

The Westend Weekly

Bringing Communities Together



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The dream lives on



Women's Division Champions – Couchiching First Nation.



Men's Division Champions – Couchiching Thunderhawks



12-year old hockey player, Emily Kaun helped her mother Pam and Michelle Gartzke with the penny table to fundraise for her AAA hockey team.

By: Teresa Hazel

Thirty three years ago, Archie Potson from Seine River First Nation organized the first Central Canada Native Hockey Tournament, which went on for over fifteen years. It was in memory of Mr. Potson's vision that Tom Big George and Judy Morrison decided to bring back the Central Canada Hockey Tournament this past weekend to The Duke Arena on Couchiching First Nation.

Geraldine Potson and her children and grandchildren were there for the opening ceremony conducted by Elder Bessie Mainville and for the official puck-drop. Mrs. Potson was gifted with a commemorative puck by the

organizers and also brought along the inaugural puck used thirty three years ago.

"The first tournament was actually thirty three years ago to the day", enthused Tom Big George about the coincidence of the date after researching the history. "We didn't plan it that way".

"It's exciting. Very nice to see", said Mrs. Potson about the hockey tournament being re-established in memory of her husband. "He organized youth teams on Seine River and took them to tournaments", reminisced his son. "He would be happy to see the arena on Couchiching", agreed his wife and children adding that Archie was very passionate about the game of hockey. They also noted that "Duke" Bruyere helped organize the tournaments along with other community members.

The Duke Arena was filled with spectators who came out to watch six teams vying for first place in the Men's Division and six teams in the Women's Division.

Men's teams included the Whitefish Bay Predators, Whitefish Bay Rangers, Couchiching Thunderhawks, Fort Frances Canadians, Northwest Bay and Thunder Bay. Women's teams participating were the NWO Panthers, Emo Goal Diggers, Couchiching Thunderhawks, Onigaming First Nation, Emo Misfits and Grassy Narrows.

Northwest Bay and Whitefish Bay Predators kicked off tournament action in the Men's division on Friday with the Predators coming out on top.

After a weekend of festivities including a Shoot to Win contest that saw Gary Adams win a chance to shoot from 114 feet away from the net to win a 2014 Ford Fiesta. After missing the board on his first attempt, he tried again from the red line for five hundred dollars. After just missing that attempt, organizers gave him one final chance from a very close proximity to take home one hundred dollars.

Tournament organizers also gave the AAA regional girls hockey team, the Borderland Rage, the opportunity to fundraise for the Fort Frances girls who are participating on this team. There was a penny table featuring great prizes including a 46" TV, outdoor patio furniture and a "scratch ticket tree".

Distant Legacy provided music at socials held on Friday and Saturday evening. There were 50/50 raffles and the canteen was kept busy throughout the weekend.

On Sunday, in the Women's final, Couchiching First Nation played against the Onigaming Snipers with Couchiching clinching the inaugural win by a score of 3 to 1.

The Men's final was an action packed showdown between the Couchiching Thunderhawks and the Fort Frances Canadians. Couchiching was again victorious beating Fort Frances four to two.

Women's consolation winner was Big Grassy First Nation and Northwest Bay picked up third in the Men's division.

At the awards ceremony, which saw the trophies piped in by members of the Fort Frances Highlanders, hardware and cash prizes were presented to the top three finishers in the Men's and Women's division. Trophies were also awarded for Most Valuable Player, Most Valuable

Goalie, Most Valuable Forward, Most Valuable Defence and Most Sportsman-

like. Trophy sponsor representatives were on hand to present the awards.



From l. Organizer, Tom Big George joins Elder Bessie Mainville and co-organizer Judy Morrison for the traditional opening ceremony.



Harry Morrisseau presented Jon Sinclair with the trophy for Most Valuable Player.



Most Valuable Player – Women's Division.



Fans from Whitefish Bay were there to cheer on their team.



Fans from Northwest Bay were also there.



Phyllis and Ed George got their pass to watch the finals on Sunday.

Photographers' showcase



These prairie chickens (Sharp tail grouse) have been coming to our home (Mike and Marie Hyatt's) for a few years now. Started with 14 of them, now they bring friends and family with them to eat the ornamental crab apples from the tree that Mike's mom (Yvonne Hyatt) and grandfather (Marshall Hyatt) planted well over 40 years ago, and they come three or four times a day for our entertainment. At the time I took these pictures on March 10th, there were at least 22 of them but I couldn't get them all in one picture.

Photo by Marie Major, Burriss Road West



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