



February 13, 2015

Dear friends of West Ranch Hockey Club,

What an exciting time of year for hockey families. Youth, college and NHL seasons are coming down to crunch time with playoff hopes on the line. This year is particularly busy as we prepare for our inaugural WRHC 2015 season and upcoming events. In this newsletter I will cover our March 21<sup>st</sup> WRHC tryout date, open enrollment and coaching update.

But before we talk about WRHC specifics, let me share with you some very exciting news from the west coast hockey world that has taken place since my last newsletter in December.

#### **ADHSHL vs. the State of Hockey**

The Santa Margarita Eagles Varsity and Junior Varsity High School Hockey teams who compete in the Anaheim Ducks High School Hockey League (ADHSHL) became the first high school hockey teams from California to play in the State of Hockey – Minnesota. The Eagles participated in the Wayzata Invitational hockey tournament. This tournament is well known for inviting top level teams from within Minnesota to play...and California High School hockey made a very impressive debut!

The Eagles Varsity team made it to the finals of the Silver division of the tournament, taking an early lead and falling just short at the end when Stillwater scored an empty net goal. The Eagles began the tournament playing the Wayzata hosts tough, losing a 2-1 decision. Then after losing to Lakeville, the Eagles rebounded by defeating Stillwater 2-0 and St Louis Park 4-1 to advance to the championship game. The JV team played very competitive as well, tying Minnetonka and losing very close games to Wayzata and famed Edina.

Those of you not familiar with Minnesota, these teams are some of the top high school programs in the country. As a matter of fact Edina, Wayzata, and Lakeville are all currently ranked in the MN top 10.

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In Minnesota, about 7,000 players from over 250 high schools play hockey every year. And Minnesota produces more NHL and college hockey players than any other state, currently 832 NCAA Division I and Division III hockey players. T.J. Oshie, Ryan McDonagh, David Backes, Derek Stepan, and 185 other professional hockey players all played high school hockey in MN. That's why Minnesota is called the State of Hockey.

There has been a lot of talk about the ADHSHL and just how good it is. I've had parents ask me about the level of play in the ADHSHL as compared to Tier hockey. Thank you Santa Margarita Varsity and Junior Varsity for answering this question on the ice – the ADHSHL is the real deal folks. And the high level of competition is being recognized, next season they are expecting over 50 teams in the ADHSHL – over 20 Varsity and 30 Junior Varsity teams.

### **Go West Young Hockey Player**

January was a big month for west coast hockey. Another big event was Arizona State University announcing they will have a NCAA Division I men's hockey team next season. The hope is that with Arizona State opting to add hockey, other Pac-12 schools will follow suit to reduce travel costs for the program. As it stands, the closest Division I competitors for ASU are Air Force and Colorado College in Colorado Springs and Denver University. There are very few Division I schools in the western United States. There are currently 59 Division I hockey schools.

*"Hockey in general on the West Coast, to say it's growing is a gross understatement," ASU coach Greg Powers said. "Last year alone, 59 kids from the state of California played Division I hockey, 14 from Arizona. We plan to recruit heavily in the west."* ASU currently has three players from Santa Clarita on their roster.

In addition, the Kings and Ducks both moved their AHL farm teams to California, in total five AHL teams and three ECHL teams have now moved to CA! The American Hockey League is creating a California-based Pacific Division next season, creating a major boon for western NHL teams. The new cities for the NHL's top developmental league will be in San Jose (Sharks), Stockton (Calgary Flames), Bakersfield (Edmonton Oilers), Ontario (Los Angeles Kings) and San Diego (Anaheim Ducks).

And CAHA announced that top players from the ADHSHL and Northern California High School hockey league will combine to form two all-star teams to compete at the 2015 Annual America's Showcase National Tournament. With the growth of high school hockey in the state of California, the tournament organizing committee has permitted CAHA to participate with two teams in this year's event. The tournament, scheduled for April 9-13 at the Robert Morris University Island Sports Center in Pittsburgh, Pa., will feature the best high school hockey teams in the nation. Last year, Team California reached the finals. This tournament is an annual event for scouts from many colleges, junior hockey programs and central scouting organizations throughout the country. The teams will consist of only junior and senior students in good academic standing.

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Speaking of ADHSHL talent, Eemu Selanne (Teemu's son) who played for Santa Margarita was selected to Team Finland. Teemu's other two sons currently play in the ADHSHL for Santa Margarita, Eemil is a senior on the Varsity and Leevi is a freshman on the JV team.

The days of telling kids that if they are serious about hockey they need to get out of California are officially over. The timing of West Ranch High School hockey could not be any better! Our players now have the option to develop and be scouted right here in Santa Clarita playing high school hockey.

**WRHC Tryouts – Saturday March 21<sup>st</sup>**

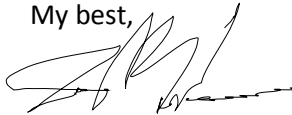
We will send out more details as the date gets closer, including instructions for pre-registration, but I want all of you to mark your calendars and get the word out as our tryouts will be held on Saturday, March 21 at Ice Station Valencia and West Ranch High School.

**West Ranch High School Open Enrollment Deadline is April 3<sup>rd</sup>**

West Ranch High School has been identified as an open enrollment school for the 2015-2016 school year. Click [here](#)  to download an open enrollment form, which you may complete and drop off at the school registrar's office. For further information, please contact the Registrar, Mary Walsh, at 661 222-1220 or by email [mwalsh@hartdistrict.org](mailto:mwalsh@hartdistrict.org).

Finally, we are close to finalizing our WRHC coaching staff and will announce that before our March 21<sup>st</sup> tryout so keep in touch and start getting excited as we will be on the ice very soon!

My best,



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