



# PORTLAND WINTERHAWKS

## Booster Club

### HAWKEY TALK - SEASON PREVIEW 09-10

#### Presidents Message

When the lights went off at the MC in March, it was going to be a long wait for the return of hockey. Thankfully that wait is about over. As the President of the Booster Club, I have been busy trying to locate ideas that would help us reach our lofty goals we set for ourselves this upcoming season. The board has met and we have looked into some great ideas for this year.

Among some of the plans, are 3 bus trips this season, with Tri Cities and Seattle ( Kent) as the possible stops. In addition, with the assistance of Ibiqity Digital Corporation and HD Radio, we are hoping to run 3 Chuck A Puck events with prizes already to go. We will have a Hi Definition Tuner for the center basket and HD Car Stereos for the side baskets.

We also will be offering an incentive to the Booster Membership this season. Booster Meetings are always monitored for attendance, but we thought we'd reward your attendance. One additional HD Tuner will be available for a raffle at the final meeting in March. Every meeting you attend will earn one ticket, if you attend all the meetings you'll have 6 tickets. One winner will be drawn to claim the big prize, but you have to be at the final meeting to be in the draw as all the tickets will be handed out then!

The Booster Club is asking for a huge turnout at the first Booster Meeting in October, date to be finalized in the next couple of weeks. We have

#### Letter from the Editor

The 2009—2010 season is right around the corner. Tonight marks the first preseason game of the season. The Hawks will be traveling to both Everett and Tri Cities for their preseason tournaments before opening on the road September 19th in Kent. Between now and then you will get the chance to see many players trying to make not only the 2009—2010 roster, but also get on to one of the most guarded secrets in all of Junior Hockey, the protected player list. Coach Johnston is expecting a very competitive camp and preseason.

This past off season was pretty special to several of the 2008-2009 players, Brad Ross represented Team Canada, Brett Ponich was the lone Hawk selected in the NHL Draft, several players were invited to NHL camps, and Travis Ehrhardt signed with the Red Wings. In all, six Hawks will be off at NHL Camps, compared with two last season. This shows the team is headed in the right direction.

This season we will once again bring you submissions from Andy Kemper, Coach Mike Johnston, players (Brett Ponich and Brad Ross in this issue) and a surprise or two along the way. Get ready fans, this should be a season to remember, and as they say in spring baseball, anything can happen along the way, that's why you play the games. Everyone has a chance to go all the way.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE  
<http://www.pwhbc.com>

## Pizza Blast Update Shows

Stark Street Pizza  
Tentative Schedule

October—26th  
November—23rd  
December—14th  
January—25th  
February—8th  
March—8th

### **BUS TRIPS!**

The Boosters have tentatively scheduled the following bus trips:

#1—December 12—Tri Cities  
#2—January 16—Tri Cities  
#3—March 13—Seattle (Kent)

### Players of the Month 2008—2009

07—08 Fan Favorite —Kurtis Mucha

October — Killian Hutt

November — Chris Francis

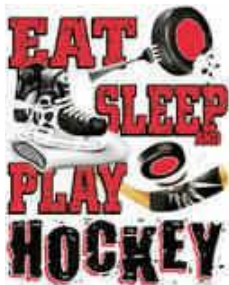
December — Luke Walker

January — Chris Francis

February — Radim Valchar

08—09 Fan Favorite — Chris Francis

**Remember to vote for the 2009—2010 players!**

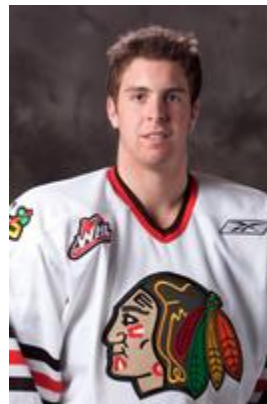


## Tentative Booster Meeting Dates—

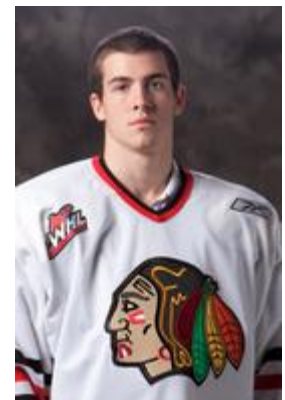
Saturday October 10th—Memorial Coliseum  
Saturday November 14th—Memorial Coliseum  
Saturday December 19th—Rose Garden  
Saturday January 2nd—Memorial Coliseum  
Saturday February 20th—Memorial Coliseum  
(Nominations Meeting)  
Saturday March 6th—Rose Garden (Elections Meeting)

### **2009—2010 Board Members**

President—Stuart Kemp  
Vice President—Andy Potter  
Treasurer—Debi Koberstein  
Recording Secretary—John Fisher  
Corresponding Secretary—Cathy Kemp  
Sgt at Arms—Ron Spencer  
Past President—Linda Donaldson  
Council Member—Tami Hall  
Council Member—Mike Hall  
Council Member—Katie Poland  
Council Member—Elke Thomas  
Council Member—Arlie Brown  
Council Member—Mary Ellen Brown



Brad Ross wins Gold as part of Team Canada!



The St. Louis Blues Select Brett Ponich in the second round of the 2009 NHL Entry Draft!



## Shortest Long Off-Season Ever

By Andy Kemper

I remember thinking when the season ended on March 15 at the MC against Chilliwack that the long off-season was going to just that – long – and that it would take forever to get to August for training camp.

Well...here we are a little over five months later and it all seemed to go by so fast.

The reason it went by fast is that for the first time in recent memory, the off-season was full of news surrounding the team. News about Bantam Drafts, NHL Drafts, Import Drafts, signings, players being named to National teams, scheduling and so much more...if you've been under a rock for the past five months, here are some of the highlights of a shorter than anticipated off-season:

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- First off, the biggest news that affects me is the hiring of Todd Vrooman to be my new color analyst for the 2009-10 season. Todd is, of course, Dean "Scooter" Vrooman's son and has grown up around the Hawk organization and I'm looking forward to hearing the analysis of the game from his younger and educated view.
- At the end of April, the Winterhawks (oh yeah...that changed too...still getting used to typing it as one word!), won the WHL Bantam Draft lottery and selected defenseman Derrick Pouliot in the first position of the draft. Pouliot is from Weyburn, SK, and is known as a skilled, puck moving defenseman who plays with poise and confidence.
- In June, Hawks defenseman Brett Ponich was selected in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Round (#48 overall) of the NHL Entry Draft by the St. Louis Blues. Ponich attended the Blues prospect camp in July and drew rave reviews from the Blues brass and will attend their training camp in September.
- Also in June, the Hawks made a move to move up in the CHL Import Draft, sending a couple draft picks to Moose Jaw, to land Switzerland native Nino Niederreiter in the second spot of that draft. Niederreiter is a 1992 born forward who is NHL draft eligible in 2010 and is highly touted. Head Coach Mike Johnston saw Niederreiter at the World U18 Championships in Fargo, ND, prior to the draft. The Hawks then used their second round pick to select 1991 born forward Jacob Berglund from Sweden.
- Brad Ross was named to Team Canada for the U18 Ivan Hlinka Memorial Tournament in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Ross and Canada won gold. Seth Swenson also was selected for Team USA for the U17 Five Nations Tournament in Germany.
- After playing only 6 games last year in the Rose Garden, the Hawks will play half of their home games, 18 of the 36, in the larger building in 2009-10.
- This was also the summer of signings...both expected and unexpected...here is a list of players that have committed to playing for the Winterhawks over the summer:

Spencer Bennett – 19 year old – 5<sup>th</sup> Round NHL Draft Pick of the Calgary Flames

Taylor Aronson – 18 year old defenseman from Southern California

Ryan Johansen – 17 year old forward – played in BCHL last year (7<sup>th</sup> Round – 2007)

Seth Swenson – 16 year old forward from Parker, CO (10<sup>th</sup> Round in 2008)

Derrick Pouliot – 15 year old defenseman – Hawks 1<sup>st</sup> Round Bantam Pick in 2009

Taylor Leier – 15 year old forward – Hawks 2<sup>nd</sup> Round Bantam Pick in 2009

Josh Hanson – 15 year old defenseman from Alaska – Hawks 8<sup>th</sup> Round Bantam Pick in 2009

## Shortest Off Season Ever, Continued By Andy Kemper

Phew...that's a busy off-season...all building up to what will hopefully be a much better season on the ice for the Winterhawks and their fans.

Mike Johnston, Travis Green, Kyle Gustafson and the Hawks scouting staff have done their best to improve the talent level on the roster, and, on paper, the season looks promising. Of course, the game isn't played on paper and only time will tell how the Hawks fare in 2009-10.

I'm writing this on the eve of training camp and there is an air of excitement and anticipation. It is less than a month until the puck drops for real on September 19 at the ShoWare Center in Kent. There is camp and pre-season to get through...but that should zoom by.

The newest era of the Winterhawks starts now...are you ready?

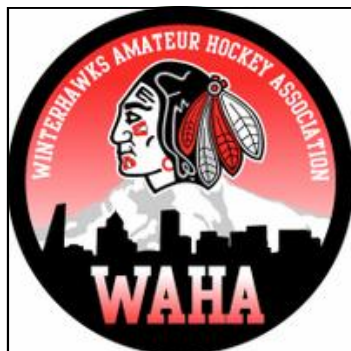
I am...GO HAWKS!

## Presidents Message Cont

ratified the Constitution and Bylaws amendments through the Board, but need ratification through the Membership for the measures to be adopted as law. Your help to vote on the measures will ensure that the measures have ample hearing. For that reason we will not have a speaker that night, but will have one in November and I am certain that the road swing will be one to talk about.

We look forward to making Christmas ornaments again this year and maybe a couple other surprises along the way, we'll see. Hope your email addresses are current, let us know if they aren't and be sure to join the new PWHBC Facebook group page [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and look up groups for Portland Winterhawks Booster Club. We also have a Twitter page <https://www.twitter.com/PWHBC>. We hope that by adding these links plus our website [www.pwhbc.com](http://www.pwhbc.com), we will be able to make sure everyone gets informed.

Enjoy preseason and get ready for the regular season!



During the summer of 2009, The Portland Winterhawks helped form WAHA. The mission of WAHA is to get kids involved with Hockey. The Winterhawks boosters are proud to help support WAHA, the Portland Jr. Hawks, NW Selects and youth Hockey in the Portland Metro Area.





## My Off Season with Brett Ponich and Brad Ross



Hawkey Talk caught up with Brett Ponich and asked him about his summer—

**Brett**—It's that time of year again, where players from all over North America and Europe come to Portland with hopes to make the Portland Winterhawks. I truly feel privileged to be part of a group of play-

ers on this team that people call "Veterans". The past two seasons that I have played for the Hawks have been a truly influential time in my life. I have learned many things not only about hockey but also about life and living away from home. I am very excited to see what this New Year brings and am confident that this year will see a very good Winterhawks team.

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When I was asked to write on how it felt to get drafted this past June, I really did not know what to say. As I thought more about it, I began to worry that I would have too much to say. The emotions that I felt on draft day or like none I have ever experienced in my life. Have you ever had a dream, where you were on your favorite vacation and then woken and realized that this very vacation was beginning that day? The first disbelief and then excitement that follows is very interesting experience. I promised myself previous to the draft that I would refrain from watching T.V or checking the draft in anyway. I did not want to torture myself waiting for my name to be called. On the second day of the draft, I set my alarm clock early to be up just in case. Sitting in my bed it wasn't fifteen minutes before I found myself on my computer checking were the draft had progressed to. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw my name at the bottom of the list. Before I could even read what team had picked me, my agent called me and informed me that I had been picked second round, forty eighth overall to the St. Louis Blues. I thanked him and hung up the phone.

I then called my parents, who had of course been watching the draft on T.V back home. My dad congratulated me and tried to speak with me over my mom's sobs. "You should be home..." I could hear in the background. I said goodbye to them and very shortly after that, my phone rang again. This time it was Hall of Famer and hockey legend Al McInnis. I almost fainted when he introduced himself. Over the course of that day it seemed like I was on the phone every five minutes. News spreads fast even in a small town like Beaumont, Alberta and I soon found myself with a flood of text messages from people I have gone to school with. That afternoon my billets took to me to the Oregon coast, as I had never been there. As I sat on the beach, my only regret was that my parents and sister could not be there to share the experience with me. Looking back now, beside that one point, I can't seem to picture a better day.

A lot of people ask me if I was surprised to go in the second round, or if I expected it. My agent was convinced that I would be picked in the second round but I thought that was too good to be true. I went into the draft not having any expectations, I wanted to get my foot in the door and the round didn't matter to me. Speaking with Paul Gaustad and other NHL players its seems like the draft doesn't mean much when camp time

# Talking Hockey with Coach Mike Johnston

Booster Club Newsletter – Aug 2009

Well it has been a busy summer and as always the warmer months always seem to slip by quickly. The priorities for our coaching staff since the end of the season have been focused around the bantam draft, development camp, NHL draft, and recruiting players.

With all of our scouts and management staff assembled in Edmonton we participated in our first WHL draft as a group. For two days we went through all the eligible 1994 born players in Western Canada and US. Gary Davidson and his staff had prepared in advance a complete depth chart with notes and ratings on their top 300 players. Believe it or not we discussed each one and then finalized our list for draft day. It was a long process but one in which I felt all our area scouts had a chance to go to bat for the players they really believed in. The final list was based on the “best players” and not rated by position. We were going to enter the draft with the intention of choosing the next player on our list. The most exciting part of draft day was having the first pick overall which is not the pick I want in the future but for that day it was great to be able to control our selection and announce – Derek Pouliot as the number one pick for 2009. In the end we were able to select 7 players from our top 50 list which is quite remarkable considering that there are 22 teams selecting in each round. It also shows you that there is quite a variance in the ranking of players from team to team. Only time will tell how each team did!

Following the draft we prepared for our development camp where we invited all recent drafts along with 1993 players on our list to Calgary for three days. This was an opportunity to meet the players along with their parents and educate them on the Portland Winterhawks and the WHL. Rich Campbell did some fitness testing but more importantly guided the players on how to train and what our priorities are in this area. We had a chance to evaluate the players on the ice and assess where they fit in to our overall depth chart. Although it is too early to determine where the 1994's (this year's draft) fit into our plans it did provide Travis and I with a chance to see the previous year's draft and 1993 list players.

This June was the first time I have been at the NHL draft in 9 years and not sat on the floor, so I had a chance to watch and get a different perspective on the proceedings. Basically we are at the draft to promote our players and also connect with agents regarding any unsigned players which are our property. The other reason for being in Montreal this year was to make final preparations for the Euro draft which was to take place three days following the NHL draft. Preparations for the Euro draft began earlier in the year but lists are finalized at the draft as agents determine if their clients are still coming over and if they are picked by and NHL team generally that team will have some say in where they are going to play for this season. Leaving Montreal we had two players who were on our priority list and in the end moved up to select Nino Niederreiter who was on everyone's list as a consensus top five pick. We liked his skill, skating ability and also his age. He is a player who could be with us for 3 three years. With our second round pick we chose Jacob Berglund who was highly recommended by an agent we trusted from Sweden. Although we

comes. It's important to prove yourself every time you lace up the skates. Before I end this I just wanted to thank my parents for their continued support and I hope to make you proud. Also, would like to thank all of the my billets for letting me stay with them during the season and off season. Lastly I would like to thank all of you fans for supporting not only me, but the team while I have been here in Portland. I am looking forward to this New Year and am glad to be a part of this organization.

## Hawkey Talk asked Brad Ross about his off season chance to play for Team Canada

Brad—Playing on Team Canada's U18 team was an amazing experience for me and winning the gold will be a memory I'll never forget. Getting a chance to play for your country is any little hockey players dream. Also it was a good marker to see where I stand in this years up coming draft.

## Talking Hockey With Coach Mike Johnston Continued -

hadn't seen him play he fit the type of player we were looking for and that was a skilled center.

We all want to congratulate Brett Ponich as he was selected in the 2nd round by St Louis which was quite an honor considering he was unranked at Christmas. Brett is a quality person who has worked very hard to get to where he is today and will be a key player for us this season. Immediately following the draft we had calls on several of our players who were not drafted including Mucha, Ehrhardt, Walker, and Jordan. All have subsequently been invited to NHL camps and as most of you know Travis Ehrhardt signed a three year deal with Detroit.

Heading into the summer we had developed a recruiting hit list and set out to sign or attempt to sign all of these players. Of the 11 players on the list we were excited to sign 9. There were two players we didn't get and they were William Wren who decided to honor his previous commitment to go to Denver University and Cason Hohmann who signed with Cedar Rapids of the USHL. Cason is definitely a player who we will continue to recruit this year and as of last month hadn't ruled out Portland but also has College options in his sites. In the end we were thrilled to get both our Euro's under contract along with Spencer Bennett (Calgary Flames draft who played in the BCJHL); Ryan Johansen (previously in Penticton of the BCJHL); Seth Swenson (Colorado Midget) and Taylor Aronson (LA Jr Kings Midget). We also decided to sign three players from this year's draft and they include Derrick Pouliot, Josh Hanson, and Taylor Leier.

Now it's time for a competitive, intense training camp and preseason schedule. Summer is over and the season is right around the corner.

# **PORTLAND WINTERHAWKS HOCKEY CLUB**