bishop Eustace, Council Rock was expected to face Central Bucks East in the finals.

"We definitely have to be the favorites to win the league," said Gilligan. "We're undefeated, and the closest game we've had when we've had everybody playing has been a 10-2 win over Germantown Academy. In both our ties, we were missing a lot of players."

The Indians, who prior to the playoffs, had outscored their opponents 175-28, are led offensively by the league's leading scorer, center Steve Karl. He is joined on the Rock's first line by

Ron Geiges and George McIntyre. The Indians' top defensemen are Lance Harry, Mark Cervellero and Mike Kelly.

Malvern Prep, last year's Flyers Cup Champion, is a favorite to return again this season to defend its crown. The Friars must win the ESHSL playoffs to secure the league's berth in the big tourney, which will be held at the league's home rink, the Skatium.

The Friars, who are paced offensively by Chic Kelly, Jim Gibson and the Mulhern brothers, Rob and Ryan, opened the playoffs with a series against Haverford High and were expected to meet Haverford School in the finals. Malvern's defense is anchored by defender Dan Kelly and goalie Jason Myrtetus.

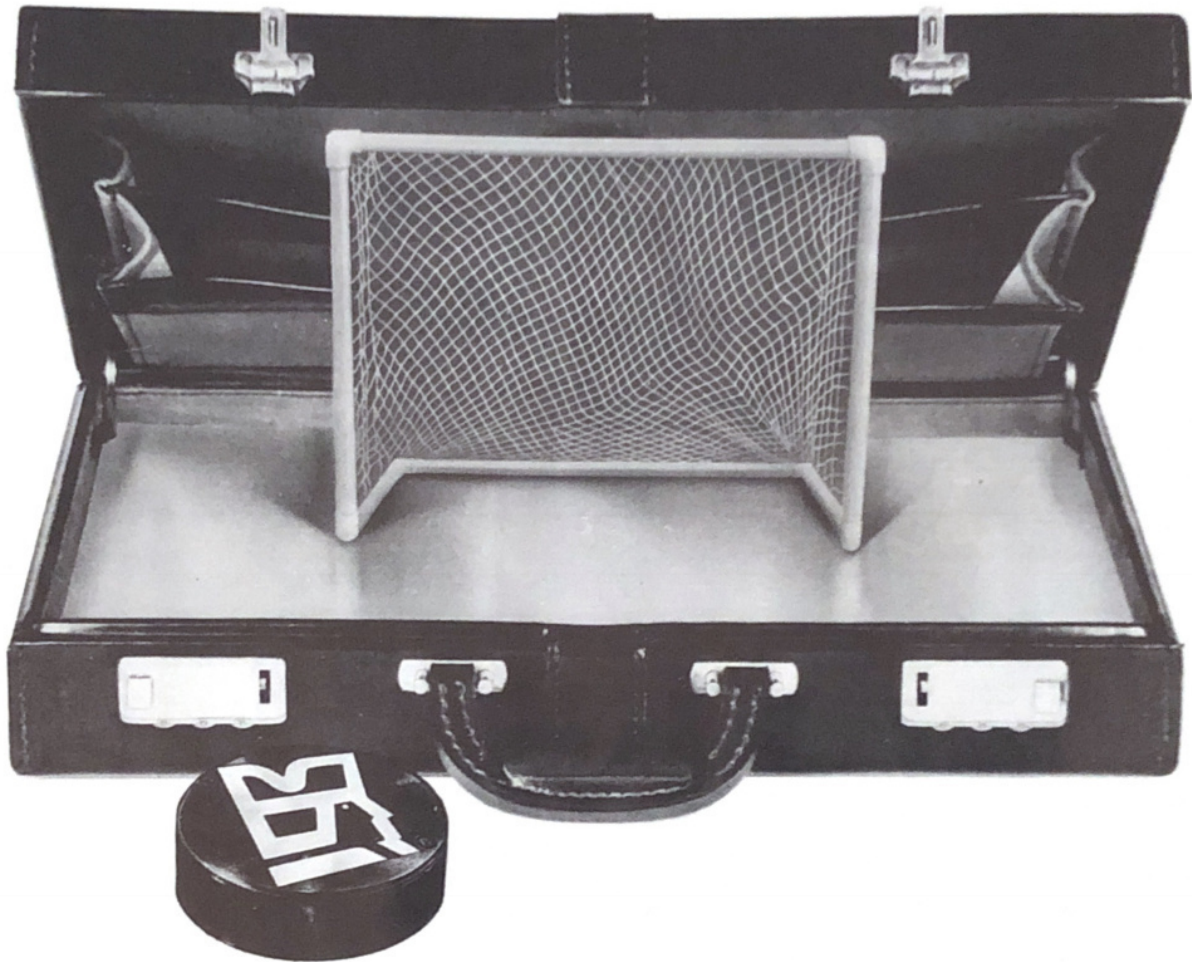
In the NSHL (Northern Scholastic Hockey League), William Tennent was the odds-on favorite to make it through the playoffs on top. The Panthers, however, had to deal with Archbishop Wood in the league championship final playoff series.

Both teams are scrappy, hard-working teams without a big-name star. The Wood Vikings rely on a pair of steady defenders, Tommy Geib and Dave Flacco, while Tennent's fortunes rest with their top-flight netminder, Scott Shaw.



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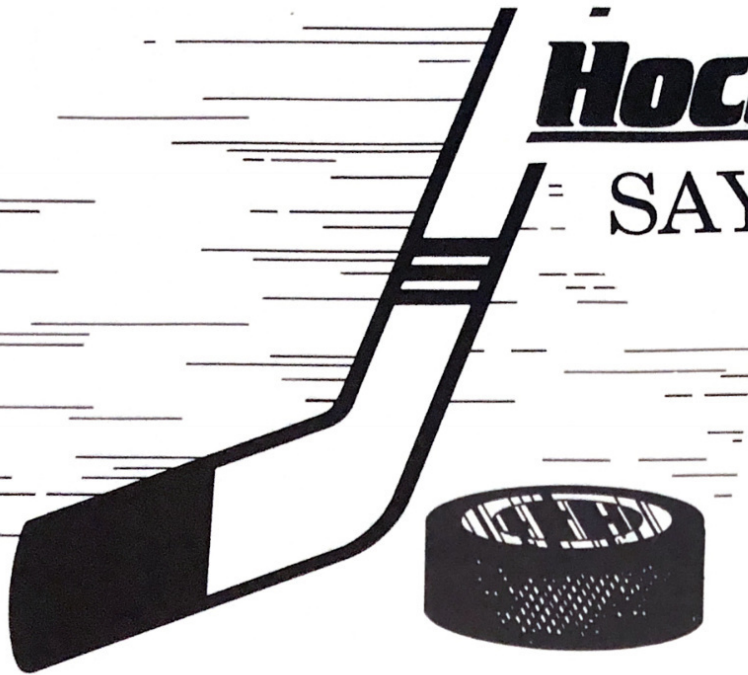
A YEAR AGO: THE 1987 FLYERS CUP

Some of the memories of the 1987 Flyer's Cup Scholastic Championship are captured in the photographs on this page. Keith Allen dropped the puck to mark the ceremonial beginning of the tournament. Bruce Craig was the color commentator for Harron Cable TV and is shown doing a between periods interview with Jay Snider. Snider enjoys being in the stands at the Skatium to watch the action and is seen talking with Andy Abramson. Eli Lutz was presented with the "Joe Scott Unsung Hero Award" for his unselfish dedication to youth hockey. Andy Abramson watched as Joseph C. Moderski presented the "Coach of the Year" award to a most deserving Tom Egan. Egan's Malvern Prep Friars gave him the best retirement gift of all - The Flyers' Cup.



Hockey Central

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DAVE POULIN ADDRESSES ANNUAL COLLEGE PLANNING SEMINAR

A capacity crowd of over 200 people filled OVATIONS, The Club at the Spectrum, as Hockey Central presented its annual College Planning Seminar for high school students and their parents.

Dave Poulin, Flyers' captain and a 1982 graduate of the University of Notre Dame, delighted the crowd with his stories of growing up in Ontario and playing youth hockey. Poulin was very candid with the audience as he related the manner in which he marketed himself to Notre Dame. Throughout his presentation, he used the word "discipline." He urged the teenagers to discipline their study habits and their athletic training. There is, he said, "a delicate but necessary balance" between the two.

Frank Segal, President of College Financial Planners in Huntingdon Valley, PA explained via a slide presentation, college financial aid. As he defined financial aid, expected family contribution, FAF and PHEAA forms, he stressed that the key to paying the ever-increasing college costs is advance planning.

The college ranks are full of natives from New England and the Midwest. This is logical because ice, both indoor and outdoor, is plentiful in these regions and most high schools offering ice hockey as a varsity sport are in these areas. Joan Schofield, Educational Consultant for Hockey Central, described the true but unbalanced statistics of player demographics. There are approximately 95 vacancies on teams each year with the ECAC and Hockey East, both Division I leagues. Fifty percent of the 95 openings will be filled by Canadians; half of the spots in the remaining fifty (24) will be occupied by players hailing from the Greater Boston area. The rest of the country, including the talent-rich states of Minnesota and Michigan, will compete for the last 24 spaces. These facts explain why an athlete must possess elite hockey skills to attend a school that harbors a top Division I team.

Mrs. Schofield acknowledged that the Delaware Valley area is receiving increased status in the minds of the college coaches and scouts. One reason for the pervasive presence of Delaware Valley hockey is exposure. Each week Hockey Central distributes a release which brings the top teams, players and events of the Delaware Valley to the attention of college coaches and publications throughout the nation. Coaches are getting the message that there is a growing reservoir of talent in the tri-state area and they are beginning to realize the benefits of tapping it.





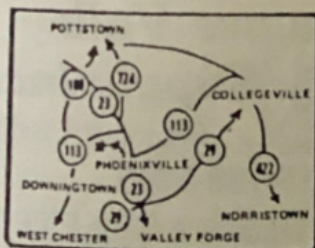
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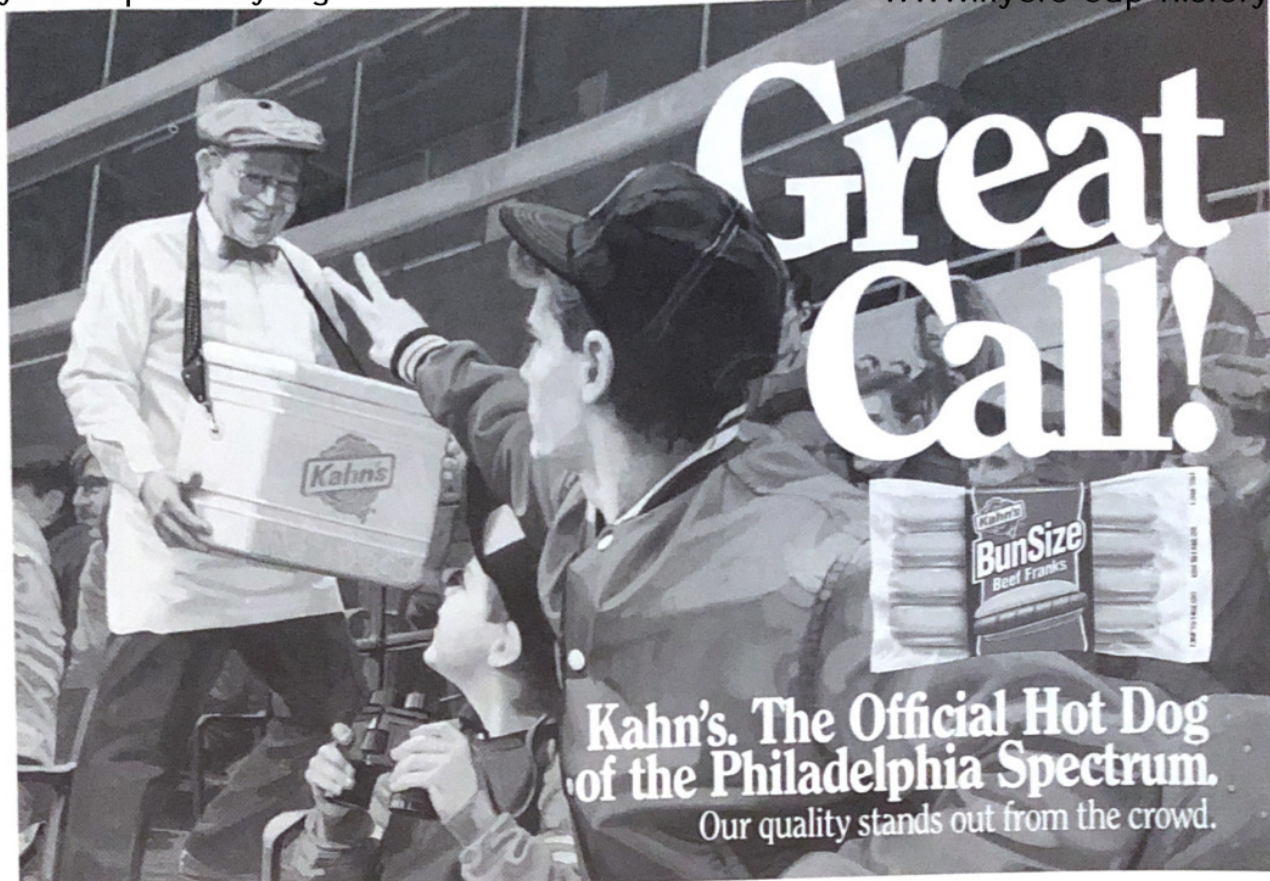
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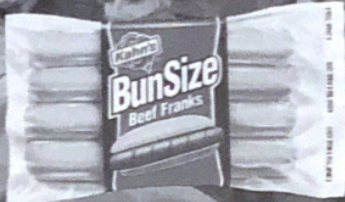


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YOUTH HOCKEY AT THE SPECTRUM

Before the crowds arrive on the afternoons prior to Flyers games, hockey is played at the Spectrum. No not by ghosts and goblins or by employees of the Spectrum but by real hockey players who have dreamed of one day playing on the same ice that a Stanley Cup was won on by the Flyers on that famous day in May 1974.

"Youth hockey at the Spectrum is all part of the corporate commitment shared by the Philadelphia Flyers and The Spectrum," said Aaron Siegel, Managing General Partner of Spectacor Management and originator of the Spectrum Youth Hockey Series in 1979.

The teams in the area were looking for extra and in some cases necessary ice time to complete league play. The Spectrum with its accessibility and available ice was a natural avenue to pursue. Hockey Central, as the central source of all youth hockey activity in the Delaware Valley made the scheduling and coordination easy, "Siegel added.

"Every kid who plays youth hockey wants to play where the Flyers do, at the Spectrum," said Joe Moderski, Chairman of the Flyers Cup Committee. "Hockey Central and the Flyers make this possible with free ice and low cost building charges."

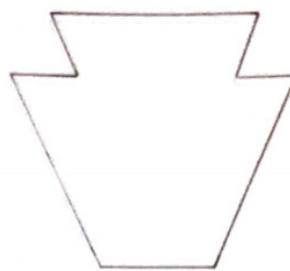
The charges are associated with necessary costs like security, cleanup, scoreboard operation and announcing. But the thrill associated with playing at the Spectrum, makes it all worthwhile.

The games, which are open to the public, are held in the afternoon. A big thrill for the players is to catch a glimpse or sometimes even talk to a Flyer or visiting NHL player or coach.

"Bobby Clarke stood and watched our team play last year," said Craig Forrest formerly of The Hill School and now a freshman at Yale University. "I don't know if he was scouting, but just knowing that Clarke was watching made it more exciting."

"We had a boy from Finland on our team last season, and Ilkka Sinisalo took some time and spoke to him," said Jim Gannon, former coach of Pennsbury High School.

So if you thought only the Flyers or a bunch of figure skaters from the Ice Capades or Disney on Ice, were the only ones to grace the ice at the Spectrum, guess again, because tomorrow, it could be your son or daughter playing there.



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