



FACE OFF

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN HOCKEY LEAGUE BOOSTER CLUBS

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Providence Makes Donations

The Providence Bruins Fan Club made a couple check presentations recently. On April 16th, the PBFC made the first donation of \$1,788.50 from proceeds from their 5th Annual Steak Fry to the Special Olympics Rhode Island. A few weeks later, the PBFC held a 2nd check presentation, again in the amount of \$1,788.50, to Special Olympics

Rhode Island. The PBFC Steak Fry Committee has done a great job!

Also, the Fan Club was proud to present its' 2nd PBFC Honorary Lifetime Membership to Keith Wilcox for his support, service, and dedication.



The photo on the right is of James Lynch, a former Providence Bruins Fan Club Executive Board member, and Honorary Lifetime member. He passed away on May 6, 2015.

Jimmy was a US Army veteran.

Jimmy was married to Norma Cianci Lynch for 67 years.

He was a highly successful coach in swimming and football. He coached for 56 years.



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Mission Statement

The purpose of this organization will be:

- To promote better understanding between Booster Clubs and the American Hockey League Organization.
- To Compare and attempt to alleviate problems confronting each individual Booster Club.
- To act as a social organization for Booster Club members.

Submitting an Article

To submit an article to this newsletter, please email it to lighthouseman2@yahoo.com with "AAHLBC Newsletter" in the subject line.

Please note: Your club must be a member of the AAHLBC in order to submit an article to this newsletter.

Editor: Bill Walch

New Division Alignment for 2015-2016

ATLANTIC DIVISION		CENTRAL DIVISION	
	BRIDGEPORT SOUND TIGERS		CHARLOTTE CHECKERS
	HARTFORD WOLF PACK		CHICAGO WOLVES
	HERSHEY BEARS		GRAND RAPIDS GRIFFINS
	LEHIGH VALLEY PHANTOMS		IOWA WILD
	PORTLAND PIRATES		LAKE ERIE MONSTERS
	PROVIDENCE BRUINS		MANITOBA MOOSE
	SPRINGFIELD FALCONS		MILWAUKEE ADMIRALS
	WILKES-BARRE/SCRANTON PENGUINS		ROCKFORD ICEHOGS
NORTH DIVISION		PACIFIC DIVISION	
	ALBANY DEVILS		BAKERSFIELD CONDORS
	BINGHAMTON SENATORS		ONTARIO REIGN
	ROCHESTER AMERICANS		SAN ANTONIO RAMPAGE
	ST. JOHN'S ICECAPS		SAN DIEGO GULLS
	SYRACUSE CRUNCH		SAN JOSE BARRACUDA
	TORONTO MARLIES		STOCKTON HEAT
	UTICA COMETS		TEXAS STARS

Booster Club Happenings

The **HARTFORD WOLFPACK BOOSTER CLUB** had some special guests at a recent membership meeting. The Bourque brothers stopped by to chat with the booster club.

The **ROCHESTER AMERICANS BOOSTER CLUB** will be celebrating their 50th year as an AHL booster club.

The **ROCKFORD ICEHOGS BOOSTER CLUB** raised \$1,776 from 50/50 sales, a jersey raffle and assorted donations for the April 9th Tornado Relief Fund. The booster club voted to add another \$1,000 to the pot, thus making the total donation \$2,776.

The **PITTSBURGH PENGUINS BOOSTER CLUB** got some good news! The Autism Society of Pittsburgh shared the total proceeds from Christmas ornament sales for 2014 was \$18,143.96. The Penguins have supported the Booster club in selling the ornaments for the past 7 years and this has enabled the club to donate \$104,582.23 to the Autism Society from these sales.

The **SAN ANTONIO RAMPAGE BOOSTER CLUB** will be getting together Friday, September 11 for the San Antonio Foam Glow 5K.



At last, Monarchs rule the AHL

From www.theahl.com June 13, 2015

UTICA, N.Y. (theahl.com) ... The Manchester Monarchs ended their 14-year tenure in the American Hockey League on the highest of notes, capturing their first Calder Cup championship on Saturday night with a 2-1 win over the Utica Comets.

The Monarchs took the series, four games to one, to complete a memorable final season in Manchester. The Los Angeles Kings' top affiliate will play in Ontario, Calif., beginning in the fall.

The Monarchs won the Cup after also finishing first overall during the regular season. Under head coach Mike Stothers, Manchester went 50-17-6-3 (109 points) in 2014-15 and eliminated the Portland Pirates (3-2), the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins (4-1) and the Hartford Wolf Pack (4-0) before defeating Utica in the Finals.

Jordan Weal, a Second Team AHL All-Star during the regular season, captured the Jack A. Butterfield Trophy as the MVP in the Calder Cup Playoffs after totaling 10 goals and 12 assists for a league-best 22 points, along with a plus-12 rating, in 19 playoff games. The 23-year old Weal was a third-round selection by Los



Angeles in the 2010 NHL Entry Draft.

In Game 5, Adrian Kempe and Vincent LoVerde scored goals 3:07 apart midway through the first period to grab a 2-0 lead, and Patrik Bartosak and the Monarchs defense made the lead stand up the rest of the way. Bartosak, who made his first career playoff start in Game 4, finished with 31 saves on the night, allowing only a single goal to Cal O'Reilly with 14.8 seconds left in regulation.

The game was played before another capacity crowd at the Utica Memorial Auditorium (3,835), the 13th sellout of the playoffs and 40th overall this season for the Comets.

Manchester's victory brings an end to the AHL's 79th season.

In operation since 1936, the AHL continues to serve as the top development league for all 30 National Hockey League teams. More than 88 percent of today's NHL players are American Hockey League graduates, and this season marked the 14th consecutive year in which more than 6 million fans attended AHL games across North America.

Syracuse to host 2016 AHL All-Star Classic

From www.theahl.com

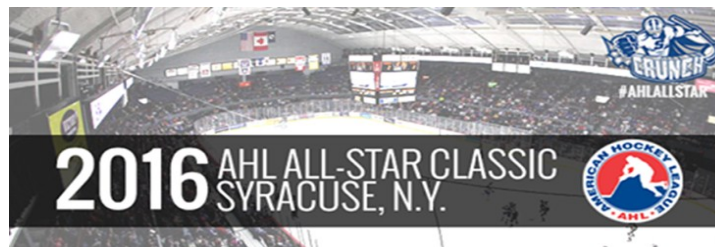
SPRINGFIELD, Mass. ... American Hockey League President and CEO David Andrews announced today that the AHL Board of Governors has unanimously approved the selection of the Syracuse Crunch as host of the 2016 AHL All-Star Classic.

The 2016 AHL All-Star Classic will include the AHL All-Star Skills Competition on Sunday, January 31, followed by the AHL All-Star Game on Monday, February 1, taking place at the Onondaga County War Memorial Arena in downtown Syracuse, N.Y.

"As we prepare to commemorate the American Hockey League's 80th anniversary next season, we are excited to bring the All-Star Classic to one of the cities that served as a charter member of our league in 1936," said Andrews. "The historic War Memorial Arena will provide a perfect backdrop to celebrate our past while showcasing the brightest young stars in hockey."

While the Crunch enter their 22nd season as members of the AHL in 2015-16, the city's history in the league can be traced back to the Syracuse Stars, who won the very first Calder Cup championship in 1936-37.

The American Hockey League will host a media conference to formally introduce the Syracuse Crunch as host of the 2016 AHL All-Star Classic on Wednesday, May 27, at 1 p.m., inside the Onondaga County War Memorial. Ticket information for the 2016 AHL All-Star Classic will be announced at that time; details about other social events taking place, including the AHL Hall of Fame Induction and Awards Ceremony, will be announced at a later date.



"We are excited and extremely honored for our team and community to host the 2016 AHL All-Star Classic," said Syracuse Crunch owner Howard Dolgon. "Fans from Syracuse and around the region will be treated to an amazing two-day event both on and off the ice."

"Hosting the 2016 AHL All-Star Classic is great news," said Onondaga County Executive Joanie Mahoney. "We've all seen Howard Dolgon's ability to create exciting events that generate national attention for the Syracuse Crunch and I am excited to see what he has in store for the AHL All-Star Classic. Thank you to David Andrews and the AHL Board of Governors for honoring our strong hockey history and we look forward to welcoming all of you during the 80th anniversary season of the AHL."

The 2016 AHL All-Star Classic will feature the top young talent in the American Hockey League: Of the 679 players to take part in the AHL All-Star Classic since 1995, more than 93 percent have competed in the National Hockey League, including Patrice Bergeron, Ben Bishop, Troy Brouwer, Ryan Callahan, Zdeno Chara, Logan Couture, Jiri Hudler, Tyler Johnson, Chris Kunitz, Ryan Miller, Gustav Nyquist, Zach Parise, Tuukka Rask, Pekka Rinne, Bobby Ryan, Martin St. Louis, Cory Schneider, Patrick Sharp, Jason Spezza, Eric Staal, P.K. Subban and Mats Zuccarello.

In operation since 1936, the AHL continues to serve as the top development league for all 30 National Hockey League teams. More than 88 percent of today's NHL players are American Hockey League graduates, and for the 14th year in a row, more than 6 million fans attended AHL games across North America in 2014-15.

Reflecting Back... By Bill Walch

When the Monarchs announced in 2001 they would play in Manchester, I naturally became a Monarchs fan. I bought season tickets. Started off with two seats, went up to four seats, then dropped to one seat when I found it hard to get anyone to go to the games. Eventually stopped all together and mostly went to road games.

Most people may know I like to travel and I have had many opportunities to do so by hitting the road (or jumping on a plane at MHT) when the Monarchs do. I have sat with the "enemy" as a visitor in many arenas around the league. In most places I was treated with respect. Being that there were seven New England teams in the AHL, the only issues (outside of playoff games in Hershey) I have ever had were from New England fans (not fellow booster club members, just the drunk casual ones...lol).

I have had the pleasure of going to AHL cities (30 in all, past and present) like Hershey, WB-Scranton, Norfolk, Charlotte, San Antonio, Houston, Omaha, Des Moines, Peoria, Milwaukee, Rockford and Chicago. My all-time favorite trip was to St. John's, Newfoundland for a couple games. Both the team and my traveling companions got fogged in after the last game and had to spend another couple of nights in St. John's. My friend Ray Clarke was concerned about his job, but my boss just told me to keep him up-to-date.

In the last 14 seasons, I have had a ton of experiences and each was unique. I wouldn't go back and change any of them. The people I have met both while visiting cities around the league and through the Association of AHL Booster Clubs has been amazing! I knew when I was going on the road I would see friendly faces around the league. It made it easier to say "Let's Go"!!!

Some of the arenas were newer and larger, but a lot of them were older and smaller than what we had here in Manchester. Each had it's own character. I liked some more than others and I liked some even more than Manchester's home arena. For me, the smaller the arena the better the atmosphere. NBA arenas are too big for AHL hockey, although that is my opinion only.

All the trips I have taken were a blast. I have had some special people to travel with over the years. I have played a few jokes on Ray Clarke over the years. He is easy to get freaked out about stuff. One time in Harford, Michelle Gagnon and Ray Clarke were under the covers in bed. Prior to this moment, I had told Michelle the plan I was hatching. I got on the bed and produced a ring and asked Ray to marry me. I won't put here what he said, but we laughed a lot. The liquor store trip earlier in the day was hysterical.

Once in Norfolk, Ray was flying in to Norfolk Airport. We were trying to figure out what we can do to Ray. I don't remember how it all came about, but we stopped at Walmart to buy dresses for Paul Kemp, Dan Barrett and I. The idea was Ray would use the hotel bathroom eventually and the three of us would get into the dresses

and surprise him when he comes out. While shopping, we found out it was cheaper to get nightgowns. One was blue, another green and the last one was pink. Ray came out of the bathroom and the look on his face was priceless. He ran back to the bathroom and locked the door...hahaha.

Now that the Manchester Monarchs AHL team has up and left Manchester, NH for Ontario, California, the opportunity to travel for hockey has pretty much come to an end. The Manchester Monarchs team will still exist, but they will be in the ECHL. However, I don't think at that level of hockey, spending the money to road trip is worth it. Plus, I won't know anyone at those arenas. Knowing people in each city made traveling worth doing and was a large part of why I would go. It was like visiting family everywhere I went. There will be one exception...I will take a trip to see the ECHL Monarchs play the Orlando Solar Bears on January 28, 29, and 30. It will be a nice long weekend in a warmer climate than NH and MHT has direct flights into Orlando at that time of year.

I had the pleasure of traveling to Utica for games 4 & 5 during the Calder Cup Finals. Due to surgery I couldn't get to game 3. However, I begged my friend Louise to drive me there (I was on crutches and some good meds, so I wasn't allowed to drive). Utica was a tough ticket to get. The arena only holds 3,800 fans. It didn't help that Utica decided to open sales at the box office at 10 AM on a Friday, but not allow online sales until noontime. I saw it as a way to lock out Monarchs fans. Needless to say, all three games (3, 4 & 5) sold out by four minutes past noon.

It was a crazy experience in Utica. The place was sold out and the fans there were rabid in cheering for there team, yet all treated Louise and I with respect and were very welcoming at the games. And they were loud...soooo loud. That was the loudest I have ever heard a fan base during a game. That trip will forever be in my memory. It helps that Manchester won the Cup!

With Manchester out of the AHL, my plan is to go to Portland once a month to see AHL hockey. It will be kind of awkward to be cheering for the "enemy", but it is what it is.

The Monarchs held a celebration on the Tuesday after the team won the championship. It was held at their home rink, the Verizon Wireless Arena. The players were introduced and Max (mascot) carried out the Calder Cup. A couple players spoke, then a video montage of the playoff run. The championship banner was raised to the roof by the players. This was done because the team was moving over the summer. Hopefully, with NHL expansion on the horizon, maybe Manchester can land another AHL club in the not-to-distant future. I can only hope.

