

KINGS ON ICE: HISTORY OF THE ALASKA GOLD KINGS AND THE TRANSFORMATION
OF FAIRBANKS INTO A HOCKEYTOWN

By

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Abstract

Wanting a higher level of hockey for local youth to aspire to, city hockey officials created the semi-professional Teamsters hockey team in 1975. The team was initially comprised of the best local recreational players, many of whom relocated to Fairbanks to work on the TransAlaska Pipeline from the upper Midwest and Seattle. Two years later the team took on the name Fairbanks Gold Kings (later changed to the Alaska Gold Kings), and quickly began proving itself against teams from Anchorage and the Pacific Northwest.

From 1975 to 1995 the Gold Kings were an amateur senior men's team, and from 1995-1997 they spent their last two Fairbanks years in the professional minor league West Coast Hockey League. Between its inception in 1975 as the Teamsters, and in spite of its relocation to Colorado Springs in 1998 as the Alaska Gold Kings, Fairbanks' team was a huge success. The Gold Kings won five national championships, played 16 different international and Olympic teams, played overseas in Asia and Europe on multiple occasions, and laid the foundation for the level of hockey found in Fairbanks today.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
 - 1.1. Purpose
 - 1.2. Research Questions
 - 1.3. Literature
 - 1.4. Methodology
2. History of the Gold Kings
 - 2.1. Socio-Cultural Impacts of the Gold Kings on Fairbanks
3. Pictorial Timeline of the Gold Kings
4. *John Rosie Gold Kings Collection*
 - 4.1. University of Alaska Museum of the North
 - 4.2. Rasmuson Library Archives
 - 4.2.1. Alaska and Polar Regions Archives & Collections
 - 4.2.2. Alaska Film Archives
5. Conclusion
6. Bibliography

1. Introduction:

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this project is to document the history of the Alaska Gold Kings ice hockey team from its inception in Fairbanks in 1975, when the team was known as the Teamsters, to its relocation to Colorado Springs after the 1996-1997 season. My research examines the importance of the Gold Kings to Fairbanks, and the team's socio-cultural impacts on the town. Specifically, I consider the Gold Kings' actions in the Fairbanks community during and after their playing years, the Fairbanks community's volunteerism in support of the Gold Kings, and the cultural exchanges that occurred in Fairbanks as a result of the Gold Kings' international hockey contests. I argue that the Gold Kings were instrumental in popularizing hockey in Fairbanks. While the construction of the Big Dipper Ice Arena in 1968 spurred the organization and growth of youth hockey in the early 1970s, Fairbanks was not a hockeytown until the formation of the Gold Kings, then known as the Teamsters, in 1975.

On a larger scale, this project also traces the trajectory of the team from an amateur, semi-professional organization formed in the 1970s and 1980s heyday of men's senior league hockey to a professional minor league franchise in the mid-1990s, when it struggled to earn community support and compete as professional hockey expanded into warm, sunny climates. It is a worthy case study of the trends in North American sports in the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century. While former players, coaches, and staff are undoubtedly part of the audience that this project seeks to reach, so are Alaskans with a passion for hockey, sports history, and local history. I hope that fans and all those in Fairbanks who were positively impacted by the team enjoy this booklet.

Because the recent and timely donation of the *John Rosie Gold Kings Hockey Collection* in part inspired my decision to focus on the Gold Kings, this project also explores the collection, with which I have worked closely at both the University of Alaska Museum of the North and the Rasmuson Library's Alaska and Polar Regions Collections & Archives. In the late spring of 2019, Fairbanks Hockey Hall of Fame President and local hockey historian Randy Zarnke donated a large collection of hockey sticks, trophies, personalized pucks, trading cards, jerseys, and Gold Kings documents to the University. The donation is officially known as the *John Rosie Gold Kings Collection*. On March 8, 2020, a Gold Kings reunion took place at the University of Alaska Museum of the North. Former Gold Kings President John Rosie, University of Alaska Fairbanks Chancellor Dan White, and Dr. Druckenmiller, the Museum's Director attended, along with scores of community members. This gathering was a time to celebrate the Gold Kings's legacy, and to ceremonially transfer the large assortment of Gold Kings items over to the University. Section four of the project details my own work with the museum portion of the collection, which I have prepared for a year-long display at the Rasmuson Library as a part of the Museum Research Apprenticeship Program. In this section I also discuss the parts of the collection donated to the Alaska and Polar Regions Collections & Archives, and the Alaska Film Archives.

1.2 Research Questions

This project explores the following questions:

1. What are the origins of the Alaska Gold Kings?
2. Who were the Alaska Gold Kings?
 - a. Who were the players?
 - b. Who were their domestic and regional rivals?
 - c. In what international contests did they compete?
3. What were the socio-cultural impacts of the Gold Kings on Fairbanks?

Answers to these research questions are significant for a number of reasons. The Gold Kings were the first major ice hockey attraction in Fairbanks and are credited by many Fairbanksans with popularizing the sport locally. In its 21-year Alaska stay, numerous players came and went, but many chose to become permanent Fairbanks residents after their hockey careers ended. Their faces have contributed to the social fabric of the city. Gold Kings players were employed locally as plumbers, pipefitters, and construction laborers, among other professions. In addition to their work and ice hockey careers, the Gold Kings served the community as coaches of youth hockey teams. While certainly some of the University of Alaska Fairbanks Nanooks and Fairbanks Ice Dogs players have settled in Fairbanks after their hockey playing ended, most do not, given that they tend to play hockey in Fairbanks for a few years as a stepping stone to another level of the game. The permanency of many Gold Kings in Fairbanks is a unique attribute of the team that speaks to the special relationship between players and the community, and the hometown atmosphere that supported the amateur senior men's team before they joined the ranks of professional hockey in 1995. Moreover, Fairbanksans supported the Gold Kings through numerous unpaid, volunteer efforts, such as transporting opposing teams from the airport by bus, running concessions during games, and selling tickets. These community efforts allowed the team to function and thrive.

The Gold Kings held rivalries with in-state neighbors the Anchorage Wolverines and the various iterations of senior men's hockey in Anchorage that formed after the Wolverines folded in 1979. They competed several times for the Anderson Cup against the St. Paul Parkers, forming a rivalry with the Twin Cities team. Thanks to the diplomacy and persistence of team president John Rosie, the Gold Kings hosted international teams from all over the world and competed in foreign countries beginning in the mid-1980s. The Gold Kings established themselves in North American senior men's hockey, and they built relationships in the microcosm of the real world that is the international ice hockey community. Men from Alaska, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Seattle, and elsewhere made Fairbanks the nucleus of their hockey world and lives, achieving remarkable feats together.

The connection between town and team that Fairbanks and the amateur Gold Kings represent has been lost in today's sports scene where multi-million dollar contracts and player-management disagreements dominate headlines. The Gold Kings players who relocated to Fairbanks did so out of passion for the sport, balancing that passion with work and family. This team is a case study of amateur sport, which has been subverted and lost to professionalism. Team members wore multiple hats as hockey players, employees, and family men. As former team president John Rosie told me about the players, "As much as they're the guy that works

behind the counter at Fairbanks Lumber, they're athletes and they're competitors. And they just love the game."¹

The Gold Kings were primarily working class men who earned significant achievements in a collective manner. John Haddad was a gifted collegiate player at Michigan Tech University who tried out for the National Hockey League. Roger McKinnon played minor league hockey all over the country, and has been consistently praised as a highly talented coach. Whereas today sport is defined by seven or eight figure salaries, and players have no real connection to the city in which they play, the amateur Gold Kings were more grounded in their love for the sport and affiliation with the community. Gold Kings contributed to the community through employment and coaching youth hockey while playing, and those who stayed after hanging up the skates still make a large impact on the town. This connection is also reflected in the volunteer endeavors by locals to help the team. The various high school hockey teams and Fairbanks Figure Skating Club helped with parking and concessions during the games, earning portions of the profits for their own organizations; John Rosie told me that it was Jim "Clutch" Lounsbury who would volunteer to drive the bus to the airport and pick up the visiting team.² Even the work of John Rosie, the president, was unpaid. The amateur status, yet profound athletic achievement of the Gold Kings made them a rallying point for the community of Fairbanks.

1.3 Literature

Little has been written about Alaskan sports, and even less has been written about ice hockey in the state. The existing publications tend to be popular literature, lacking the structure and focus of academic writing. This project fills a niche in Alaskan sports literature because there is only one book on the history of hockey in the state: Randy Zarnke's *Fairbanks Hockey Pioneers*. Zarnke's book broke ground by putting the spotlight on Alaska hockey within state historical research, and it remains a valuable resource.

My research illuminates how sports contribute to the identity of northern cities and towns such as Fairbanks. Athletics can have profoundly positive individual and communal effects, particularly on isolated communities. It also contributes to the literature by telling another story of sports and sports success in a remote, northern part of the United States. In recent twentieth century history, Alaska has presented pioneers from varying backgrounds opportunities to build new lives. Zarnke reveals this about hockey in Fairbanks, noting the significant individuals who laid the foundation for the sport in town. Lew Freedman captures this essence of "starting anew" and being different "because of Alaska" in *Thunder on the Tundra*, by chronicling the story of Barrow football on the Arctic Ocean. He does something similar in *Diamonds in the Rough*, sharing with readers the individuals and teams that have built up the Alaska Baseball League over the years. Michael D'Orso's *Eagle Blue* provides insight into the challenges of maintaining a successful high school basketball team in the fly-in community of Fort Yukon, Alaska. My research similarly illustrates the hardships of creating a semi-professional and professional hockey team in Fairbanks, and achievements through player, coach, and community perseverance. Whereas Zarnke's book focuses on the stories of individuals involved in Interior hockey, not all of them related to the Gold Kings, my project examines the larger scale socio-cultural impacts of the Gold Kings on Fairbanks, and how the story of the Gold Kings reflects changes in the broader American professional sports scene. This

¹ Interview with John Rosie, interview by author, November 2019.

² Rosie interview.

project also touches on the Fairbanks community's rejection of the Gold Kings when they turned professional in 1995, a development Zarnke does not address.

1.4 Methodology

I collected data from semi-structured interviews, online newspaper archives, the University of Alaska Museum of the North, and the Rasmuson Library's Alaska and Polar Regions Collections & Archives. My interviewees include John Rosie, former president of the Gold Kings; Rob Proffitt, former player and current General Manager of the Fairbanks Ice Dogs; John Haddad, former player and current owner of Outpost Alaska; Randy Zarnke, fan and Fairbanks' hockey historian; and Dan Raley, former *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* sports writer who covered the Gold Kings and sports in the late 1970s.

Knowing that each of the interviewees would have a different story to tell, I wanted participants in this research to feel comfortable taking the interview down any path, as long as it related to Gold Kings hockey. For John Rosie, Rob Proffitt and John Haddad, I asked the following:

- (1) When were you a part of the Gold Kings?
- (2) What is your own background?
 - (a) Where are you from?
 - (b) When did you start to play hockey?
 - (c) What brought you up to Fairbanks?
 - (d) How did you end up playing/coaching/managing the Gold Kings?
- (3) What was your role with the team?
- (4) What was the hockey community in Fairbanks like back when you were a part of the team?
- (5) Who were the main rivals of the Gold Kings?
- (6) Given the semi-professional status of the team, what kind of employment did you possess while you were a hockey player?
- (7) How did you manage to balance personal life, hockey, and work?
- (8) What was your life like up here while playing (managing or coaching depending on the interviewee) for the Gold Kings?
- (9) What do you do now? Do you have a family? Do you work? If so, where? What kept you in Fairbanks?
- (10) In retrospect, where do you see the Gold Kings in the evolution of hockey in Fairbanks? Would hockey be what it is today with a strong youth program, high school programs, a North American Hockey League program, and an NCAA Div. I program had the Gold Kings not been around?

I asked sports writer Dan Raley and local hockey historian Randy Zarnke the following:

- (1) Were you born and raised in Fairbanks?
 - (a) If not, where are you from?
 - (b) What brought you up here?
- (2) What was your relationship to the Alaska Gold Kings?
- (3) Do you have any favorite memories of Gold Kings hockey?

- (4) Fairbanks appears to be a pretty hockey-crazy city in the present-day, but my understanding is that was not always the case. Did the Gold Kings play a role in popularizing hockey in Fairbanks for both playing and spectating?

I searched through the archives of the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, which are stored through the online database NewspaperArchive. Using specific dates, terms, and phrases I narrowed my search. Terms included “hockey,” “Teamsters,” and “skating.” Phrases used were “Gold Kings Hockey,” and “Ice hockey in Fairbanks.” My online *News-Miner* archive research ranged from the early twentieth century, c.1906, through 1998.

At the University of Alaska Museum of the North I have organized the paraphernalia and equipment portion of *John Rosie Gold Kings Collection*. Items such as collectible beer steins, personalized hockey pucks, jerseys, sticks, hockey trading cards, fan apparel and pennants were donated. Documents at the Rasmuson Library Alaska and Polar Regions Collections & Archives include season programs, government resolutions concerning the team, and photographs. At the Alaska Film Archives, collection donator Randy Zarnke and I watched parts of the nearly dozen filmed games. Additionally, the Film Archives hold audio tapes of games, including an audio tape of the official theme song made for the Gold Kings by Bruce Innes Music. A considerable amount of material has been donated to both the Museum and Library, and is still being processed.

2. History of the Gold Kings

Those who have walked the track on the second story of Fairbanks' Big Dipper Ice Arena have seen the many trophies, photographs, commemorative plaques, and portraits that adorn its walls. These memories and memorabilia form the Fairbanks Hockey Hall of Fame. Much of the Hall of Fame consists of the Alaska Gold Kings and the many individuals who made this five-time national championship winning senior men's team a reality. For many of today's youth players, the Gold Kings may not register, but for more established Fairbanksans the Gold Kings tread hallowed hockey ground.

Names like Chuck Cartier, John Haddad, Chris Cahill, and Timmy Lee represent hockey playing legends to many in Fairbanks. John Rosie's name is synonymous with an unyielding devotion to team management. Roger McKinnon is remembered as a grand chessmaster of the game - a former player and coach who excelled equally in both roles. The Anchorage Wolverines, Anchorage Aces, Minneapolis Bucks, and St. Paul Parkers command the degree of respect demanded by sport and the scale of animosity expected of rivals. The Big Dipper is home. Amateur senior men's hockey brings to mind glory and success once parallel with the National Hockey League, and also reminds avid hockey fans who know their sport's history of a swift extinction brought on by NHL expansion and the emergence of ice hockey in the American Sunbelt. In 1975 the Gold Kings, then Teamsters, began their intrepid navigation of the semi-professional hockey world. In 1995, the team turned pro, and just three years later the team relocated to Colorado Springs. This project demonstrates that without the Alaska Gold Kings, ice hockey would not be what it is today in Fairbanks.

The history of ice hockey and ice skating in Fairbanks is almost as old as the town itself. With a long winter and cold temperatures, Fairbanksans first pursued ice sports on the naturally frozen waterways about town. Several newspaper articles from the earliest iteration of the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, then called the *Fairbanks Daily Times*, capture this interest in ice skating and hockey. The Chena River and Noyes Slough served as particularly popular wintertime skating spots. An early article from October 29, 1906 references the popularity of skating on the Chena River:

Skaters of Fairbanks had the pleasure of skating before their very doors on First Avenue yesterday. Hundreds of people were out on the ice and enjoyed the glassy surface on the Big Chena River.³

Like their Canadian neighbors to the east, Alaskans have had a long, natural affinity for ice sports. In a short film clip archived in the Oral History Collection of the Alaska and Polar Regions Collections & Archives at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, interviewee Mark Ringstad discussed how old-time Fairbanksans used to skate on the Chena River and at Griffin Park in the 1920s and 1930s. When asked about it, Ringstad remarked, "I think we could skate before we could walk."⁴

³ *Fairbanks Daily Times*, "Everyone Had Skates On," October 29, 1906, accessed January 2, 2020.

⁴ Mark Ringstad, *Alaska and Polar Regions Collections and Archives*, accessed January 2, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLYOfNLBIqI>.

According to local hockey historian and Fairbanks Hockey Hall of Fame curator Randy Zarnke, true citywide organized youth hockey did not begin until 1970. It was Local Teamsters Union President and father of hockey-playing sons Gary Atwood who kicked off Fairbanks youth hockey. Zarnke credits Atwood as an influential figure in the early days of Interior ice hockey.⁵ It was also Atwood who got the ball rolling with the Gold Kings, then Teamsters, hockey team. Zarnke told me in an interview:

The way I understand it ... youth hockey started here in 1970. [...] Gary had some sons that were playing, and ... he saw, or foresaw, that if there was a higher level the younger kids would have something to aspire to. The way I understand, he was talking to some of the other community leaders, and he said, ‘What can we do? How can we do this? How can we develop a men’s team that can compete against Anchorage and Seattle?’⁶

To Dan Raley, who served as the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* sports editor from 1977 to 1979, the relatively modern history of hockey in cold, wintry Fairbanks came as a surprise. On his arrival in Fairbanks from his hometown of Seattle, Raley was bewildered by the undeveloped state of hockey in the Great Land. He told me:

Oh what I remember was, you know, here we are in the Great North, Great White Northland, [and] we didn’t have any hockey. I remember just all of sudden someone decided to change that by providing a semi-pro hockey team. And these guys all came up out of north Seattle.⁷

While several players came from Seattle, not all originated from the Puget Sound. The Teamsters’ first coach, Roger McKinnon, came from Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, a city on the Upper Peninsula of Michigan separated by the St. Mary’s River from its sister city of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. In his earliest days, as was common in senior men’s hockey, Roger served as a player-coach. McKinnon was one of many Teamsters/Gold Kings players to make their way north to Fairbanks from the city affectionately nicknamed the “Soo.” Former player and coach John Haddad mentioned that a lot of players came from “Michigan, Washington, Minnesota. Guys just happened to come here for work,” and they were drawn to the prospect of continuing to play.⁸

McKinnon, whose profile can be found on a plaque hanging on the walls inside the Big Dipper Ice Arena, had a lasting impact on Fairbanks hockey. When Atwood and other city officials were scrambling to put together a senior men’s team in the mid-1970s to compete with Anchorage and the Pacific Northwest, some of the local hockey founders knew of McKinnon and his reputation in the hockey world. Zarnke recalled:

⁵ Interview with Randy Zarnke, interview by author, Fairbanks, November 22, 2019.

⁶ Zarnke, interview.

⁷ Interview with Dan Raley, interview by author, Fairbanks-Seattle over phone, November 2019.

⁸ Interview with John Haddad, interview by author, 2019.

It just so happened that somebody knew Roger. Roger was not here at the time. So they put out a request to Roger that if you come to town, we are trying to build a senior men's team, and we want you to be our coach. He was kind of between gigs at the time. He had played in a variety of places: Reno and Lima, Ohio, and I think he was in Stevens Point at the time. He liked their sales pitch, and so he came up in '75.⁹

According to John Rosie, Gary Atwood and Tim Sanderson recruited McKinnon, who saw a unique opportunity in the Interior. As Zarnke noted, when McKinnon accepted the Fairbanks coaching job, "he was already a veteran of semi-pro hockey, having played for several minor professional teams around the country."¹⁰ According to Rob Roos of *The Sault News*, a thriving Alaskan economy in the midst of the pipeline heyday, and "an opportunity to play and coach hockey, and perhaps a chance to settle down and build something special in his own way" were enough to convince McKinnon to move to Fairbanks in 1975.¹¹

When the team first began to play in 1975, home games were held at the Big Dipper Ice Arena off Lathrop Street. Originally a World War II airplane hangar constructed for the Lend-Lease program in Tanacross, 200 miles southeast of Fairbanks, the structure was relocated to Fairbanks in 1968. While today the Big Dipper has an artificially frozen surface, and the arena is heated for spectators' comfort, in the early days of Teamsters and Gold Kings' hockey the arena relied on Mother Nature's brutal sub-arctic temperatures for creating ice, and fan comfort suffered.

Sports writer Dan Raley recalled, "I remember it being cold always to sit in that arena and cover the games."¹² Many of the early players and fans note that the temperature of the Big Dipper reflected the temperature outside. With a rink, coach, management, sponsor, and players selected from the top tier of the local men's league, the Teamsters began playing when Fairbanks temperatures proved conducive to ice hockey, often in early November.

The significance of the Big Dipper to Fairbanks ice hockey and the community as a whole cannot be overstated. The brainchild of Hez Ray, the physical education director at Lathrop High School, moving the facility was initially a joke. As Ray recalled in an interview, when he and some boys were returning from an athletics tournament in Whitehorse, the team saw the building off the ALCAN Highway. Apparently the team "looked at the building and they jokingly said, 'Hey, why don't we bring this back to Fairbanks.'"¹³ While the work by individuals such as Gary Atwood brought spirit to Fairbanks youth hockey, the Big Dipper ultimately gave it life, providing the much needed structure. The Dipper also serves as much more than an ice hockey rink. As a November 1972 editorial piece from the *News-Miner*

⁹ Zarnke, interview.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Rob Roos, *The Sault News*, "Return of the Gold King: Sault native McKinnon left hockey legacy in Fairbanks" April 10, 2018, accessed December 20, 2019, <https://www.sooeveningnews.com/sports/20180410/return-of-gold-king-sault-native-mckinnon-left-hockey-legacy-in-fairbanks>.

¹² Raley, interview.

¹³ Kent Brandley, "Hez Ray Takes Leave to Aid Teen Center," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, April 10, 1968, accessed January 5, 2020.

highlights, “Figure skating, speed skating, recreation skating and ice hockey participation by hundreds of residents can now be enjoyed daily at the Big Dipper.”¹⁴

As expected of any community facility, the Big Dipper has undergone transformations over the decades since first being disassembled, relocated, and rebuilt in Fairbanks in 1968. The plaque honoring Roger McKinnon still greets visitors and athletes in the entrance; the Gold Kings five-time national championship banner still hangs from the wall; and the many glass encased photographs and trophies of the team adorn the second floor.

While Fairbanksans were certainly no strangers to ice, the Big Dipper did something nothing else had before: It gave the community a centralized, communal area in which to hone and develop hockey skills. While hockey continued to be played on outdoor rinks and frozen bodies of water throughout town, the Dipper became, to borrow hockey lingo, “the barn” that generations of hockey players have been coming to since its relocation in 1968. Just a couple of years after the installation of the Big Dipper, outdoor rinks proliferated in Fairbanks. Rinks were built at all local elementary schools, providing kids with a place to skate and play hockey anytime of the day with the help of floodlights. This boom in outdoor rink construction can be attributed to the “Buy-a-Board” program, which encouraged residents to donate \$15 to help furnish the materials needed to build outdoor rinks. Naturally, Mother Nature took care of the rest when winter engulfed the Interior. John Rosie remembers those outdoor practices vividly:

All the rinks were natural surface ice. Most of the rinks had neighborhood groups that would shovel them when the snow fell, maybe once in a while actually flood them so they could get a nice surface. For a while, I don’t know if it was actually true, but in my mind I believe it was true that every elementary school had an outdoor rink, and hockey was a big deal.¹⁵

After two seasons as the Teamsters, the team’s stockholders convened to officially incorporate the organization. In 1977 the Teamsters became the Fairbanks Gold Kings. Several years later, beginning in 1983, the team changed its name to be representative of the whole state, becoming the Alaska Gold Kings. As the Anchorage Wolverines had folded in 1979, and the southcentral city was unable to consistently maintain a senior men’s team, the Gold Kings organization found it prudent to replace “Fairbanks” with “Alaska” at the start of the team name. Joe Jackovich of Jackovich Tractors and Equipment created the new team name by nodding his cap to the gold mining history of the Interior, the Goldpanners baseball team, and his favorite NHL team the Los Angeles Kings. With an unproven track record and reputation in the early years, the Teamsters-turned-Gold Kings were confined to competing against more regional teams, the obvious one being the in-state rival Anchorage Wolverines. Rosie mentioned that the Gold Kings had to pay their way south to clash against the Wolverines, and in order for the Wolverines to travel north to Fairbanks, the Gold Kings also had to foot the bill.¹⁶ Other teams were drawn from the Pacific Northwest region of Washington, Oregon, and British Columbia. When asked how these teams were enticed to travel thousands of miles north to play the nascent

¹⁴ *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, “Big Dipper: a real value,” November 28, 1972, accessed January 7, 2020.

¹⁵ Rosie, interview.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

Gold Kings, John Rosie emphatically said, “Offer money! Fifteen tickets you know; 16 tickets and a weekend in Fairbanks, Alaska that you pay for.”¹⁷

Over time as the Gold Kings continued to rack up impressive wins, their credibility grew, as did their ability to schedule more competitive, prominent teams. While the team had admirable performances in previous national championships, placing second in 1978 and 1980, and third in 1981, their first national title in 1983 opened several new doors for the Gold Kings, linking Fairbanks to the hockey world.

When asked by *News-Miner* sports editor Keith Olson what the 1983 victory meant, Roger McKinnon commented:

Being national champs, the Gold Kings should be invited to at least one trip overseas since Redford went overseas twice while they were national champs. Also, there’s a good chance we could be matched up with some of the international teams that tour the country every year.¹⁸

Retrospectively, the *possibility* of the Gold Kings playing internationally is almost comical. One of the most defining traits of the team and its legacy is their international play. John Rosie attributes the attraction of international teams to Fairbanks partly to the city’s “mystique,” but much credit goes to Rosie himself.¹⁹ With the permission of USA Hockey, Rosie traveled to a convening of the heads of the International Ice Hockey Federation in Vienna, Austria in the early 1980s. There Rosie mingled with hockey leaders including European royalty and constituents of the wealthy elite in their home countries. At 37, a lawyer from Fairbanks wearing an Alaska Gold Kings blazer “while these guys are wearing three piece suits,” Rosie bluntly pitched his idea to the various hockey diplomats. While surely the intelligent and diplomatic Rosie was more subtle in real life, he recalled going up to the sporting leaders and saying: “Hi I’m John Rosie, I’m from Fairbanks, Alaska. I’d like you to bring your national team to play mine in Fairbanks, Alaska. Would you do that?”²⁰ Much to his surprise, seemingly owing to the mysterious allure of Fairbanks, the hockey officials began bringing their national teams to the Interior to play the Gold Kings.

The team’s first foray into the international hockey community came in March of 1985 when the team and Fairbanks hosted the national squads of Austria, Japan, and the Netherlands in the *Fairbanks World Invitational*. A year later the Kings hosted another international tournament with the national teams of Yugoslavia and Norway, and the Canadian representative, the Moose Jaw Generals. Saskatchewan’s Moose Jaw Generals were no joke, even when stacked up against the Yugoslavian and Norwegian national teams. The Generals were runners-up for the Hardy Cup in 1984, and winners of the Canadian Senior AA trophy in 1985.²¹ Just a month before, in February 1985, the Gold Kings made their first trip to Alaska’s eastern neighbor Canada, where they played Alberta’s Stony Plain Eagles.

In the 1986-1987 campaign, the Gold Kings did the seemingly impossible, what many consider their greatest accomplishment: They tied the Russian National B team 4-4 after getting

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Keith Olson, “Gold Kings can look forward to bright future,” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, April 13, 1983.

¹⁹ Rosie, interview.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ *Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame*, “1984-85 Moose Jaw Generals Hockey Club,” accessed April 23, 2020, <http://sasksportshalloffame.com/inductees/1984-85-moose-jaw-generals-hockey-club/>.

clobbered the day before. The Russian National B team was far from the equivalent of a junior varsity football team. The Soviet national team is the winningest of all time in international competition. The backups to the best in the world rank among the best. This “B” team was comprised of players from the prestigious Russian clubs of Moscow Dynamo, the Red Army, and the Moscow Wings; the Red Army being the most central and perhaps famous of all Russian sports clubs. To top off the 1986-1987 season, the Gold Kings hosted their third *World Invitational*. The honor was split with the co-host city of Anchorage. Canada, Sweden, Norway, and the Gold Kings competed.

In February 1988, the Kings held their first Olympic Hockey Preview the week before the official 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics kicked off. France, Norway, Austria, Poland, Switzerland, and the Gold Kings competed. Five years later in 1993, Alaska held a second Olympic Hockey Preview preceding the 1994 Lillehammer Games. Split between Anchorage and Fairbanks, the 1993 Arctic Challenge Hockey Preview pitted the “Big Three” (Russia, Canada, and the United States) against one another and Team Alaska at the Carlson Center and Sullivan Arena. Team Alaska consisted of players from both the Alaska Gold Kings and Anchorage Aces. The fact that the top three teams in the world were in Alaska was enough to lend immense prestige to the tournament, not to mention \$20,000 on the line, with half going to first place, \$7,500 to second, and \$2,500 to third.

Adding to the international credibility of the Gold Kings was stiff competition against the Finnish and Czech junior national teams in December 1988. In February 1989 the Gold Kings traveled across the Pacific to play in Japan. In the years to come the Gold Kings played in Europe twice more, once in Denmark/Norway, and later in France.

Beginning in 1990 the Gold Kings started their amicable hockey relationship with the Khabarovsk Red Army team. The New York City-based *People to People Sports Exchange Commission* initiated the hockey exchange. While Rosie told me the trip to Khabarovsk turned out to be a front so the commission head at the time, Leonard Milton, could talk forestry business with Soviet officials, it nonetheless sparked a relationship between the Gold Kings and Khabarovsk, and made the Gold Kings the first American team to travel and play in the Russian Far East.²²

The proximity of Khabarovsk to Alaska and America’s West Coast, and its continued hockey series with Fairbanks throughout the early 1990s, was nearly enough to make the Russian squad a part of the fledgling minor league West Coast Hockey League. While Khabarovsk only played exhibition games against WCHL opponents, for individuals like *News-Miner* sports writer Tim Mowry, the possibility of the team joining the West Coast league was very real. In defense of the idea, Mowry wrote:

Just imagine a hockey league, if you will, between the Soviet Union and Alaska. The Alaska Gold Kings. The Glasnost Gladiators. The Anchorage Aces. The Khabarovsk Kapitals. The Whitehorse Wahoos. The Siberian Senators. Sounds ridiculous, doesn’t it? Well think again, the idea of a U.S.S.R.-Alaska league may not be that farfetched. Or that far off, for that matter.²³

²² Ibid.

²³ Tim Mowry, “Alaska-Soviet League isn’t that farfetched,” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, January 19-20, 1990.

Unlike the strong hockey bond between Khabarovsk Red Army and the Gold Kings, the relationship between the University of Alaska Fairbanks Nanooks hockey team and the Gold Kings was often on shaky ground in their early years of coexistence. As John Haddad put it, “It was always a huge rivalry. Everybody hated UAF. They hated us. Because we stole each other’s crowd back and forth.”²⁴ The University had sponsored several iterations of a club hockey team since nearly its founding in 1917, playing outdoors on naturally frozen ice. It was, however, the construction of the indoor, climate controlled Patty Ice Rink and entrance of the Nanooks into NCAA hockey in 1979 that complicated the relationship of the two teams. A major reason for the tension between the two clubs was attracting a fanbase. The other factor that strained the relationship was media coverage, specifically by the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*. A common argument from Gold Kings proponents was that the *News-Miner* maintained a bias against the Gold Kings, giving far more coverage to the Nanooks.

In the late 1980s under Nanooks head coach Don Lucia, there appeared to be de-escalation. The Gold Kings and Nanooks played several times, competing annually for the KSUA Cup. By the early 1990s many Gold Kings roster spots were filled by former Nanook players who saw the senior men’s team as an opportunity to continue playing the game. Tensions, however, still plagued the relationship. *News-Miner* sports writer Tim Mowry aptly captured the relationship between the two teams in a 1991 piece titled “Don’t expect a local ice hockey showdown soon.” Despite having competed in previous years, he quotes both Rosie and Lucia as favoring an end to the intercity competition, leaving both teams to fill their respective niches. Mowry wrote:

Will the two teams ever get back on the ice together? Let's put it this way: Will Roseanne Barr ever sing the national anthem at the presidential inauguration?...Ultimately it will be up to hockey fans in Fairbanks whether the Golden Heart City is big enough for two teams.²⁵

While the Gold Kings’ relationship with the Nanooks was fragile over the years, the organization’s connection to the international hockey community was sturdy. By the time the Gold Kings were close to ceasing operations and moving to Colorado Springs in 1997, they had played 16 different national and Olympic teams, three of which no longer exist.²⁶ They were the only American sports team to cement a bond with a team from the Russian Far East. In fact, several Russian players played for the Gold Kings in the early-to-mid 1990s.

In addition to their games with teams from the European and Asian continents, from their earliest days, the Gold Kings held contests with Canadian teams. In the late 1980s when Anchorage supported a senior men’s team inconsistently, Fairbanks developed a fierce rivalry with the Taku Whitehorse Stallions and played a few games against the Whitehorse Huskies. The latter was the only men’s senior hockey team from the Canadian territories to ever win the Allan Cup, an award once regarded as prestigious as the Stanley Cup.

After the 1994-1995 campaign in which the Gold Kings took home their fifth national title upon beating the Anchorage Aces 7-6 in overtime, John Rosie and the organization went professional. The team became a founding member of the incipient West Coast Hockey League

²⁴Interview with John Haddad.

²⁵ Mowry, “Don’t expect a local ice hockey showdown soon,” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, January 31, 1991.

²⁶ John Rosie, “It was go pro or die,” February 11, 1997.

or WCHL. Modern day fans of the game will know of the ECHL or East Coast Hockey League, which is two tiers below the NHL, and absorbed the remaining WCHL teams in the early 2000s. The Gold Kings' new league replaced the brief one-season Pacific Hockey League (PHL), in which the Gold Kings were members. PHL co-members, the Anchorage Aces and Fresno Falcons, joined the Alaska Gold Kings in forming the WCHL alongside the Bakersfield Fog, Reno Renegades, and San Diego Gulls. Talk of making the Khabarovsk Red Army league members never culminated in membership. Khabarovsk, however, played exhibition games against the WCHL over the ensuing seasons.

Fairbanks's first year in the West Coast Hockey League was clearly a success; they lost in the championship round of the playoffs only by one game in a five-game contest to the San Diego Gulls. Even with an impressive first season in the WCHL, interviews and newspaper clippings indicate that Gold Kings fans and the Fairbanks community were reluctant to see their team go professional. This attitude carried over to the abysmal 1996-1997 season when the Gold Kings won just 13 of 64 games.

In early January of 1997, *News-Miner* sports writer Mike Stetson wrote a piece titled, "Bring the real Gold Kings back,"²⁷ in which he claimed that the blame for the downfall of the Gold Kings rested with the organization's management. He criticized Rosie's decision to turn professional, arguing that the *simple* amateur days when Gold Kings worked and lived in the community, and crushed the best competition, were the pinnacle of Fairbanks hockey. Stetson went so far as to say that if the rumors of the minor league, professional Gold Kings relocating to Colorado Springs or Boise were true, so be it.

While Stetson's nostalgia was understandable, given the success of the amateur senior men's Gold Kings teams throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, the history of hockey at this time supports Rosie's decision and his reasoning for joining the WCHL. Until the mid-1980s, senior men's hockey was immensely popular, and the annually contested Allan Cup that pitted Canada's two best senior men's teams against one another was once considered as distinguished as Lord Stanley's Cup. For most of its history, hockey was limited to the northern regions where it originated. By the late 1980s / early 1990s, however, hockey rapidly expanded into non-traditional markets in the American Southwest and Southeast. By the early 1990s the growth of the National Hockey League, professional minor leagues, and junior hockey rendered senior men's league hockey nearly obsolete.²⁸

The decline of high levels of amateur hockey in the United States and Canada gave Rosie little choice but to professionalize the organization. Rosie explains the dilemma in his guest opinion piece titled, "It was go pro or die," his rebuttal to the criticisms Mike Stetson and others in the Fairbanks hockey community leveled at him.²⁹ Rosie explains that with only three teams competing for the 1997 U.S. amateur championship, and the most storied organizations such as the St. Paul Parkers and Warroad Lakers no longer playing, the writing was clearly on the wall.

After a woeful 1996-1997 season the Gold Kings ceased operations, Rosie citing the inability to keep the team financially afloat by himself, as crowd numbers continued to dwindle as a contributing factor. Fan support decreased significantly once the Kings entered the WCHL. Rosie later recalled: "When I turned the Gold Kings pro, Fairbanks really rejected the team.

²⁷ Mike Stetson, "Bring the real Gold Kings back," January 9, 1997.

²⁸ John Rosie, "It was go pro or die: Fairbanks can look forward to a growing league," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner Guest Opinion*, February 11, 1997.

²⁹ John Rosie, "It was go pro or die."

They didn't like the idea of playing San Diego and Bakersfield and Fresno...the community rejected the team."³⁰ Professionalization resulted in the team losing its "hometown team" feel that had made the Gold Kings such an integral part of the community. Rosie discussed the inevitability of the team losing its "Fairbanks identity" with professionalization as players were recruited from all over North America and even Russia. He also had to compete with general managers and coaches recruiting talented hockey players to play ice hockey in the middle of the Sunbelt in states like California, Arizona, Texas, and Florida. Rosie acknowledged that he simply could not compete with organizations that could offer players the chance to leave practice at the rink and head to the golf course. The six months of outdoor naturally frozen ice Fairbanks could offer was obsolete, proving Fairbanks's geography disadvantageous in the changing tides of professional hockey.³¹ In mid-February 1998, with no warning given to local media, the Alaska Gold Kings and Rosie stealthily left Fairbanks.³² The franchise moved south to Colorado Springs, becoming the Colorado Gold Kings. The franchise folded after four years in Colorado.

In the team's proverbial ashes came an opportunity for former Gold Kings Rob Proffitt and Roger McKinnon to establish the Fairbanks Ice Dogs in 1997, enabling Alaskan players to continue developing their skills close to home, and filling the gap in the city's socio-cultural sports fabric after the relocation of the Gold Kings. The cessation of Gold Kings operations in the spring of 1997, and the quiet disappearance of the team in February of 1998 left a void in Fairbanks. As Rob Proffitt told me, "I don't think it was just a hockey void in this community. It was a social void."³³ The Big Dipper was a social space where community members not only gathered to watch hockey but also mingle. Such social centers are essential for any community, but perhaps they carry more weight for a northern, isolated community such as Fairbanks. Proffitt and the Ice Dogs have gone on to fill that void for Fairbanksans, becoming huge successes and routinely playing in front of packed crowds at the Big Dipper. Proffitt credits Rosie and the Gold Kings for much of the foundation on which the Ice Dogs were built:

The platform that was built by John Rosie and company if you will has been a huge catapult to our success. Because we took that template, used a lot of it, and just built on it, you know, and that's where we got where we are today.³⁴

It cannot be known for certain if the Ice Dogs would exist without the Gold Kings, but the latter undoubtedly helped establish the basis for the junior hockey team. In 2011 during February's "Hockey Week in Fairbanks," the Ice Dogs wore the Gold Kings logo on their jerseys as an homage to their senior men's predecessors who once packed the Big Dipper to capacity. Further evidence of the Ice Dogs' connection to the Gold Kings can be found on the "Team History" section of the Fairbanks Ice Dogs' website. Near the bottom of the timeline in 1997, the site states "Founded the Fairbanks Ice Dogs to replace the Alaska Gold Kings."³⁵

As an ardent hockey fan, I believe Fairbanks owes much to the Gold Kings and the many dedicated and talented individuals who played for and represented the team. They are all legends

³⁰ Rosie interview.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Eley, "Gold Kings quietly announce departure from Fairbanks," February 19, 1998.

³³ Interview with Rob Proffitt, interview by author, 2019.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ *The Official Site of the Fairbanks Ice Dogs*, "Team History," accessed April 6, 2020, <https://www.fairbanksicedogs.com/team-history>.

in their own right, and just as importantly many are contributing members of the Fairbanks community. Most of the UAF Nanooks and Ice Dogs players come from elsewhere, and few choose to settle here. The Goldpanners without question are only here for three months of 24 hour daylight baseball before returning to their colleges and universities in the Lower 48. The Gold Kings were different. Many decided to make the city their permanent home. It is remarkable to have five-time national champions / international hockey competitors living down the street, especially in a northern isolated city, but we do, and for that Fairbanks is richer.

2.1 Socio-Cultural Impacts of the Gold Kings on Fairbanks

On March 8th, 2020, due to the age and geographical dispersion of some of the team, possibly the last Gold Kings reunion took place. Former players, fans, and even president John Rosie, who came from Colorado for the event, convened at the University of Alaska Museum of the North to christen the *John Rosie Gold Kings Collection*, and ceremonially pass on box after box of memorabilia to the University. In the Museum's auditorium, representatives from the Ethnology and History Lab, Alaska and Polar Regions Collections & Archives, and the Alaska Film Archives collaborated to display many of the items, documents, and films donated to the University. As ex-players, diehard fans, and even John Rosie himself funneled into the auditorium to look, one individual after another thanked us for helping document, record, and preserve the Gold Kings. While through semi-structured interviews and primary resources it was already evident to me how impactful the Gold Kings have been on the Fairbanks community, the emotional outpouring of the community affirmed my assessment. I argue that there are five avenues through which the Gold Kings have socio-culturally impacted Fairbanks: 1) Coaching youth hockey, 2) Participating in charitable acts such as Christmas donations and SS Nenana restoration while the team was in Fairbanks, 3) Inspiring Fairbanksan volunteers to help keep the amateur team functional through actions such as running concessions and ticket sales during games, 4) Bringing foreign cultural exchanges to Fairbanks as a result of international hockey, and 5) Settling down in Fairbanks after the end of their playing careers.

During the Gold Kings' reign in Fairbanks, many players began coaching the sport, including head coach Roger McKinnon.³⁶ McKinnon was a prolific youth coach and, alongside former Gold Kings player Rob Proffitt, was instrumental in starting the junior hockey Fairbanks Ice Dogs in 1997.³⁷ Seven former Gold Kings have won the Fairbanks Hockey Hall of Fame "Coach of the Year Award": Wayne Sawchuck (2006), Dave Teets (2008), Jordy Wolter (2009), Rob Proffitt (2010), Mark Weber (2012), Bruce Laiti (2013) and Matt Atkinson (2017). In addition to providing Fairbanks youth with coaching, many former players have raised children of their own through the local hockey scene, adding to the reputation of Fairbanks as a hockeytown. John Haddad's son Nick played for both the Fairbanks Ice Dogs and UAA Seawolves; Chris Cahill's son Cayden formerly played for the Ice Dogs and is now a member of the University of Wisconsin River Falls men's hockey team; Rob Proffitt's son Ty is also an Ice Dogs alum who now plays for the University of Wisconsin Superior; John Teets, son of former

³⁶ Evan Bracken photographer, "Hockey Camp," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, June 12, 1980.

³⁷ Josh Niva, "Juniors invade Alaska," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, June 8, 1997.

Gold King Dave Teets, played for the Ice Dogs, and now represents the University of Alabama-Huntsville in hockey; and Bruce Laiti's daughter Lisa is a former Bemidji State women's hockey team player who now serves as the Community Engagement Coordinator for UAF Nanooks Athletics. This is not a comprehensive list of the Gold Kings who have coached hockey in Fairbanks, but it illustrates the passion of the players for passing on the game to the progeny.

While in Fairbanks from 1975 to 1997, the organization gave back in spades to the community. Through researching the online archives of the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, I came

across numerous guest opinion pieces submitted by Fairbanksans over the years expressing gratitude for the charitable, community-driven work done by the Gold Kings. In 1983, Sue Thomason, then the president of the Fairbanks Figure Skating Club, warmly praised John Rosie and the Gold Kings for the numerous forms of support they provided to athletics training and education in Fairbanks.³⁸

Years later in 1989, former Gold Kings employee Shirley Schneider submitted a piece to the *News-Miner*, titled "Gold Kings provide much to city besides plenty of hockey games." Her letter perfectly captures the public spiritedness of the Gold Kings, referencing

the local hockey teams and figure skaters who earned profits working games, the variety of local businesses that benefited from visiting teams using their services, and the UAF scholarships funded by the team in the late 1980s. Additionally, Schneider commends the Gold Kings for two

Ice skating

(A copy of the following was submitted as a letter to the editor.)

Feb. 7, 1983

P.O. Box 74102

Fairbanks, AK 99707-4102

John Rosie, President
Alaska Gold Kings, Inc.
Fairbanks, AK 99701

Dear Mr. Rosie:

The Fairbanks Figure Skating Club would like to thank you for the support which the Gold Kings organization has given us this year. Not only have you underwritten the printing of the program for our upcoming ice show, Children's Classics, but by contracting with our group for clean up after the hockey games, you have made it possible for us to continue our activities on a sound financial footing.

The Fairbanks Figure Skating Club is committed to: 1) educating the community in ice skating as a form of exercise and entertainment; 2) providing an avenue of instruction for anyone wishing to further their knowledge and enjoyment of figure skating; and 3) providing a safe, pleasant, and clean place in which to enjoy these activities.

We are aware of the many other nonprofit groups you have supported this year as well: Jaycees, West Valley Boosters, Lathrop Hockey Cheerleaders, Monroe Boosters, Fairbanks Youth Hockey, Fairbanks Women's

he did. Above, from left, Bor
President Marc Langland, Bi
the proverbial ribbon.

Hockey League, Fairbanks Old Timers Hockey, North Pole Boosters.

You have also provided security personnel at the Big Dipper, and funding for two part-time Parks and Recreation employees during the hockey season. Thus, we would like to recognize the significant contribution which the Gold Kings have made in furthering of athletic activities for the benefit of the Fairbanks Community.

It is very encouraging that the Gold Kings, a non-profit organization, have sought out groups such as ours to share in its success. We appreciate your support.

Best wishes for continued success.
Sue Thomason, President
Fairbanks Figure Skating Club

WICCA helped

Feb. 8, 1983

SR Box 10454

Fairbanks, AK 99701

To the Editor:

I would, at this time, like to thank the staff at WICCA. A little over a month ago my wife and I had gotten into an argument. I slapped her and also made some strong threats. Later that evening when I'd come home from work I found my wife was gone. There was only one thing on my mind: was she safe?

The next day I found myself in the

³⁸ Sue Thomason, "Ice Skating," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, February 16, 1983, accessed January 14, 2020.

of the same principles I make arguments based on: the coaching of youth hockey players, and the immersion of Fairbanksans into global cultures through international hockey contests.

Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska, Wednesday, June 7, 1989—5

Gold Kings provide much to city besides plenty of hockey games

Prepared in mind and heart with the firm conviction that my utopia lies elsewhere, I am preparing to leave Fairbanks. This fact will delight some and sadden others, but no matter, I am not writing to expound on the plus and minuses of Shirley Schneider, I wish instead to promote the Alaska Gold Kings.

For the past two seasons I've been employed by the Gold Kings. Overall I enjoyed it, although there were times when the state of understanding, or lack of it, made for some interesting moments.

One fact remains, I respect the efforts of Mr. Rosie and the team's accomplishments. In my opinion, there is no other non-profit organization which returns so much to the community—here is why:

The Alaska Gold Kings play their games in town with the exception of one international trip per year. Although the "working board" provides much game time assistance, there are game-related activities that require a labor force.

The Gold Kings hire Lathrop High School students for parking, West Valley High School students for selling tickets, the hockey women's traveling team for the upper beer booth, the Old-Timers hockey team for the lower beer booth, and the Women's Hockey Association to sell programs.

Fairbanks Youth Hockey and the Fairbanks Figure Skating Club serve the hundreds of customers at their respective concession booths, from crowds attracted to the Big Dipper to watch the Alaska Gold Kings hockey games. All Gold Kings games are officiated by the

Guest Opinion
By SHIRLEY SCHNEIDER

local hockey officials association. For some of these organizations, it is their only fund-raiser; for others, their net earnings at the end of the year would be greatly reduced if it were not for Gold Kings hockey.

Travel agencies; hotels; restaurants; entertainment centers; automobile rentals; security companies; television studios; newspapers; janitorial services; food, beverage, and liquor distributors; grocery outlets; printing companies; logo merchandising outlets; office products stores; sports equipment shops; insurance companies; medical facilities; airlines; gift shops; radio stations; trophy shops; and city, borough, and state employees. This is a list of some of the businesses that benefit financially during the most bleak employment period (winter), from the Alaska Gold Kings hockey program due to their "buy local, hire local" policy.

Are you impressed? Wait, I'm not finished. The Alaska Gold Kings also provided two full scholarships and one partial scholarship to the University of Alaska Fairbanks during the 1988-89 season, sponsored two traveling teams and made money-making opportunities possible for another travel team. The Gold Kings also split the 50-50 ticket monies with the various

youth hockey traveling teams.

The presence of the Alaska Gold Kings in our community for the past 12 years has definitely influenced the type of coaching available to youth hockey teams. This coaching has helped the quality of these teams competing at regional and national levels.

Our noteworthy participation in tournaments outside of Alaska has provided the impetus that has resulted in Fairbanks youth hockey hosting regional and national competitions in Fairbanks.

I am almost finished, but here is something else you may not have asked yourself. What are figure skaters doing at a hockey game? The answer is, they are taking the opportunity to skate before large crowds, crowds that would not be there, if not for the Gold Kings.

I won't bore you with the benefits of cultural exchange when the international teams travel to Fairbanks, or the fact that the world press provides news coverage of the Fairbanks events in the papers of the participating foreign countries. But, I would like to emphasize that when the Alaska Gold Kings believed Fairbanks would make the perfect city to host international winter sports training, they acted on their belief.

Where will it all end? I hope it will end with the people of Fairbanks providing the moral, physical, and financial support required to help maintain this extremely community-minded organization.

Shirley Schneider has worked with the Alaska Gold Kings and the Tanana Valley Fair Association.

39

In August of '89 the team descended on Alaskaland where "they volunteered time to help with the restoration effort on the Riverboat Nenana... They sanded part of the deck and the sides of the deckhouse."⁴⁰ In the 1990s the Gold Kings also began visiting local elementary schools to raise awareness about the importance of education to impressionable young minds. The program was called K.I.C.K. or "Kings in Class for Kids." Through this program Gold Kings players visited local elementary schools. In a "Letter to the Editor" from 1997, local Trudi Rand captured K.I.C.K. and its positive impact perfectly:

³⁹ Shirley Schneider, "Gold Kings provide much to city besides plenty of hockey games," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, June 7, 1989.

⁴⁰ *Daily News-Miner*, "What a Great Idea," August 29, 1989.

Ticasuk Brown elementary school has had the pleasure of having four Kings so far. The students have received one-on-one tutoring, help with art projects, and talks about team playing and sportsmanship. They have also had the benefit of learning about different countries such as Russia and Canada. One class learned the Russian alphabet, count to five, and say hello and goodbye in Russian.⁴¹

Even though by the 1997 season the Gold Kings were losing community support, and on the verge of having to leave Fairbanks, they continued to have a worthwhile influence on the community through programs such as “Kings in the Class for Kids.” These are just a few examples of the magnanimity of the Gold Kings, and the appreciation of the Fairbanks community for such charitableness.

In April of 1978 The Gold Kings traveled to Roseau, Minnesota for the National Tournament. What made the trip possible for the team was not the deep pockets of its stockholders or sponsors, but “a community fund raising drive that produced nearly \$15,000.”⁴² This example of community action inspired by the team introduces the third form of evidence of the Gold Kings’ socio-cultural impact on the city: the way in which Fairbanks rallied around the team. Near the end of our interview, Rosie reflected deeply on the community’s volunteer efforts that helped keep Gold Kings hockey functional. An introspective man, Rosie gave immense credit to Fairbanks for supporting the Gold Kings. “The community made it happen. If the community didn’t buy in, we wouldn’t be talking about this,” he said, referring to the willingness of Fairbanks to accept a group of hockey players, some local and other transplants, and embrace them as the town’s team. Regarding the physical volunteer work of the community, Rosie said:

On any given night you might have 100 volunteers at the Big Dipper, because you had Lathrop parking cars, West Valley selling programs, somebody else selling tickets, and Youth Hockey running one concession stand, and Women’s Hockey running another concession stand, and Men’s Hockey running another concession stand, and the figure skaters running another concession stand. I didn’t do that intentionally, I needed labor, and these people were willing to volunteer to earn some money for their programs.⁴³

In examining the volunteer efforts of the community towards the Gold Kings, it must be recognized that the players themselves were volunteers until the team went professional in 1995. The same can be said

⁴¹ Trudi Rand, “Support Kings,” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, February 18, 1997.

⁴² Olson, “Kings face Dakotans Saturday,” April 5, 1978.

⁴³ Rosie interview.

for John Rosie, Roger McKinnon, team trainer Mike Weber, and anyone else affiliated with the team. John Rosie's income came from his law practice, not serving as the team's president. McKinnon ran the sporting goods store Sport King. The players had to work various jobs during the day, especially in the summer off-season, so they could earn a living while representing Fairbanks and giving local youth a goal to aspire to, pro bono.

The foreign cultural exchanges the team partook in abroad and brought to Alaska also had significant socio-cultural impacts on the Fairbanks community. Beginning in 1985 the Gold Kings hosted their first international tournament against the Dutch, Japanese, and Austrian national teams. This was the first of many foreign cultural exchanges to occur on Fairbanks soil. From 1987 through the mid-'90s the Gold Kings hosted Soviet and post-Soviet Russian squads. In 1990 the team, through the *People to People Sports Exchange Commission*, initiated a relationship with the Far Eastern Russian team Khabarovsk Red Army. The three-week long hockey series was played in both Fairbanks and Khabarovsk. In his *News-Miner* coverage of the exchange, Bob Eley captured the warm relationship between the two teams, quoting Rosie as saying "'You could see it developing,' ... 'Some guys hugged each other after the game against Khabarovsk and others were patting each other on the shoulders during warmups before the game.'" When Khabarovsk came to Fairbanks in the winter of 1990, the visiting players took advantage of the cultural opportunities unavailable to them back home, interacting with Fairbanksans in the process. In her article "Soviets come to trade," *News-Miner* staff writer Mary Jones wrote "Members of a visiting Soviet hockey team walked into the Footlocker at Bentley Mall loaded with watches, souvenir pins and teapots Tuesday. They left with arms full of Nike clothing and sports gear bags."⁴⁴ While abroad the Gold Kings served as ambassadors for the Golden Heart City. In 1989 the team participated in a playing tour of Japan. Fairbanks resident Bill Gordon happened to be on a business trip in Japan at the same time. He witnessed the positive diplomacy of Rosie and the Gold Kings, and Japan's embrace of the organization.

John Rosie (Gold Kings president) and the young players were magnificent diplomats for our state and country. Playing before large Japanese crowds, these Alaskans delighted the fans with their skills and an aggressive style of hockey. But more importantly they represented our city in a statesmanlike manner. All of us should reap great benefits from the exposure Alaska has received. Beside the huge crowds, there was also extensive press coverage by most Japanese media.⁴⁵

This is just a sample of the Gold Kings' socio-cultural impact on Fairbanks through foreign cultural exchanges. The team was instrumental in bringing international hockey teams to Fairbanks thanks to the diplomacy of John Rosie at the Vienna International Ice Hockey Federation meeting in the early '80s.

⁴⁴ Mary Jones, "Soviets come to trade," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, January 17, 1990.

⁴⁵ Bill Gordon, "Good exposure," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, March 6, 1989.

A fifth means through which the Gold Kings socio-culturally impacted Fairbanks, and continue to do so, is the permanent settlement of many Gold Kings in town after hanging up the skates. Besides continuing to serve as youth hockey coaches, many former Kings have gone on to lucrative careers, contributing to Fairbanks society and its economy. One of the more obvious examples is Rob Proffitt, who, alongside Roger McKinnon launched the Fairbanks Ice Dogs junior hockey program in 1997. Proffitt continues to serve as the general manager for the Ice Dogs, one of the most popular attractions in town. The Ice Dogs have continued carrying the Fairbanks hockey legacy set by the Gold Kings, routinely playing in front of sold-out crowds, producing three NHL draft picks, and turning out numerous NCAA division I and III players. Former standout player and coach John Haddad runs Outpost Alaska, a purveyor of all-terrain vehicles and snow machines, and the farthest north Harley Davidson dealership. When I walked into Outpost Alaska to interview John Haddad I was amazed by the number of employees working the sales floor and back offices. Outpost Alaska is an economic contributor to Fairbanks and the state, as well as a provider of the necessary equipment that some Alaskans quite literally depend on, such as snow machines.

Matt Atkinson, the 2017 Fairbanks Hockey Hall of Fame “Coach of the Year” recipient, co-owns Northern Alaska Tour Company. The Fairbanks-based company provides tourists and residents alike excursions ranging from northern lights viewing to the extremes of Kaktovik polar bear tours. Atkinson’s business contributes to the Fairbanks economy, enticing tourists from all over the world to interior and northern Alaska. Chuck Cartier, one of the most seasoned Gold Kings, manages Alaska Rubber & Rigging Supply’s Fairbanks operation on Van Horn Road. His company is a statewide and regional provider of hydraulic and industrial hosing, and rigging equipment. Alba Brice, who played for the Gold Kings in the late ‘80s and early ‘90s, now works out of Anchorage as the Director of Business Development for the Calista Native Corporation. A regional ANCSA corporation, Calista represents 56 communities in southwest Alaska along the Bering Coast, Yukon River and Kuskokwim River.⁴⁶ Other examples of Gold Kings who have remained local after the end of their hockey careers include Dave Teets, manager of Fairbanks Fuel; Curt Franklin, co-owner of the Oasis Restaurant and Lounge on University Avenue; and Bruce Laiti, who played hockey at the University of Wisconsin, and is now a mechanical estimator at Alyeska Pipeline Service Company. Many of the Gold Kings chose to stay in Fairbanks or in the case of Alba Brice, Alaska, after their days with the Gold Kings came to a close. These former players have gone on to run local businesses and sports franchises, contributing to the socio-cultural fabric and local economy of the city and state.

In her newspaper coverage of the March 8th, 2020 Gold Kings reunion at the University of Alaska Museum of the North, *News-Miner* writer Kyrie Long wrote, “In Fairbanks hockey history no one beats the Kings in impact.”⁴⁷ That impact has been widespread in Fairbanks, spanning decades from the mid-1970s to the present. The Gold Kings have socio-culturally shaped Fairbanks in five ways. First, many Gold Kings have served as local youth hockey coaches. Roger McKinnon is an obvious example, who not only made a mark coaching youth hockey, but alongside Tim Waggoner also

⁴⁶ Calista Corporation, “Our Region,” accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.calistacorp.com/shareholders/shareholder-overview/our-region/>.

⁴⁷ Kyrie Long, “Alaska Gold Kings reception: UAMN hosts, receives memorabilia donations,” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, March 9th, 2020.

ran the sporting goods store Sport King, where youth and adult players alike could get the equipment necessary to play the game. In addition to McKinnon, seven former Gold Kings have won the Fairbanks Hockey Hall of Fame “Coach of the Year” award. Secondly, during their 21 years in Fairbanks the Gold Kings contributed to the community through numerous charitable acts such as aiding in the restoration of the SS Nenana, a sternwheeler built in the 1930s, and visiting local elementary schools to promote education. Local organizations such as the Fairbanks Figure Skating Club, Oldtimers Hockey, Women’s Hockey, Lathrop and West Valley high school hockey, and Fairbanks youth hockey teams benefited immensely from the Gold Kings who enabled them to earn revenues by working concessions, ticket sales, and parking during Gold Kings games. Third, the Gold Kings became a rallying point for the community, inspiring community volunteer action such as the aforementioned work of various local organizations during games, and individuals like Jim “Clutch” Lounsbury stepping forward to transfer visiting teams from the airport to town by bus. Importantly, the work of John Rosie, coaches like Roger McKinnon, trainer Mike Weber, the players, and all other staff was volunteer until the team merged with the professional West Coast Hockey League. The fourth manner through which the Gold Kings affected Fairbanks was by hosting foreign hockey teams for international competitions. These international games gave the team and town exposure to different cultures and peoples otherwise distant from the Golden Heart City. Finally, the many former Gold Kings who chose to call Fairbanks home after their hockey playing careers concluded continue to socio-culturally and economically contribute to the well-being of the town through continuing to coach youth hockey and promote the sport, and running popular and successful entities such as the Fairbanks Ice Dogs and Oasis Restaurant & Lounge.

3. The Gold Kings: A Pictorial Timeline

“Rome wasn’t built in a day and neither were the Detroit Red Wings”

Certainly there’s money to be made by any group that can successfully and economically put a semi-pro Fairbanks team on the ice. But the prospect of making it big from the start defies any get-rich-quick scheme. “We just don’t want to start out in a position of having to fold right in the middle of the season,” Atwood said.

Will it work? Rome wasn’t built in a day and neither were the Detroit Red Wings. The lack of an arena where the spectators can watch comfortably makes the plan an iffy prospect for rapid success. *Still, the promoters feel hockey has a definite future here* and foresee in their crystals the community interest to make it work.⁴⁸

-Keith Olson, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*,
October 1, 1977.

The following pages contain a comprehensive timeline of the Alaska Gold Kings from their origins in 1975 to their relocation to Colorado in 1997. I aim to supplement the second chapter, “History of the Gold Kings,” taking readers through a dynamic and engaging visual journey of the team’s years. Some seasons contain more highlights and newspaper clippings than others. As you move through this timeline you will meet myriad characters, some of whom came and went, and others of whom remained with the Gold Kings for many years. I took all of the articles and article clippings from the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* online archives.

Each season is listed in bold, followed by a season summary, roster, and schedule. From there readers can review season highlights. Given the size and remoteness of Fairbanks, the Gold Kings achieved a remarkable record in just over two decades in Alaska. They won five national championships, played some of the best North American amateur teams, and competed in several international tournaments with squads from Canada, Europe, and Russia. Despite their impressive record, not all of Fairbanks supported them. Even in their winningest years, some local hockey aficionados scoffed at the Gold Kings’ style of play as archaically violent and unruly. Others thought and still think that the Gold Kings are the best thing to ever happen to Fairbanks. No matter one’s personal opinion, it is undeniable that the Gold Kings had a

⁴⁸ Keith Olson, “Gold Kings,” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, October 1, 1977.

significant presence in town, and they were a big force in making the Golden Heart City an ice hockey playing, watching, and loving town.

Becoming an accomplished hockey team was not always so easy for the Gold Kings. Many summers appear to have filled John Rosie with anxiety as he struggled to negotiate ice time with the Big Dipper, Carlson Center, or Patty Arena for the impending season. In the early years the Gold Kings depended entirely on the naturally frozen ice of the unheated hangar-turned-hockey rink Big Dipper. This sometimes meant waiting days before an opening series to have the first practice. Rosie and the Gold Kings had to navigate financial constraints, and market themselves heavily in a city with a collegiate program as well. There were fans that criticized their style of play and ridiculed the team in its last days, but there were also diehard fans that truly supported the Gold Kings. Many Fairbanksans over the years submitted opinion pieces to the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* expressing deep gratitude for all of the charitable work done by the team. This timeline captures the ups-and-downs, triumphs and struggles that the Alaska Gold Kings faced during their time in Fairbanks. I hope readers will develop a firm grasp of the history of the team, and the impact the Gold Kings had on Fairbanks. The timeline illustrates how the Teamsters rose out of relative obscurity to become a dominant force in senior men's league hockey as the Gold Kings, and then faded into obscurity again when they turned professional in 1995. This depicts a larger movement in North America in which the professionalization of sport undercut amateurism in the late 1980s to 1990s.

Before the Teamsters:

An article written for the *News-Miner* in 1972 by Allan Curtis offers a view of the long and at times choppy history of hockey in Alaska. Allan reflects on the growth of hockey in the state, and how the game had ups-and-downs until then. He notes that at the turn of the 20th century ice sports such as skating and curling were quite popular pastimes in the territory.

Organized hockey in Fairbanks and Anchorage had its roots in the 1920s when hockey associations were established for both cities. Not until the early 1960s did Anchorage organize a program for boys, and shortly thereafter Fairbanks did so. In 1926 the University of Alaska established its hockey team, which was comprised of students and faculty members. The UA hockey team competed against Dawson, Yukon Territory, various Anchorage squads, and teams cobbled together in Fairbanks, as well as teams from Ladd Field (later Fort Wainwright), and later Eielson Air Force Base. Hockey contests were often held during the annual Ice Carnival. Allan comments on the restructuring of the Fairbanks youth program in 1970, crediting three individuals - Hez Ray, John Contento, and Terry McKean - with helping to rebuild the program. According to Curtis, these men "started with nothing and built the framework for the years to come." Of course the work of Gary Atwood must not be overlooked. Curtis ends the article stating "Hockey has come a long way in Alaska and in Fairbanks since the first hockey association was formed in 1925. Since then, the emphasis has changed from the older player to the younger."

If only Allan Curtis could have then looked into a crystal ball to see what was to come just three years away in 1975 with the formation of the Gold Kings' predecessor, the Teamsters.

Below are two photographs from the Allan Curtis article. The above photograph is of children playing ice hockey at the Big Dipper circa 1972. The bottom photograph's caption reads "1936 Championship-hockey was established many years ago in Fairbanks. In the photo above the University of Alaska meets Dawson in the Fairbanks Ice Carnival. UA was victorious."⁴⁹



BIG DIPPER—Youth hockey has flourished the past two years on the ice rink of the Big Dipper. This year two outside rinks have been added.



1936 CHAMPIONSHIP—Hockey was established many years ago in Fairbanks. In photo above the University of

Alaska meets Dawson in the Fairbanks Ice Carnival. UA was victorious.

1967: Hockey was still, relatively speaking, undeveloped in town. Players from the university and soldiers stationed at Fort Wainwright would compete outside, as Fairbanks was still a year away from the first indoor rink, the Big Dipper, being built.⁵⁰

U of A Hockey Squad Ties Ft. Wainwright

Bob Balster's unassisted goal with 90 seconds left in the contest salvaged a 2-2 tie for the U of A hockey squad against the Ft. Wainwright Rangers.

alties for fighting with 11 minutes left to liven up the game. Armstrong then appeared to tie the game up with five minutes left but, after a heated discussion his

⁴⁹ Allan Curtis, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, "Hockey gains popularity in state," October 19, 1972, accessed January 5, 2020.

⁵⁰ *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, "U of A Hockey Squad Ties Ft. Wainwright," February 20, 1967, accessed January 3, 2020.

In 1967, the local school board struggled to finance the building of an ice rink, which was a much needed addition in order to add winter sports to the local physical education curriculum.⁵¹

School Board Backs Winter Sports Rink

1968: Hockey on post at Fort Wainwright was revitalized in the late 1960s. One of the Army's main opponents was the UA Nanooks.⁵²

Below is a photograph of hockey action from the 1968 Winter Carnival. This year local Fairbanks teams and Canadian squads from Whitehorse, Y.T. and Inuvik, N.W.T. competed in the hockey tournament.⁵³

Hez Ray Takes Leave To Aid Teen Center

By KENT BRANDLEY
Staff Writer

The man who saw a community need, took a pipe dream and sought to turn it into a reality, left his paying job today to complete the volunteer task.

Hez Ray, Lathrop High School physical education director turned in a request for personal leave for the remainder of this school year.

His action came after school board members inquired about Ray's status. The board, meeting last night, also asked about insurance and student participation.

Ray, 37, has been working, practically fulltime on the massive project known as "Operation Big Dipper." The idea is to move an abandoned 220-foot by 167-foot hangar at

Tanacross some 200 miles to Fairbanks where it will be used as a youth recreation center. The area has no such facility now.

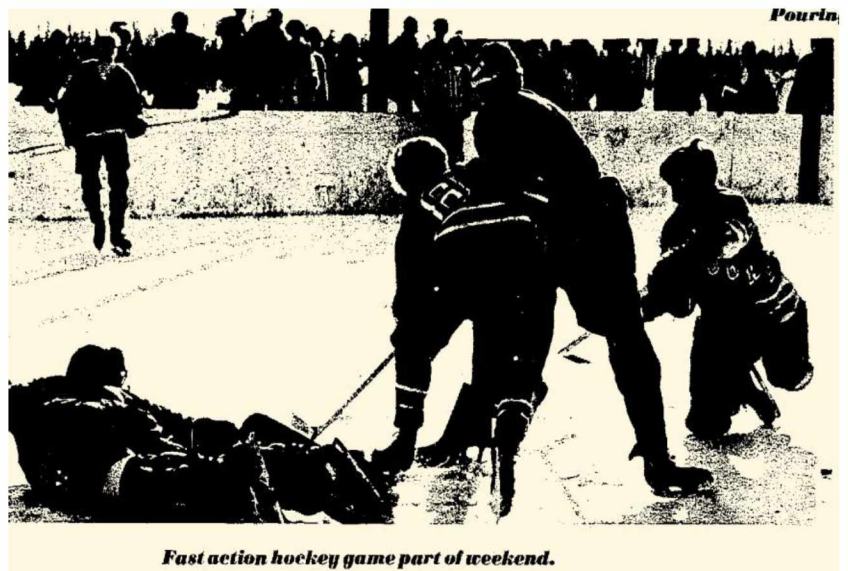
Ray says he requested leave to "clarify everything." He says he doesn't want anyone to have justification for criticism. So he will not take taxpayers money while attempting to do two things. Some citizens still don't believe in the partiality of the project.

"We're not going to stop now," the youthful looking coach who came here from Texas in 1953 says.

The project is moving forward rapidly.

Ray flew to Juneau on one day's administrative leave to see Gov. Walter J. Hickel. Hickel,

(See RAY, Page 1)



Fast action hockey game part of weekend.

In order to dedicate himself to what was called "Operation Big Dipper" without taking taxpayer dollars, Hez Ray excuses himself from his job as Lathrop High School physical education director "to move an abandoned 220-foot by 167-foot hangar at Tanacross some 200 miles to Fairbanks where it will be used as a youth recreation facility. The area has no such facility now."

⁵¹ *News-Miner*, "School Board Back Winter Sports Rink," February 22, 1967, accessed January 3, 2020.

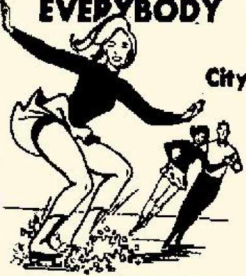
⁵² *News-Miner* Staff Photo, "On the Attack," January 24, 1968.

⁵³ *News-Miner*, "'Crystal Fantasy' Carnival Sees Sunny Weekend," March 11, 1968, accessed January 3, 2020.

Upon returning from an athletic tournament in Whitehorse, led by Ray, the team of boys “looked at the building and they jokingly said, ‘Hey, why don’t we bring this back to Fairbanks.’ That’s the way it started. Now it’s no joke.”⁵⁴

After a successful relocation of the airplane hangar some 200 miles northwest from Tanacross to Fairbanks, the ice rink portion of the facility is set to open mid-November just in time for hockey season.⁵⁵

EVERYBODY **ICE SKATING**
 City Recreation Department
 at The **BIG DIPPER**
 19th & Lathrop
 * Skating Postponement
 -15° by Airport Temperature



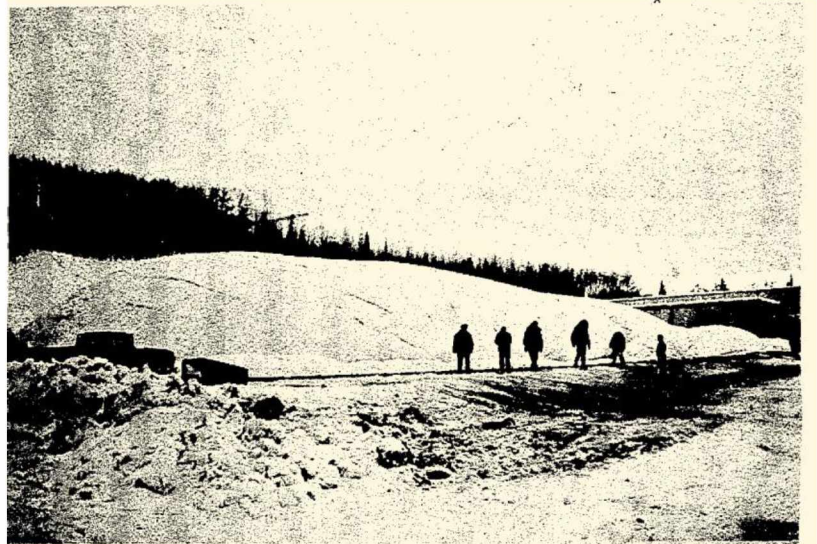
GENERAL RECREATIONAL SKATING
 Every Night of The Week 7 to 9 p.m.
 Saturday Afternoon 12 to 5 p.m.
 Sunday Afternoon 12 to 5 p.m.

SPECIAL CLASSES
 Children—Sat. 9:30 to Noon
 3 Instructors Available
 Adults—Wed. 2:30 to 4:00 p.m.

HOCKEY SCHEDULE Elem. Grades 4-5-
 Tues.-Thurs. 4 to 6 p.m.—Anybody
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RINK SCHEDULE INFO.—FEE 25'

- Beautiful warmup room
- Attendant on duty
- Phone 426-6944 during hours
- Concession & skate rental
- Music compliments of Music Mart
- Bugs compliments of Fether Stead & Harland's



HALFWAY THERE—The huge bubble begins to take shape as it is about half filled with its approximately one million cubic feet of pressurized air. Temperatures inside the structure can be maintained at zero degrees despite up to -40 degrees on the outside.

1969: UAF erected the rink covering affectionately known as the “Beluga.”⁵⁶

Above is a photograph of the rink dome covering known as the “Beluga” being inflated.⁵⁷

1970: The advertisement to the left for the Big Dipper Ice Arena sponsored by the City Recreation Department promotes recreational ice skating and hockey for youth interested in learning the sport.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ Kent Brandley, “Hez Ray Takes Leave to Aid Teen Center,” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, April 10, 1968, accessed January 3, 2020.

⁵⁵ *News-Miner*, “Hockey Rink Work Slated for ‘Dipper,’” October 31, 1968, accessed January 3, 2020.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, “University’s Giant Balloon Takes Igloo Shape,” February 17, 1969, accessed January 4, 2020.

⁵⁷ Dennis Cowals (photographer), *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, February 17, 1969, accessed January 4, 2020.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, February 19, 1970, accessed January 4, 2020.



FACE OFF—The U of A Nanooks and the Gustavus Adolphus Gusties prepare for a face off during their game Saturday at the University of Alaska. The Nanooks played the nationally ranked Minnesota team well through the first two periods, but a third stanza explosion propelled the visitors to an 11-2 victory. *(News-Miner Staff Photo)*

Despite still being in the shadow of

the university's basketball program, UAF's hockey program continued to grow with the 1969-1970 season being a pivotal year as the team took on its first out-of-state collegiate squad when nationally ranked Gustavus Adolphus traveled to Fairbanks (above photograph).⁵⁹ The addition of the air inflated dome known as the "Beluga" covering a rink was a major boost to UAF hockey.⁶⁰

In October, meetings were held to organize a youth hockey league in Fairbanks modeled after the youth football league, which was then only in its second year of existence. The program planned to compete against Anchorage youth teams, something that had not been done since the 1963-64 season.⁶¹

20th Annual Progress Edition, 1970

New emphasis gives hockey boost at U of A

The University of Alaska athletic department has put a great deal of emphasis during the 1969-70 term in upgrading the school's intercollegiate ice hockey program.

Hockey has suffered in its development at UA because of the lack of facilities and the absence of a qualified coach to push the program forward.

The addition of the air-inflated dome, better known as Beluga, a year ago and the hiring of Fred Stevenson as coach this term has turned all that around.

Another important element is an expanded schedule.

"It is important to get more contests on our schedule," says Stevenson. "There is no way I can coax top hockey players to come to the university until I can offer them a decent number of games during the season."

Meeting tonight on youth hockey program

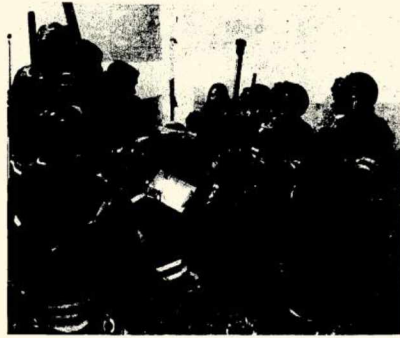
Meetings have been held and equipment will be available at a nominal cost.

⁵⁹ Ibid, February 2, 1970, accessed January 4, 2020.

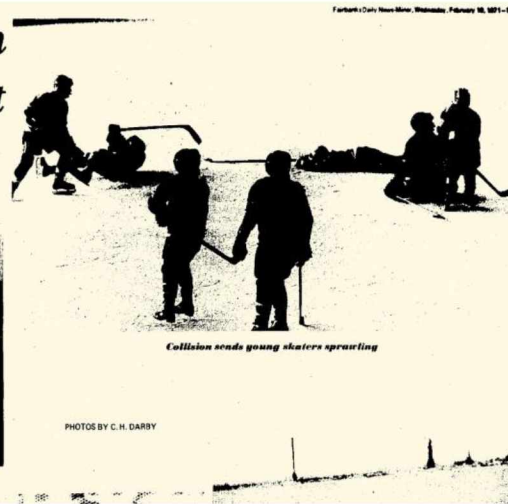
⁶⁰ Ibid, "New Emphasis gives hockey boost at U of A," March 17, 1970, accessed January 4, 2020.

⁶¹ Ibid, "Meeting tonight on youth hockey program," October 27, 1970, accessed January 5, 2020.

Youth hockey program makes successful debut



Denall team gets final instructions



Collision sends young skaters spruiling

PHOTOS BY C. H. DARBY

1971: In its first season the youth hockey program was a resounding success.⁶²

1972: Youth hockey continued to flourish in Fairbanks.⁶³

Youth hockey is going grrr-reat!



Instruction on the ice



Determined iceer



School).

The Big Dipper, while filling an otherwise huge void in area recreational needs, has already been outgrown. The Fairbanks Youth Hockey Program is in need of outdoor facilities this year to augment the Big Dipper due to the fantastic two-year growth of the organization. The wheels of government have turned exceptionally slow on recreational projects such as the Big Dipper, but the desires of the people for whom the government functions, have been made loud and clear by the phenomenal growth of the various recreational programs.

The youth hockey program continued to expand rapidly, so much so that some locals believed more hockey facilities were needed to accommodate said growth. This editorial piece discusses the fact that the much needed Big Dipper has done a great deal for the community in terms of recreation, but now the Borough must help build more of these facilities as the demand for them increases.⁶⁴

⁶² Ibid, photographs by C.H. Darby, "Youth hockey program makes successful debut," February 10, 1971, accessed January 5, 2020.

⁶³ Ibid, photographs by Sharon Brunn, "Youth hockey is going grrr-reat!," February 18, 1972, accessed January 5, 2020.

⁶⁴ Ibid, "Eye to the local election," August 17, 1972, January 5, 2020.

Hockey pushing program

1973: Into its third season, the Fairbanks Youth Hockey Program attracted increased community support. The association's numbers continued to grow. A local program called "Buy-a-Board" allowed Fairbanksans to pay \$15 that would help furnish the 675 sheets of plywood necessary to build nine outdoor rinks at the local schools.⁶⁵

The Fairbanks Youth Hockey League, currently enjoying its third highly successful season, is pushing for the construction of ice hockey and skating rinks at each one of the grade schools in the area.

The league today received a donation from the Fairbanks Medical and Surgical Clinic of enough materials for one full rink. Other rinks are being planned with proceeds of the Buy-A-Board Drive and other fund-raising efforts.

The young hockey league is having a meeting tonight at 7:30 at the Golden Nugget and all persons interested in hockey are invited to attend the board meeting. Future plans of the league will be discussed.

Other upcoming events include another Ryan-Main hockey clash at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 23 at the Big Dipper; the visit of a combined boys-girls team from Gulkana on Feb. 24 and competition with the Anchorage Midget Division teams on Feb. 24-25.



Photography donated by Stu Pochter, The Lens Magazine

BUY A BOARD \$15.00
We Need 675 Sheets of Plywood

All proceeds will be used for material for 9 Hockey Rinks, expenses for Hockey Uniforms, Referees and Hockey Clinics.

We presently have over 350 kids from 6 to 16 in hockey uniforms and with a little help from EVERYONE we will be able to develop an excellent YOUTH HOCKEY PROGRAM.

To offer your assistance, phone 456-5005



READY FOR HOCKEY SEASON—Richard Barnett works on framing for Barnette Elementary School hockey

rink being constructed with the help of the Fairbanks Youth Hockey Association. *(Staff photo)*

This photograph shows a local volunteer helping to construct an outdoor rink at Barnette Elementary School through the "Buy-a-Board" program.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Ibid, "Hockey pushing program," February 14, 1973, accessed January 5, 2020.

⁶⁶ Staff photo, "Ready for Hockey Season," October 10, 1973, accessed January 7, 2020.

1974: In a May editorial piece, the *News-Miner* recommends that the University strongly consider putting funds and effort into building a strong intercollegiate hockey program to attract attention to the school, much like the basketball team and mining engineering program do. Ultimately, the Patty Ice Rink would not be constructed until 1979 when the Nanooks began play as an intercollegiate team, competing against other universities, as opposed to just local Fairbanks and Anchorage men's teams.⁶⁷

In December the first intra-city high school hockey game in Fairbanks took place when West and East Lathrop took to the ice against one another.⁶⁸

1975: In March the Fairbanks Men's Recreational Hockey League concluded with a tournament. Competing were Chilkoot Charlie's, East Lathrop, West Lathrop, Sports Cache, Green Construction and Jackovich Tractor. Chilkoot Charlie's was crowned the champion.

In the Letters to the Editor of an April *News-Miner* edition, Rich Tarkiainen of the Fairbanks Men's Recreational Hockey League writes about the success of the 1974-1975 season, which attracted over 100 adults to the league as a way to get exercise and stay active in the winter.⁶⁹

1975-1976: The First Season

Little in terms of articles from the *News-Miner* on the Teamsters can be found for the 1975-1976 season, particularly the first half of the season. Local interest in hockey at both the youth and adult levels continued to grow over the course of the season, however. An important milestone was the formation of the Blue Line Club in January of 1976, led by president Marlo Miller and Vice President Gary Atwood. The goal of the non-profit was to raise \$1.2 million for a new indoor, year-round ice rink. By June the club had raised \$300,000.

In addition to the new rink, a proposition for a three-city, four-team hockey league was put forth. The idea was for the Fairbanks Teamsters, Whitehorse, Anchorage Wolverines, and University of Alaska Anchorage to compete, helping keep local talent in Alaska and the Yukon Territory instead of promising players moving to the Lower 48 or southern Canada for development. The big question was whether the Anchorage Wolverines, then facing financial troubles, would join the fledgling league.

July, 1975: Gary Atwood is named head of Teamsters Local 959.⁷⁰

Teamsters name Atwood head of Fairbanks office

⁶⁷Ibid, "Mediocre in all fields?," May 15, 1974, accessed January 7, 2020.

⁶⁸ Tune Dunah photographer, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, "High School Hockey History," December 27, 1974, accessed January 7, 2020.

⁶⁹ Rich Tarkiainen, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, "Hockey Success," April 23, 1975, accessed January 7, 2020.

⁷⁰ Craig Smith, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, July 2, 1975.

January 1976: An article written by *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* Sports Editor Scott Barry, a.k.a. “Sidelineer,” focuses on the explosive growth of hockey in Fairbanks, and Roger McKinnon’s optimism surrounding its growth and expectations. Barry writes, speaking vicariously through McKinnon, that for youth hockey to continue growing in the Interior, the top levels of hockey need to be expanded to a semi-pro league with Anchorage and Canadian towns, and a university program.⁷¹

In a late January contest with the University of Alaska Fairbanks, the Teamsters posted an impressive 17-3 victory as Roger McKinnon scored five goals himself. In the article below, McKinnon equates the Teamsters with the semi-professional Anchorage Wolverines.⁷²

In March the “Blue Line Club,” a group of local ice hockey enthusiasts spearheaded by Marlo Miller and Gary Atwood, launched a public fund to finance a public arena closer to downtown as UAF continued work on its \$4.8 million ice hockey facility. The arena was part of the plan to help aid the expansion of hockey in Fairbanks, and put a semi-professional team in town.⁷³

April, 1976: The Teamsters beat the Anchorage *All-Stars* at Ben Boeke Arena in a three-game series to capture the first ever Alaska Governors Cup, an event that is now contested between UAF and UAA hockey.⁷⁴

Teamsters rout City League foe

The Teamsters, with player-coach Roger McKinnon leading the way, exploded past the University of Alaska, 17-3, in a Fairbanks City League hockey match Sunday.

McKinnon, who scored five goals, said it was the best effort of the year for the Teamsters.

“The Teamsters are on a par with the Wolverines, he said, referring to the Anchorage semi-pro squad.

and Ed Joss turned in hat tricks to boost the Teamsters' scoring, while Hubert Angiakak, Tim Krupa and Dan Kwapica accounted for the UA goals.

In Sunday's earlier contest at the Big Dipper Sports Cache broke open a tight game in the third period to register a 14-9 triumph.

Steve Campbell and Kenny Carroll paced Sports Cache with four and three goals, respectively, while Steve Draneau and

By CARL PORTMAN
Staff Sportswriter

“If everything falls into place and there are no hang-ups,” Fairbanks next winter will boast a highly competitive semi-professional hockey team and a new multi-use 4,000 seat hockey arena, says Gary Atwood, president of the Teamsters hockey club.

Atwood said the new Fairbanks hockey club would be on the same level as the Anchorage Wolverines, Alaska's only semi-pro puck organization. However, Atwood cautioned that the plans for the Fairbanks team depend largely on its ability to enter a league and on the construction of the new ice facilities.

⁷¹ Scott Barry, “Hockey growing in Fairbanks,” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, January 13, 1976.

⁷² *News-Miner*, “Teamsters rout City League Foe,” January 27, 1976, accessed January 9, 2020.

⁷³ Carl Portman, “Local group works for a news hockey team and arena,” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, March 20, 1976.

⁷⁴ Portman, *News-Miner*, April 5, 1976.

Progress for hockey league

Progress is being made toward creating a regional hockey league, and Fairbanks would have a team.

Gary Atwood, a member of the Blue Line Club and president of the Teamsters hockey team, said Whitehorse, Fairbanks and Anchorage might field teams to play in the new league.

Whitehorse is interested in joining the proposed league, Atwood said, while the Anchorage Wolverines might join.

Presently, the Fairbanks Teamsters play only in local city league competition, as do teams

anchorage will field a varsity hockey team next year and Atwood has contacted the university about having their team play in the league.

If they joined, Anchorage could have the University team and the Wolverines in the league. Fairbanks would field a team and the fourth squad would be made up of Whitehorse area players.

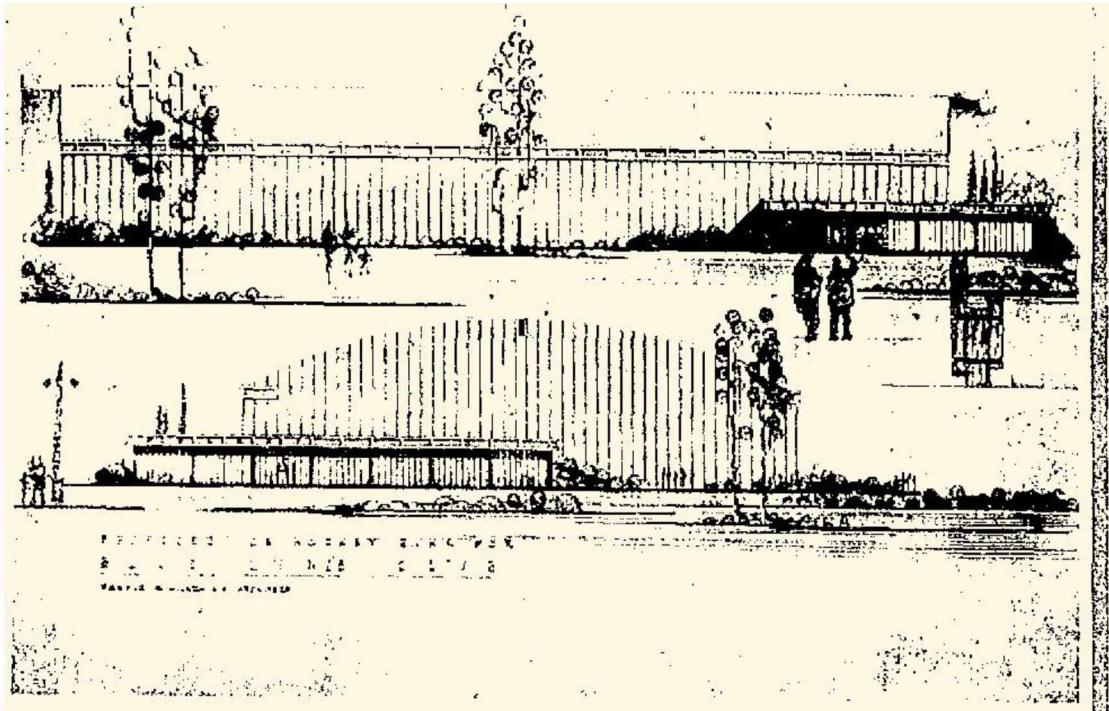
"We plan to have a few exhibition games too, with clubs coming up from Calgary, Edmonton, Portland or Reno to play in each city our league plays in," Atwood said.

The cost of transporting teams

May, 1976: Great progress was being made towards the formation of a four team semi-professional hockey league to include the Fairbanks Teamsters, Anchorage Wolverines, University of Alaska Anchorage, and Whitehorse.⁷⁵

June, 1976: The Blue Line Club raised over \$300,000 for a new arena in anticipation of the three-city, four team semi-professional hockey league. The projected cost for the arena was \$1.2 million. Both Marlo Miller and Gary Atwood, president and vice president of the Blue Line Club respectively, felt the increased interest in ice hockey and ice sports necessitated another indoor artificial ice rink.

Above is a sketch of the building printed in a *News-Miner* article.⁷⁶



PROPOSED ICE ARENA—This is a drawing of the proposed ice arena being planned by the Blue Line Club. The

Organization has raised \$300,000 so far. If all plans fell, the facility will open in November at a location near Alaskaland.

(Staff Photo)

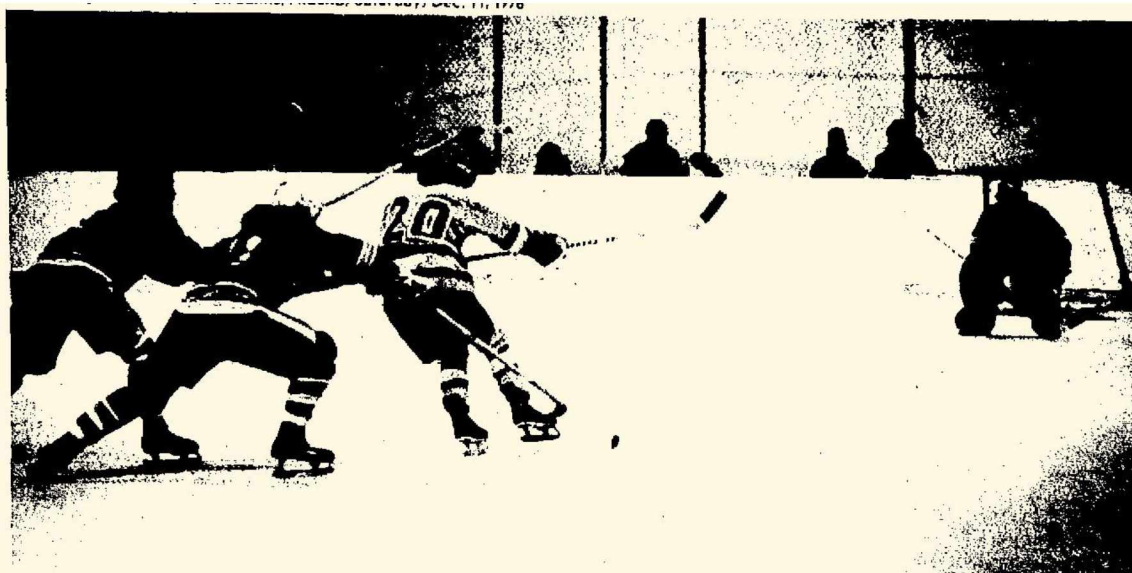
⁷⁵ *News-Miner*, May 7, 1976.

⁷⁶ Craig Smith, "Arena drive at \$300,00," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, June 9, 1976, accessed January 9, 2020.

1976-1977: The Second Season

With hockey being a relatively new organized sport, and the Teamsters being an even newer team in Fairbanks, few articles for the 1976-1977 season can be found. Prior to the start of the season, plans for a three-city, four-team league were scratched in August due to the withdrawal of the University of Alaska Anchorage and the Anchorage Wolverines. The Blue Line Club, a nonprofit organization formed in January 1976, desperately continued to raise funds for a new year-round artificial ice arena. The prebuilt rink was being shipped to Fairbanks, but the opening of the rink continued to be postponed. The rink was to be located at the old city impound lot across from Growden Field.

The photograph on the right depicts a December contest between in-state rivals Anchorage Wolverines and Fairbanks Teamsters.⁷⁷



TROUBLED — Billy Brett of the Anchorage Wolverines ducks to avoid one stick and steps over another as he

drives the puck toward the Teamsters' goal in a hard-fought ice battle here Friday night. The Wolverines won 6-4.

(Staff Photo by Marc Olson)

1977-1978 Season

In its inaugural season as the Fairbanks Gold Kings, the team achieved major milestones. The organization dropped the team name Teamsters in favor of the Gold Kings. It was Joe Jackovich, an original stockholder and owner of Jackovich Tractor and Equipment Co., who came up with the name combining references to the gold mining history of Fairbanks, the Goldpanners baseball team of Fairbanks, and his favorite professional hockey team the Los Angeles Kings. With some new faces and many familiar returning players, the Gold Kings trounced the Anchorage Wolverines in a best-of-three contest for the Alaska Governor's Cup. In April, the team traveled to Roseau, Minnesota, thanks to the fundraising efforts of local supporters of the team. The team beat the Grand Forks Wheat Kings and Bemidji Blues but lost to R-K Design of Redford, Michigan 9-3 in the championship game.

⁷⁷ *News-Miner*, photograph by Marc Olson, "Troubled," December 11, 1976, accessed January 9, 2020.

Roster

Paul Malette	Dave Borland	Ed Joss	Gene Slyziuk
Tom Crawley	Dave Teets	Joe Behling	Tim Waggoner
Kurt Laiti	Pete Larsen	Jim Dufford	Rod Chiupka
Matt Stephl	Jim Ozimkoski	Charlie Freese	Chuck Cartier
Brent Cole	Gary Whiteley	Jim Lydon	Gary Swenson

Schedule

November 11-12: Anchorage Wolverines
November 25-27: Victoria Maple Leafs
December 2-3: Anchorage Wolverines
December 16-17: Seattle Indians
January 6-7: Juan DeFuca Merchants
January 13-14: Anchorage Wolverines
January 18-19: Vermillion Night Hawks
January 27-28: Whitehorse
February 3-4: Spokane Expo's
February 10-11: Anchorage Wolverines
February 24-25: RCMP Islanders

Keith Olson

Sports Writer

Gold Kings



YES, VIRGINIA. THERE IS A semi-pro hockey team in the Golden Heart City, and it's about to graduate from its semi-city-league status in the guise of the Fairbanks Gold Kings.

Don't believe it, huh?

Well what if it was reported that a nucleus of 11 stockholders met Friday of last week at the Traveler's Inn to lay the groundwork for a corporation under that name. And what if they've already released a schedule for a 29-game season that includes 21 home dates?

Suddenly the story becomes more believable, particularly among those of the persuasion that it's a crying shame Fairbanks has neither a college or bonafide city team to brag about despite the absence of a first-class rink.

WELL THERE IS SUCH A GROUP ready to put its best foot and sports dollar forward to promote a team in Fairbanks. The details came out Tuesday over a hot beef sandwich in the company of former Teamsters hockey coach Roger McKinnon, who has been named player-coach for the new team.

In October, stockholders Gary Atwood, John Rosie, Joe Jackovich, Thomas Paskvan, Jim Laiti, Charles Freeze, Wayne King, Bob Durkee, Ed Joss and Jim Lounsbury met at the Traveler's Inn (where the Westmark Hotel now stands) to form the Gold Kings corporation. Most of the Gold Kings players came from the predecessor team, the Teamsters, but the roster was finalized after tryouts.⁷⁸

With a few new faces and many returning players, the newly formed semi-professional hockey team known as the Fairbanks Gold Kings opened their inaugural season on the road against the Anchorage Wolverines. The team had a 31-game schedule, lending legitimacy to the organization. While the Wolverines had been practicing for three weeks, the Gold Kings were limited to just one week on the ice before facing off against Anchorage.⁷⁹

New faces provide Kings with promising outlook

By DAN RALEY
Sports Editor

So far, trying to establish hockey in the Fairbanks area has been like trying to fit a square peg into a round table. It won't fit no matter how hard the push.

Save for an energetic outbreak of youth hockey, arena fiascos and unpopular teams have done much to tarnish the efforts of the puck sport, which would appear to be a very solid choice to flourish here. However, an upward trend may soon be on the way.

After promising a community team along the lines of the Alaska Goldpanners and then quietly going about its business to bring it off, the semiprofessional Fairbanks Gold Kings have aroused much curiosity.

The Gold Kings have taken several positive steps in making their effort believable by adding a new name ("dropping Teamsters"), new players, new backing and by putting together a legitimate 31-game schedule.

Now they go to battle. The Gold Kings, despite having only a week to work out due to lack of adequate ice



ROB CHIUPKA

Teamster skater, Ozimkoski was captain of his Detroit Red Wing junior team. He was offered scholarships in both hockey and baseball, but was drafted into the army instead.

JIM LAITI—The youngest in the long line of Laiti brothers, he was a member of the Teamsters last year but did not see action. He, too, is a native Fairbanksan.


CHARLIE FREEZE—He has played the last two seasons with the Teamsters after graduating from Service High School in Anchorage. He is also from Fairbanks originally.

Defensemen

JOE BEHLING—Regarded as the top Gold King defenseman, Behling played Canadian junior hockey. He's another two-year member of the Teamsters. "He has more experience than the others," said McKinnon of the defenseman.

TOM CROWLEY—He recently graduated from Lathrop High School and hopes to follow in the footsteps of Brent Cole and Bruce Laiti, two Teamsters skaters, also from Fair-

In an early December match-up between the Gold Kings and Anchorage Wolverines, a massive bench-clearing brawl broke out in the second period. Both teams were assessed 22 penalty minutes and sent to the locker rooms prematurely. Note the fans, egging on the brawlers, hanging from the chainlink fencing that once encircled the rink at the Big Dipper.⁸⁰



PUCK PARTY—Members of both the Fairbanks Gold Kings and Anchorage Wolverines intermingle in a second period brawl Friday night at the Big Dipper after both benches cleared. Officials were unable to control order at the time but did manage to clear the ice later and cancel the rest of the period. Anchorage won the game, 10-3.

Staff photo by Steve Olson

⁷⁸ Keith Olson, "Gold Kings," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, October 1, 1977, accessed January 10, 2020.

⁷⁹ Dan Raley, "New faces provide Kings with promising outlook," *News-Miner*, November 10, 1977, accessed January 10, 2020.

⁸⁰ Keith Olson, Marc Olson photographer, "Bench clearing brawl spurs Wolverines past Gold Kings," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, December 3, 1977.

Gary Swensen, left, and Chuck Cartier, right.⁸¹



The Gold Kings swept the Governor's Cup with three wins against the Anchorage Wolverines. In the photograph below, Gold Kings players celebrate the victory on the ice.⁸²

In April, the Gold Kings, thanks to a community fundraising effort, advanced to Roseau, Minnesota for the U.S. National Senior Intermediate Hockey Tournament. The team placed second to R-K Design of Redford, Michigan.⁸³



WE'RE NUMBER ONE!—Members of the Fairbanks Gold Kings hockey team break into smiles and cheers as the final seconds tick off in their third straight victory over the Anchorage Wolverines Friday night at the Big Dipper, giving Fairbanks the Governor's Cup. Gold Kings from left are Matt Steph, Jim Dufford, Tim Waggoner, Dave Teets (top), Bruce Laiti and Gary Swenson. The win was the Gold Kings' 13th in a row as they wind down their season tonight at 8 against Anchorage.

(Staff photo by Eric Muehling)

1978-1979 Season

In October, team management and Roger McKinnon debated making the head coaching position a salaried job. Eventually a decision was reached to leave the position unpaid, given the unpaid status of the entire team, and McKinnon agreed to stay on as head coach. Later, in November, the Gold Kings raised adult ticket prices from \$4.00 to \$5.00 to help keep the organization afloat financially. Perhaps one of the most infamous moments in Gold Kings history occurred when the team met with the Burnaby Lakers in Fairbanks in January of 1979. A Burnaby player punched head referee Gary Whitley in the face. The Gold Kings retaliated, and the officiating crew ended the game early as a result of the confrontation. Following the game,

⁸¹ Marc Olson photographer, "Gold Kings entertain respected Vermilion," *News-Miner*, January 17, 1978, accessed January 11, 2020.

⁸² Eric Muehling photographer, "We're Number One!," *News-Miner*, March 11, 1978, accessed January 11, 2020.

⁸³ Olson, "Kings face Dakotans Saturday."

Gary Atwood harangued and berated Whitley and the other officials for ending the contest so soon. Tired of the physical and verbal abuse endured that evening, Whitley and his co-officials stormed out of the locker room, vowing there and then to never officiate another Gold Kings game.

The Gold Kings set another organization landmark this season as they posted their first shutout in team history, beating the Victoria, B.C. Athletics 11-0. At the conclusion of the season in their second National Tournament appearance in Detroit, the Kings again took second place. The Blue Line Club was continuing to promote a multi-use arena, collecting donations, and hoping to open the structure by the winter of 1979 for hockey and skating.

Roster

Gary Swenson	Dave Borland	Bill Duquette	Pete Larsen
Arthur Milan	Tim Waggoner	Sandy Imlach	Chuck Cartier
Dave Teets	Mike Winters	Christopher Fagan	Tom Crawley
Brad Kings	Kurt Laiti	Jim Lydon	Bruce Laiti
Gene Slyziuk	Rod Chiupka	Steve Campbell	
Jim Ozimkoski	Joey Behling	Matt Stephl	

Schedule

November 10-11: Anchorage Wolverines
 November 17-18: Anchorage Wolverines
 November 24-26: Vancouver Pharaohs
 December 1-3: Victoria Maple Leafs
 December 8-10: Juan DeFuca Merchants
 December 15-17: Seattle Indians
 January 5-6: Anchorage Wolverines
 January 12-14: Vancouver North Shore Winterhawks
 January 19-20: Anchorage Wolverines
 January 26-28: Vancouver Burnaby Lakers
 February 2-4: Victoria Athletics
 February 9-11: Vancouver Pastimes
 February 16-18: District 69 Golden Eagles B.C.
 February 23-25: Seattle Indians
 March 2-4: Simon Fraser University
 March 9-11: Vancouver Burnaby Timbers
 March 16-17: Governor's Cup Playoffs
 March 23-25: Governor's Cup Playoffs

Gold Kings prime for season opener

By KEITH OLSON
Sports Writer

The Fairbanks Gold Kings have cut their 36-man tryout roster to 22 for this weekend's season opening hockey series against the Anchorage Wolverines.

Player-coach Roger McKinnon put the team through an intra-squad scrimmage Monday night on the outdoor rink at the Big Dipper and followed that workout with the latest cut that included seven men.

"We've got 22 now and I'll probably wait until after we play Anchorage up here (Nov. 17 and 18) to make any more. We'll probably carry 18 or 19 through the season," McKinnon said Tuesday.

At present the team includes six new faces along with 16 from last year's squad. The new players are goalie Bill Duquette, defenseman Sandy Imlack, Art Milan, Chris Fagan and forwards Steve Campbell and Clay Wallace.

Duquette and veteran Jim Lydon give the Gold Kings what McKinnon considers a solid goal-tending duo going into the season. The coach said both will see action in this weekend's two-game series but he's undecided about which will start Friday's opener.

Campbell, Milan, Wallace and Fagan are all local products. Campbell returns after attending Washington State University on a baseball scholarship, while the other three played last year on West Valley's prep state championship hockey team.

Imlack played part-time last year for the Wolverines and now attends classes at the University of Alaska-Fairbanks.

The Gold Kings opened practice last Thursday and, with only a week of ice

time under their belts, McKinnon said the opener will be particularly tough.

Last year the Gold Kings played their opener after two week's practice but still managed to squeeze out a two-game split with the Wolverines, who've been practicing some three weeks now and already have had two practice games.

There may well be a revenge motive as well since Fairbanks has beaten Anchorage eight straight times.

"Our goalkeepers kept us in those games last year and I think we were in better shape. We'd hoped the ice would be ready for us early again this year, but it just didn't work out that way," McKinnon said.

"We're going to be out of shape for this first one. The Wolverines should be excellent shape, and we'll need to skate with four lines just to keep up with them," the coach said. "If they can't run us off the ice in this series, they're in a world of hurt."

"Everyone's a little tired and sore from the practices and this is the time we should be slacking off. But we can't afford to do that. It's really not fair putting 'em through a tough game against a team like the Wolverines this early in the year without practices . . ."

In my opinion we're just finally getting a chance just to practice on a rink with lines. It'll take us a period just to get used to playing hockey again."

All expected returnees from last year are now back with the team. The last two—forward Peter Larson and center Gary Swenson—are due in from Seattle today, where both have been working. McKinnon said both have been skating in Seattle and "are probably in better shape than the rest of us."



BILL DUQUETTE



SANDY IMLACK



STEVE CAMPBELL

Most notable absentees from this year's team are top defenseman Joey Behling and No. 1 goalie Paul Malette.

Both left Fairbanks for employment outside. Captain Gary Larson and defenseman Robbie Quinn have retired.

Peter Larson was named the team's Most Valuable Player last year and Swenson led the team in goals scored (22). Leading assist man Chuck Cartier (47 points, 32 assists) also returns.

McKinnon lists the Gold King lines this way: (1) center Larson and wingers Swenson and Tim Waggoner; (2) center Bruce Laitl and wingers Kurt Laitl and Cartier; (3) center Rod Chupka and wingers Campbell and Dave Borland; and (4) center Jim Dufford and wingers Jim Ozimkoski and Matt Stephi.

Defensemen will open the season paired up like this: (1) Milan and Brad King; (2) Imlack and Dave Teets; and (3) Fagan and Tom Crawley. The rest of the players will be shuffled in as needed.

This weekend's series includes single games at 8 p.m. on Friday and Saturday night at Anchorage's Ben Boeke Arena. The Wolverines come to Fairbanks next weekend for the Gold Kings' home opener.



To submit scores on the Hotline, dial 456-8333



WRIST ACTION—Fairbanks Gold King Tim Waggoner, left, shows some stick technique while trying to dig the puck out of the boards during first-period action in Friday's hockey game at the Big Dipper against the

Anchorage Wolverines. Applying pressure at right is Anchorage's Emelio Beaver, while Fairbanks' Chris Fagan looks on from behind. The Gold Kings rallied in the final period to beat the Wolverines 8-6. (Staff photo by Eric Muehling)

In the photograph to the left Gold King Tim Waggoner and Anchorage Wolverine Emelio Beaver battle for the puck. Beaver is considered a pioneer of Alaskan hockey, breaking down the race barrier as an African-American player.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Olson, "Gold Kings prime for season opener," *News-Miner*, November 8, 1978.

⁸⁵ Muehling photographer, "Wrist Action," November 18, 1978.

New hockey clubs form for those without

The Gold Kings helped start new teams for adult and youth players alike. To satisfy the growing popularity of the sport in Fairbanks, McKinnon and the Gold Kings created an intermediate men's team known as the Polar Bears for those who did not make the cut for the Gold Kings. For teenage players ages 15-16 who either attended a school without a squad or failed to make their high school team, they created a Midget team.⁸⁶

An intermediate-level hockey team is being formed in Fairbanks and tryouts are set for next Wednesday at 10 p.m. on the Big Dipper ice.

Roger McKinnon, coach of the Fairbanks Gold Kings, said the new team is being formed to fill a void for a large number of older hockey players with no place else to play.

"We've got to get this thing going. There's just too many good hockey players laying around with nothing to do," McKinnon said Wednesday while announcing the team's formation.

In addition to that team, a Midget Division hockey team is also in the formation stages for players age 15-16 who either failed to make their respective high school teams or attend a school that doesn't field a hockey team.

The new intermediate club, to be named the Polar Bears, already has two games scheduled for Dec. 29 and 30 in Anchorage against the fledgling Anchorage Hornets. More games are anticipated with teams from the University of Alaska and possibly

Whitehorse.

Mary Fritze, a spokesman for the new Midget team, said that club is being organized with sponsorship from the Teamsters and adds that weekly practices are set for 8-9 p.m. Mondays and Thursdays at the Big Dipper.

Players interested in trying out for the Midget team are urged to contact Fritze at 452-8998.

Zales The Diamond

January 1979: A *News-Miner* article captured an on-ice brawl after an attack on a game official by the Burnaby Lakers.⁸⁷

Ice match-up ends early after players slug referee

By KEITH OLSON
Sports Writer

The contest had all the ingredients of a full-scale riot when game officials called a premature end to Saturday night's Fairbanks Gold Kings-Burnaby Lakers hockey game at the Big Dipper.

Referee Gary Whitley, who was twice punched by Burnaby players during the game, ordered play stopped with 14:34 still remaining in the third period and the Gold Kings out in front 7-4.

The suspension came at a point when both benches emptied onto the ice, fights broke out, and at least a few of the estimated 900 fans were dangerously close to joining in the bedlam.

"I'm glad they stopped it when they did because there were some fans just about ready to get into it, and I'd have been one of the first ones," said one fan after the game.

Fairbanks center Peter Larsen had just scored the Gold Kings' seventh goal when Laker center Sandy Bain punched Whitley in the head to throw the bench-clearing. Whitley was about to whistle Bain with a misconduct penalty for shooting the puck into the stands when Bain threw his punch.

Late in the second period, Laker captain Gord Girard also surprised Whitley with a punch in the face. The incident occurred seconds after Tim

Waggoner's short-handed goal had given the Gold Kings a 6-5 lead. Girard was apparently enraged by Whitley's indication of a delayed hooking penalty against him. Ironically, Girard's hooking penalty was nullified when the Gold Kings scored their goal.

Whitley ordered both teams to the dressing rooms to cool off with 5:46 still remaining in the frame, and the third period began with that amount of time lapsed on to the regular 20-minute time setting.

Between periods Whitley said he was the object of threats made in the Burnaby locker room. Whitley said the Laker coach warned him that he might get punched again if he didn't loosen up on his calls.

"I didn't even want to go out for the third period, but I felt I had to," he said. Whitley, who captained last year's Gold King team, said he suspended the game because the third-period brawl would have resulted in game misconducts for "at least" eight Burnaby players—the goalie for leaving his crease, three men for leaving the penalty box and four other players for leaving the bench.

"They already had three men out. That would've given them 11 game misconducts and I felt with that many men out they wouldn't have had enough players to continue," Whitley said.

Through the first two periods, Whitley had called 36 penalties—17 against the frustrated visitors who at one time had men as many as four deep in the penalty box.

Whitley said he was calling the game close in an effort to keep control of the game, which erupted into fights before the contest was even four minutes old.

Burnaby, which prides itself on a "body" style of hockey, was particularly hurt by penalties in the second period when the Gold Kings rallied from a 4-2 deficit to take their 6-5 lead. Two of the Fairbanks scores came on power plays.

"I think Whitley handled it right, not only to prevent a riot on the ice but also from some kind of incident involving the fans," said Gold King coach Roger McKinnon.

"Burnaby is a good hockey team, they're just uncontrollable. I was proud of the way our guys kept their heads tonight the way things were going. To be a championship hockey team, you've got to have discipline. And their guys don't have it. . . . One thing's for sure, you'll never see the Lakers up here again."

Laker coach Gary Forbes refused to defend his players for striking the referee, but he added that he felt Whitley was baiting his players. Forbes said Whitley "stuck his face right out at

Girard, daring him to hit him" just prior to the second-period incident.

"If a referee has no power of compass, there's no way he should try to control a hockey game. That referee didn't belong on the ice," Forbes said.

"He almost dared my player to hit him. I'm not defending my player, there's no excuse for hitting a referee. But I've been a referee myself for 23 years, and I'm just looking at it from both sides.

"We were up in the second period and the referee took it away from us. It could've been a good game with competent officials," Forbes said.

"I asked Roger not to call off the game, but I think now it might have been for the best. . . . For sure, we'll have two or three of our players suspended on account of this and it's just a shame we had to come all the way up here for this to happen just when we about to enter the provincial championships."

For the record, the Gold Kings got the win, their 11th straight and 17th win in 21 outings. Burnaby, which lost to the Gold Kings 5-3 on Friday night, left town with a 14-4 record.

Tim Waggoner scored twice while Kurt Laiti and Chugka added one goal each to help the Gold Kings' second-period comeback.

Chugka also scored the game's first goal just 15 seconds into the contest

before Burnaby countered to take a 3-1 lead on goals by Rob Deszaux, Dave Duck and Steve Block. Larsen, who played for Fairbanks despite being suspended by the flu, then scored his first goal to narrow it to 3-2 at the 12:47 mark of the opening period.

Girard widened the Burnaby lead to 4-2 early in the second period before the Gold Kings went to work with three straight goals to take a 5-4 lead. Burnaby then tied it again at 5-5 on Rick Krane's goal at the 12:19 mark.

Coincidental minors to Duck and Fairbanks' Matt Stepi preceded a roughing call on Gold King Jim Ozimkowski to set the stage for Waggoner's short-handed goal that ended the second period.

Newly-acquired goalie Lenzy Zaiser turned in another fine performance in the Fairbanks net with 29 saves, including six sparkling rejections on Burnaby breakaways.

Waggoner and Gold King Joey Behling were both injured but managed to finish the game. Waggoner was hit in the mouth by a stick early in the first period and had to be helped off the ice. Behling required stitches over his left eye after being struck by a flying stick, also in the first period.

Burnaby had one player injured when defenseman Doug Tottenham was rocked into the boards in the third

Daily News - Miner

SPORTS

To submit scores on the Hotline, dial 456-8333

Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska, Monday, Jan. 29, 1979-11

Whitley, others won't be back

By KEITH OLSON
Sports Writer

Referee Gary Whitley and linemen Gene Muller and Jerry England say they'll never officiate another hockey game for the Fairbanks Gold Kings following an ugly, violent confrontation with the Burnaby Lakers during Saturday night's game at the Big Dipper.

Whitley, who earlier had stopped play in the second period when he was punched by Laker captain Gord Girard, terminated the game with 11:41 left in the third period after being punched a second time by Laker center Sandy Bain.

Whitley suffered a cut lip from Girard's punch and said he needed medical aids to clear his head before returning to the ice for the third period.

In the referees' dressing room following the contest, several of the Burnaby players and line men charged him with hitting Muller.

"I want to talk to you," Whitley said in angry tones to Whitley. "There's nothing a reporter in the room. Oh, God, I wish I didn't have to do this," Whitley said. "You had no right suspending that game. There's more heat at stake than just suspension, you know."

Whitley and England proceeded to argue. Whitley saying that the Gold Kings shouldn't have scheduled a game with other hockey clubs that "bring their own fans and all sorts of trouble."

"Whitley said he'd heard the Lakers had been previously been suspended from their league and were suspended for a year from entering their own arena (discontinued by the text).

England responded: "We have to play the game that we can get." Whitley charged Whitley with being too tight on the calls and tried to terminate the conversation saying: "We're talking to Whitley."

Whitley said: "It's that year I've never referee for you again. I'm not going to referee for you again. I'm not going out of the dressing room and I'm not going to be in the dressing room challenging them to have him back."

Muller and England both said. "I would like Whitley had every right to suspend the game and punish Whitley a



saying they "never set foot on the ice for the Gold Kings again."

England then left. The three officials dressed and later set the rink with a security guard present.

England denied any alleged suspension leveled against his team. Laker coach Gary Forbes commented that his team had never been suspended by an authority and that he would never schedule another game in a series in Fairbanks.

But Forbes denied that there are currently any league suspensions in effect against his club.

Laker coach Gary Forbes refused to defend his players for striking the referee, but he added that he felt Whitley was baiting his players. Forbes said Whitley "stuck his face right out at

period by a Larsen body check. Tottenham had to be helped off the ice and did not return.

Four of the Lakers received game misconducts on the night. Girard and Bain also received gross misconducts for striking the referee and their actions will be reported to both the American and Canadian amateur hockey associations. Whitley said he would recommend suspensions of both Girard and Bain as well as the entire Laker club.

Burnaby 3 2 0-3
Fairbanks 2 2 1-2
First Period: 1, Fairbanks, Chugka (F); 2, Burnaby, Deszaux (A); 3, Burnaby, Duck (A); 4, Burnaby, Duck (F); 5, Burnaby, Duck (A); 6, Burnaby, Duck (A); 7, Burnaby, Duck (A); 8, Burnaby, Duck (A); 9, Burnaby, Duck (A); 10, Burnaby, Duck (A); 11, Burnaby, Duck (A); 12, Burnaby, Duck (A); 13, Burnaby, Duck (A); 14, Burnaby, Duck (A); 15, Burnaby, Duck (A); 16, Burnaby, Duck (A); 17, Burnaby, Duck (A); 18, Burnaby, Duck (A); 19, Burnaby, Duck (A); 20, Burnaby, Duck (A); 21, Burnaby, Duck (A); 22, Burnaby, Duck (A); 23, Burnaby, Duck (A); 24, Burnaby, Duck (A); 25, Burnaby, Duck (A); 26, Burnaby, Duck (A); 27, Burnaby, Duck (A); 28, Burnaby, Duck (A); 29, Burnaby, Duck (A); 30, Burnaby, Duck (A).

⁸⁶ *News-Miner*, "New hockey clubs form for those without," December 23, 1978, accessed January 11, 2020.

⁸⁷ Olson, "Ice match-up ends early after players slug referee," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, January 29, 1979.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*, "Whitley, others won't be back," January 29, 1979.

Wolverine fold-up will hurt Kings

By KEITH OLSON
Sports Writer

The Fairbanks Gold Kings say they need some sort of inter-city competition with Anchorage and will do everything they can to help the Anchorage Wolverines salvage their disbanded program.

"We'll work with anybody that'll have a team in Anchorage. We need a team in Anchorage," Gold King spokesman John Rosie said Wednesday.

"For a semi-pro hockey program in this state to be viable, there has to be some sort of inter-city competition. Without it we don't make money to help us out (in other games) when we lose money."

The Wolverine board of directors voted Monday to disband its program because of a reported \$30,000 debt. Spokesmen for the Anchorage club said their program began a financial downslide three years ago after moving into Ben Boeke Arena, where gate receipts simply haven't been large enough to offset operating costs.

Gold King-Wolverine games have been the chief money-makers for both clubs. Rosie said the Wolverine demise hurts the Gold Kings financially but not to the extent where Fairbanks will also have to fold.

Rosie pointed out that much of the Wolverines' debt stemmed from their insistence on scheduling national teams (such as the West German team last year) and American teams from the Midwest.

The Gold Kings schedule most of their games against teams from the Seattle-Vancouver area, which team officials say helps keep costs at a

minimum when bringing clubs north from the Lower 48.

Both the Wolverines and Gold Kings have cited travel costs as their largest operating expense.

Wolverine coach Jeff Cooper and player-stockholder John Roberts are reportedly trying to keep the Wolverine players together in hopes of salvaging a team to play the Gold Kings in the upcoming Governor's Cup series. That best-of-five series is scheduled to begin March 16 in Fairbanks.

Rosie said the Gold Kings are reviewing the rest of their season

schedule and may drop one of their later series to re-schedule another series with the Wolverines.

Rosie said some type of arrangement may be worked out to host the Wolverines here or play a benefit game in Anchorage, prior to the Governor's Cup series, and perhaps share the gate receipts. However, no such commitment has yet been made.

"We'll do whatever we can to help the Wolverines back into a position where they can play," Rosie said. "We're pushing for another Governor's Cup series... We do need them badly."

In February, the Anchorage Wolverines folded for financial reasons. The disbanding of the Anchorage team, due to ever-increasing debt, put a strain on the Gold Kings to keep competitive hockey alive in the state of Alaska.⁸⁹

LOST

**THE JEWISH POPULATION
IN THE FAIRBANKS
AREA**



*Now's the time
to stand up
and be
counted!*

The Gold Kings set a team landmark, posting the team's first ever shutout against the Victoria, B.C. Athletics in 50-below weather.⁹⁰

Stingy Gold Kings record first shutout ever

By KEITH OLSON
Sports Writer

Goalie Bill Dugette woke up yesterday with a jewel in his pocket. The gem came Saturday in a 27-ave performance that earned Dugette his eighth straight win and the first shutout in club history as the Fairbanks Gold Kings blanked the Victoria Athletics 11-0 at the Big Dipper.

A small but hearty crowd of about 200 braved the 50-below weather to witness the affair, one which also featured a five-goal performance by Gold King winger Chuck Cartier.

The win was Fairbanks' 13th straight and improved the Gold King season record to 19-4-0. The Athletics, who play out of Saanich, B.C., in the South Island Big 6 Hockey League, left town with a 17-13-3 mark.

Victoria played the series short-handed with only two forward lines and simply lacked the manpower to keep up in this one after dropping Friday's series opener by a more respectable 6-3 score.

"We just didn't have the gas," said Victoria player-coach Brian Hamilton after seeing his team outshot 56-27 on the night. "They just kept coming back on us and we didn't have the men to keep up."

Gold King coach Roger McKinnon was just as abrupt in his post-game analysis: "What can I say? It was just good basic hockey!"

Cartier, who just returned to the Gold Kings this week after a three-week absence, scored two of his five goals in the second period when Fairbanks erupted for four goals en route to a 6-0 lead. The shaggy-haired right winger then topped off the evening with a three-period hat trick that foiled any Victoria comeback effort before it could start.

Yet, even with an 11-goal lead, the fireworks weren't over until the final seconds ticked off in Dugette's coveted shutout. An interference call on Fairbanks' Bruce Laiti gave Victoria a power play for the final 1:17, and Dugette made three late saves to keep the zero on the scoreboard for the

visitors.

"That was the closest they came to scoring all night," Dugette said after the game. "They had one that went off the post and the puck was just lying there, but (Dave) Teets got his stick on it to knock it away."

"I had lots of help tonight. You never get a shutout without backchecking and everything... They had no rebound shots all night and every shot they got off was from a bad angle. They only had about three shots all night from the

slot."

Victoria goalie Rick Bains looked just as impressive in the Athletics end as he swatted away 47 shots, many with a cat-quick glovehand. Few of those stops were easy, either, as the Gold Kings kept the pressure on all night long with a sharp skating game and pinpoint passing.

"It's hard to miss when your shooting into an open net," Cartier said of his five goals.

Asked to compare this year's team to

last year's squad, Cartier said depth is the biggest difference at this point in the season. "Our whole team is tighter this year," Cartier said. "When you go out with four lines and the other team doesn't score, you know you're strong on every single line."

Teets and winger Tim Waggoner scored first-period goals to give the Gold Kings an early 2-0 lead. Cartier then went to work with his five goals while Kurt Laiti, Matt Steph, Jim Ozimkoski and Sandy Imlach all added

solo shots. Bruce Laiti also assisted on three goals, while Peter Larsen and Rod Chupka assisted on two each.

None of the Fairbanks scores resulted from power plays, however two—those by Waggoner and Steph—went up on the board while the Gold Kings skated short-handed.

Referee Gene Mahler whistled just eight penalties in the game, none of them majors. Mahler worked the game with linemen Jimmy Brett and Rich Tarkainen.

Mahler and Tarkainen are two of the four officials that said Monday they'd never worked another Gold King game. However, local officials met with Gold King management on Saturday afternoon and apparently worked out their differences and led to the boycott.

Judy Martell, referee-in-chief for the state, flew into town from Anchorage to organize the meeting.

Gold King spokesman John Rosie said the two-hour meeting was very beneficial to clear the air of hard feelings between the two groups. Rosie said most of the problems stemmed from "non-communication" between the Gold Kings and the local hockey officials, and now those lines of communication have been reopened.

All of the local hockey officials are expected to return to the ice in upcoming games. The Gold Kings return to play this weekend with a two-game home series against the Vancouver Pastimes.

Victoria	1	2	3	Totals
Fairbanks	2	4	0	6
First Period—1, Fairbanks, Teets (Larsen), 4:27;				
2, Fairbanks, Waggoner, unassisted, 8:11;				
Penalties—Pogel (V), 3:27; B. Laiti (F), 17:20;				
Second Period—3, Fairbanks, B. Laiti, 9:14;				
2:10; 4, Fairbanks, Cartier (Betting), 7:47; 5,				
Fairbanks, Cartier (unassisted), 12:41; 6, Fairbanks,				
Steph (Chupka), 13:30; Penalties—Bosch (V),				
10:40; Chupka (F), 11:28; Teets (F), 14:14;				
Third Period—2, Fairbanks, Cartier (Teets, B.				
Laiti), 10:14; 4, Fairbanks, Ozimkoski (unassisted),				
1:38; 8, Fairbanks, Cartier (Larsen), 4:08; 10,				
Fairbanks, Cartier (B. Laiti), 8:12; 11, 13:11;				
Fairbanks, Imlach (Chupka), 10:20;				
Shots On Goal—Victoria, 9-40-27; Fairbanks, 10-				
27-19-28.				
Goalkeepers—Victoria, Bains; Fairbanks,				
Dugette.				
Attendance—288 (estimate).				



SIDE BY SIDE—Dave Pettinger, right, of the Victoria Athletics and Fairbanks Gold King Charlie Freese jostle each other up the ice during semi-pro hockey action Saturday at the Big Dipper. The Gold Kings won 11-0.

⁸⁹Ibid, "Wolverine fold-up will hurt Kings," February 1, 1979.

⁹⁰ Ibid, "Stingy Gold Kings record first shutout ever," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, February 5, 1979.

Good luck to the Fairbanks Gold Kings Hockey Team in the National Invitational Tournament

March 30 through April 1
Detroit, Michigan



This advertisement illustrates local support for the Gold Kings as they prepared for their second National Tournament.⁹¹

☆ **GAMES**
Friday, 8:00 p.m., March 23
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Saturday Nite, March 24
(during Saturday's game)

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☆ **FOOD & DRINKS**
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Join the FUN this Saturday, March 24th at Alaskaland Civic Center!

☆ **DANCE**
Saturday, March 24
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ALASKALAND CIVIC CENTER

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☆ **GOOD TIMES**

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We would like to thank the following sponsors for their support and merchandise for the Auction.

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6. Alaska	21. Star in Seal	36. Sam's & Fred's	51. Alaska
7. Alaska	22. Star in Seal	37. Sam's & Fred's	52. Alaska
8. Alaska	23. Star in Seal	38. Sam's & Fred's	53. Alaska
9. Alaska	24. Star in Seal	39. Sam's & Fred's	54. Alaska
10. Alaska	25. Star in Seal	40. Sam's & Fred's	55. Alaska
11. Alaska	26. Star in Seal	41. Sam's & Fred's	56. Alaska
12. Alaska	27. Star in Seal	42. Sam's & Fred's	57. Alaska
13. Alaska	28. Star in Seal	43. Sam's & Fred's	58. Alaska
14. Alaska	29. Star in Seal	44. Sam's & Fred's	59. Alaska
15. Alaska	30. Star in Seal	45. Sam's & Fred's	60. Alaska

A special thanks to Tommy's, Cabaret and K&L Distributors.

In April, the Gold Kings placed second again at the National Tournament.⁹²

Gold Kings come up on short end of stick again

REDFORD, Mich. (Special)—For the second year in a row, the hockey season for the Fairbanks Gold Kings ended with a loss to R-K Design of Redford, Mich.

The Alaskans lost to Redford 10-3 Sunday in the championship game of the National Invitational Tournament. R-K Design is the same team that beat Fairbanks 9-3 in last year's finals of the U.S. National Senior Intermediate Tournament in Roseau, Minn.

The loss snapped a 23-game unbeaten streak for the Gold Kings, who tied powerful Lansing, Mich., 6-4 in their tourney opener on Friday and advanced to the championship with an 11-5 victory over Muskegon, Mich.

"Redford was just 100 per cent a better hockey team. They beat us everywhere—in the corners, back-checking and forechecking. They have at least a half-dozen skaters faster than anyone on the Gold Kings. They were awesome . . . phenomenal," said Gold

King spokesman John Rosie, who traveled with the team to Redford.

"The Gold Kings were as strong as they could've been going into it. They were prepared and knew what they had to do. But they didn't have the stature and strength to get the job done. Even Redford's defensemen were faster than anyone we have. The people back home haven't seen defensemen that fast in Fairbanks!" Rosie added in a telephone interview Sunday.

"I'd be willing to bet there probably isn't a stronger (intermediate) men's hockey team in the country than Redford. Fairbanks is as good as any of the top teams, take away Redford."

Redford outscored Fairbanks 4-1 in the opening period and never looked back en route to its victory in the championship game. Bob Brinkworth had a hat trick and two assists while Gary Cendrowski added two goals and a pair of assists to pace the winners. Jim Orzimoski, Bruce Laiti and Gary

Swenson all tallied single goals for Fairbanks.

Final shots-on-goal tallies were unavailable for the entire game, but through the first two periods Redford outshot the Gold Kings by a 47-21 margin.

"They just outplayed us. Every time we made a little mistake, they capitalized on it and it went up on the scoreboard," said injured Gold King Jim Lyden, who also accompanied the team to Redford.

In other tournament games, Lansing defeated Sun Valley, Idaho, 7-3 on Sunday to claim third place. Redford advanced to the championship game by winning its division with a 4-1 victory over Sun Valley on Friday and a 15-2 victory over Niagra Falls on Saturday.

Fairbanks had to come up with a monumental effort on Saturday just to get into the championship game. After tying Lansing 6-6 in their opener, it came down to a goals scored to see



To submit scores on the Hotline, dial 456-8333

whether Lansing or Fairbanks would advance to the finals against Redford. Lansing opened Saturday's play with a 10-3 victory over Muskegon, Mich., but the Gold Kings met the challenge by scoring 11 goals later in the day against the same team.

Controversy marred the Fairbanks-Muskegon game when it was discovered that Muskegon used a substitute Junior A goaltender in place

of its starting goalie against Lansing. The Gold Kings challenged the substitution late in the second period, and Muskegon was forced to replace the Junior A goalie with another walk-on, Danny McDonald.

Fairbanks then put on a murderous charge to outscore Muskegon 9-3 over the final two periods. Goalie Bill Duquette registered 33 saves for Fairbanks, while the two Muskegon

goaltenders rejected an amazing 76 Gold King shots. McDonald handled some 50 shots alone in the final two periods.

Chuck Cartier had three goals to lead the way for Fairbanks against Muskegon. Swenson and Orzimoski contributed two goals each while Bruce Laiti, Joey Behling, Kurt Laiti and Scott Michaels added single tallies.

Rosie said the Gold Kings rated as somewhat of a novelty and earned themselves quite a fan following from among the Michigan fans. Better than 100 fans from Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., also traveled to Redford to root the Gold Kings on. Sault Ste. Marie is home for several of the Gold King players.

Including a game in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., played prior to the tournament, the Gold Kings finished the second season with a sparkling 27-6-1 record. In their two-year history the Gold Kings have compiled a record of 48-13-2.

Rosie said several of the Gold Kings

are staying in Michigan for awhile to visit friends and relatives. The first players returning home are expected in Fairbanks late Tuesday, he said.

National Invitational Tournament
Championship Game

Fairbanks	10	3	2-3
Redford	4	3	3-10
First Period—1: Redford, Goodnow (Brinkworth, Cendrowski), 3-0; 2: Redford, Cendrowski (Brinkworth), 4-1; 3: Redford, Rutherford (Hartigam), 2-0; 4: Fairbanks, Orzimoski (King), 11-4; 5: Redford, Lerg (Goodnow, Cendrowski), 13-13; Penalties—Behling (F), 9:42; Swenson (F), 2:52; DeMarco (R), 2:53; Behling (F), 3:28; Orzimoski (F), 3:00; Howe (R), 9:17; Johnson (R), 10:04			
Second Period—4: Redford, Brinkworth (Lerg), 9-5; 5: Redford, Cendrowski (unassisted), 10:21; Penalties—Farbig (R), 2:11; Behling (F), 4:31; Swenson (F), 12:14			
Third Period—8: Fairbanks, B. Laiti (Cartier), 1:10; 10: Redford, Farbig (Hartigam), 2:28; 11: Redford, Redwood (Graft, Howe), 10:07; 12: Redford, Brinkworth (unassisted), 11:17; 13: Fairbanks, Swenson (K. Laiti, King), 14:30			
Shots On Goal (first two periods only)—Fairbanks 21, Redford 27			
Goaltenders—Fairbanks, Duquette; Redford, Palmer and Jackson (2)			
Attendance—960 (estimate)			

⁹¹ News-Miner, March 24, 1979.

⁹² Ibid., Gold Kings come up on the short end of stick again," April 2, 1979.

1979-1980 Season

In September 1979, John Rosie discussed the greatest challenges for the Fairbanks Gold Kings organization in an interview with *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* sports writer Keith Olson. Rosie reported high operating costs, finding more competitive opponents, securing adequate ice time, needing to grow fan support, and negotiating player contracts as the main challenges. Also adding to Rosie's headaches for the 1979-1980 season was the temporary absence of coach Roger McKinnon, who returned to his native Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan to help his family after his father suffered a stroke in November. McKinnon returned in December to reclaim his position from Bruce Laiti who took over the role in his absence. Furthermore, unseasonably warm weather and the uncompleted UAF Patty Rink left the Gold Kings painfully short of ice time for practices.

The Gold Kings played several highly anticipated and competitive matchups over the course of the season. They competed with Pueblo, Colorado, a team that won the Aspen Cup as the best Colorado squad, and put the trophy on the line against Fairbanks. The hometown heroes also competed for the Mayor's Cup during Anchorage's Fur Rendezvous, and their own Governor's Cup during the Winter Carnival against an all-star team comprised of Anchorage's best. In March, one of Michigan's top teams, Houghton, put their Copper Cup up for grabs against the Kings. On the heels of Houghton, the St. Paul Parkers, a senior men's league dynasty and perennial powerhouse, competed with the Gold Kings for the Anderson Cup. The Gold Kings proved victorious against Houghton, but lost to the St. Paul Parkers. These matchups would continue to define the Gold Kings' schedule over the coming years. The Kings did not play in the National Tournament this season, but several of their opponents from this season including Pueblo and Houghton placed high in the tournament, proving the Gold Kings' caliber.

Roster

Mike Roy	Jim Lydon	Ronald Muir	Chris Fagan
Bruce Laiti	Rich Hayward	Chuck Cartier	Dave Howard
Rod Chiupka	Kurt Laiti	Steve Campbell	Dave Borland
Jim Ozimkoski	Dave Teets	Pete Larsen	Jim Dufford

Schedule

November 22-25: Thanksgiving Tournament	February 8-10: Port Alberini, B.C.
December 7-9: Trail, B.C.	February 15-17: Portland Royals
December 15-16: Anchorage Visa	February 22-24: B.C. Tournament
December 21-22: Boise, ID	February 29-March 2: Seattle Indians
December 24-25: Sault Ste. Marie, MI	March 7-9: Casper, Wyoming
January 18-20: North Shore Winterhawks	

Keith Olson
Sports Writer



John Rosie looks ahead

JOHN ROSIE TOOK on quite a load last spring when he became president of the Fairbanks Gold Kings, and the local attorney still faces a heavy workload before the team opens its third season of semi-pro hockey about eight weeks from today.

Several problem areas have plagued the Gold Kings since their inception in 1977 and they warrant further attention before the beginning of this season. In no particular order, the Gold Kings must deal with: 1. high operating expenses, the biggest of which is the cost of bringing outside teams to Fairbanks; 2. upgrading the season schedule with tougher competition; 3. finding more ice time; 4. boosting fan support, and 5. satisfying player



JOHN ROSIE

dissatisfaction over contracts and benefits.

Rosie's plan of attack has been to tackle all five at the same time because the resolution of any one depends at least partly on resolution of the other four.

Rosie said university officials have agreed to make their new indoor ice arena available for a four-team Thanksgiving Tournament if it is ready on time, and UAF's Dr. John Gilmore says construction is right on schedule.

In a September interview with *News-Miner* sports editor Keith Olson, John Rosie discussed the challenges the organization faced in the coming season. He cited high operating costs, scheduling tougher teams, securing sufficient ice time, the need to increase fan support, and negotiating contract terms to alleviate player discontent as the greatest challenges.⁹³

To the right is a 1979 advertisement for Sport King, Roger McKinnon's sporting goods store that was considered "Hockey Central" in town. While now permanently closed, the building is located on

Kalakaket Street behind the Safeway on the West End of Fairbanks.⁹⁴

SPORT KING
Phone 479-2820
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Near University Center

YOUR ONE STOP HOCKEY PRO SHOP

Come see Tim or Roger from the Fairbanks Gold Kings for professional service.

- ☆ Complete selection of quality Hockey equipment for men, women and children
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- ☆ KOHO-COOPER-NORTH AND-LANGE-BAUER

Skate Sharpening? We're the best!

"Good Luck" to all of our Bantam A Tryouts.



UAF rink may be ready soon

Efforts to open the new University of Alaska-Fairbanks hockey rink next month have taken a turn for the better following a meeting Monday between contractors and school officials.

UAF athletic director Dr. John Gilmore said delays in the arrival of some materials—primarily lockers for dressing rooms and safety rails for spectator areas—may still postpone full use of the facility until mid-December.

But Gilmore said if the rest of the work is completed on schedule the rink could be available for ice skating and hockey practice at the end of this month.

In the photo above, workers Monday continued to make progress on the rink surface in preparation for testing ice-making equipment later this week.

Gilmore also said the university is looking for a way to perhaps install temporary safety railings and complete other necessary work to host a four-team Thanksgiving hockey tournament sponsored by the Fairbanks Gold Kings.

Chances of the Gold Kings still being able to play their tournament on university ice hinges on negotiations between university planners and project contractors regarding who would pay for the temporary work needed to host a spectator event, Gilmore said.

The UAF Patty Ice Rink neared completion in the late autumn of 1979. John Rosie and the Gold Kings had to negotiate ice time at the rink, something not easily done, given the competition for fans between UAF and the Gold Kings that would materialize over the years.⁹⁵

⁹³ Olson, "John Rosie looks ahead," September 15, 1979.

⁹⁴ *News-Miner*, October 27, 1979.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, "UAF rink may be ready soon," October 10, 1979, accessed January 12, 2020.

1980-1981 Season

During the course of the 1980-1981 season, extremely cold weather forced the Gold Kings to cancel some matches because of the Big Dipper's primitive conditions. In January, the Gold Kings beat Superior, Wisconsin in Fairbanks for the Great Lakes Cup. The Vancouver Pharaohs cancelled their January match with the Gold Kings for financial reasons. The Gold Kings played the renowned Flying Fathers, a team of Canadian Catholic priests who put on exhibition games around Canada and the United States in an effort to raise money for local charities.

More scheduling problems plagued Rosie and the Gold Kings in March. The Aspen, Colorado team fired its coach earlier in the year, resulting in a loss of talent that left the team rudderless and ill-prepared to fly to Fairbanks to face the Kings. Fairbanks was slated to compete for the Mayor's Cup as a part of the Fur Rendezvous in Anchorage. The mid-week start of the tournament was problematic for the working Gold Kings players, however, and Anchorage was not willing to pick up the tab for the Gold Kings, as the Fairbanks organization had done when the Anchorage *All-Stars* traveled north to play. In late March, on the heels of sellout crowd home games against the Redford, Michigan Stars, came unfortunate news that the Borough filed a lawsuit against the organization for back taxes. When asked about the matter by a *News-Miner* reporter, Rosie said, "the matter would be discussed at the next board meeting and then the Borough would be contacted to resolve any differences."⁹⁹ The Gold Kings placed third at the National Tournament.

Roster

Mike Roy	Rich Hayward	Mike Miscovitch
Bruce Laiti	Kurt Laiti	Chris Flagan
Rod Chiupka	Mark Sanford	Dave Borland
Tim Waggoner	Ron Muir	Brad King
Jim Ozimkoski	Chuck Cartier	Dave Teets
Jim Lydon	Steve Campbell	

Schedule

November 8: UAF

November 14: UAF

November 21-22: Seattle Indians

November 28-30: Lansing, MI

December 5-7: Juan de Fuca Merchants

December 12-14: Lloydminster, Alberta

December 19-22: Colorado

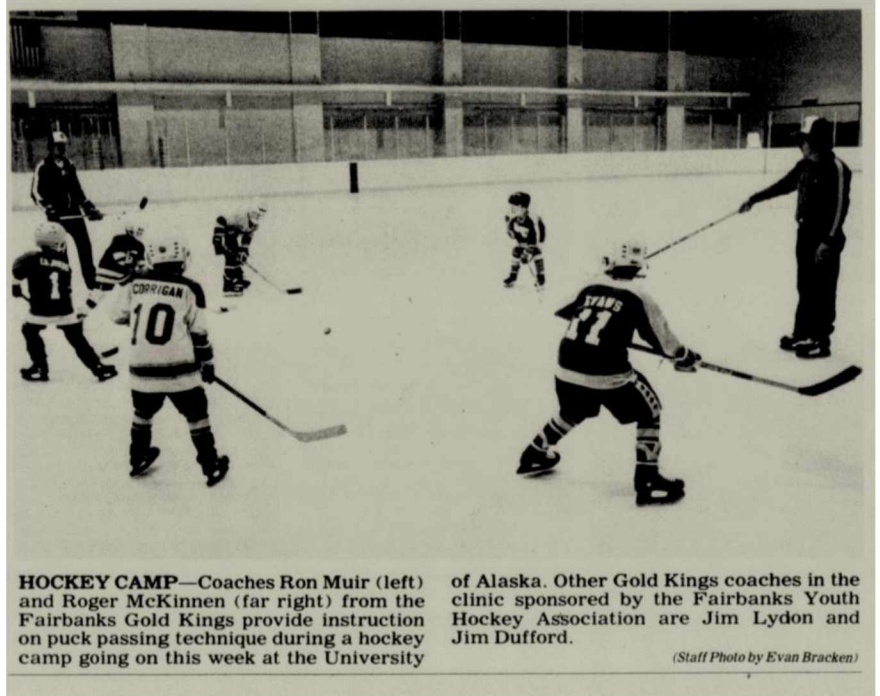
January 16-17: Vancouver

January 23-25: Superior, WI

⁹⁹ *News-Miner*, "Gold Kings sued for sales tax," March 18, 1981, accessed January 13, 2020.

January 30-31: Anchorage
 February 6-8: Flying Fathers
 February 13-15: Victoria
 February 20-22: Mayor's Cup in Anchorage
 March 6-8: Pueblo, CO
 March 13-15: Anchorage
 April: National Tournament

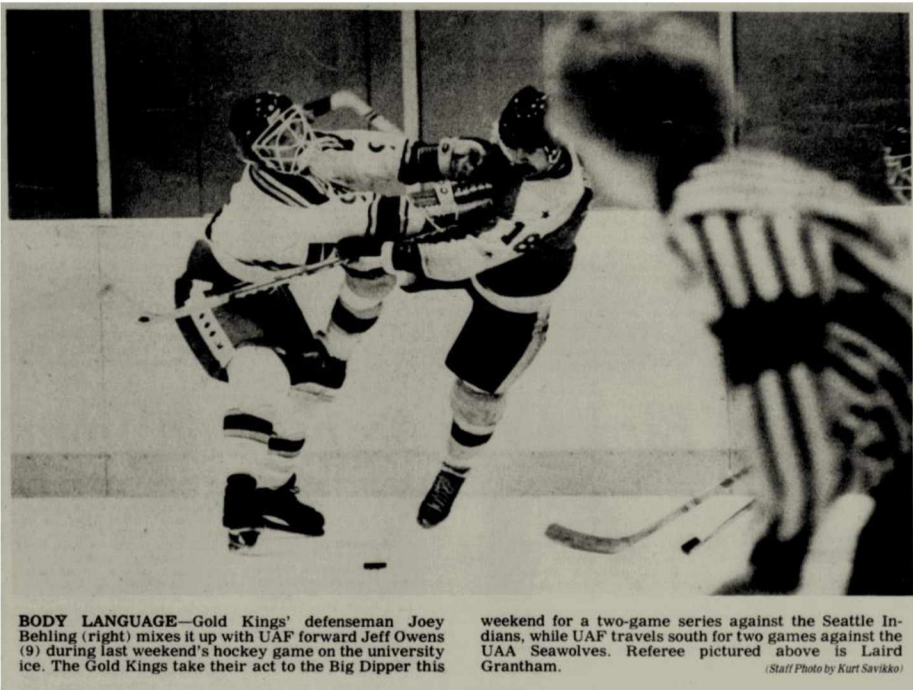
Roger McKinnon and the Gold Kings will long be remembered for helping prepare Fairbanks youth to take to the ice. This photograph captures a June 1980 hockey clinic.¹⁰⁰



HOCKEY CAMP—Coaches Ron Muir (left) and Roger McKinnen (far right) from the Fairbanks Gold Kings provide instruction on puck passing technique during a hockey camp going on this week at the University

of Alaska. Other Gold Kings coaches in the clinic sponsored by the Fairbanks Youth Hockey Association are Jim Lydon and Jim Dufford.

(Staff Photo by Evan Bracken)



BODY LANGUAGE—Gold Kings' defenseman Joey Behling (right) mixes it up with UAF forward Jeff Owens (9) during last weekend's hockey game on the university ice. The Gold Kings take their act to the Big Dipper this

weekend for a two-game series against the Seattle Indians, while UAF travels south for two games against the UAA Seawolves. Referee pictured above is Laird Grantham.

(Staff Photo by Kurt Savikko)

In November the Gold Kings opened the season with two contests against the University of Alaska Fairbanks Nanooks. The photograph below depicts action during one of the games.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Bracken photographer, "Hockey Camp," June 12, 1980.

¹⁰¹ Kurt Savikko photographer, "Body Language," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, November 20, 1980, accessed January 12, 2020.

Jim Greiner, author of the newspaper piece below and father of a hockey player, provides advice on equipping children for hockey. Greiner says, “Of all the aspects of finding that my youngest aspires to the likes of ‘The Rocket’ Richard, Bobby Hull, and someone named Laiti, perhaps the gear that he wears is most baffling.” Further along in the article, Greiner states, “All youth hockey players, my son included, hold the Gold Kings in high esteem, and our own local semi-

pros are well represented on most of the practice jerseys worn by the kids. In fact, so intense is this esteem that one runs the risk of being high-

Hockey outfit today's 'suit of lights'

When I think of ice skating I recall a pair of badly scuffed racing skates, you know the kind—blades about 24 inches long, the kind that are probably still stowed safely away by your mother in a dusty corner of the attic on the old homestead.
I inherited a pair of these during



Jim Greiner

Make no mistake, a manservant is still needed in the complex process of preparing a hockey player for his bull. In this case it's me, though the lad has made great strides toward learning to don his own gear.
First there is thermal underwear and socks. These cover a badly holed T-shirt and precede a light turtle-

ding for the thighs, and are held up by suspenders. In fairness, similarities between bull ring garb and hockey suits end here, for these drawers are loose, so loose that the kid inside could easily turn 180 degrees where it not for the heavy-duty braces.
Now, and only now, are we ready

sticked should the Gold Kings' name be taken in vain.”¹⁰²



MOVING IN—Redford (Mich.) Stars players Ron Griffith and Billy Ciraulo move in on Fairbanks Gold Kings winger Jim Ozimkoski as he takes a shot during Friday's hockey game at the university arena. Ozimkoski scored once in the game, but Redford outskated Fairbanks in an 8-3 win that opened the three-game series which continues with games tonight and Sunday afternoon. (Staff Photo by Cathie Harms)

In March, the Gold Kings took on the Redford, Michigan Stars in a three-game home contest. Redford was considered one of the strongest teams in the country. Redford beat Fairbanks in all three games.¹⁰³

April, 1981: Gold Kings placed third at nationals.¹⁰⁴

Gold Kings claim third at nationals

1981-1982 Season

In December 1981, the team underwent an organizational restructure, becoming a non-profit corporation, with John Rosie serving as president. The Kings were scheduled to open the season against defending Minnesota State champions Duluth, but the later canceled their visit due to players quitting in the weeks leading up to the match. In late February and early March, the Gold Kings earned two big wins against the Redford (Michigan) Stars, a team that had previously dominated the Fairbanks players. Near the end of the season the Gold Kings out-

¹⁰² Jim Greiner, “Hockey outfit today's 'suit of lights',” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, December 3, 1980, accessed January 13, 2020.

¹⁰³ Eley, Cathie Harms photographer, “Gold Kings beaten by Redford,” March 21, 1981, accessed January 13, 2020.

¹⁰⁴ Greiner, “Gold Kings claim third at nationals,” April 6, 1981, accessed January 13, 2020.

scored the Anchorage All-Stars, which allowed the team to retain the coveted Governor’s Cup. As the Gold Kings did not compete in the National Tournament this season, their year concluded on a high note of trouncing the Anchorage All-Stars in the contest for the Governor’s Cup.

Roster

Ron Olund	Bill Duquette	Joey Behling	Paul Beckman
Ron Muir	Dave Teets	Kurt Laiti	Al Turgeon
Rod Chiupka	John Haddad	Mark Sanford	Mike Roy
Tim Waggoner	Chuck Cartier	Dave Borland	Rich Hayward
Jim Ozimkoski	George McVittie	Gary Swenson	

Schedule

- January 29-30: Anchorage
- February 5-7: Chicago
- February 26-28: Redford, MI
- March 5-7: Minneapolis Bruins
- March 12-14: Minneapolis Bar Flies
- March 23: Governor’s Cup (Fairbanks)
- March 26-27: Governor’s Cup (Anchorage)

October, 1981: A letter sent to the *News-Miner* urges the community to financially support the team, claiming that the team faces dissolution, putting all of Fairbanks hockey in jeopardy.¹⁰⁵

Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska, Wednesday, Oct. 7, 1981—19



NE
Box 710.
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over the last 13 years. It is great to be "home!"

Gold Kings help

Sept. 30, 1981
University of Alaska-Fairbanks
College, Alaska

Dear Sirs,

The purpose of this communication is to enlist financial support for the Gold Kings; either in the form of donation and/or sponsorships from the private sector. The team faces dissolution unless financial assistance is forthcoming.

As a relative newcomer to Fairbanks, it is apparent that a healthy hockey movement exists. In order for any hockey system to function more efficiently it should be developed to a point where it is self-perpetuating, i.e. each rank of hockey activity should aspire to a higher one with feedback on all levels.

Where will the midget and high school hockey players go in the present system unless there is some in-

intermediate base upon which they can use as a stepping stone and/or a levelling off point. This base already exists in the form of the Gold Kings and to some extent the University hockey team.

Proper planning and support can be used to implement a self-perpetuating system in which the community as well as the individual obtains the highest returns for energies invested. This full cycle of hockey activity will form the basis for continual feedback at all levels of participation.

The Gold Kings semi-professional status can only be enhanced by a strong hockey program here and conversely a strong Gold Kings team can act as a catalyst to drive the system; either in the form of coaching and/or the entertainment provided. As the calibre of play becomes better, more qualified teams and personnel will be attracted here. Once this is realized, the team could become a major drawing card and in doing so could assure its financial autonomy.

The long range benefits of implementing such a system become obvious; whether they be in the form of the exhilaration the players realize, the good will generated among the parents or the pride that a community can obtain in doing a project well.

For more information regarding Gold Kings hockey please contact Roger McKinnon at 479-2820 or John Rosie at 452-3196.

Yours Sincerely,
William S. Procnunier
Research Associate

¹⁰⁵ William S. Procnunier, "Gold Kings help," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, October 7, 1981, accessed January 13, 2020.

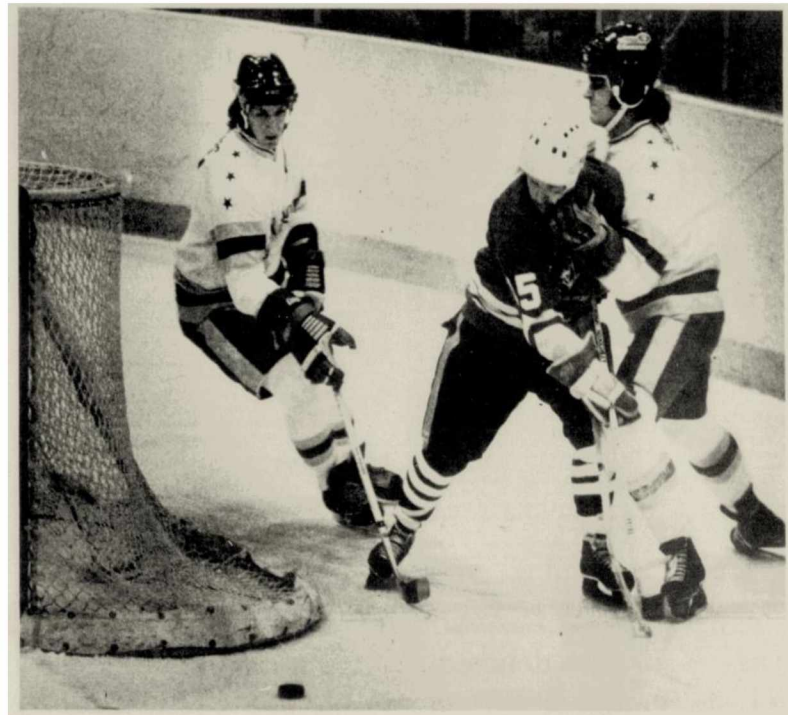


The Gold Kings had a tough go of it in their first games against Anchorage, losing a few of the contests against a team they traditionally dominated.¹⁰⁶

MIXING IT UP—Gold Kings newcomer John Haad (center) scuffles with Anchorage player Barry Woods in the opening moments of Friday's ice hockey game at the UAF arena won by Anchorage 8-6. Other Gold Kings pictured are goalie Al Turgeon (35), Jim Ozimkoski (9) and Tim Waggoner (rear). (Photo by Joe Correia)

The photograph to the right captures the intense rivalry between the Gold Kings and the Anchorage All-Stars as the two teams frequently played one another, often ending the season with a contest for the Governor's Cup.¹⁰⁷

The Gold Kings did not compete in the National Tournament, but ended their season on a high note with a three-game cleanup of the Anchorage All-Stars, which gave the team a wide berth to the Governor's Cup.



INTENSE RIVALRY—Fairbanks Gold Kings John Haddad (right) and Dave Teets ride Anchorage All-Star Scotty Smith off the puck during the season opening game at the UAF ice arena. The two teams renew their rivalry tonight at 8 at UAF as they open a three-game series to determine the winner of the Governor's Cup. The Gold Kings need to win all three games to keep the Cup. (Staff photo by Joe Correia)

1982-1983 Season

This was a milestone year for the Gold Kings as they beat the Griffin Sporting Good Stars of Michigan for their first national championship title victory in April of 1983. Such a monumental victory opened up new avenues for the Gold Kings such as increased recruiting success (men wanted to play for national champions) and gave the team the credibility and respect needed to begin hosting international teams. The regular season docket was filled with high-caliber teams, as the Gold Kings battled several Canadian squads and perennial

¹⁰⁶ Joe Correia photographer, "Mixing It Up," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, January 30, 1982, accessed January 14, 2020.

¹⁰⁷ Correia photographer, "Intense Rivalry," March 26, 1982, accessed January 14, 2020.

powerhouses from Minnesota. The Kings even competed against the Minneapolis-based Team USA, comprised of former professional and national team players. After spending most of the last couple of seasons at the Patty Ice Arena on the UAF campus, the Gold Kings finally moved back to a newly renovated Big Dipper, a rink they would call home for the remainder of their stay in Fairbanks, with the exception of some minor repair closures over the years that forced the Kings to the Carlson Center. The rink was equipped with a new artificial ice system, clear plexiglass allowing easy viewing of the action, new seats replacing the wooden bleachers, and indoor heating to protect spectators and players alike from the winter elements. In 1983 Rosie and the organization made a successful bid to host the 1984 U.S. Intermediate Senior Men's National Ice Hockey Championships in Fairbanks. The Gold Kings earned the support of the City Council, Borough Assembly, and Chamber of Commerce.¹⁰⁸

Roster

Bill Duquette	Joey Behling	Ron Muir	Chuck Cartier
Paul Burke	Mike McDonald	Rod Chiupka	Gary Swenson
Dave Borland	Charlie Freese	Jim Ozimkoski	Mark Sanford
John Haddad	Ron Olund	Tim Waggoner	D.J. Olund

Schedule

November 12-13: Nanaimo, B.C.
 November 19-20: Calgary, Alberta
 November 25-27: St. Paul Parkers
 December 3-4: Fort St. John, B.C.
 December 10-11: Seattle Indians
 December 17-18: Sun Valley
 January 21-22: Bonneyville, Alberta
 January 28-29: Warroad, MN Lakers
 February 4-5: St. Paul Saints
 February 11-12: Kimberly, B.C.
 February 18-19: Innisfail, Alberta
 February 25-26: Bonneyville, Alberta
 March 4-5: Hastings, MN Merchants
 March 18-19: Sun Valley
 April 7-9: National Tournament in St. Louis

¹⁰⁸ *Daily News-Miner*, "Gold Kings get backing for tourney," February 17, 1983.

Gold Kings prime for ice opener

By BOB ELEY
Sports Writer

The Fairbanks Gold Kings appear to be in their best shape ever to open their semi-pro hockey season next Friday at the Big Dipper ice arena.

The Gold Kings have been working out for almost a month to get ready for the upcoming season, which figures to be the toughest in the team's history. Island Conference champion Nanaimo, B.C. will provide the opposition when the Gold Kings begin their eighth season next Friday at 8 p.m. in the first game of a two-game series.

"At this stage we're coming along pretty good, but we've got a couple of injuries," Gold Kings' coach Roger McKinnon said Friday. "I'd like to have a couple more players, but as far as conditioning goes I'd have to say we're better prepared for the start of the season than we have been in the past."

Center Ron Olund was injured during practice last week when he took a shot on the ankle, and McKinnon is hoping Olund will be back in action in time for the opener. McKinnon also said that defenseman Dave Teets has retired and Jim Ozimkoski, who turned out for early workouts, is not currently listed on the roster.

"Those two guys have been a key

part of the team in the past so we've got some big shoes to fill," McKinnon said.

Among the players that figure to fill the void are the likes of defenseman Mike MacDonald, a three-year player at Harvard, and Don Olund, Ron's brother.

"Both of those guys are fitting in well and figure to be a key part of the program," McKinnon said.

The Gold Kings' top three lines will be different from what they've been in the past couple of years. The top line will be centered by veteran Rod Chiupka with Mark Sanford and Chuck Cartier handling the wing positions.

Don Olund centers the second line which features veteran Gary Swenson at one wing and newcomer Chris Ford, who played for the University of Alaska-Fairbanks the past two seasons, at the other wing. Ron Muir centers the fourth line with Tim Waggoner and newcomer Andy Miscovich as the wingers.

"If (Ron) Olund is healthy I'm sure he'll center one of those lines," McKinnon said, adding that forwards Charlie and Sam Freeze are pressing hard to gain spots on one of the top three lines.

"I'm really surprised at how well the lines are meshing," McKinnon

said. "I think we'll have three solid lines ready to go in the first game."

While the Gold Kings may be a little short on defense, the defensemen they do have aren't lacking in experience or ability. John Haddad and MacDonald will form one defensive unit with Joey Behling and Dave Borland comprising a second unit. Paul Beckman is the fifth defenseman.

"We could use a couple of more defensemen, but the guys we do have are all solid hockey players," McKinnon said.

Bill Duquette, who was nothing less than sensational last year, and Paul Burke will handle the Gold Kings' net-minding duties.

The Gold Kings will play 25 of their 29 regular season games at the newly renovated Big Dipper, and McKinnon said it's nice to have a place the Gold Kings can call home after spending the past couple of seasons playing at the UAF ice arena.

Gold Kings tickets are now on sale at Sport King. Adult passes, good for

all 25 home games, are \$90 and passes for children and students are \$60. Single game prices are \$5 for adults and \$3 for students and children.

Gold Kings Ice Hockey
1982-83 Schedule

Nov. 12	Nanaimo, B.C.
Nov. 13	Nanaimo, B.C.
Nov. 18	Calgary, Alb.
Nov. 20	Calgary, Alb.
Nov. 25	St. Paul Parkers
Nov. 26	St. Paul Parkers
Nov. 27	St. Paul Parkers
Dec. 1	Fort Saint John, B.C.
Dec. 4	Fort Saint John, B.C.
Dec. 10	Seattle Indians
Dec. 11	Seattle Indians
Dec. 17	at Sun Valley
Dec. 18	at Sun Valley
Jan. 21	Bonnyville, Alb.
Jan. 22	Bonnyville, Alb.
Jan. 29	War Road, Minn. Lakers
Feb. 4	St. Paul Seattle
Feb. 5	St. Paul Seattle
Feb. 11	St. Paul Seattle
Feb. 12	Kimberly, B.C.
Feb. 18	Nanaimo, B.C.
Feb. 19	Edmonton, Alb.
Feb. 25	Edmonton, Alb.
Feb. 26	at Bonnyville, Alb.
Mar. 4	Hastings, Minn. Merchants
Mar. 5	Hastings, Minn. Merchants
Mar. 19	Sun Valley
Mar. 20	Sun Valley
Apr. 7-9	Nanaimo at St. Louis



TIED UP—Fairbanks Gold Kings' defenseman Dave Teets (left) skates in to steal the puck while teammate John Haddad (right) occupies a rival with the Anchorage All-Stars during the Gold Kings' 1981-82 season opener. Teets has retired, but Haddad will be back as the team's top defenseman when the Gold Kings open their 1982-83 season next Friday against Nanaimo, B.C. (News-Miner file photo)

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The Gold Kings had their best schedule yet in 1982-1983, with several Canadian teams and top Minnesota teams coming to Fairbanks to play. In the photograph, Dave Teets and John Haddad take the puck from an Anchorage All-Star player from the 1981-1982 season.¹⁰⁹

In the annual competition for the Anderson Cup, the Gold Kings achieved their first win against the St. Paul Parkers on home ice in late November. The Gold Kings went on to beat the St. Paul Parkers in a best-of-three to clinch the Anderson Cup.¹¹⁰

Gold Kings claim first from Parkers



BOARD PLAY—Gold Kings winger Ron Muir tries to outmuscle Fort St. John's Art Bilodeau while battling against the boards for a loose puck during Friday's ice hockey game at the Big Dipper. The Gold Kings took an early 1-0 lead in the game, but wound up losing to the visitors from British Columbia 7-4. The two teams play again tonight at the Dipper starting at 8 p.m. (Photo by Brian Schneider)

In the photograph to the left, Gold King Ron Muir battles along the board for the puck with a Fort St. John's player.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Eley, "Gold Kings prime for ice opener," November 6, 1982, accessed January 14, 2020.
¹¹⁰ Olson, "Gold Kings claim first from Parkers," November 27, 1982, accessed January 14, 2020.
¹¹¹ Brian Schneider photographer, "Board Play," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, December 4, 1982, accessed January 14, 2020.

The photograph to the right shows Gold Kings head coach Roger McKinnon as the Gold Kings prepared to vie for the national championship in St. Louis.¹¹²

Gold Kings ready for national tests

By BOB ELEY
Sports Writer

ST. LOUIS—The Fairbanks Gold Kings have been here three times before, but coach Roger McKinnon feels his team's fourth trip to the Senior National Ice Hockey Tournament is going to end up different from trips of the past.

The Gold Kings have finished second in the nationals on two different occasions and third in their last bid in 1981.

"I really do think this is the year the Gold Kings can put it all together," said McKinnon, prior to today's opening-round game against the Chicago Huskies.

"Nobody around here seems to know too much about the teams that are in the tournament," McKinnon said. "They say that Chicago and St. Louis have very good clubs, but nobody is saying anything about the Gold Kings and I think we're going to



ROGER MCKINNON
Gold Kings coach

Gold Kings capture crown on typical late-game rush

By BOB ELEY
Sports Writer

ST. LOUIS—The Fairbanks Gold Kings wrapped up the AHAUS Senior National Ice Hockey Championship in impressive fashion here Sunday and, they did it in a way that Fairbanks hockey fans have been accustomed to seeing their favorite team win.

The Gold Kings spotted the Griffin Sporting Goods Stars of Redford, Mich., a 2-0 lead early in the first period before they tightened up their defense and roared from behind to claim an 8-2 victory in the title game. "I was thinking, 'Oh no, here we go again,' but there's no quit in this team, and they showed it today," said Gold Kings goaltender Bill Duquette, who toughened up and stymied the Stars the rest of the way, making several spectacular saves in the process.

"I knew if we were tied or ahead going into the third period we would blow them off the ice, and that's exactly what we did," he added.

The Gold Kings rallied to take a 3-2 lead at the end of the first period and, after scoring once in the second stanza, they broke the game wide open with four unanswered goals in the final 20 minutes of play.

"We talked about holding our composure in the locker room before the game, and that's what we did," said Gold Kings coach Roger McKinnon. "I have a lot of confidence in this team, and the players have faith in each other."

McKinnon also reflected on the difference between this year's team and the two previous Gold Kings teams that lost to Redford in national tournament games.

"We had a good schedule this year where we were always playing tough teams," he said. "And when you add players like Mark Weber, Ron Muir, John Haddad, Ron Olund, D. J. Olund and Paul Burke, it makes all the difference in the world."

The Gold Kings players agreed that it was a total team effort that enabled them to earn the honor of being the best senior men's amateur hockey team in the nation.

"There wasn't just one guy that really didn't want it today," said winner Jim Ozimkoski, an original Gold King. "The only way they were going to beat us was by taking advantage of our mistakes, and we didn't make any."

After Dave Shawchuck and Billy Cirulko scored from close range to give Redford a 2-0 lead in just 4:23 of the game, Duquette slammed the door and the Gold Kings offensive machine, which outscored its oppo-

nents 57-7 in the five tournament games, went to work.

The Gold Kings got on the scoreboard at the 6:35 mark of the penalty-filled first period when Ozimkoski stopped a Redford clearing pass at the blue line and fed Ron Olund all alone in front of the net. Olund slid the puck under Redford goalie Rudy Vari for the first of his two goals in the game.

Bruce Lahti slipped home a rebound to pull the Gold Kings even at 10:35, and Mark Sanford tipped in a cross-ice pass from Chiupka at 17:23 to put Fairbanks ahead for good.

The referee whistled 36 minutes worth of minor penalties in the first period, leaving both teams short-handed for most of the frame.

The turning point in the game came early in the second period when the Gold Kings skated short-handed for six minutes without giving up a score.

Ron Muir scored the lone second-period goal on a power play, and the Gold Kings completely dominated the third period to put the national championship on ice. Tim Lee scored twice in the third period with Tim Waggoner and Chuck Carter adding single tallies to complete the Gold Kings rout.

Fairbanks advanced to Sunday's finals by whipping the Hastings (Minn.) Merchants 9-1 in Saturday night's semifinals, while Redford advanced with an 11-6 victory over the Niagara Falls (N.Y.) Warriors 11-4.

Hastings scored the first goal in the semifinal game, but the Gold Kings dominated from that point on as Muir, Sanford and Waggoner scored two goals apiece with Ozimkoski, Behling and D. J. Olund adding one goal each.

Saturday's Semifinals

Redford 11, Niagara Falls 6
Fairbanks 9, Hastings 1
Fairbanks 9, Redford 7

Sunday's Finals

Fairbanks 8, Redford 2
Fairbanks 8, Hastings 1

Saturday's Semifinals

Redford 11, Niagara Falls 6
Fairbanks 9, Hastings 1
Fairbanks 9, Redford 7

Sunday's Finals

Fairbanks 8, Redford 2
Fairbanks 8, Hastings 1

Saturday's Semifinals

Redford 11, Niagara Falls 6
Fairbanks 9, Hastings 1
Fairbanks 9, Redford 7

Sunday's Finals

Fairbanks 8, Redford 2
Fairbanks 8, Hastings 1

Saturday's Semifinals

Redford 11, Niagara Falls 6
Fairbanks 9, Hastings 1
Fairbanks 9, Redford 7

Sunday's Finals

Fairbanks 8, Redford 2
Fairbanks 8, Hastings 1

¹¹² Eley, "Gold Kings ready for national tests," April 7, 1983, accessed January 15, 2020.

¹¹³ Ibid., "Gold Kings capture crown on typical late-game rush," April 11, 1983, accessed January 15, 2020.

1983-1984 Season

Thanks to the trademark perseverance of John Rosie and the Gold Kings, Fairbanks was awarded the American Hockey Association of the United States 1984 Senior National Invitational Ice Hockey Tournament in the summer of 1983, months before the season's opening. In May, a feature article in the opinion section of the *News-Miner* analyzed the positive economic impacts of the Gold Kings on Fairbanks. John Rosie had reported to the Chamber of Commerce that:

60,000 people attended the games this year. Three local high schools that handled the ticket sales split the profits 50-50, and organizations that manned the concession booths did well too. Visiting teams spent about \$5,000 per weekend, plus what they spent on hotel or motel rooms.¹¹⁴

Before the opening game of the season against the Killum, Alberta Indians, before a roaring Fairbanks crowd, Rosie presented the Gold Kings with the national trophy they had won the previous spring. The Gold Kings played another impressive season, racking up victories against a variety of highly ranked Midwest and Canadian teams.

Roster

John Haddad	Dave Teets	Bill Duquette
Tim Waggoner	Jim Ozimkoski	D.J. Olund
Joey Behling	Chuck Catier	Ron Olund
Keith Behling	Mark Weber	Ron Muir
Mark Sanford	Jim Lydon	Rod Chiupka
Tim Lawson	Tim Lee	

Schedule

November 11-12: Killum, Alberta Indians
November 18-19: Anchorage All-Stars
November 24-26: St. Paul Parkers
December 2-3: Minneapolis Bucks
December 9-10: Lloydminster, Alberta
December 16-17: Stony Plain, Alberta Eagles
January 13-14: Bonnyville, Alberta Warriors
January 20-21: Innisfail, Alberta Eagles
January 27-28: Regina, Saskatchewan

¹¹⁴ *News-Miner*, "On the Inside," May 27, 1983, accessed January 18, 2020.

February 3-4: St. Paul Saints
February 10-11: Fort St. John, B.C. Flyers
February 17-18: Hastings, MI Merchants
February 24-25: Detroit O'Leary Hawks
March 2: Bonneyville, Alberta
March 3: Llyodminster, Alberta
March 9-10: Sun Valley, Idaho Suns
March 16-17: Alberta Major All-Stars
March 23-24: Anchorage

The Gold Kings started the season against the Killum, Alberta Indians at the Big Dipper. The team received a standing ovation from more than 2,400 fans in the tightly packed Big Dipper for their first home game of the season since winning the senior men's national championship the previous season. In the photograph to the right, John Rosie hands the national trophy to captain Rod Chiupka before the game.¹¹⁵



¹¹⁵ Schneider photographer, "National Trophy," November 12, 1983, accessed January 19, 2020.

Gold Kings are Fairbanks team

Around Thanksgiving time, Bob Eley wrote an article defending his choice of never watching the Anchorage-based late November basketball tournament known as the

Every year at Thanksgiving, I'm asked the same question over and over again.

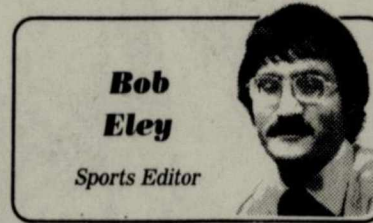
Are you going to Anchorage for the Shootout?

My reply for the past four years—and especially the last two—has been an emphatic “no,” which usually sends the questioners’ eyes rolling skyward in utter amazement.

Why, in heaven’s name, isn’t the sports editor of the state’s third largest newspaper not going to staff Alaska’s only claim to fame in the world of major college basketball?

Aside from that, isn’t the Great Alaska Shootout the sporting event that gets the most fan support?

There’s no doubt that the Shootout



Bob Eley

Sports Editor

Gold Kings have gained such community support in the last couple of years.

One reason, is the renovation of the Big Dipper. The building is a nice to place be. There’s plenty of room, everyone who’s seated and usually those who stand have a good view of the rink. During games there’s an exuberant atmosphere about the place.

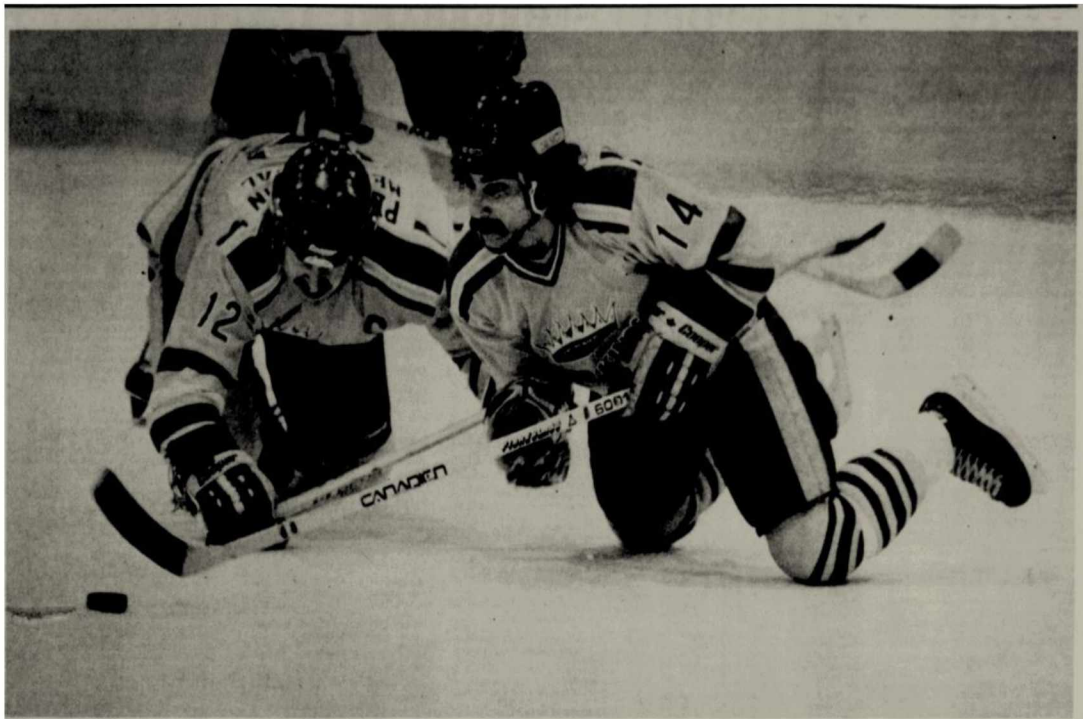
Secondly, the Gold Kings have gotten nearly the entire hockey community involved in their organization. The Fairbanks Amateur Hockey Association runs the concession stand, the men’s and women’s recreation leagues run the beer stands, and the high schools are involved in ticket taking, program and 50-50 sales. This participation means everyone be-

means, the building was filled to about 65 percent of capacity for the 1983 Shootout finals.

The Big Dipper seats just over 1,800 people. Anyone who attended Saturday’s game knows there were a lot more people than that in attendance. On a percentage basis the Dipper was probably 150 percent full.

Let’s also look at the population

Great Alaska Shootout over the Gold Kings. He argues that on a per capita basis, the Gold Kings are far more popular, and that their brand of hockey is more enjoyable to watch than college basketball.¹¹⁶



Chuck Cartier and Rod Chiupka scramble for the puck in a December contest against the Minneapolis Bucks.¹¹⁷

POOL ANYONE?—Alaska Gold Kings Chuck Cartier (14) and Rod Chiupka (12) appear to be lining up a pool shot as they scramble on the ice for a loose puck during Saturday night’s ice hockey game at the Big Dipper against the Minneapolis Bucks. The Gold Kings posted a 7-6 victory to complete a two-game sweep of the Bucks. (Staff photo by Eric Muehling)

¹¹⁶ Eley, “Gold Kings are Fairbanks Team,” December 2, 1983, accessed January 20, 2020.

¹¹⁷ Muehling photographer, “Pool Anyone?,” December 5, 1983, accessed January 20, 2020.

The Minneapolis Bucks displayed their deep gratitude for the warm atmosphere of Fairbanks and the helpfulness of the Gold Kings staff during the Minneapolis Bucks' December visit to Fairbanks.¹¹⁸

Thanks Fairbanks

Dec. 7, 1983
8806 S. Lyndale
Bloomington, Minn. 55420

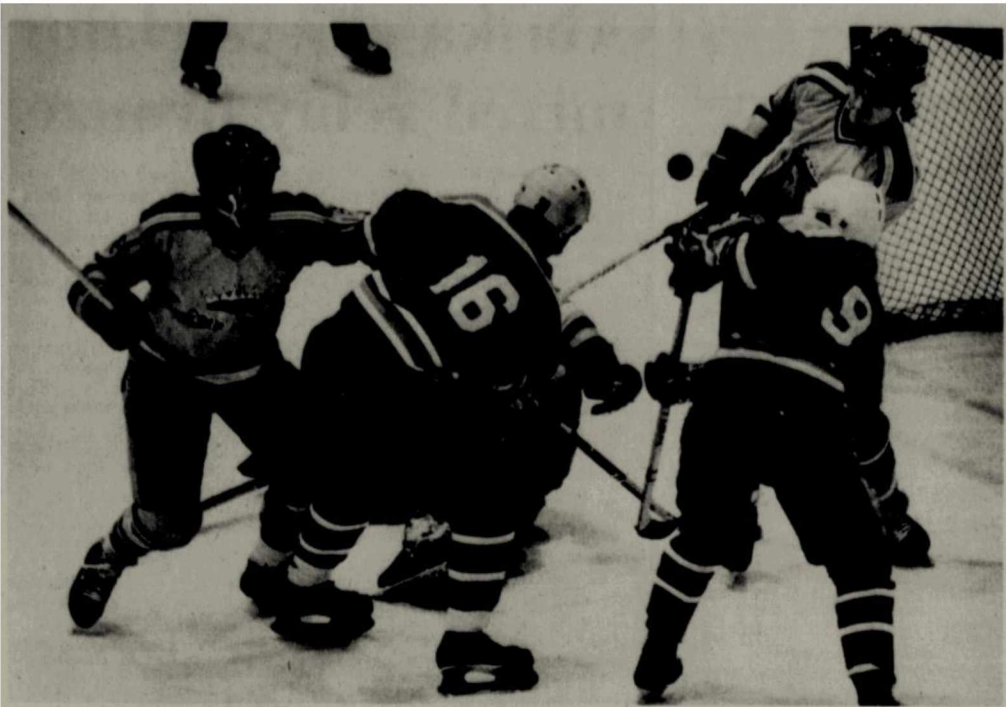
To the Editor:

Early this month the Minneapolis Bucks were invited to play a two-game ice hockey series in Fairbanks against the Gold Kings. Few of our players had ever been to Alaska, and we would like to "take off our hats" to the city of Fairbanks, which we found to be friendly beyond imagination.

All of our dealings from the beginning with the Gold Kings staff, reflected the sociable atmosphere we found so special in Fairbanks.

Thank you, for a great weekend!

Yours truly,
Roger J. Buck
Buck's Hockey Club



MIXING IT UP—Alaska Gold Kings John Haddad (rear) and Joey Behling (18) mix it up with Detroit O'Leary Hawks, Chris DeLabbio (9) and Stan DeLabbio (16) during Saturday night's hockey game at the Big Dipper. The Gold Kings scored five unanswered goals to claim a 9-4 win and a sweep of the series.

(Photo by Brian Schneider)

In February, the Gold Kings swept the visiting Detroit O'Leary Hawks. In the photograph below, John Haddad and Joey Behling confront some of the visiting players in front of the net.¹¹⁹

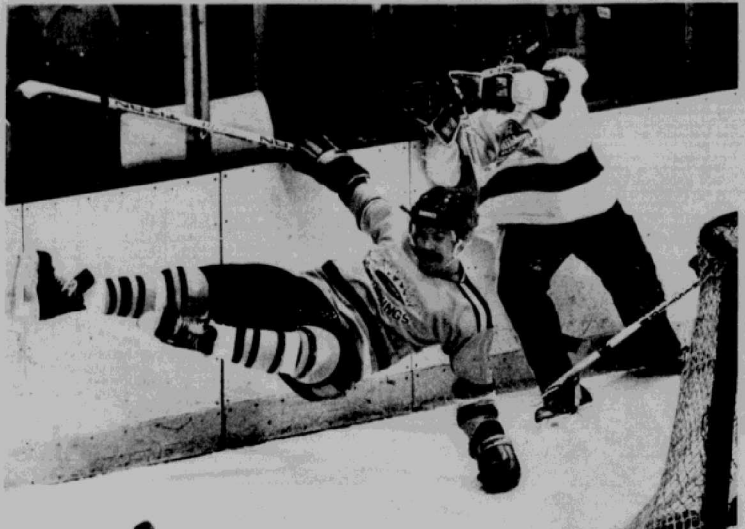
¹¹⁸ Roger J. Buck, "Thanks Fairbanks," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, December 7, 1983, accessed January 21, 2020.

¹¹⁹ Schneider photographer, "Mixing It Up," February 27, 1984, accessed January 21, 2020.



Gold Kings captain Ron Muir gets involved from the bench during Thursday's night game in the Senior Men's National Ice Hockey Tournament.

In pursuit of another national hockey title



Gold Kings defenseman Joe Behling keeps his eye on the puck as he's knocked off his feet by Bill Barton of Superior, Wis., during their match Thursday night.



Roger McKinnon, coach of the Gold Kings, studies the action on the ice.



Gold Kings goalie Jim Lydon snags a puck shot on goal.



"Get them now!" screams Gold Kings fan Robyn Tucker during Thursday's match at the Big Dipper.

By BOB ELEY
Sports Editor

Since the Senior Men's National Ice Hockey Tournament opened Thursday morning at the Big Dipper, the intensity on the ice and in the stands has been high, but it has been especially high when the defending national champion Alaska Gold Kings are on the ice.

On Thursday night, about 1,000 fans turned out to watch the Gold Kings skate to a 7-7 tie against the Superior, Wis., Lakers in what many observers felt was one of the most exciting hockey games played at the Dipper.

The crowd went wild when Kyle Larson scored the game-tying goal with less than three minutes to play. The referee had to hold up play for almost a minute because of the uproar.

The enthusiasm was nearly the same Friday night when the Gold Kings faced the Niagra Falls Warriors in a must-win game.

When the Gold Kings finally went ahead of Niagra Falls, 2-1, on a Timmy Lee goal late in the first period, the crowd went bonkers. It was the first time the hometown boys had been ahead in the tournament. The crowd continued to make its presence felt throughout the evening as the Gold Kings rolled to an 8-3 victory.

The intensity level will get even higher tonight when the tournament semifinals take place at 6 and 9 at the Big Dipper. The national champion will be determined at 4 p.m. Sunday.

Staff photos by
JOE CORREIA



Chicago Alumni forward Dave Brower rests in the locker room between periods during Chicago's match against the Seattle Indians.



Alan Armbruster is jubilant after a Gold Kings' score in Thursday's 7-7 game against Superior, Wis., Thursday night.

The article above displays the action for the 1984 national championship tournament, which the Fairbanks Gold Kings had the honor of hosting. The Kings, again, went far in the tournament, posting a second-place finish to the Minneapolis Bucks.¹²⁰

1984-1985 Season

This was another landmark season for the Gold Kings as they hosted their first World International Invitational in which Austria, Japan, and the Netherlands participated. This was the opening for the Gold Kings into the international hockey world. The Gold Kings competed in the National Tournament where they finished second to their rival the Minneapolis Bucks.

Roster

Rod Chiupka	Tim Lee	Mark Weber	Mel Bailey
Timbo Lawson	Ron Muir	Paul Burke	Joey Shawhan
Bruce Laiti	Joey Behling	D.J. Olund	Peter M. Larsen
Kyle Larson	Mark Sanford	Fred DeVuono	John Bergo
Jordan Wolter	Tim Waggoner	Chuck Cartier	
Jim Lydon	John Haddad	Ron Olund	

Schedule

November 9-10: Le Duc Bruins
 November 16-17: Superior, Wisconsin
 November 22-24: St. Paul Parkers
 November 20-December 1: Grand Center Grizzlies
 December 7-8: Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan
 December 14-15: Anchorage
 December 3-January 3: Trip to Holland
 January 18-19: Killum Alberta Indians
 January 25-26: Stony Plain Eagles
 February 1-2: Minneapolis Bucks
 February 8-9: Regina
 February 15-16: Figure Skaters Show
 February 22-23: Sacramento Rebels
 March 2: Austria
 March 5-6 and 8-9: Fairbanks World Invitational
 March 15-16: Hastings Merchants
 March 22-23: Open
 March 29-31: U.S. Nationals

¹²⁰ Eley, Correia photographer, "In pursuit of another national hockey title," March 31, 1984, accessed January 21, 2020.

In March of 1985 the Gold Kings played the Austrian, Japanese, and Dutch national teams in the inaugural World Invitational Tournament held in Fairbanks.¹²¹

Kings lose early lead to powerful Japanese

By JOHN M. SWEENEY
Sports Editor

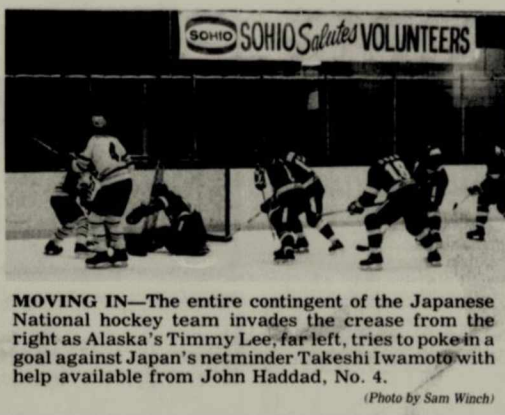
"Our backs are to the wall, there's no question about that," Alaska Gold Kings' Head Coach Roger McKinnon said after the national hockey team of Japan had defeated the Gold Kings, 4-1, Tuesday night at the Big Dipper.

The loss came in both teams' first-round games of the Alaska Gold Kings World Invitational Tournament.

For the Kings to hold any hope of making Saturday's championship game, they must beat Holland at 8 tonight.

"It would be nice to have a chance in your own tournament," McKinnon said.

Japan, taller and heavier than most observers imagined, outskated, outmuscled and outscored their way to a fairly decisive win



MOVING IN—The entire contingent of the Japanese National hockey team invades the crease from the right as Alaska's Timmy Lee, far left, tries to poke in a goal against Japan's netminder Takeshi Iwamoto with help available from John Haddad, No. 4.

(Photo by Sam Winch)

1985-1986 Season

The Gold Kings had a slightly new look after the retirement of several seasoned players and the recruitment of new icemen.¹²² In February, the team made its first ever trip to Canada, where they took on Alberta's Stony Plain Eagles. The Gold Kings set the bar high for themselves again with another Gold Kings International Invitational where they played the national teams of Norway and Yugoslavia, and the Canadian representative, the Moose Jaw Generals. Fairbanksan Horace Royal wrote an opinion piece published in the *News-Miner* in which he chastised Bob Eley for what he termed his glorification of the Gold Kings, and criticized the Gold Kings for their style of play, which he considered too frequently violent. This was emblematic of the city schism between Gold Kings and Nanooks fans. The Gold Kings's style of play, however, with fights often interspersed throughout games was customary for senior men's hockey at this time. The team had planned to attend the Men's National Tournament, but was forced to abandon their plans after several players left for employment on the North Slope oil fields.¹²³

¹²¹ John M. Sweeney, "Austrians are here and they are BIG!" *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, March 1, 1985; Sweeney, Sam Winch photographer, "Kings lose early lead to powerful Japanese," March 6, 1985.

¹²² Eley, "Gold Kings looking to the future," September 22, 1985.

¹²³ *Ibid*, "Gold Kings abandon bid for national title," April 2, 1986.

Austrians are here and they are BIG!

By JOHN M. SWEENEY
Sports Editor

Alaska Gold Kings' Head Coach Roger McKinnon got his first good look at the Austrian National Team Thursday afternoon at the Big Dipper.

"We're going to have our hands full," McKinnon said after watching the Austrians practice. They arrived Wednesday and will play in the Gold Kings World Invitational Tournament beginning Tuesday.

Before that, the Gold Kings and Austrians will face each other in a special pre-tournament game Saturday night at 8.

"They're big," McKinnon said. "Bigger than I thought they'd be. We can beat them, but we're going to have to be smart about it."

So, the Gold Kings venture into the world of international hockey begins with the Austrians, with the Japanese and Dutch on the way soon.

"This is going to be fun," said Gold Kings' President John Rosie.

In April, the Gold Kings concluded the season with another second place finish to the Minneapolis Bucks in the National Tournament.

Roster

Joey Behling	Timbo Lawson	Fred Devuono	John Haddad
Bill Duquette	John Bergo	Jerry Howard	Chris Cahill
Ward Wallin	Jordan Wolter	Bill Barton	Todd Lawson
D.J. Olund	Mark Maroste	Jim Barton	Shane Hinada
Steve Murphy	Tim Lee	Ron Muir	Dave Hall

Schedule

November 8-9: Calgary Hawks

November 15-16: St. Paul Parkers

November 22-23: Leduc, Alberta Bruins

November 29-30: Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan Generals

December 6-7: Edmonton

December 13-14: Stony Plain, Alberta Eagles

December 20-21: Sun Valley, Idaho

January 10-11: Detroit O'Leary Hawks

January 17-18: Lloydminster, Alberta Border Kings

January 24-25: Killam, Alberta Indians

January 31-February 1: Regina Bruins

February 7-8: Edmonton

February 14-15: Portland Royals

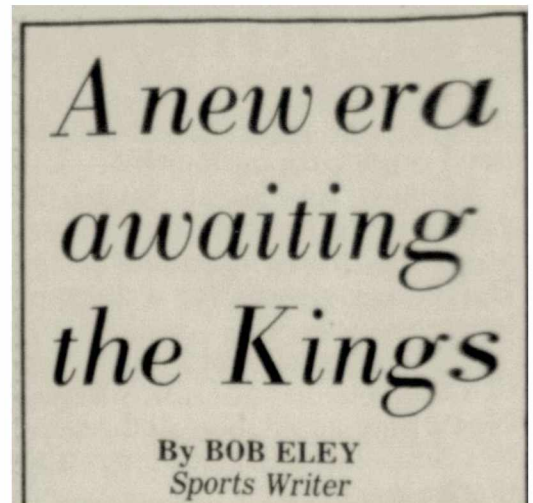
February 21-22: Fresno Falcons

March 1: Yugoslavia National Team

March 4-8: Gold King World Invitational: Yugoslavia, Norway, Moose Jaw Generals

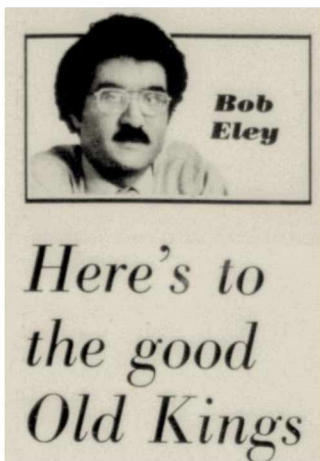
In October, Bob Eley wrote a piece about the coming Gold Kings' season, calling it a new era.

Eley notes that the gradually attained prominence of the Gold Kings, beginning in 1975, put them in a position where they could invite players from outside of Alaska to come north and try out for the team.¹²⁴



¹²⁴ Ibid, "A new era awaiting the Kings," October 29, 1985.

November 1985: Eley reminisces about the original Gold Kings, termed the “Old Kings,” noting that had it not been for them, the current Gold Kings likely would not exist.¹²⁵



December 1985: Horace Royal writes an opinion piece criticizing *News-Miner* sports writer Bob Eley for his praise of the Gold Kings.¹²⁶

Moronic portrayal

December 1, 1985

Sports Editor:

I laughed while reading Bob Eley's report of the Alaska Gold Kings game in the Sat., Nov. 30 edition of your paper. Bob is a decent writer, but his moronic attempts to glorify the Gold Kings do little to counter the fact that Gold Kings hockey is hockey at its worst.

I enjoy watching good hockey. That is why I watch high school and collegiate hockey—that's where the best hockey in Fairbanks can be found. I don't see many Gold Kings fans there, though. They pay to watch a fight on ice—the Gold Kings are only too happy to see that they get what they pay for.

Your paper shouldn't portray the Gold Kings as dedicated athletes worthy of the admiration of our young people—they aren't.

Sincerely,
Horace Royal

In February, the Gold Kings embarked on the team's first trip to Canada.¹²⁷

Gold Kings get set for trip to Canada

By **BOB ELEY**
Sports Writer

The Alaska Gold Kings will find out how the other side lives this weekend when they travel to Alberta, Canada for a two-game series against the Stony Plain Eagles.

Usually its the Gold Kings who have all the home ice advantages—familiar ice, friendly fans, a full roster, etc.—but those advantages will all lie with Stony Plain this weekend as the Gold Kings make their first ever trip to Cananda.

“The guys are really looking forward to going there,” Gold Kings Coach Roger McKinnon said Wednesday afternoon. “In a lot of ways their program is very similar to ours. They play in front of similar-size crowds and they treat the teams that come in there very well.”

The two-game series begins at 6:30 p.m. (AST) Friday and con-

MARK MAROSTE
Gold Kings' captain

¹²⁵ Ibid, “Here’s to the good Old Kings,” November 5, 1985.

¹²⁶ Horace Royal, “Moronic Portrayal,” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, December 1, 1985.

¹²⁷ Eley, “Gold Kings get set for trip to Canada,” February 6, 1986.

To the right is an advertisement for the second Gold Kings Hockey International Tournament.¹²⁸



TOURNAMENT PASSES:
Includes all games, including March 1st exhibition.
\$35.00 each
3 for \$90*

Gold Kings Hockey INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENT

TICKET PRICES:

Mar. 1st, Sat. **\$6.00**
Gold Kings vs Yugoslavia Exhibition
Gold Kings Season Passes valid (this game only)
Hall of Fame Game/Awards Night (fans choice presentation)

Mar. 4th, Tues. **\$10.00**
5:00 p.m. Norway vs Canada
8:00 p.m. Gold Kings vs Yugoslavia

Mar. 5th, Wed. **\$10.00**
5:00 p.m. Yugoslavia vs Canada
8:00 p.m. Gold Kings vs Norway

Mar. 7th, Thurs. **\$10.00**
5:00 p.m. Yugoslavia vs Norway
8:00 p.m. Gold Kings vs Canada

Mar. 8th, Sat. **\$15.00**
5:00 p.m. #3 vs #4
8:00 p.m. #2 vs #1



*Pre-sale price only. Must be purchased by Fri., Feb. 28th



FOREIGN FLAVOR—Mustafa Besic, captain of the Yugoslavian National Hockey Team, stands at attention during the playing of the national anthem as Fairbanksan Bert Snyder skates by with the Yugoslavian flag prior to last Saturday's exhibition game against the Gold Kings at the Big Dipper Ice Arena. Vince DeWitt/News-Miner

To the left is a photograph of the captain of the Yugoslavian national team in Fairbanks as a part of the International Tournament.¹²⁹

Yugoslav icemen fitting right in

¹²⁸ "Gold Kings Hockey International Tournament," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, February 25, 1986.

¹²⁹ Vince DeWitt photographer, "Foreign Flavor," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, March 4, 1986.

In late March, the Gold Kings had decided to embark on a trip to the National Tournament despite the departure of several players to the North Slope. The team was later forced to abandon their trip because too many players were unavailable due to work commitments.¹³⁰

Gold Kings to take trip to national ice tourney

The Alaska Gold Kings will be going to the U.S. Senior National Championship Hockey Tournament April 3-6 in Fon du Lac, Wis.

There had been some conjecture that the Gold Kings would skip this year's national tournament because several players have headed for the North Slope and the team hasn't played a game since the conclusion of the second Gold Kings' World Invitational Tournament on March 9.

However, the team's board of directors voted Monday night to send a squad that will include three full lines, two sets of defensemen and goaltender Paul Burke.

This will mark the Gold Kings'

seventh national tournament showing in the past nine years. They have one national title, four second place finishes and a third place finish to their credit.

The Gold Kings won the National Championship in 1983 at St. Louis. Since then the Gold Kings have finished second to the Minneapolis Bucks for two straight years. The score of both championship games was 3-2.

The last time the tournament was held at Fon du Lac, the Gold Kings finished in third place.

Other states that are expected to be represented in the tournament are Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Missouri, New York and Michigan.

1986-1987 Season

On par for the course, the 1986-1987 season marked another spectacular performance by the Gold Kings. In October, prior to the season starting, Chuck Cartier assumed the role of coach as Roger McKinnon moved to the general manager position. During the middle of the season the Gold Kings announced their new mascot in the form of a personified skating hockey puck.

The Gold Kings accomplished what many consider their greatest hockey feat, tying the Soviet National B Team 4-4. The title "Soviet National B Team" belied the caliber of the players, who hailed from the best Soviet club teams such as Moscow Dynamo, the Red Army, and the Moscow Wings. The Gold Kings concluded the season with their Third World Invitational in which they placed fourth out of four teams, losing to Norway in the third place game. Canada beat Sweden in Anchorage to capture the crown. Some local fans expressed discontent over the season ending, as they saw it, prematurely without a trip to the U.S. Senior Men's National Tournament.

Roster

John Bergo	Dirk Anderson	Kurt Laiti	Bill Duquette
Jordan Wolter	John Haddad	Don Jamieson	Ron Muir
Tim Lee	Brad Corbett	Steve Murphy	Mark Sanford
Chris Cahill	D.J. Olund	Dan Beaty	Ryce Miller
Paul Burke	Buddy Bender	Pat Fegan	
Oey Behling	Rick Trupp	Bill Barton	

¹³⁰ "Gold Kings to take trip to national ice tourney," *News-Miner*, March 25, 2020.

Schedule

November 7-8: Kenai
November 14-15: Calgary Hawks
November 21-22: Stony Plain Eagles
November 28-29: Kenai Mic-Macs
December 5-6: St. Paul Parkers
December 12-13: Whitehorse
December 19-20: Calgary
January 9-10: Detroit O'Leary Hawks
January 16-17: Calgary All Stars
January 23-34: Grand Prairie Athletics
January 30-31: Lloydminster Border Kings
February 6-7: Moose Jaw Generals
February 13-14: Kimberly
February 20-21: Whitehorse
February 27-28: Minneapolis Moby Dicks
March 6-7: Moose Jaw Generals

Gold Kings name Cartier as new coach

By BOB ELEY
Sports Writer

There will be some familiar faces in different places both on and off the ice when the Alaska Gold Kings open the 1986-87 hockey season next month.

As in other years, there will be some changes in personnel on the team's roster, but the biggest changes will be behind the bench and in the front office as Roger McKinnon has relinquished his coaching duties and is now the general manager and Chuck Cartier has been named to coach the senior men's hockey team.

"Between his personality and his playing ability we found the blend we were looking for in a coach," Gold Kings President John Rosie said in making the announcement of the team's new coach.

As a player, Cartier was the Gold Kings' sparkplug for several years and was always one of the most popular members of the team among the fans.

Cartier was an original member of the Gold Kings and played through the 1984-85 season, before announcing his retirement prior to last season. He was a member of the Gold Kings lone national championship team in 1983.

"I'm really looking forward to it," Cartier said. "I've been coaching kids for five or six years. Now, it's time to see if I can just get the point across to



CHUCK CARTIER
New coach



ROGER McKINNON
New GM

players who are basically my own age.

"It's certainly going to be a challenge. There's no doubt about that," Cartier added.

Until he announced his retirement as coach in September, McKinnon was the only mentor the Gold Kings ever had. He said he decided to leave the bench because he was being stretched too thin between his business commitments at Sport King, the Gold Kings and as Coach of the Gold King Midget A's.

McKinnon said he would still continue as Coach of the Midget A's.

"I guess it's a promotion," McKinnon chuckled, when asked about his new position.

"I'm still have the same commitment to the organization, but this year it has to be in a different form," McKinnon said. "I was hoping to do something that would be an advantage to the team, so when John asked me to be general manager and I accepted.

"I think it will be a real good working relationship between myself and Chuck," McKinnon added.

"We're extremely pleased with the way things worked

out," Rosie said.

Cartier said Gold King fans can expect a young and fast team this year, especially since most of last year's senior class at UAF will probably be in uniform.

"We're going to have a lot of youngsters this year between 20 and 22 years old," Cartier said. "I don't think we're going to be as physical as some of the teams in the past, but we're definitely going to be a lot faster."

Cartier said that formal practices begin this week and that he will hold tryouts 8:15-9:30 p.m., Oct. 14, and from 10:11-30 p.m., Oct. 15, at the Big Dipper.

The Gold Kings open the season on Nov. 7 and 8 at Soldotna against a newly formed team in

Kenai. The following weekend, the Gold Kings return to Fairbanks for their home opener at the Big Dipper.

Rosie said that ticket prices this year will be reduced to what they were two years ago. Single game admission will be \$5. Season tickets are \$100. Special 10-ticket books will be sold for \$90.

While there is no World Invitational Tournament on this year's schedule, Rosie said that many of the same teams that have visited Fairbanks in the past will return including the Moose Jaw Generals, St. Paul Parkers and defending U.S. Senior Men's national champion Moby Dicks of Minneapolis, Minn.

Midgets lose three

The Alaska All Stars of Anchorage swept a three-game ice hockey series from the Fairbanks Gold King Midget A's last weekend.

Anchorage won both of Saturday's games at the Big Dipper, 6-5 and 6-4, and then posted a 3-1 victory in the finale Sunday morning at the UAF Ice Arena.

Jim Tobin scored a pair of goals with Dave Olson, Scott Keyes and Steve Chalupnik adding one apiece in the opener. Olson and John Brown were each credited with three assists.

Goalie Chuck Brainerd registered 38 saves.

Olson scored a pair of goals in Saturday's second game. Brown and Glenn Weaver each had one. Brian Renfrew made 35 saves in the Fairbanks' nets.

Hayden O'Rear scored the lone goal on Sunday. Anchorage's final goal was scored into an empty net with 10 seconds left in the game. Brainerd stopped 33 shots.

The Midget A's (1-4) will be back in action on Oct. 24-25 in a tournament at Anchorage.

In early October, Chuck Cartier became the new coach of the Gold Kings as Roger McKinnon moved to the role of general manager.¹³¹

¹³¹ Eley, "Gold Kings name Cartier as new head coach," October 7, 1986.

The laudatory piece to the right highlights McKinnon's deep roots in hockey and passion for the game, which he began playing at the age of five in his hometown of Sault Ste. Marie on Michigan's Upper Peninsula.¹³²



GOLD KINGS MASCOT
New puck costume

reached at 456-6661 days or 456-5527 evenings.

* * *

IF YOU NEED a turkey drawn, give a call to one of the following youngsters. They were the winners in the Thomas Teacher & School Supply turkey drawing contest, according to manager Judy Musgrove.

Steve Sanford of Pearl Creek won first place and Dennis Badu of Hunter won second in the



Dan Joling

Hometown Reporter

fourth and fifth grade category. Jamie Skorick of Barnette won first and Joey Alan Pruett of Aurora won second in the second and third grade category. Leslie Sanford of Pearl Creek and Jeremy Mattoon of Aurora won first and second places respectively in the first grade division.

* * *

I MISSED the first appearance of the Gold Kings new puck mascot Friday night, a cross between Mr. Bill and Speedy the Alka Seltzer guy, according to N-M photographer Mike Belrose. If you missed Saturday's News-Miner sports page, here's Mike's picture of it. I'm embarrassed to say I envisioned something a little different. I thought the puck was going to be horizontal. This makes a lot more sense, although sportswriter Bob Eley tells me the puck's arm configuration made it impossible for her to throw candy to the crowd. I can see how that would be a problem with 14-inch arms and no shoulders.

Sports People

By CINDY FORDHAM

McKinnon is Mr. Hockey

In all nine years of the Alaska Gold Kings' existence, the semi-pro ice hockey club has known but one head coach.

But things will change this coming season.

Earlier this month, Roger McKinnon, 38, resigned as coach and was elevated to general manager.

McKinnon said that he was spreading himself too thin between coaching two hockey teams and running his sporting goods business.

"I just had to make my commitments," he said. McKinnon said that he won't know how he really feels about his change in position until the Gold Kings drop the puck on the ice in their 1986-87 opener Nov. 7 at Soldotna.

"I think I'm ready to get out of it (coaching) and help in other ways," he said. "Whether you're a player, a board member or a general manager, you've got to respect your position," said McKinnon, who will continue to coach the Gold King Midget A's.

McKinnon, who has devoted his life to hockey, said that the town he grew up in, Sault Ste. Marie, Mich. could have been called "Hockey Town, USA."

"That was the thing to do," said McKinnon, who started playing hockey at the age of five. "One thing led to another."

McKinnon's most memorable moment as a hockey player occurred when he 16 years old and was playing midget hockey.



ROGER MCKINNON
Now the GM

"I scored the winning goal to win the national tournament."

McKinnon's first coaching job came when he was playing with the Reno, Nev. Aces.

"When it came right down to it, I think I'd as soon play than coach," he said. McKinnon is still an active player in Fairbanks recreational hockey.

McKinnon, who owns and operates Sport King, said the highlight of his coaching career came in 1983, when the Gold Kings won the national championship.

McKinnon said he likes hockey because of the action. "There are very few dull moments," he said. "Outside hockey, I like to fish and hunt."

In December, the Gold Kings unveiled their new mascot, an anthropomorphized hockey puck on skates.¹³³

¹³² Cindy Fordham, "McKinnon is Mr. Hockey," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, October 16, 1986.

¹³³ Dan Joling, "Gold Kings Mascot," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, December 1, 1986.

The Gold Kings played the Soviet National B Team in early January. The Soviet team was comprised of players from Russian clubs Moscow Dynamo Club, the Red Army, and Moscow Wings. The Gold Kings lost the first game and tied the second match.¹³⁴

February, 1987: The Gold Kings renewed their rivalry with Anchorage's new team the Anchorage Shooting Stars.

March, 1987: The Gold Kings participated in the third World Invitational Tournament split between Anchorage and Fairbanks, with Norway, Sweden, and Canada competing. NHL scouts from several NHL organizations were on hand to identify potential talent.



TWO NINES—A pair of No. 9's, the Gold Kings' Jordy Wolter and the Soviet Union's Andrej Lomakin, square off during the Russia-Gold Kings series Friday night at the Big Dipper. The Gold Kings take on Duluth, Minn. this weekend. *Randy Belinsky News-Miner*

1987 Alaska Gold Kings							Sunday's Summary	
Third Annual Gold Kings							Exhibition—At Sullivan Arena	
World Invitational Tournament							Canada 6, Sweden 2	
	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pts.	CANADA	2 0 4—6
Norway	1	0	0	7	2	2	SWEDEN	0 0 2—2
Canada	0	0	0	0	0	0	First period —1. Canada, Simpson (Karpan) 4:52; 2. Canada, Doucet (Volgrain, Berry) 16:10. Penalties—Simpson, C. 2:39; Yawney, C. 8:26; Samuelson, S. 10:08; Roy, C. 11:19; Habscheid, C. 18:21; M. Lundstrom, S. 18:36.	
Sweden	0	0	0	0	0	0	Second period —None. Penalties—Doucet, C. 4:27; Vilgrain, C. 5:12; Huss, S. 5:49; Trader, C. 7:07; Roy, C. 9:24; Burakovsky, S. 9:24; Vilgrain, C. (minor-10 misconduct), 12:23.	
Alaska	0	1	0	2	7	0	Third period —3. Canada, Schrieber (Burke) 6:50; 4. Canada, Vilgrain (Doucet, Felix) 10:27; 5. Sweden, Burakovsky (Eriksson 10:51 (pp)); 6. Canada, Schrieber (Cote, Joseph) 12:24; 7. Canada, Felix (McLaren) 15:54. Penalties—Berry, C. 5:07; Reiersen, C. 9:00; Eriksson, S. 14:02; Doucet, C. double minor, 14:02.	
Saturday's Result							Shots on Goal —Canada 11-8-8—27; Sweden, 14-11-17—42.	
Norway 7, Alaska 2							Goalies —Canada, Burke (42 shots-40 saves); Sweden, Liljeborn (27-21)	
Sunday's Result							Officials —Ferguson, Brett, Karabelnikoff. Att.—1,398.	
Canada 6, Sweden 2 (exhibition)								
Monday's Schedule								
Canada vs. Sweden, 7 p.m.								
Tuesday's Schedule								
Norway vs. Canada, 5 p.m.								
Alaska vs. Sweden, 8 p.m.								
Wednesday's Schedule								
Norway vs. Sweden, 5 p.m.								
Alaska vs. Canada, 8 p.m.								
Friday's Schedule								
Championship and consolation games, times and sites TBA								

Canada beat Sweden in Anchorage to win the tournament. The Gold Kings ended the 1986-1987 season losing to Norway in the third place game.¹³⁵

¹³⁴ Randy Belinski, "Two Nines," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, January 8, 1987.

¹³⁵ *News-Miner*, March 9, 1987.

1987-1988 Season

The Gold Kings had another strong season over the course of 1987-1988. They hosted the 1988 Olympic Hockey Preview, playing against the national teams of Austria, Poland, Norway, France, and Switzerland. While they dropped their first three games during the Preview, they enjoyed a dramatic win over the Norwegian squad. The relationship between the Kings and Nanooks convalesced under new Nanooks' coach Don Lucia. In November, the two teams put on a light-hearted hockey match in the "Nanooks-Gold Kings Jamboree" where players mixed up the teams. The two Fairbanks squads competed again in February to the delight of local hockey fans.

In April, the Gold Kings won their second national championship in Sun Valley, Idaho five years after winning the tournament for the first time in 1983. Post-season, the organization received word from Juneau that the state government was considering funding the Gold Kings to travel abroad and bring more international competition to Alaska. During Fairbanks's annual tradition of Golden Days in July, the Gold Kings sponsored a visit by Edmonton Oilers' defenseman and Stanley Cup champion Steven Smith to participate in the parade.

Roster

Jim Barton	Ken Haman	Dave Olsen	Jordy Wolter
Bill Barton	Curt Franklin	Alan Morton	Jay Weaver
Alba Brice	Curt Jennings	Jamie Smith	Kory Wright
Chris Cahill	Tim Lee	Mark Reinikka	John Roehl
Steve Charbonneau	Kevin Milles	George Thiel	
Bill Duquette	Ryce Miller	Mike Cuzak	

Schedule

November 7: UAF Jamboree

November 13-14: Seattle Indians

November 21-22: Banff Hawks

November 26-28: Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan Generals

December 4-5: St. Paul Parkers

January 8-9: Yukon Arctic Winter Games

January 15-16: Sault Ste. Marie, MI

January 22-23: Fort Qu'Appelle Lakers

January 29-30: Wayburn, Saskatchewan Devils

February 4-10: Alaska Gold Kings 1988 International Olympic Preview featuring Austria, Poland, Norway, France, and Switzerland

February 26-27: UAF

A *News-Miner* article, on the right, from September 1987 illustrates the cultural importance of the Gold Kings to Fairbanks.¹³⁶

November, 1987: The Gold Kings and UAF displayed the ability to cooperate and coexist. The two organizations exhibited greater amiability towards one another under first-year UAF coach Don Lucia. They even mixed up rosters

in a lighthearted “Nanook-Gold Kings Jamboree.” Don Lucia told the *News-Miner* that “There is definitely room in town for a university hockey team and the Gold Kings.”¹³⁷

Short clips of the Fairbanks Symphony Orchestra, the Gold Kings hockey team and the Goldpanners baseball team illustrate culture and entertainment in Fairbanks. The area also has excellent schools and a modern hospital, the narrator says.
Tilsworth, in response to a ques-

To the right is an advertisement for the Gold Kings 1988 Olympic Hockey Preview Tournament.¹³⁸

The Fairbanks Gold Kings Present
1988 Olympic Preview Tournament
February 4-10 at the Big Dipper Arena
Tournament Tickets: \$40
Available At
● BENTLEY MALL
● GAVORA MALL
● SHOPPERS FORUM

Buy your tickets from Gold Kings players! They'll be in uniform at the above locations all day Saturday and Sunday December 12 and 13!

Austria vs. Gold Kings	Feb. 4
Poland vs. Gold Kings	Feb. 5
Poland vs. France	Feb. 6
Norway vs. Gold Kings	Feb. 6
Switzerland vs. Norway	Feb. 9
Gold Kings vs. France	Feb. 9
France vs. Norway	Feb. 10
Gold Kings vs. Switzerland	Feb. 10

FAIRBANKS GOLD KINGS

¹³⁶ Ibid, September 2, 1987.

¹³⁷ Sweeney, “Gold Kings open season on positive note,” November 8, 1987, accessed January 22, 2020.

¹³⁸ Fairbanks Gold Kings, “1988 Olympic Preview Tournament,” December 11, 1987.

The Gold Kings began looking to the Whitehorse (Yukon Territory) Taku Stallions, for a new northern rival, given Anchorage's inability to maintain a consistent senior men's team.¹³⁹



The Gold Kings face off against Yukon Jan. 8 at 8 p.m. at the Big Dipper. News-Miner library

In early February, excitement was brewing for the Olympic Hockey Preview, which brought France, Norway, Austria, Poland, and Switzerland to Fairbanks to play the Gold Kings.¹⁴⁰

Sports

Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska

Wednesday, February 3, 1988—9

Olympic Hockey Preview excitement building

By BOB ELEY
Sports Writer

Not many people in Interior Alaska will get the chance to see the Winter Olympics that start 10 days from now in Calgary, Alberta. However, hockey fans in the Interior will get the next best thing during the coming week when the Alaska Gold Kings host five Olympic teams in the Gold Kings' Olympic Hockey Preview that starts Thursday night at the Big Dipper Ice Arena.

Olympic teams from Austria, Poland, France, Norway and Switzerland will be in Fairbanks during the next week to participate in a series of seven exhibition games that will

be the final Olympic tuneup for those national squads.

Only two other events during the past year—the Canada Cup and the Investia Tournament in Moscow—have attracted more Olympic teams to one place at one time.

"From what I read in Sports Illustrated, Austria is supposed to be a potential medals round team as are Poland and Switzerland," Gold Kings President John Rosie said earlier this week.

"If the Gold Kings can play to their potential against those three teams and get a few breaks we may end up with a tie," Rosie said. "France and Norway is where we can look for victories.

"But to beat France and Norway we're going to have to play sound fundamental hockey and get good goaltending."

Last year, the Gold Kings did exactly that when they went up against international competition. The Alaska skaters earned ties against the Soviet Union's national B team and Sweden plus winning one of three games against Norway.

The Olympic Hockey Preview opens at 8 p.m. Thursday when the Gold Kings entertain Austria. Friday night, the Gold Kings host Poland and Saturday night the Gold Kings will go up against France.



Also on Saturday, Poland meets Norway.

The Preview resumes Tuesday when the Gold Kings battle Norway and concludes Wednesday when

Norway plays France and the Gold Kings face Switzerland.

Tickets for each Olympic Hockey Preview game are \$10 per person and can be purchased in advance at Sport King, Sports Cache, Fred Meyer and the Gold Kings office, 531 Fourth Ave.

While there are still plenty of tickets remaining for all games, sellout crowds are expected to be on hand, Rosie said.

The same five Olympic teams and Czechoslovakia will play a series of five exhibition games in Anchorage.

For the Gold King players, the Olympic Hockey Preview is a chance to compete against some of

the most talented hockey players in the world.

"In the past when international teams came up here, there was always the question of whether these were the real Olympic players," Gold King Coach Roger McKinnon said. "This time there is no doubt.

"I think it took awhile, but it's finally sinking in that these are the real Olympic teams. These games are kind of like a dream come true for most of our guys."

McKinnon said excitement in the Gold Kings camp is running extremely high, especially among the younger players who will be getting their first taste of international competition.

"I just hope that we don't get too excited," McKinnon said. "If certain players do well it will open the door for them in international hockey and they're all aware of that."

Austria and Norway should both be familiar to Gold Kings fans as both countries have sent teams to play in Fairbanks during the past four years.

Austria won the Gold Kings' first World Invitational Tournament in 1985 and Norway was the tournament champion following year beating the Gold Kings, 7-5, in the championship game. Last year Norway finished third behind Team Canada and Sweden.

(See KINGS, Page 12)

¹³⁹ News-Miner Photograph Library, January 2, 1988.

¹⁴⁰ Eley, "Olympic Hockey Preview excitement building," February 3, 1988.

After dropping the first three contests of the Olympic Hockey Preview, the Gold Kings shocked the Norwegian Olympic Team with a 3-2 victory.¹⁴¹

Gold Kings stun Norway's Olympic ice squad



JUST MISSED—A shot by the Gold Kings Kevin Milles, lower left, goes off the pads of Norway goalie Tommy Skaarberg in Tuesday's Olympic Hockey Preview game at the Big Dipper Ice Arena where the Gold Kings upset Norway, 3-2. *Brian Schneider/News-Miner*

By DAVE THOMAS
Sports Writer

After disappointing losses in their first three games of the Olympic Hockey Preview, the Alaska Gold Kings were ready to change their fortunes.

However, if the Gold Kings were going to reverse field, they were would have to accomplish it against one of the top teams in this year's Olympic Hockey Preview—Norway.

When you want to win, though, it doesn't matter who you play.

The home skaters jumped ahead early and then withstood a 49-shot assault by Norway—thanks to a spectacular effort in goal by Alba Brice—to pull off a stunning 3-2 win Tuesday night at the Big Dipper.

"I am speechless," said Coach Roger McKinnon. "When you can knock off an Olympic team with just a bunch of guys from Alaska, it's like a miracle on ice."

"We knew if we all worked our a— off, we could do it," said Brice. "We killed penalties and the defense was awesome. There was no nervousness."

"It's about time," said Kory Wright, who scored what proved to be the winning goal late in the second period. "It is a great win. We could've had three wins."

Wright was referring to a pair of heartbreaking losses in the team's last two games of the hockey extravaganza.

After dropping a 7-2 decision to Austria on Thursday, Poland scored five times against Alaska in the third period Friday to take a 7-5 win. The next night, France scored a goal with just 14 seconds left to pull out a 6-5 victory.



The Gold Kings wrap up the Preview tonight with an 8 o'clock game against Switzerland. Right before that at 5, France meets Norway. Both games are at the Big Dipper.

Aside from the play of Brice in the nets, the players said that not getting in an early hole was a big difference.

In each of the first three games, the Gold Kings had given up early scores including a pair of goals to Poland in the first five minutes and two to France in the opening 31 seconds.

"The biggest thing was that we didn't spot them any early goals," Wright said.

"The key was in the first period when we got on top," said Greg Moore. "Then we could see what we could do."

"We decided to go out and attack them," said McKinnon.

And unlike the first two games, the Gold Kings broke on top first.

After Norway skated circles around the Gold Kings in the first half of the opening stanza, the host team broke through with a fluke goal.

Chris Cahill broke into the Norway zone and was held by Orjan Lovdal. While referee Jimmy Brett started to make a delayed-penalty call, Cahill managed to stay on his feet and somehow poke the puck past a startled Tommy

From there, the burden fell on the defense and Brice in particular. Both were up to the challenge.

"Alba put on a show," said McKinnon. "We had a defensive system set up and the players followed through on it."

"We forced them wide and when we got the puck, we got it out of our zone."

One of the turning points in the game defensively, was when the Gold Kings killed off a two-man disadvantage late in the first period.

Billy Barton was sent off for tripping and then 45 seconds later, John Haddad was whistled for high sticking.

Down two skaters for 1:16, the Gold Kings thwarted the Norway attack as the Norwegians got off only a couple of good shots at Brice.

"I knew we would win when we stopped the 5-on-3," said Wright. "They are an Olympic team and for us to stop them like that—I just knew we would win after that."

In the second period, the Gold Kings wasted two golden opportunities.

First, Moore missed on a penalty shot. He was taken down by Geif Huff on a breakaway at the 10-minute mark.

On the shot, Moore moved in and waited for Skaarberg to make a move. But the goaltender held his ground and was able to smother Moore's attempt.

Then at the 7:10 mark, Barton broke around Skaarberg and had a wide-open net to shoot at but somehow sent the puck wide.

"I don't want to talk about it, please," said Barton, who is playing with a bad knee and a severely pulled groin. "I think I blacked out or something."

Norway finally got on the scoreboard at the 17:36 mark of the

Olympic Hockey Preview

At the Big Dipper
Thursday's Result
Austria 7, Gold Kings 2
Friday's Result
Poland 1, Gold Kings 2
Saturday's Results
Poland 4, Norway 2
France 6, Gold Kings 5
Tuesday's Result
Gold Kings 3, Norway 2
Wednesday's Schedule
France vs. Norway, 5 p.m.
Switzerland vs. Gold Kings, 8 p.m.

At Sullivan Arena—Anchorage
Friday's Result
Norway 9, France 1
Saturday's Result
Czechoslovakia 5, Switzerland 4
Sunday's Results
Switzerland 4, Austria 2
Czechoslovakia 7, Poland 2

Tuesday's Summary
Gold Kings 3, Norway 2

NORWAY 2 1—1-2
ALASKA 5 4 8-3

First period—1. Alaska, Cahill 3; Moore, Thord 10:12; 2. Alaska, Moore 2 (Milles, Stralow) 11:27 (pp); Penalties—Lovdal, N (hooking), 10:11; Thorsen, N (interference), 11:18; B. Barton, A (tripping), 13:38; Haddad, A (high sticking), 14:42.

Second period—3. Norway, Thorsen (Gud. Bakem) 17:58; 4. Alaska, Wright 18; Walter, Cahill 18:28; Penalties—Huff, N (hooking), 2:46; Huff, N (hooking), 10:00, penalty shot; Walter, A (hooking), 13:25.

Third period—5. Norway, Fritz (Salstein, Ekelund) 8:18 (pp); Penalties—Bergengen, N (hooking), 4:28; Moore, A (interference), 7:06; Haddad, A (tripping), 11:39; Gudkovsk, N (high sticking), 11:39.

Shots on goal—Norway 11-22-16-49; Alaska 5-10-2-25.

Power play opportunities—Norway 1 of 2, Alaska 1 of 2.

Penalty shot missed—Moore, A, 10:00 second.

Goalies—Norway, Skaarberg (39 shots, 17 saves); Alaska, Brice (49-7).

Referee—Jimmy Brett, Linesman—Kerry Blair and K. Karabatschoff.

Officials A—1,300 (est.).

Tuesday's Highlights

In April, the Gold Kings won their second national championship in Sun Valley, Idaho.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ Dave Thomas, "Gold Kings stun Norway's Olympic ice squad," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, February 10, 1988.

¹⁴² *News-Miner*, April 4, 1988.

May, 1988: The Gold Kings continued to make their mark in Alaska as Juneau considered funding the team to help bring more international competition to Alaska.¹⁴³

6—Fairbanks Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska, Thursday, May 12, 1988

Gold Kings may get trip at state's expense

By SAM BISHOP
News-Miner Bureau

JUNEAU—The Gold Kings hockey team may get state money next winter to help take a trip abroad and to bring international hockey teams to Fairbanks.

The money would arrive via the annual state reappropriations budget. Gov. Steve Cowper has not yet decided what projects to veto from the bill, but has said he sees plenty to draw his red pen.

The Gold Kings hosted Olympic teams from France, Poland, Austria and Norway this past winter.

The \$30,000 from the Legislature would act as seed money for the team's efforts this coming winter. Part of the program would be a team trip to Japan next February to compete against the Japanese national team and two teams from the Soviet Union.

In December, the team hopes to host teams from Finland, Sweden and Czechoslovakia. Teams from

Norway, West Germany and Canada or Finland may participate in a March tournament.

Sen. Bettye Fahrenkamp, D-Fairbanks, submitted the request for the Gold Kings money. She said the Gold Kings are beginning to gain international recognition but they need a boost.

"I try to respond to my constituents' needs," Fahrenkamp said. "When it gets to that stage, they need help."

Fahrenkamp successfully pushed a list of reappropriations for various groups in the Fairbanks area.

The money was sprung loose by repealing money left over from spending in previous years. Those included \$250,000 for the planning and design of a courthouse in Fairbanks and \$1.4 million for innovative placer mining grants. Most of the placer mining money was spent, but the courthouse money was not.

Fahrenkamp said a new courthouse in Fairbanks is years away.

"There's no use planning for a courthouse we can't build," Fahrenkamp said. "For it (the money) to just sit there, to me, is just crazy."

The Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce would receive \$25,000 to sponsor an international ice-carving exhibition. The exhibition, intended to promote winter tourism, would be held in conjunction with the annual Fairbanks Ice Festival.

Alaska and American Airlines, Totem Ocean Trailer Express, the Arctic Winter Games, the city of Fairbanks, the Alaska Railroad and Mortgage Guarantee Insurance Corp. teamed up this past winter to bring ice carvers from Chicago and Harbin, China. The carvers taught 31 apprentices while in Fairbanks.

"I don't know of anything that the

people of the city of Fairbanks enjoyed more," Fahrenkamp said. The state money would help pay for a similar event next year.

Also in the reappropriations bill, the Legislature again approved a plan to study Railbelt energy alternatives. With \$2 million the power authority will compare gas, coal, inerties and conservation alternatives.

"Basically, it's going to be a comparison of which new projects would most efficiently produce the cheapest energy," LeResche said. "I'm sure it will be stated at least partially in terms of cost-benefit ratios."

The reappropriations bill also funds numerous state, city and borough government projects in Fairbanks, as well as those requested by several other non-profit groups.

Fahrenkamp said few groups got as much as they asked for, given the tight money supply.

1988-1989 Season

The Gold Kings opened the season as the defending U.S. champions. They lost the title to the Minneapolis Bucks in April of 1989, in a 3-2 upset at the Bloomington Ice Garden in the championship round of the U.S. National Tournament. Along the way to the National Tournament the Kings faced the junior national teams of Czechoslovakia and Finland in the World Invitational Tournament, and played against the Japanese national team in Japan. Timmy Lee became the all-time leading scorer for the club.

Roster

Troy Wingfield	Billy Barton	John Haddad	Brian Kraft
Jimmy Barton	Greg Evans	Kevin Milles	Dave Wilcox
J.P. Brown	Jeff Evans	Mark Nason	Scott Wilhelm
Chris Cahill	Curt Franklin	Dave Olson	Jordy Wolter
Don Daniels	Ken Haman	Haydon O'Rear	
Doug Desorcie	Tim Lee	John Roehl	
Bill Duquette	Ryce Miller	Keith Swarner	

¹⁴³ Sam Bishop, "Gold Kings may get trip at state's expense," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, May 12, 1988.

Schedule

November 4-5: Seattle Indians
November 11-12: St. Paul Parkers
November 18-19: Calgary Hawks
November 24-26: Thunder Bay Twins
December 2-3: Quesnel Kangaroos
December 9-10: Minneapolis Bucks
December 21-23: World Invitational
January 6-7: Whitehorse
January 13-14: N. St. Paul Blades
January 20-21: Ft. Qu 'Appelle Lakers
January 27-28: Philadelphia Wings
February 3-4: Saskatchewan Southern Rebels
February 10-11: New York St. Nicks
February 17-March 4: Japan Trip
March 10-11: UAF
March 17-18: Old Kings
March 30-April 2: U.S. National Tournament Minneapolis, MN

October, 1988: Gold Kings open season as defending national champions.¹⁴⁴

December, 1988: Timmy Lee became the Gold Kings all-time leading scorer.¹⁴⁵

February, 1989: Gold Kings traveled to Japan to play the Japanese Men's National Ice Hockey Team.

March, 1989: Fairbanksan Bill Gordon, while on a business trip to Japan that overlapped with the Gold Kings'

Gold Kings out to defend national crown

Gold Kings defeat Minneapolis *Lee breaks scoring mark*

By BOB ELEY
Sports Writer

Every time the Alaska Gold Kings and Minneapolis Bucks get together, one can bet on a close game and the opening contest of this year's two-game series was no different than the past.

The two most dominant teams in U.S. senior men's hockey played on even terms for more than 58 minutes before the Gold Kings pulled out a wild 6-4 victory when Chris Cahill and Brian Kraft scored goals in the span of 18 seconds in the 59th minute of play Friday night at the Big Dipper Ice Arena.

In the process of taking a 4-3-1 lead in the all-time series with the Bucks, Gold King captain Timmy Lee overtook Rod Chupka as the team's all-time scoring leader.

Lee, who entered the game two points behind Chupka, had a goal and two assists to give him 432 points in his career that began during the 1982-83 season.

Lee's clearing pass set Cahill free for the game-winning break-away goal at 18:37 of third period.

Just 18 seconds after Cahill had given Alaska the lead, Kraft ripped one past Minneapolis goaltender Westy Graves to insure the victory.

The Bucks led 2-1 after two periods and Kraft's goal capped a wild third period in which the Gold

The two teams meet again tonight at about 8:30 following the University of Alaska Fairbanks-UA Anchorage college game.

No Gold Kings-Bucks game has ever been decided by more than two goals.

The first two periods of play fit the mold of past Minneapolis-Alaska games as the two teams battled it out on even terms.

The Bucks drew first blood at 15:54 of the first period Mader scored just 31 seconds after the Bucks had killed off a penalty.

The Gold Kings evened the count early in the second period when Barton and O'Rear teamed up on a 2-on-1 break.

Barton broke into the Bucks' zone and fed O'Rear who tucked the puck under the pads of Graves as he was being pulled down to the ice by Bucks' defenseman Dan Haskins.

O'Rear's goal came at the 5:49 mark.

Undaunted by the roar from the crowd, the Bucks came back to take a 2-1 lead on Mader's second goal of the game at 16:24 of the second period. Mader came out from behind the net, spun around in front of Duquette and slipped the puck under the Alaska goalie's pads.

The action opened up in the third period as the Gold Kings cranked



HIGH-STEPPING—Alaska Gold King Greg Evans tries to find the puck during the first period of Friday's game against the Minneapolis Bucks at the Big Dipper

¹⁴⁴ Eley, "Gold Kings out to defend national crown," October 5, 1988.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, "Gold Kings defeat Minneapolis: Lee breaks scoring mark," December 10, 1988.

Good exposure

March 6, 1989
3180 Peger Rd.

Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

Sports Editor,

While in Japan recently on a business trip, I had the pleasure to attend two of the hockey games between the Alaska Gold Kings and the Japanese National Team. The Gold Kings did not win the games, but Fairbanks and the state of Alaska certainly were real winners.

John Rosie (Gold King president) and the young players were magnificent diplomats for our state and country. Playing before large Japanese crowds, these Alaskans delighted the fans with their skills and an aggressive style of hockey. But more importantly they represented our city in a statesmanlike manner. All of us should reap great benefits from the exposure Alaska has received. Besides the huge crowds, there was also extensive press coverage by most Japanese media.

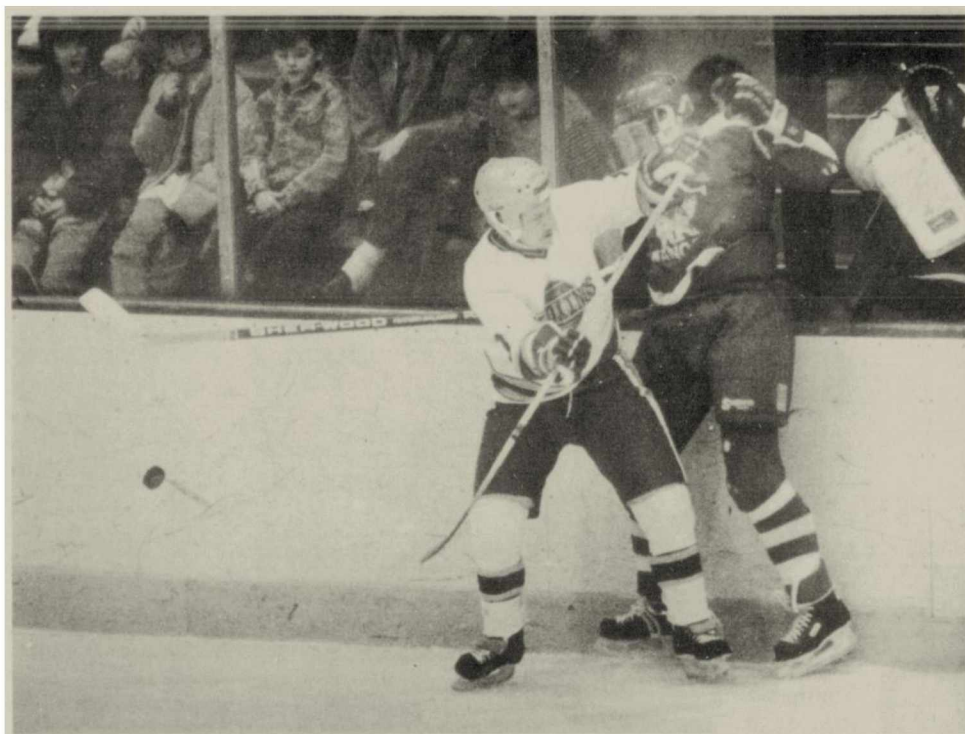
The state of Alaska has been spending large sums of money to promote Alaska in the Far East. Expensive tourism promotions and state offices in foreign countries hopefully will provide openings into this market, but I suspect, at less cost and equally effective is the product put on the ice by the Gold King organization.

Fairbanksans should thank John Rosie and the board of directors of the Alaska Gold Kings for taking the trip and representing Alaska so well.

Sincerely,
Bill Gordon

hockey tour, watched some of the action, and praised Rosie and the team for their laudable, diplomatic behavior.¹⁴⁶

In March, the Gold Kings competed against the UAF Nanooks in the KSUA Cup, providing well-received hockey entertainment for Fairbanks fans.¹⁴⁷



April, 1989: The Gold Kings lost to the Minneapolis Bucks 3-2 at the Bloomington Ice Garden in the championship game of the U.S. National Tournament.

1989-1990 Season

The Gold Kings cemented their hockey friendship with Europe this season. In December the team played the Danish and Norwegian national teams in a European tour. Through the

¹⁴⁶ Bill Gordon, "Good exposure," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, March 6, 1989.

¹⁴⁷ Mike Belrose photographer, "Loose Puck," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, March 11, 1989, accessed January 23, 2020.

People to People Sports Exchange Commission the Gold Kings and Khabarovsk, USSR established a three-week long series of hockey games in both locations. This made the Gold Kings the first American sports team to play in the Russian Far East. The two squads connected, and over the years continued to play one another. The Gold Kings even added some Khabarovsk players to their rosters when they entered the West Coast Hockey League. When the Khabarovsk team members played on American soil in Fairbanks, they were exposed to new cultural experiences as mundane as accessing certain magazines, such as *Playboy*, unavailable in the Soviet Union.

In an article titled “Alaska-Soviet League isn’t that far fetched,” writer Tim Mowry discussed the possibility and feasibility of such a league. John Rosie told Mowry that in five to ten years down the road it could well be a real hockey partnership.¹⁴⁸ Finally, in April the Gold Kings made history yet again when they won their third national title over their rival the Minneapolis Bucks in Seattle.

Roster

Alba Brice	Greg Evans	Lance LaJiness	Rick Pitta
John P. Brown	Curt Franklin	Tim Lee	Rod Poindexter
Chris Cahill	Greg Fritze	Ryce Miller	Kevin Sullivan
Steven Castelletti	John Haddad	Kevin Milles	Keith Swarner
Eric Cline	Ken Haman	Steve Murphy	Jordy Wolter
Bill Duquette	Kirk Haman	Mark Nason	

Schedule

October 27-28: Gold Kings v. Old Kings
 November 3-4: Whitehorse
 November 10-11: Seattle Indians
 November 17-18: Calgary Hawks
 November 23-25: Wild Turkey Classic-San Diego Surf
 December 1-2: Philadelphia Wings
 December 8-9: Anchorage Team
 December 15-16: Norwegian Team
 January 12-13: N. St. Paul Blades
 January 19-20: Whitehorse
 January 26-27: Toronto Selects
 February 2-3: Alberta Aces
 February 9-10: Assinaboise Southern Rebels
 February 16-17: The Boston Hockey Club
 February 23-24: Abottsford Blues
 March 2-3: St. Paul Parkers

¹⁴⁸ Tim Mowry, “Alaska-Soviet League isn’t that far fetched,” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, January 19-20, 1990.

March 9-17: International Tournament in Fairbanks

March 23: Old Kings

March 29-April 1: National Tournament

August, 1989: Gold Kings help with the restoration of the Riverboat Nenana at Alaskaland.¹⁴⁹

WHAT A GREAT IDEA—The Alaska Gold Kings showed that they can get things done even without hockey sticks in hand. Some members of the team recently volunteered time to help with the restoration effort on the Riverboat Nenana at Alaskaland the other day. They sanded part of the deck and the sides of the deckhouse.

The photograph on the right captures the action during the Seattle-Gold Kings game.¹⁵⁰

Donations help make Christmas

The Fairbanks Gold Kings are taking a shot at helping Santa make it a merry Christmas for needy families in Interior Alaska.

During Gold King games this weekend and next, children can have their photos taken with Santa for \$4. Half of the proceeds will go to Santa's Clearing House.

The photos will be taken Friday and Saturday nights from 8 to 11.

Santa's Clearing House, an all-volunteer effort to raise money for needy people in the Fairbanks area, is headquartered at 3876 S. Cushman St. Clearing House workers deliver hundreds of food baskets each Christmas to families in need of a lift.



TOUGH FALL—Alaska Gold King Kevin Milles flies through the air after tangling with Seattle Indian Sean Baker during the first period of play Saturday night at the Big Dipper Ice Arena. The Gold Kings defeated Seattle 8-4. Brian Schneider Photo

The Gold Kings helped families in need during the Christmas season.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ *News-Miner*, "What a Great Idea," August 29, 1989.

¹⁵⁰ Schneider photographer, "Tough Fall," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, November 12, 1989.

¹⁵¹ *News-Miner*, "Donations help make Christmas," November 28, 1989.

In December, the Gold Kings played the new Anchorage team, the Aces, renewing the rivalry between Alaska's largest and second largest cities.¹⁵²

Ice wars to heat up tonight

The Anchorage-Fairbanks ice hockey rivalry heats up on two fronts tonight in Fairbanks.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks entertains UA Anchorage in a battle of two of the nation's top independent NCAA Division I schools at 7:30 p.m. at the Patty Center while the Alaska Gold Kings host the newly formed Anchorage Aces in an 8 p.m. senior men's contest at the Big Dipper Ice Arena.

Both series conclude on Saturday night.

Senior captain David Holmes, who anchors the UAF defense, is out of the lineup for at least a couple of more weeks. Holmes underwent arthroscopic knee surgery two weeks ago. Other than Holmes' injury, the Nanooks are at full strength, Lucia said.

The Gold Kings are 10-1 on the season and have won five straight

games. They would like nothing better than to extend their winning streak to seven as they head for Europe next week for five games of international competition in Denmark and Norway.

Anchorage is a team comprised mostly of former UAA players. The Aces will be playing their first game of the season tonight.

Later that month the Gold Kings faced off against the national teams of Denmark and Norway as a part of their European Tour.¹⁵³

Kings challenge Europeans

By **BOB ELEY**
Sports Writer

The Alaska Gold Kings will step up into the world of international ice hockey during the next week as they head to Denmark and Norway to play five games in a span of six days.

"I think they're ready. Everyone has been working hard and I think we've done everything we can to

¹⁵² Ibid, "Ice wars to heat up tonight," December 8-9, 1989.

¹⁵³ Eley, "Kings challenge Europeans," December 14, 1989.

In December and January, through the People to People Sports Exchange Commission based in New York, the Gold Kings and a Soviet team from Khabarovsk put together a multi-week series of games and cultural exchange. Bob Eley wrote, "Despite the language barrier, a three-week series of games between the Gold Kings and Khabarovsk, Soviet Union has been set up."¹⁵⁴

The visiting players from Khabarovsk in the Russian Far East were enthralled by the new cultural opportunities presented to them in Fairbanks.¹⁵⁵

come to trade

By MARY JONES
Staff Writer

Members of a visiting Soviet hockey team walked into the Footlocker at Bentley Mall loaded with watches, souvenir pins and teapots Tuesday. They left with arms full of Nike clothing and sports gear bags.

The athletes, in town to play five games against the Alaska Gold Kings, traded their items for shiny colorful matching warm-up suits with zipper tops and matching pants bearing the Nike logo.

The Soviet hockey players toured Fairbanks Tuesday. Lacking U.S. money, the players relied mostly on bartering, common in Russia.

Not that they passed up cash when offered. One enterprising group of Russians took 29 watches to the B&L Pawn Shop and walked away with \$870, an interpreter said.

The visitors from Khabarovsk were polite, knew what they wanted and knew the price they wanted for their goods, said Charles Mack, assistant manager of the Footlocker, an athletic gear store.

T-shirts and tennis shirts with the famous Nike swoop were popular, he said. Players could easily barter them away for other goods once back in the Soviet Union, Mack said.

"These things are worth a lot in Russia," said Mack. "It's a prestige thing."

The Soviets mostly traded waterproof Soviet Army officers watches, sets of enameled pins representing the 15 Soviet republics and ornate teapots. The hockey players wanted the equivalent of about \$40 for the watches, \$50 for the sets of pins, and \$100 for a teapot.

Mack said no cash actually changed hands at the Footlocker. His manager gave him permission to trade one-on-one with
(See SOVIET, Back Page)



Mike Mathers/News-Miner

NOSTALGIC LOOK—Visiting Soviet skaters, front to back, Igor Truhachev, Marat Gil'Manov, and Aleksandr Kasseev find a bit of their home country in January's issue of Playboy magazine, whose cover story, "The Women of Russia," drew their attention. The skaters were visiting the bookstore on the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus Tuesday after spending several hours in the morning touring local malls in town.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, "Speaking Russian via fax machine is no easy task," January 11, 1990.

¹⁵⁵ Mary Jones, "Soviets come to trade," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, January 17, 1990.

Exchange just beginning

Gold Kings expect series growth

By **BOB ELEY**
Staff Writer

During the past five years the Alaska Gold Kings have brought international hockey to Fairbanks and the recent three-week exchange with the Khabarovsk Hockey Club of the Soviet Union is likely to generate additional interest.

The Gold Kings have a four-game series with Lada of the Soviet Union scheduled in March, but that just may be the beginning of a more extensive exchange with teams in the Soviet Union and the Far East, according to Gold Kings president John Rosie.

"We signed a protocol of intent to try to make this an annual thing," Rosie said Sunday night in discussing the recent exchange. "It's their intent to provide transportation for equipment."

that there will be more exchanges . . . We'll take it one step at a time and the first step has been made with this exchange."

Rosie said the possibility of having a double round-robin tournament has been discussed, with one round games being played in the Soviet Union and the other in Fairbanks.

Rosie said the recent tournament in Khabarovsk was being mentioned in the Soviet press as a tournament for the Far East that would become similar to what the Investia Cup is for Moscow.

"I think the tournament had more significance for them, than it did to us," Rosie said. "They're already talking about inviting teams from Australia, China, North and South Korea, Alaska and Japan."

vited into homes as honored guests in true sincerity.

"It was a real freindship experience," Rosie added. "It's so different not being able to speak the language, yet being good friends."

A strong bond between the players on the two teams appears to building as well.

"You could see it developing," Rosie said. "Some guys hugged each other after the game against Khabarovsk and others were patting each other on the shoulders during warmups before the game even started.

"There were not such feelings toward the Japanese or the Chinese," he added.

Any trip to the Soviet Union is going to be memorable, but this first excursion by the Gold Kings probably may never be forgotten.

February, 1990: The Gold Kings, Rosie, and Khabarovsk anticipated that the hockey series and friendship on the ice would continue for years to come.¹⁵⁶

The Gold Kings' rivalry with the St. Paul Parkers continued into the 1990s as the Kings won back the Anderson Cup, a trophy held between the two teams, in the 1989-1990 season.¹⁵⁷

In April, the Gold Kings beat their rivals the Minneapolis Bucks in Seattle for their third national title.



PUCK BATTLE—Billy Barton of the Alaska Gold Kings battles for the puck with St. Paul's Joe Delisle and an unidentified Parker in the first game of the Anderson Cup Series Friday night at the Big Dipper Ice Arena.

1990-1991 Season

This season, several new players joined the Gold Kings, forming another strong team. In late November, around Thanksgiving, the Kings played Khabarovsk Red Army in a five-game series keeping the teams' hockey friendship alive. From late December to early January, the team embarked on a European playing tour in which they competed against France, Switzerland, and Czechoslovakia. Finally, in late March, the Gold Kings lost the U.S. Open national title to their rival the Anchorage Aces.

¹⁵⁶ Eley, "Exchange just beginning: Gold Kings expect series growth," February 7, 1990.

¹⁵⁷ Schneider photographer, "Puck Battle," March 4, 1990.

Roster

Alba Brice	Greg Fritze	Matt Koleski	Steve Murphy
Chris Cahill	John Haddad	Lance LaJiness	Scott Nelson
Antonio Catani	Ken Haman	Tim Lee	George Stetson
Greg Evans	Kirk Haman	Ryce Miller	Craig Stephens
Curt Franklin	Brian Klanow	Kevin Milles	Joey Love

Schedule

October 26: Blue/Gold Scrimmage

October 27: Old Kings/Gold Kings

November 2-3: Philadelphia Wings

November 9-19: Calgary Hawks (Alberta AAA champs)

November 16-17: St. Paul Parkers

November 22-24: Wild Turkey Classic-Khabarovsk Red Army Team

November 20-December 1: San Diego Surf

December 7-8: Whitehorse

December 14-15: Anchorage Aces

December 19-January 2: France Tour-France, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia B

January 11-12: Fort St. John, B.C.

January 18-19: St. Paul Metros

January 25-26: Abbotsford

February 1-2: Southern Saskatchewan Rebels

February 8-9: Edmonton Paul Band

February 15-16: Pueblo Ravens

February 22-23: Chicago Alumni

March 1-2: Whitehorse

March 8-9: Anchorage Aces

March 15-16-21: Japan National Team

March 22: A League All Stars

March 23: Old Kings/Gold Kings

March 28-31: U.S. Open National Tournament



This season, Fairbanks was introduced to several new faces on the team.¹⁵⁸

The Gold Kings maintained the hockey exchange with the Soviet Union as they played another five-game series against the Khabarovsk Red Army in late November.¹⁵⁹

Gold Kings primed for Soviet invasion

From late December to early January the Gold Kings toured Europe playing France, Switzerland, and Czechoslovakia.¹⁶⁰

Kings head out on French tour

By TIM MOWRY

In early April, the Gold Kings lost the national championship title to their reinvented rival the Anchorage Aces.

¹⁵⁸ Nora Gruner photographer, "New Kings," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, October 30, 1990.

¹⁵⁹ Mowry, "Gold Kings primed for Soviet Invasion," *News-Miner*, November 21, 1990, accessed January 28, 2020.

¹⁶⁰ Mowry, "Kings head out on French tour," December 20, 1990, accessed January 28, 2020.

1991-1992 Season

While the season ended on a high note as the Gold Kings won their fourth national title, the team met several obstacles in the summer of 1991. In June, the team joined the Pacific Northwest Hockey League alongside the Anchorage Aces, Soldotna Mic-Macs, and Whitehorse Knights. After losing their sponsorship, Soldotna had to drop their position in the Pacific Northwest Hockey League, forcing Rosie and league officials to quickly replace the Mic-Macs with two Canadian squads. In August, Rosie and the Gold Kings filed a lawsuit against their pull-tab vendor who countersued and demanded the immediate dismissal of Rosie from the organization. Due to renovation of the Big Dipper, the Kings had to play the first half of the season at the Carlson Center.

Roster

Bill Duquette	Rob Proffitt	Corey Metro	John Haddad
Scott Nelson	Chris Cahill	Tim Krogan	Wess Wilson
Charlie Henrich	Kirk Haman	Kevin Milles	Alba Brice
Jim Gibson	Tim Lee	Keith Swarner	Scott Brownfield
Rick Recla	David Holmes	Kevin Nohe	
Ken Haman	Bruce Laiti	Matt Koleski	

Schedule

November 1-2: Whitehorse Huskies

November 7: Anchorage Aces

November 8-9: Anchorage Aces

November 15-16: Chicago Chargers

November 23-24: Whitehorse Huskies

November 26-28: Wild Turkey Classic with the Khabarovsk Red Army Team

December 6-7: St. Paul Parkers

December 20-21: Assiniboia Southern Rebels

January 17-18: Stoney Plain Eagles

January 24-25: New England Wings

January 31-1: Whitehorse

February 7-8: Abbotsford Flyers

February 14-15: Sault Ste. Marie Indians

February 20-22: Anchorage Aces

February 28-29: Whitehorse

March 6-7: Assiniboia Southern Rebels

March 13-14: PNHL League Championships

March 20: Old Kings

March 26-29: U.S. Open Nationals in Stanford, Connecticut

Kings happy to go back to Dipper

By TIM MOWRY
Staff Writer

Who says bigger is better.

Despite bigger crowds and bigger ice at the Carlson Center, Alaska Gold Kings president John Rosie can't wait to move back to the smaller confines of the Big Dipper Ice Arena.

After a preliminary inspection on Wednesday, Fairbanks North Star borough officials said the Big Dipper is on schedule to re-open to the public on Dec. 21.

Heavy snows last winter weakened the roof and forced the arena to close in June for a \$2.1 million repair job.

The re-opening of the Big Dipper is good news for Rosie, who estimates the Gold Kings lost \$45,000 in revenue by playing their first 11 games in the Carlson Center.

"I can show it to you in black and white," said Rosie.

Not only is ice time more expensive at the Carlson Center and University of Alaska Fairbanks Patty Center—\$100 an hour at the Carlson Center, \$80 an hour at UAF and \$36 an hour at the Big Dipper—but the Gold Kings were not able to sell concessions or beer at the Carlson Center, which has its own concessionaire in Ogden Enterprises.

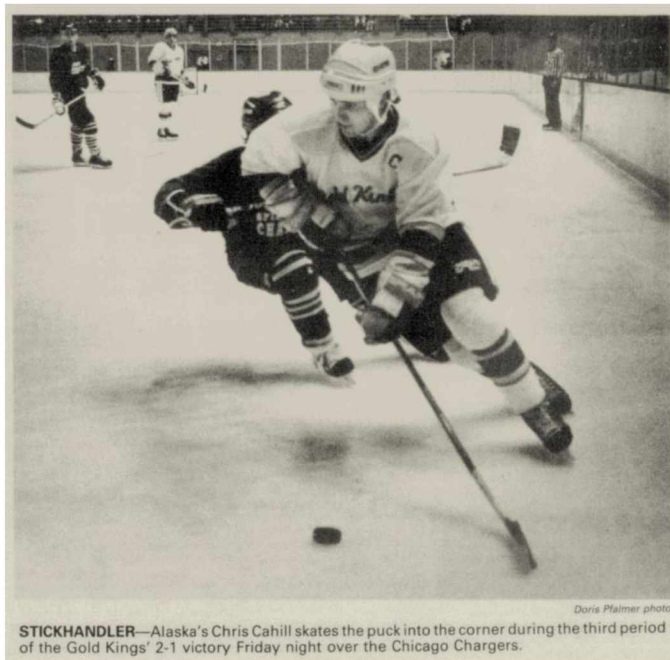
"We had our lunch handed to us
(See *DIPPER*, Page B-3)

Gold Kings to play in Pacific Northwest Hockey League

June, 1991: Rosie announced that the Gold Kings were to play in a four-league Pacific Northwest Hockey League made up of the Gold Kings, Anchorage Aces, Soldotna Mic-Macs, and Whitehorse Knights.¹⁶¹

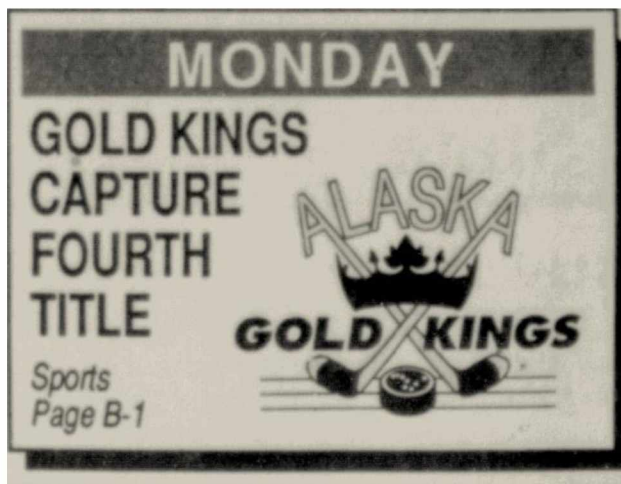
In the photograph to the right, skilled stickhandler Chris Cahill works the puck past a Chicago Chargers player.¹⁶²

December, 1991: The Gold Kings played the second half of the season at the Big Dipper after completion of its renovation. They had been playing at the Carlson Center.¹⁶³



Doris Pfalmer photo
STICKHANDLER—Alaska's Chris Cahill skates the puck into the corner during the third period of the Gold Kings' 2-1 victory Friday night over the Chicago Chargers.

March, 1992: Gold Kings won their fourth national championship title.¹⁶⁴



¹⁶¹ Mowry, "Gold Kings to play in Pacific Northwest Hockey League," June 16, 1991.

¹⁶² Doris Pfalmer photographer, "Stickhandler," November 17, 1991.

¹⁶³ Mowry, "Kings happy to go back to Dipper," December 12, 1991.

¹⁶⁴ *News-Miner*, "Gold Kings Capture Fourth Title," March 30, 1992.

1992-1993 Season

The Gold Kings had another strong season as Ryce Miller and Steve Murphy took over the coaching position while Roger McKinnon moved to general manager. The Kings had a diversified schedule, playing new teams from Washington, D.C. and Penticton, BC. They again hosted the Khabarovsk Red Army Team as a part of their “Wild Turkey Classic.” The Gold Kings cemented their rivalry with the Yukon Territory with several games against the Whitehorse Huskies over the course of the season. The Gold Kings-Aces rivalry ratcheted up when the latter knocked the Gold Kings out in the semifinals of the U.S. National Tournament.

Roster

Bill Duquette	Chris Cahill	Kevin Milles	Scott Brownfield
Scott Nelson	Kirk Haman	Keith Swarner	Shawn Petty John
Charlie Henrich	Tim Lee	Kevin Nohr	Kyle Orr
Jim Gibson	David Holmes	Matt Koleski	Eric Cline
Rick Recla	Bruce Laiti	John Haddad	Matt Atkinson
Ken Haman	Corey Metro	Wess Wilson	Arthur Carroll
Rob Proffitt	Tim Krogan	Alba Brice	John Blankenship

Schedule

October 30-31: Whitehorse Huskies

November 6-7: Anchorage Aces

November 13-14: Washington D.C.

November 20-21: anchorage Aces

November 26-28: Wild Turkey Classic with Khabarovsk Red Army Team

December 4-5: Whitehorse Huskies

December 11-12: St. Paul Parkers

January 8-9: Whitehorse Huskies

January 15-16: Penticton Silver Bullets

January 22-23: Chicago Chargers

January 29-30: Warroad Warriors

February 5-6: Stoney Plain Eagles

February 12-13: Whitehorse Huskies

February 19-20: Penticton Silver Bullets

February 25: Anchorage Aces

February 26-27: Anchorage Aces

March 19: Old Kings

March 25-28: U.S. Nationals

October, 1992: Ryce Miller and Steve Murphy took over as co-coaches of the Gold Kings as Roger McKinnon became general manager.¹⁶⁵



Action shot of the Gold Kings' November contest against the Washington, D.C. Nationals.¹⁶⁶



NET PLAY—Alaska Gold Kings goalie Scott Nelson stops a shot by Washington Nationals' Paul Mulvey as Gold Kings defenseman Charlie Henrich moves in to clear the rebound during Friday night's home opener at the Big Dipper Ice Arena. The Gold Kings swept the two-game series winning 15-3 on Friday and 7-1 on Saturday.

¹⁶⁵ Richard Griffis, "Miller, Murphy take over Gold Kings," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, October 9-10, 1992, accessed January 28, 2020.

¹⁶⁶ Mathers photographer, "Net Play," November 15, 1992.



Action shot of Gold Kings forward Tim Krogan, a native of Edina, Minnesota.¹⁶⁷

A March *News-Miner* article examines the Fairbanks-Sault Ste. Marie hockey connection, noting that as of 1993, eighteen

Gold Kings players had come from Sault Ste. Marie. This does not include other Michigan players such as John Haddad (Port Huron) and Matt Koleski (Detroit). This pipeline was fueled by a growing hockey scene in Fairbanks and the construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, which provided employment opportunities for Fairbanks semi-professional hockey players.¹⁶⁸

March, 1993: Gold Kings come up short in the National Tournament, being knocked out in the semifinals by the Anchorage Aces in a 3-0 shutout.

Kings have a pipeline to Alaska

The Sault Ste. Marie connection is real

By NED ROZELL
Correspondent

In the mid-70s, two pipelines were built in Alaska. To see one, drive out the Steese Highway. To see the other, head out to the Big Dipper Ice Arena on a Friday or Saturday night.

The Alaska Gold Kings' pipeline carries talent, and it runs from Fairbanks to Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., a town of 14,000 people on the Ontario border. Over the years, 18 Gold Kings have come to Fairbanks from "the Soo," including Chuck Cartier, Tim Waggoner, Joey Behling, Billy Duquette and Scott Michaels.

The current crew of Gold Kings includes five players who took their first steps on the ice in Sault Ste. Marie: All-time leading scorer Tim Lee, eight-year Gold King Chris Cahill, and second-year players Rob Proffitt, Rick Recla and Corey Metro.

1993-1994 Season

In the summer, plans were confirmed for the 1993 Arctic Challenge Olympic Hockey Preview to be held in September with Fairbanks and Anchorage serving as co-hosts. Team Alaska, comprised of Gold Kings and Aces, played the national teams of Russia, Canada, and the

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, "Hard Skater," November 19, 1992.

¹⁶⁸ Ned Rozell, "Kings have a pipeline to Alaska: The Sault Ste. Marie connection is real," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, March 12-13, 1993.

U.S.A., colloquially known as the “Big Three.” The games were split between the Carlson Center in Fairbanks and the Sullivan Arena in Anchorage. With the “Big Three” in town and \$20,000 on the line, this was a major milestone for Fairbanks and Alaska hockey.

For regular season play, the Gold Kings joined the newly formed Pacific Coast Hockey League or PCHL alongside the Anchorage Aces, Abbotsford-Bellingham Flyers, Fresno Falcons, Los Angeles Lightning, and Covina California Hawks. Over the course of the season the Fairbanks-Anchorage sports rivalry was charged by the continuous matchups between the Gold Kings-Aces and UAF-UAA. In March, the Fresno Falcons eliminated the Kings from the U.S. National Championship Tournament.

Roster

Matt Koleski	Charlie Henrich	Mike Finke	Ron Stadem
Tim Krogan	John Haddad	Kevin Milles	Elliot Jackson
Jim Gibson	Corey Metro	Steve Soleski	Ty Senden
Eric Cline	Kevin Nohr	Rick Lord	Shawn Ulrich
Rick Recla	Chris Cahill	Wayne Sawchuck	
Rob Proffitt	Kirk Haman	Brad Deweese	

Schedule

- October 21-22: Anchorage Aces
- October 29-30: Detroit Ultra Air Kings
- November 5-6: Bellingham Flyers
- November 12-13: California Hawks
- November 19-20: Whitehorse Huskies
- November 26-27: Bellingham Flyers
- December 3-4: St. Paul Parkers
- December 10-11: Los Angeles Lightning
- January 7-8: Whitehorse Huskies
- January 14-15: Washington, D.C. Nationals
- January 21-22: Stony Plain Eagles
- January 28-29: Bellingham Flyers
- February 4-5: Anchorage Aces
- February 18-19: Fresno Falcons
- February 25-26: Chicago Chargers
- March 4-5: Fresno Falcons
- March 11-12: Anchorage Aces
- March 18: Old Kings
- March 24-27: U.S. National Championship in Fresno



In June, the Gold Kings and all of Alaska hockey received big news of the opportunity to host the national teams of Russia, Canada, and the United States, colloquially

known as the “Big Three” in the September 1993 Arctic Challenge Hockey Preview. Team Alaska was comprised of players from the Alaska Gold Kings and Anchorage Aces, and the Preview was split between Fairbanks’s Carlson Center and Anchorage’s Sullivan Arena.¹⁶⁹

October, 1993: The Gold Kings opened up the regular season playing the Anchorage Aces at the Sullivan Arena in Anchorage as a part of the newly formed Pacific Coast Hockey League. The PCHL was comprised of the Alaska Gold Kings, Anchorage Aces, Abbotsford-Bellingham Flyers, Fresno Falcons, Los Angeles Lightning, and Covina California Hawks.

The Gold Kings-Aces and UAF-UAA kept the Fairbanks/Anchorage hockey rivalry fueled.¹⁷⁰

FAIRBANKS vs. ANCHORAGE

UAF, UAA to play twice this season

By DOUG HILL
Staff Writer

It's the beginning of a new era in the University of Alaska Fairbanks-University of Alaska Anchorage hockey rivalry.

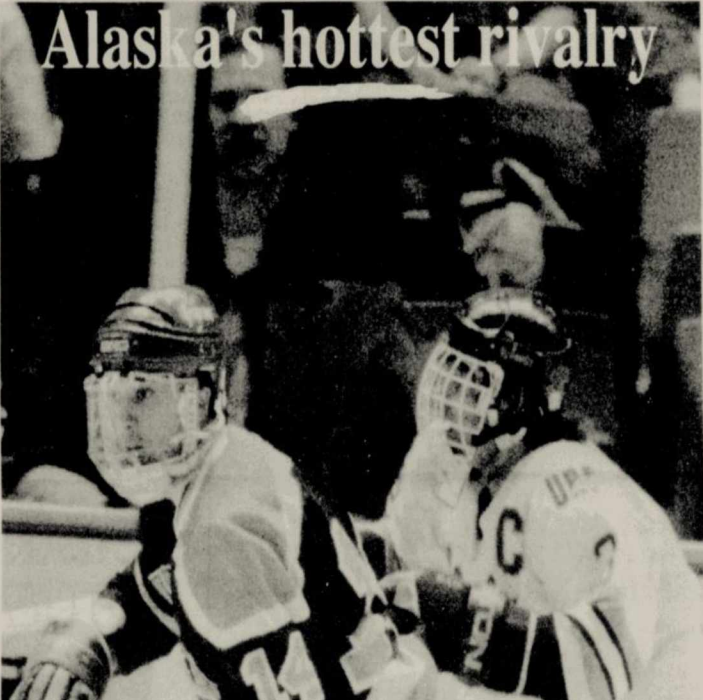
The Nanooks have a new coach, the Seawolves have scores of underclassmen, but the most significant change comes off the ice. Because of schedule restrictions, the two teams meet only twice this season.

The Seawolves have become a full-fledged member of the Western Collegiate Hockey Association and have little room on their schedule for non-conference opponents. In fact, this weekend's home-and-home series with the Nanooks will provide the Seawolves with their only non-conference action of the season.

UAF first-year head coach Dave Laurion understands the situation UAA is in.

"It's unfortunate we don't play each other four times," he

Alaska's hottest rivalry



Gold Kings begin season against Aces

By BOB ELEY
Sports Editor

Just over a month ago, many of them were teammates skating for Team Alaska in the Arctic Challenge Hockey Preview. Tonight, they will be bitter rivals when the puck drops on the 1993-94 senior men's hockey season.

So go the fortunes of the Alaska Gold Kings and the Anchorage Aces, who square off in a two-game series starting at 7 tonight at Sullivan Arena in Anchorage.

Just how much of an effect the "Team Alaska experience" will have on the rivalry won't be known until tonight's game begins.

"I honestly don't know how they'll react this weekend," Gold Kings president John Rosie said earlier this week. "There were some real friendships developed during the Arctic Challenge, and now we're going to have to find out how we're going to be adversaries again."

¹⁶⁹ *News-Miner*, "Arctic Challenge Hockey Preview," September 16, 1993.

¹⁷⁰ Doug Hill, "Fairbanks vs. Anchorage: Alaska's hottest rivalry," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, October 21, 1993.

January, 1994: The Gold Kings did their part to make Fairbanks a hockey playing and spectating haven. In this article, the *News-Miner* claims that “ice hockey is the most popular spectator sport in Fairbanks,” and the Gold Kings are a major reason why.¹⁷¹

Fairbanks ice hockey teams are tops

News-Miner staff

To put it simply, ice hockey is the most popular spectator sport in Fairbanks.

And there's reason good for it. Fairbanks is the home of two of the finest non-professional hockey programs in the nation.

The University of Alaska Fairbanks annually is ranked among the top 15 teams in the the nation and plays its home games in the spacious 4,600-seat Carlson Center on Lower Second Avenue at Wilbur Street.

The Nanooks, an affiliate mem-

ber of the Central Collegiate Hockey Association, are currently ranked 11th or 12th in all of the nation's college hockey polls.

The Nanooks have a home series against Ferris State (Jan. 14-15), University of Massachusetts-Amherst (Jan. 21-22), University of Waterloo (Feb. 11-12), Army (Feb. 18-19) and Mankato State (March 4-5).

For ticket information call 474-7205.

The Alaska Gold Kings have been one of the most successful senior men's hockey organizations in the

United States for the past 17 years.

Comprised mostly of players who have completed their collegiate eligibility or junior hockey careers, the Gold Kings have won four USA Hockey Seniors Men's Open national championships and have never finished lower than third place in a national tournament.

The Gold Kings play their home games at the Big Dipper Ice Arena, a 2,000-seat facility located on Lathrop Street.

Home games remaining on the 1994 schedule include the Washington Nationals (Jan. 14-15), Stony Plain, Alb., Eagles (Jan. 21-22), Bellingham, Wash. Flyers (Jan. 28-29), Anchorage Aces (Feb. 4-5), Chicago Chargers (Feb. 25-26), Fresno Falcons (March 4-5) and the Anchorage Aces (March 11-12).

For ticket information call, 456-7825.



March 1994: Fresno Falcons eliminated the Gold Kings from the U.S. National Championship Tournament.

1994-1995 Season

Under first year head coach and former standout player John Haddad, the Gold Kings had a terrific season. They opened the season as a member of the Pacific Hockey League with talk of going professional in the near future. Soon, the Gold Kings received an influx of Russian players, including some from the same Khabarovsk Red Army team that had toured Alaska on three past occasions. In January, John Rosie announced that the Gold Kings would be going pro as members of the West Coast Hockey League. Months later in early April the Gold Kings took home their fifth national championship title, beating their in-state nemesis the Anchorage Aces 7-6 in overtime.

Roster

Bond Sutton	Tony Toth	Lorne Kanigan	Jim Scott
Todd Henderson	Kevin Milles	Matt Koleski	John Blankenship
Damian Fenton	John Lee	Shawn Ulrich	Jesse Lundgren
Oleg Filimonov	Chris Cahill	Scott Keyse	
Mike Finke	Tim Lee	Tim Krogan	
Eric Cline	Igor Alechine	Rob Proffitt	

Schedule

October 15: L.A. Rockets (exhibition)

¹⁷¹ *News-Miner* staff, “Fairbanks ice hockey teams are tops,” January 7, 1994.

October 21-22: Whitehorse
 October 28-29: Seattle Indians
 November 4-5: Anchorage Aces
 November 11-12: Vancouver Thunderbirds
 November 18-19: Anchorage Aces
 December 2-3: Detroit Raiders
 December 9-10: California Hawks
 January 6-7: Whitehorse Huskies
 January 13-14: Molson Ice
 January 20-21: L.A. Rockets
 January 27-28: Fresno Falcons
 February 3-4: Anchorage Aces
 February 10-11: Chicago Chargers
 February 17-18: Fresno Falcons
 February 24-25: California Hawks
 March 3-4: Anchorage Aces
 March 10-11: Anchorage Aces
 March 12: Anchorage Aces
 March 17-18: Vancouver Thunderbirds
 March 24: Old Kings
 March 30-April 2: U.S. Nationals

GOLD KINGS: League could be in future
Continued from Page C-3
There are 11 teams in the North American Association and nine of those teams have scheduled games for this season. As for this year, the Gold Kings open a 43-game schedule by hosting the Los Angeles Rockets at 8 p.m. Saturday at the Big Diner in Anchorage. The game will

When the Gold Kings opened the season against the Los Angeles Bandits in the Pacific Hockey League, the organization was one step closer to professionalization, and Rosie even mentioned the possibility of going pro in the next couple of years. The plan would turn the senior men’s Pacific Hockey League into a professional hockey association.¹⁷²

November, 1994: Randall Zarnke submits a “Guest Opinion” piece to the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner* expressing what the Gold Kings mean to Fairbanks and Interior Alaska. Zarnke comments on the volunteer spirit of players, coaches, and management that explains the

**Gold Kings
 a success**
 By RANDALL ZARNKE
 Fairbanks owes a debt of gratitude to the Alaska Gold Kings. This volunteer organization has brought world-class athletic competition to our community. The commitment by these volunteers to Fairbanks’ first men’s hockey team has made this program a huge success.
 Unfortunately, media attention has focused elsewhere in recent years. Therefore, the Gold Kings’ program has not received the rec-

Guest Opinion

¹⁷² Eley, “Gold Kings: League could be in future,” October 14, 1994.

success of the Alaska Gold Kings. He notes that this success is a reflection of the Fairbanks community.¹⁷³

As Russian players began their surge into the National Hockey League in the wake of the fall of the Soviet Union, the Gold Kings also welcomed talented Russian players. Oleg Filomonov joined the team midseason as a former goalie for the Khabarovsk Red Army team that played the Gold Kings on three separate occasions. Rosie said that there were plans for other Russian players to join as well.¹⁷⁴

Russian goalie Filomonov joins the team

Gold Kings versus the Whitehorse Rapids in a January 1995 match.¹⁷⁵

January 1995: Rosie announced that the Gold Kings franchise would go professional next season as a part of the West Coast Hockey League.¹⁷⁶



Mike Mathers/News Miner

Gold Kings are shooting to go pro next season

By BOB ELEY
Sports Editor

After 18 years as one of the top amateur hockey organizations in the United States, the Alaska Gold Kings will go pro next season.

Gold Kings president John Rosie announced Saturday night that the team would be one of the charter members of the newly formed West Coast Hockey League next season.

The league, headed by Bruce Taylor, construction magnate from Vancouver, B.C., is scheduled to begin play next year and will have its headquarters in Fresno, Calif., site of this year's U.S. Elite

National Hockey Championships, March 29-April 2.

"I really do think that it's going to happen," Gold Kings Rosie said Sunday night. "There are just too many driving economic forces for the cities in California to wait. We don't control anything. The timetable is being set by the demand in California."

The new league was announced by Taylor in Fresno last week. Taylor, who will serve as the league president, will own the Fresno franchise and possibly teams in Vancouver, B.C., and Tucson, Ariz., according to Rosie.

While there are still many details to be worked out, Rosie said that Fairbanks was granted a franchise in the league after Taylor visited the city during last weekend's series between the Gold Kings and Fresno Falcons.

"Basically we have an agreement to continue working to formulate the league to begin play next year," Rosie said as he stood outside the Gold Kings lockerroom following Saturday night's 12-2 victory over Fresno. The Falcons won the first game of the series, 10-7, Friday night.

Rosie said that he probably will serve as the league's vice president. Rosie also said league by-

laws will call for hiring a commissioner.

Rosie said the new league would be patterned after the East Coast Hockey League, one of four minor hockey leagues recognized by the National Hockey League.

Rosie said the league will have a salary cap of \$5,000 per week per team in an attempt to keep a competitive balance among the league's teams.

The ECHL currently has a \$6,000 salary cap. Like the ECHL, Rosie expects the WCHL to have affiliations with teams in both the International Hockey League and possibly the NHL.

See KINGS on page C-3

¹⁷³ Randall Zarnke, "Gold Kings a success," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner Guest Opinion*, November 10, 1994.

¹⁷⁴ Eley, "Kings head out on trail to Whitehorse: Russian goalie Filomonov joins the team" October 21, 1994.

¹⁷⁵ Mathers photographer, "Fighting For Control," January 7, 1995.

¹⁷⁶ Eley, "Gold Kings are shooting to go pro next season," January 30, 1995.

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177

A February article in the “Local” section of the *News-Miner* provides a bio of legendary Gold Kings coach/player and Sport King Owner Roger McKinnon.¹⁷⁸



April, 1995: Fairbanks Gold Kings beat the Anchorage Aces 7-6 in overtime for their fifth national championship win.¹⁷⁹

Gold Kings complete their drive for five

¹⁷⁷ “West Coast Hockey League” advertisement, *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, January 30, 1995.

¹⁷⁸ Mary Fenno, “When it comes to hockey, McKinnon is king,” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, February 6, 1995, accessed January 29, 1990.

¹⁷⁹ Eley, “Gold Kings complete their drive for five,” April 3, 1995.

1995-1996 Season

Former UAF player and Monroe Catholic coach Wayne Sawchuck was selected as the head coach of the professional West Coast Hockey League Gold Kings. On October 27, the Gold Kings officially started playing professionally as they took to the ice against their rival the Anchorage Aces. The team received a facelift as well; the new logo became a menacing lion clutching a hockey stick. At the end of the season the Gold Kings were eliminated in the semifinals by the eventual champions, the San Diego Gulls.

Roster

For the extensive roster visit

https://www.hockeydb.com/ihdb/stats/display_players.php?tmi=4601.

Schedule

Played Anchorage, Reno, Bakersfield, Fresno and San Diego multiple times from November through March.

June 1995: The Alaska Gold Kings officially go professional, joining the minor-league West Coast Hockey League (WCHL). The California cities of Bakersfield, Fresno, and San Diego, and Reno, Nevada are expected to join. The Anchorage Aces were uncertain early on, but would eventually join the league.¹⁸⁰

**Gold
Kings
go pro**

On October 27, the Gold Kings opened their first professional season against the Anchorage Aces at Sullivan Arena in Anchorage.

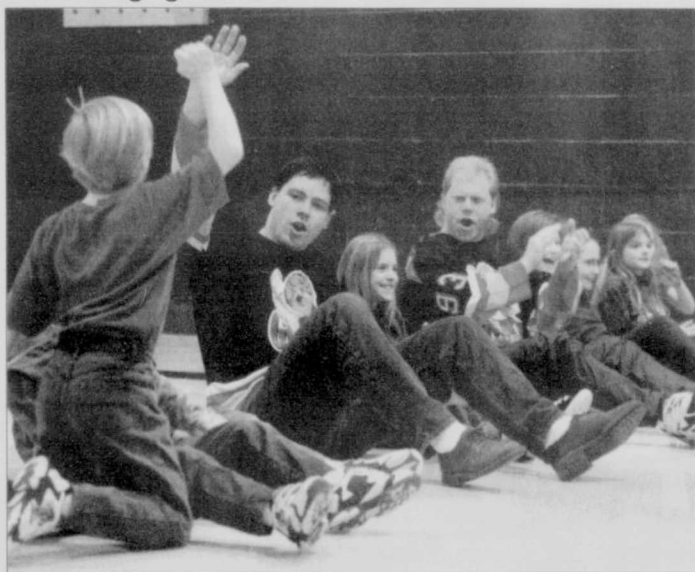


The new Alaska Gold Kings' logo for the West Coast Hockey League, a lion clutching a hockey stick, can be seen on the white jersey sported by Derek Linnell in the photograph on the right.¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ Eley, "Gold Kings go pro," June 28, 1995.

¹⁸¹ Mathers photographer, "King Of The Ice," November 4, 1995, accessed January 30, 2020.

Gold Kings go to school



Jason Langberg, 8, gives Alaska Gold Kings defenseman Marcel Aubin a high five after scoring during a game of capeball kickover last week at Weller Elementary School. Randy Motosko, 8, and Gold Kings forward Shawn Ulrich are behind Aubin. Ulrich and Aubin, both of whom have teaching credentials, try to visit schools as often as possible to help promote education as well as the Gold Kings West Coast Hockey League team.

The Gold Kings visited local elementary schools to promote education and Gold Kings hockey.¹⁸²

At the end of the season in late March and early April, the San Diego Gulls won the WCHL championship. They defeated the Gold Kings in the semifinals in a best-of-five contest 3-2.

1996-1997 Season

The 1996-1997 season was an emotionally charged year that would be the Gold Kings last. In the off-season, Brad McCaughey, formerly of the

Anaheim Bullfrogs of Roller Hockey International, took the helm as head coach of the Gold Kings. The team again added international depth to their squad with more Russian recruits. From a hockey standpoint, it was an abysmal season for the Kings who finished the season with a 13-47 record, which removed them from playoff contention.

Tensions in the Fairbanks hockey community and among Gold Kings fans rose. In January, Mike Stetson fired off an opinion piece in the *News-Miner* attacking Rosie and management for the demise of the Gold Kings as a result of going professional. Stetson argued that Gold Kings hockey was enjoyable when the team was comprised of locals who worked and lived in the community, and fought on the ice against the continent's and world's best. At the end of the article he sprinkled in hearsay about the team relocating to Boise or Colorado Springs at the conclusion of the 1996-1997 season and stated, "So maybe this is the farewell season for the WCHL Kings, and if so, fine."¹⁸³

In February, John Rosie fired back a retort to Stetson. In his opinion piece Rosie noted that while proud of his role in bringing many fond memories to Fairbanks before the Kings turned pro, he was disappointed in the town's quick dismissal of the current team. He reiterated his argument that the expansion of professional hockey all over the continent, including into states such as Florida and Texas, and the simultaneous demise of senior men's hockey left him with no choice but to go pro or fold.¹⁸⁴ At the end of May, Rosie and the organization suspended operations, hopeful that the team would make a return after a year-long break. While the Gold Kings did resume operations in another city, their Fairbanks days came to a close after the 1996-1997 season.

¹⁸² Gruner photographer, "Gold Kings go to school," *News-Miner*, January 23, 1996.

¹⁸³ Mike Stetson, "Bring back the real Gold Kings," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, January 9, 1997.

¹⁸⁴ John Rosie, "It was go pro or die: Fairbanks can look forward to a growing league," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner Guest Opinion*, February 11, 1997.

Roster

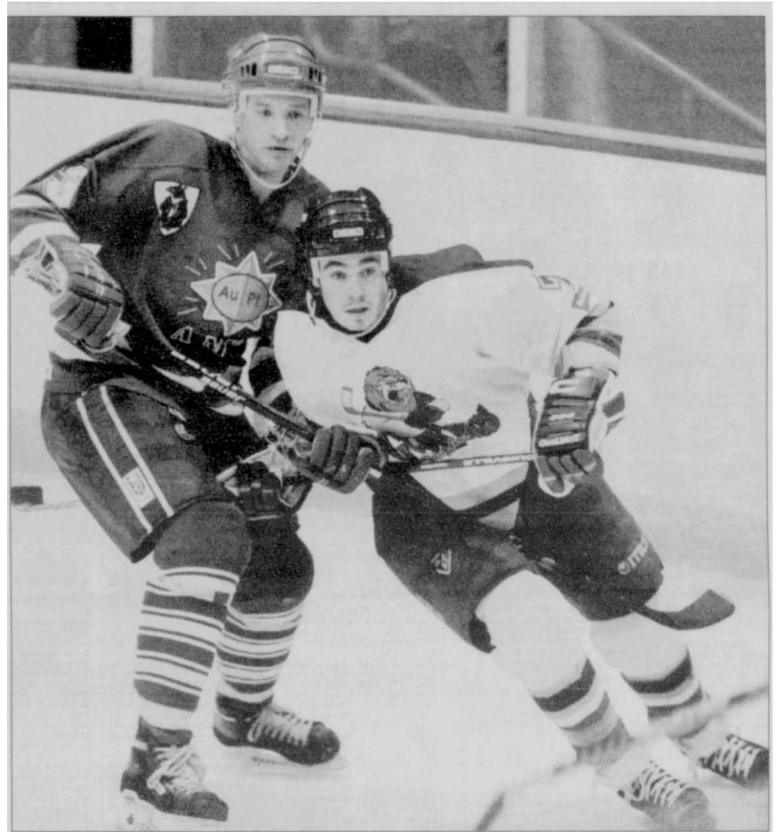
For the extensive roster visit

https://www.hockeydb.com/ihdb/stats/display_players.php?tmi=4601

Schedule

The Alaska Gold Kings played Anchorage, Reno, Bakersfield, Fresno, and Sand Diego multiple times from November through March.

November, 1996: Gold Kings played the Khabarovsk Red Army Team in West Coast Hockey League play. Khabarovsk was an exhibition team.¹⁸⁵



Mike Mathers/News-Miner

ICY RELATIONS—Alaska Gold Kings' Chris Simms and Khabarovsk Red Army team's Yevgeniy Kuveko get tied up behind the Russian net during Friday night's game. The Red Army team won 4-1.

¹⁸⁵ Mathers photographer, "Icy Relations," November 2, 1996.

December, 1996: The in-state rivalry between the Gold Kings and Aces continued well into the minor leagues. In the photograph below the two teams battle it out.¹⁸⁶



TWO-FRONT BATTLE—Gold Kings' Shayne Lebreton, top right, keeps Aces' George Wilcox from controlling the puck in front of Gold Kings' goalie Todd Henderson Thursday night at the Big Dipper. the Aces won the game 6-3.

January, 1997: Mike Stetson had choice words for Gold Kings management in a *News-Miner* piece in which he ridicules the heads of the organization for professionalizing and monetizing the Gold Kings in their two seasons in the WCHL instead of staying with their humble yet successful roots in senior men's hockey.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, "Two-Front Battle," December 27, 1996.

¹⁸⁷ Stetson, "Bring back the real Gold Kings," January 9, 1997.



Mike
Stetson

Bring back the real Gold Kings

Remember the good old days?

I do. The good old days of Gold Kings hockey. Before the West Coast Hockey League. Before the 11-game losing streak to Anchorage. Before the fun was sapped out of the raucous stands at the Big Dipper.

Sure you remember, the days in the old airplane hanger, with natural ice, a mesh fence on top of the boards instead Plexiglas and names like Roger McKinnon, Chuck Cartier and the Dancing Bear, Billy Duquette.

I remember watching the Dancing Bear in goal stone the Russian National B Team in an inspired 4-4 game which had a sellout crowd on their feet almost the entire night.

I remember the good natured rivalry between the Kings and the Nanooks which culminated in the Mayor's Cup series, where UAF would take on the Kings in a weekend series for local bragging rights.

I remember the long-lived rivalries with the St. Paul Parkers and the Moose Jaw Generals. The wild games filled with fights, fast skating, and emotion.

There was even a Cup for the series champion between St. Paul and the Kings, the Anderson Cup remember

Later that month, in an article written by Bob Eley, John Rosie poignantly addressed the current despair of the Gold Kings, and what it would have taken to have kept the team in Fairbanks. He quelled rumors of the team moving to another expansion city, and made it known that just as he predicted, senior men's hockey became nearly obsolete with only three teams competing in the 1997 championship. Rosie was disappointed by the criticism he received for a team to which he had devoted 21 years of his 24 years in Fairbanks.

Kings' owner upbeat about expansion

Rosie says team will play here or it will fold

By BOB ELEY
Sports Editor

Alaska Gold Kings president John Rosie is excited about expansion in the West Coast Hockey League, but how long the Fairbanks professional hockey team can survive is an entirely different matter.

"I'm tickled to death because it vali-

dates what I said two years ago when we played for our last senior men's national championship," Rosie said Wednesday evening after WCHL commissioner Mike Meyers announced that Boise, Idaho, had been awarded a franchise for the 1997-98 season.

Meyers is expected to announce today that another franchise will be awarded to Tacoma, Wash. Tucson, Ariz., also is scheduled to join the league next year and Khabarovsk, Russia, will become a full-time league member, giving the WCHL 10 teams.

There are still negotiations with a group in Sacramento, but Meyers said in a Tacoma News Tribune story published

Tuesday that the chances of that happening in time for next season are about 40-60.

"I watched senior hockey die and the prediction that I made that the Gold Kings would have to play in the WCHL or not survive are coming true," Rosie said. "I'm happy to see expansion and I hope that it starts to re-establish my credibility.

"Things are falling into place (for the WCHL) and hopefully that bears some truth to the credibility of what I've been talking about for the past two years."

Rosie said there is no basis to the rumors that have been swirling around Fairbanks about the possibility of the Gold Kings moving into one of the new WCHL

cities.

"Contrary to rumor, I'm not in Boise, I'm not in Tacoma and Sacramento is not mine either," Rosie said. "I can assure you, the Gold Kings will either play here or nowhere next season."

This season has not been a good one for the Gold Kings, who will take a 10-24-3 record into the first of six straight road games Friday night at San Diego.

There are 27 games remaining on the Gold Kings schedule and it figures that they will have to win at least 18 of those in order to make a run at the fourth and final playoff spot.

Rosie said that how long the Gold Kings
See KINGS, Page D-3

Rosie: "I can assure you, the Gold Kings will either play here or nowhere next season."

Eley: "Rosie said that he is having trouble understanding some of the criticisms leveled at him and the Gold Kings this season."¹⁸⁸

Continued from Page D-1

survive in Fairbanks will depend on the support that the franchise can regain from the community. He said the team will definitely lose money this year.

"Most people would consider it a fortune," Rosie said. "I know it's going to be at least six figures.

"I can survive, but the question is I don't know how many more years I can shoulder the entire responsibility alone," he added. "I'm a founding member of this league and have the right to operate in Fairbanks as long as I choose too."

Rosie said that he is having trouble understanding some of the criticisms leveled at him and the Gold Kings program this season.

"People seem to take it lightly that Fairbanks has been my home for 24 years and that I've been involved with the Gold Kings for 21 of those years," Rosie said. "I guess people think all of that can just be uprooted and thrown away.

"If this was purely a business, the Gold Kings would never have been started in 1976," he added. "The program has been

maintained for reasons other than business and it's discouraging to have criticisms leveled at me by people who don't know what they're talking about."

Rosie said there is no way the Gold Kings can go back to being a successful senior men's hockey team.

"I've spent the last 12 years working with USA hockey and I've just returned from their meetings," Rosie said. "This year the (senior men's) national championships are going to be in Minneapolis and there are only three teams registered to play."

Rosie said that expansion will help alleviate some of the scheduling problems that have come up with being a member of a six-team league.

"When we were a senior team, the media said it would be more interesting if we were in a league," Rosie said. "Now that we're in a league, we're criticized for playing the same teams too many times.

"I think that by the year 2000 this league will have 14 or 15 teams and some teams might not even come here once a year," he added. "We'll be back to a schedule of playing different teams every weekend.

"However, the cost of getting through the first two years with just six teams has been devastating."

While the Gold Kings have been struggling this season, Rosie believes the team can be competitive in future seasons.

"This year we had commitments from players and many of those commitments weren't honored," Rosie said. "It's unrealistic to think that we can win the league every year because of our geographic disadvantage, but I think we can be a second-, third-, fourth- or fifth-place team."

So, what will it take for the Gold Kings organization to turn things around on the ice and be financially successful as well?

"When I made my presentation to the Chamber of Commerce two years ago, I said that the public, political and private sectors would have to make the commitment for us to be successful," Rosie said. "It requires a concentrated effort on the part of all three for us to survive and that is still the case."

With that in mind, Rosie isn't making any commitments about next year.

"The jury is still out on that," he said.

¹⁸⁸ Eley, "Kings' owner upbeat about expansion: Rosie says team will play here or it will fold," January 23, 1997.



February, 1997: The Gold Kings continued to be topped by the WCHL's best team and the Kings' biggest rival the Anchorage Aces.¹⁸⁹

In February 1997, Rosie published a long opinion piece in the *News-Miner* that responded to Stetson's January 9 article titled "Bring back the real Gold Kings" and the many Fairbanks hockey fans who turned their back on the professional West Coast Hockey League version of the Gold Kings.¹⁹⁰

It was go pro or die

Fairbanks can look forward to a growing league

When I read Mike Stetson's Jan. 9 column, headlined "Bring back the real Gold Kings," I felt a wave of emotion—some very favorable, some rather negative.

First, I felt very proud of being a part of an organization that has stimulated such fond memories and filled so many winters with the excitement he recalled. I felt accomplished with helping bring to Fairbanks such individuals as Billy Duquette, Chuck Cartier, Timmy Lee, Chris Cahill, John Haddad and over 35 other men who came to our community to play for the Alaska Gold Kings and stayed. If these young men had never aged, they would still be entertaining us rather than owning homes and businesses and coaching our youth hockey teams. They would not be the fathers of the boys who now play for the competitive travel teams that continue to advance the reputation of Fairbanks hockey that the Gold Kings, in part, helped create.

I, too, remember the exhilaration of hosting the national and Olympic teams of 14 different nations, three of which no longer exist. We have brought home five senior men's league national championships as well as hosted the national championships twice. Who can forget the heart-breaking overtime loss to the Minneapolis Bucks or the overtime championship victory over the same team six years later? I wouldn't trade those memories for anything. I am honored that Stetson found these achievements to be worthy of recall.

But the landscape of hockey has changed drastically. When the Gold Kings started playing

John
Rosie



Guest Opinion

hockey in Fairbanks, there were only 12 National Hockey League teams and a total of 28 professional teams in all of North America. The continent was blessed with scores of great amateur teams and the Allen Cup—the prize of North American amateurs—may have been more prestigious than the Stanley Cup. Now there are 26 teams in the NHL alone, over 130 professional teams in North America and more professional hockey teams in Florida and Texas than any other state. The Allen Cup is now a weekend tournament and the U.S. National Championship that once was so important had only four teams last year and only three committed for this year.

Contact hockey at the old Gold Kings level is history. Chicago has no league that permits contact hockey in a city of 4 million people. Michigan, with the most adult teams in the nation, plays only no-check hockey. The Moose Jaw Generals haven't played a game since 1988, the St. Paul Parkers since 1993, and the Whitehorse Huskies folded their team after winning the Allen Cup in 1991. The Warroad Lakers of Minnesota (the Allen Cup winners for the last two years) declared their 50th season of competition their last because of the lack of players and competition. Add to this insurance rates, injuries, the lack of administration and it is easy to understand why leagues, rinks, cities and entire states have been forced to abandon contact hockey.

I, too, wish for the days when I

¹⁸⁹ Mathers photographer, "Aces Showing," February 8, 1997.

¹⁹⁰ John Rosie, "It was go pro or die: Fairbanks can look forward to a growing league," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner Guest Opinion*, February 11, 1997.

Kings playoff hopes fade with road loss

191

In May, the team suspended operations, hoping to return after a year-long break.¹⁹²

After suspension of operations:

June, 1997: Roger McKinnon and Rob Proffitt started the Junior B Hockey Program that would become the Fairbanks Ice Dogs and fill the void left by the Gold Kings.

Juniors invade Alaska

193

In late June, Rosie said that as the West Coast Hockey League branched and expanded into more populated markets, a reemergence of the minor league Gold Kings was unlikely.¹⁹⁴

Gold Kings move to suspend

Owner optimistic that team may return after year hiatus

By BOB ELEY

Sports Editor

The Alaska Gold Kings, Fairbanks' entry in the West Coast Hockey League, have officially applied to the league to suspend operations for at least one year.

Gold Kings owner John Rosie and WCHL Commissioner Mike

Meyers confirmed Friday that the application for a one-year suspension was in the league offices in Reno, Nev.

Rosie actually made the announcement he would suspend operations earlier in the week with little fanfare while being in-

terviewed by local television sports reporters.

The league's Board of Governors must approve the petition during its annual meeting June 10-12. Meyers said he didn't think there would be any trouble having the petition approved.

"John has indicated he can't financially continue in the method of operation that he is right now," Meyers said in a telephone interview from league headquarters Friday afternoon.

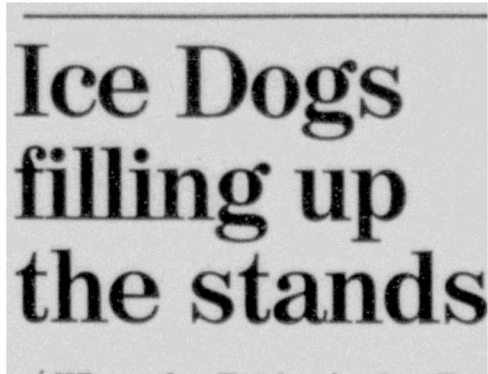
¹⁹¹ Staff Report, "Kings playoff hopes fade with road loss," *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, February 15, 1997.

¹⁹² Eley, "Gold Kings move to suspend operations: Owner optimistic that team may return after year hiatus," May 31, 1997.

¹⁹³ Niva, "Juniors invade Alaska," June 8, 1997.

¹⁹⁴ Eley, "Chances of Gold Kings return fading," June 18, 1997.

Through their first six games, the Ice Dogs averaged almost 1,200 fans at the Big Dipper, quickly establishing themselves in the community sports scene.¹⁹⁵



**Ice Dogs
filling up
the stands**

February, 1998: Rosie and the Gold Kings packed their bags and officially moved to Colorado where they became known as the Colorado Gold Kings. Eley noted that “With little fanfare and no official notification of the local media, the Alaska Gold Kings officially left Fairbanks on Wednesday.”¹⁹⁶



**Gold Kings quietly announce
departure from Fairbanks**

Epilogue

After relocating to Colorado Springs in the winter of 1998, the organization became known as the Colorado Gold Kings, playing in Colorado Springs as a member of the West Coast Hockey League until folding in 2002. As a professional team the Gold Kings found more success in Colorado, going to the playoffs each of their four remaining seasons. The success of the team in Colorado Springs did not parallel the height of achievement the Gold Kings attained between 1975 and 1995 in Fairbanks, however. The Fairbanks Ice Dogs were a natural replacement, starting their history off strongly with an excellent first season from 1997-1998 when they often filled the Big Dipper to capacity. Many of the characters covered in this timeline still live in Fairbanks. They are husbands, fathers, businessmen, hockey coaches, and contributing community members. The Gold Kings built the foundation for hockey in Fairbanks today, beginning in 1975.

¹⁹⁵ Mowry, “Ice Dogs filling up the stands,” October 22, 1997.

¹⁹⁶ Eley, “Gold Kings quietly announce departure from Fairbanks,” February 19, 1998.

4. *John Rosie Gold Kings Collection*

The following sections contain a sampling of the material recently donated by Randy Zarnke to the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The collection is officially known as the *John Rosie Gold Kings Collection*. At the University of Alaska Museum of the North, Ethnology and History Lab director Angela Linn and I have been the first to handle and catalogue the more physical items such as pucks, jerseys, hockey sticks, and commemorative pins. Thus far, the Alaska and Polar Regions Collections & Archives at the Elmer E. Rasmuson Library has not had the resources to organize and catalogue the paper materials donated, an assemblage of ten boxes full of season programs, photographs, letters, and other written materials. There are also audio tapes and films of hockey games now held at the Alaska Film Archives. Section 4.2.2 briefly identifies the audio tapes. These are mostly recordings of National Tournament game broadcasts, and a copy of the official “Alaska Gold Kings Theme Song” by Bruce Innes.

I am fortunate that Rachel Cohen and Becky Butler gave me the opportunity to handle this side of the collection prior to its being officially catalogued. To the best of my ability I have given items from the Alaska and Polar Regions Collections & Archives citations. Also, I am very grateful to Angie Linn for her guidance at the Museum, and Angie Schmidt for allowing me to access the portion of the collection at the film archives.

4.1 Museum Collection

The portion of the *John Rosie Gold Kings Collection* housed at the University of Alaska Museum of the North contains an array of hockey and hockey-related items. Through the spring of 2020 I have catalogued 63 of these objects. Among them are collectible beer steins, commemorative pucks and pins, hats, jerseys, and hockey sticks. A considerable amount of time goes into cleaning, documenting, and storing objects according to museum protocols, so with a large collection donated, only a portion of it is in the official records thus far. Below are photographs of these objects.

For the virtual museum exhibit, visit <https://akethnogirl.wordpress.com/>.



The photograph to the left is of one of the collectible beer steins collected by Gold Kings fans over the years. The distinct season-by-season mugs were a trademark of the Gold Kings and coveted by fans.¹⁹⁷

The beer stein below has the logo of the 1984 U.S. Senior Men's National Tournament, commemorating the event that was held in Fairbanks.¹⁹⁸



To the left are collectible stickers that say "Fairbanks Alaska Gold Kings" with the team's logo of two hockey sticks intersecting at a golden crown.¹⁹⁹

When the Gold Kings went professional in 1995, joining the WCHL, SplitSecond Manufacturing made trading cards for the team. Cards can still be purchased on Amazon and Ebay.²⁰⁰



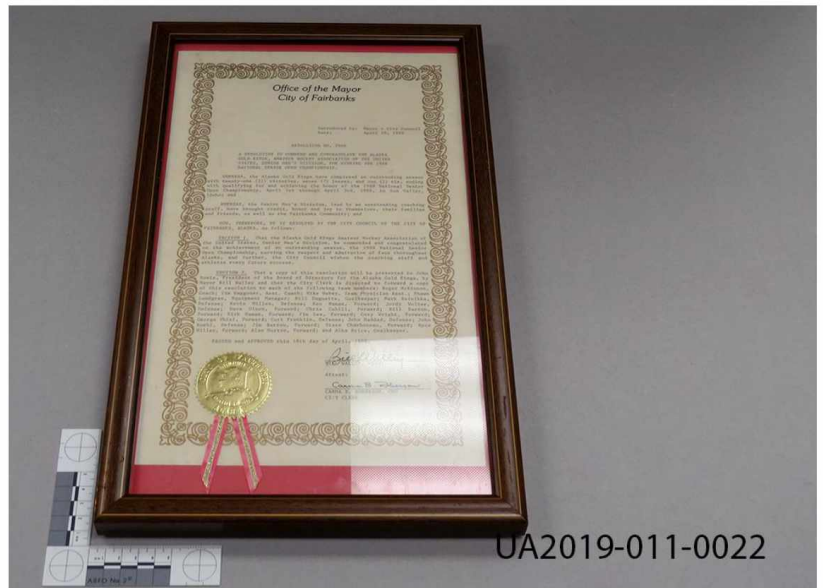
¹⁹⁷ Sam Urban, *UA2019-011-0002*, October 7, 2019, University of Alaska Museum of the North, Fairbanks, Alaska.

¹⁹⁸ Urban, *UA2019-011-0005*, October 7, 2019.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid*, *UA2019-011-0008AC*, October 9, 2019.

²⁰⁰ SplitSecond Manufacturing, photograph by Sam Urban, *UA2019-011-0019AC*, October 14, 2019.

This is an official resolution from the Fairbanks city mayor, honoring the Alaska Gold Kings for winning the 1988 national championship.²⁰¹



This is a watch made by Vostok Watch Makers, Incorporated based in Christopol, Russia. The company is known for designing military and diving watches. This item was most likely given to the Gold Kings either during a trip to Khabarovsk, or when Khabarovsk Red Army visited Fairbanks.²⁰²

The two photographs below are of a Gold Kings jersey. The player is unknown. Best guess, given the logo and the wear on the jersey places it in the mid-to-late 1980s.²⁰³



²⁰¹ Ibid, UA2019-011-0022, October 14, 2019.

²⁰² Ibid, UA2019-011-0030AC.

²⁰³ Ibid, UA2019-011-0032, December 2, 2019.



This is a commemorative puck from the 1993 Arctic Challenge, in which Team Alaska (Gold Kings/Anchorage Aces) hosted the “Big Three” of Russia, Canada, and the United States.²⁰⁴

This pin commemorates the 1988 Alaska Olympic Hockey Preview in which the Gold Kings hosted the national teams of Austria, France, Switzerland, Norway and Poland just before the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics.²⁰⁵



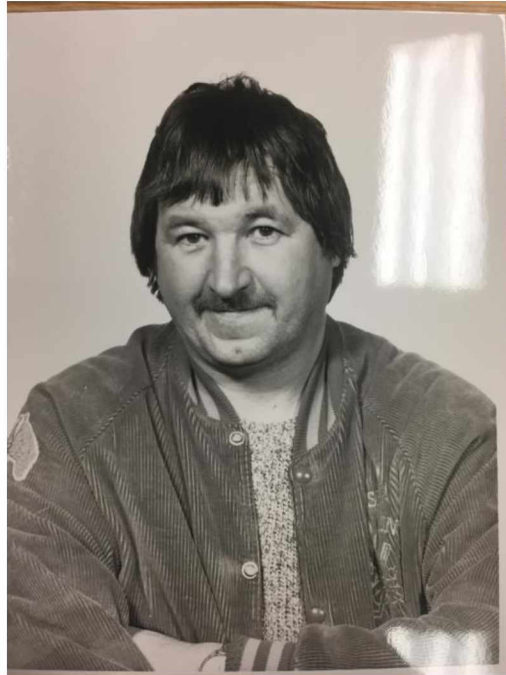
²⁰⁴ Ibid, *UA2019-011-0046*, December 4, 2019.

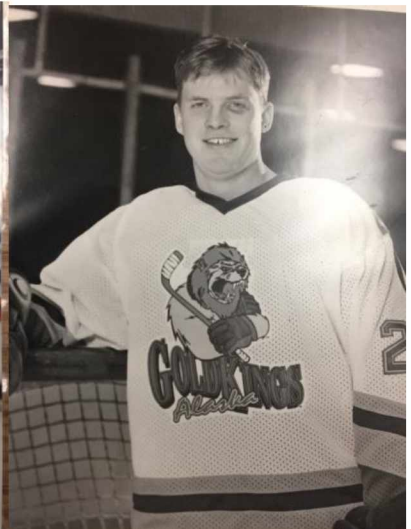
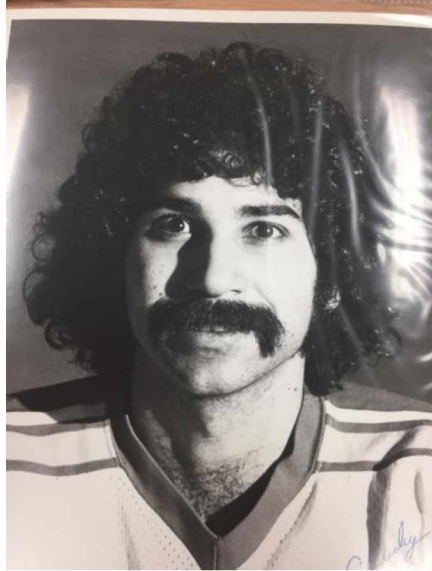
²⁰⁵ Ibid, *UA2019-011-0050*, February 5, 2020.

4.2 Library Collection

4.2.1 Alaska and Polar Regions Collections & Archives

It should be noted that all items below are from the “John Rosie Gold Kings Collection-unprocessed.” No official citations are available.







"Alaska Gold Kings"



Warren Carter

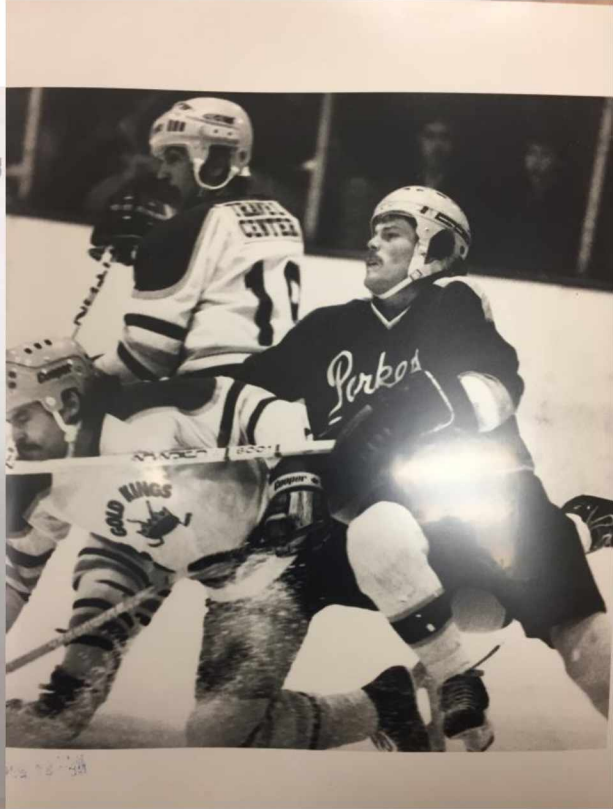
24 yrs old
6'0 195 lbs
Salmon Arm, BC

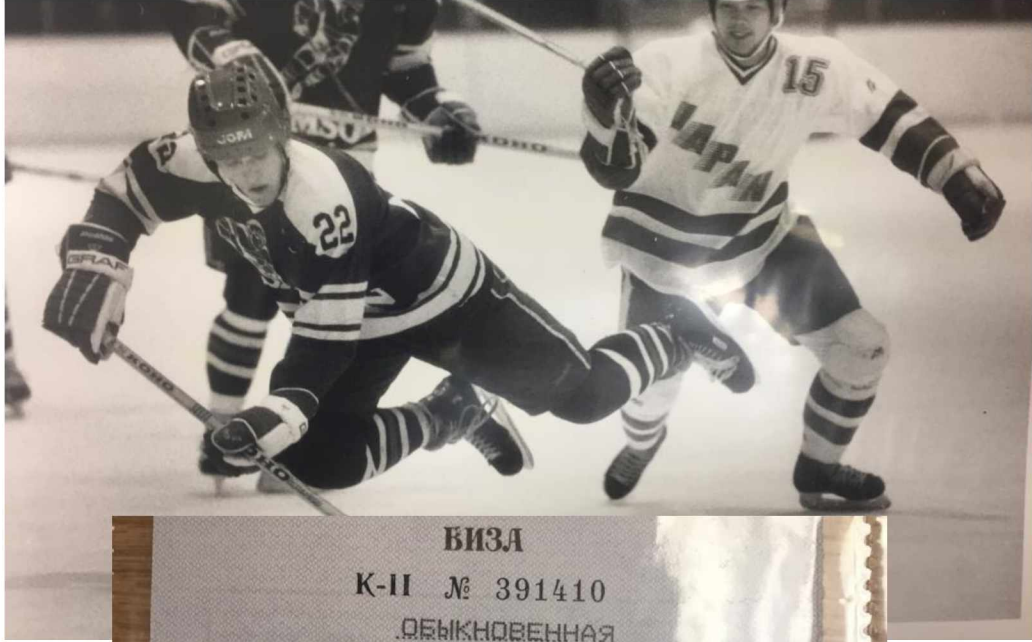
#27 CENTER

Carter joins the Gold Kings after spending a successful four years with UAF's hockey team. As an excellent face-off man and defensive specialist, the responsibility of shutting down the other team's top line will most likely rest on his shoulders.

Year	Team (League)	GP	G	A	Pts	Pim
'94-'95	UAF (CCHA)	31	4	19	23	24
'93-'94	UAF (CCHA)	38	11	29	40	22
'92-'93	UAF (CCHA)	29	6	11	17	22

H & H CONTRACTORS





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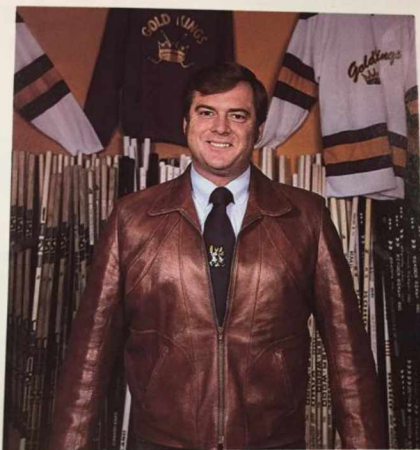
DUANE NELSON

**FAIRBANKS GOLD KINGS
1983
SEMI-PRO NATIONAL CHAMPIONS**

WORLD PHOTOGRAPH



Dave Hall



Bud Sands "Voice of the Gold Kings"

A special thanks to Bud from the Gold King organization for his efforts in the game officials box and commentary during the games.

4.2.2 Alaska Film Archives

Below is a list of the National Tournament game broadcasts recorded on audio tapes. The collection also holds a recording of the “Alaska Gold Kings Theme Song” made by Bruce Innes, which I transcribed.

- “Gold Kings versus Bemidji Blues U.S. National Championships,” April 8, 1978, Roseau, MN.
- “Grand Forks Wheat Kings versus Fairbanks Gold Kings,” April 8, 1978, Roseau, MN.
- “Alaska Gold King Championship Hockey,” Lynnwood, WA, 1990.
- Gold Kings versus Minneapolis Bucks tapes.
- “Alaska Gold Kings Theme Song,” *Bruce Innes Music*:

*“Great hockey action is here
Gold Kings!*

*Super excitement it’s right here!
Shoot Gold Kings!
Go for the Gold!
Score Gold Kings!
Go for the Gold!*

*It’s the Alaska Gold Kings’ year
And they’re comin’ on strong.*

*A tradition doin’ the best we can do,
Hockey action is waiting for you.*

*We are the champions!
The Gold Kings bring the action home to you!*

*Competition is here!
Gold Kings!*

*Look for the action, it’s right here!
Shoot Gold Kings!
Go for the goal!
Score Gold Kings!
Go for the Goal!*

*It's the Alaska Gold Kings' year
And they're comin' on strong!*

*A tradition doin' the best we can do,
Hockey action is waiting for you!*

*We are the champions!
The Gold Kings bring the action home to you!*

5. Conclusion

On paper, the Gold Kings existed in Alaska from 1975 to 1997, but for former players and fans the memories and legacy still carry on. The Gold Kings were an amateur senior men's hockey team for most of their history. The organization started out as the Teamsters for the first two seasons. It was the brainchild of community leaders such as Gary Atwood hoping to give local youth a higher level of hockey to aspire to. In 1977, the stockholders met to incorporate the team as the Fairbanks Gold Kings, later changing the name once more to the Alaska Gold Kings. At the amateur level the Gold Kings were remarkably successful, winning five national championships, and competing on the international stage several times. The team in its early years was often comprised of upper Midwest and Seattle transplants who came north for employment, typically along the pipeline, and the opportunity to continue playing hockey. By the mid-'80s the success of the Gold Kings enabled coach McKinnon and management to recruit new players more persuasively, with many new Gold Kings still coming from American hockey hotbeds such as Minnesota and Michigan.

The first natural rivalry for the Gold Kings was with the Anchorage Wolverines, a team that gave the Gold Kings stiff competition in the late '70s until folding in 1979 due to insolvency. Early rivalries also formed with the Seattle Indians and other Pacific Northwest-based teams. As the Kings continued to garner success, they began competing against highly touted upper Midwest and Canadian teams. The Twin Cities metro area produced two of Fairbanks' most acknowledged contenders in the St. Paul Parkers and Minneapolis Bucks throughout the 1980s. Following the dissolution of the Wolverines in 1979, Anchorage continued to develop various senior men's teams, but none endured to become a challenger to the Gold Kings until the emergence of the Anchorage Aces in 1989. Over the years a rivalry formed much closer to home than Anchorage. While the University of Alaska Fairbanks had produced ice hockey teams since the earliest days as the U of A, the construction of the Patty Ice Arena on campus in 1979, and relocation of Nanooks hockey to the NCAA Division I in the '80s made the university team a business threat to the Gold Kings. While the Gold Kings and Nanooks played several series, even competing for the KSUA Cup in the late 1980s, the competition off the ice for fans and media attention were perhaps more contentious.

A hallmark of Gold Kings hockey were the international contests in which they participated in Fairbanks and abroad. In the early '80s, John Rosie accompanied the president of USA Hockey to an International Ice Hockey Federation meeting in Vienna, Austria. With characteristic intellect and purpose, Rosie began pitching the idea of various European teams coming to Fairbanks, Alaska for hockey tournaments to the heads of national ice hockey federations, some of whom were royalty. Rosie's persuasiveness worked, and in March of 1985 the Gold Kings hosted their first international Tournament, vying against the Dutch, Austrian, and Japanese national teams at the Big Dipper. Beginning in 1990, the Kings struck up a

relationship on and off the ice with Khabarovsk Red Army throughout the early years of the decade. Their visit to Khabarovsk made the Gold Kings the first American sports team to ever step foot on Far Eastern Soviet soil. The Gold Kings continued to host international tournaments and teams over the years, playing a total of 16 national and Olympic teams. Three of these teams, Yugoslavia, U.S.S.R., and Czechoslovakia no longer exist. John Rosie and the Alaska Gold Kings left an indelible mark on the hockey lore of Fairbanks, making it an international hotspot for the sport in the '80s and '90s.

While the recruitment of top tier players, fierce rivalries with perennial American and Canadian powerhouses, and international contests are among the Gold Kings' most distinctive qualities as an organization, their socio-cultural impacts on Fairbanks are as significant as the hockey achievements. In sub-section 2.1 "Socio-Cultural Impacts of the Gold Kings on Fairbanks," I argue that the team affected Fairbanks in five ways. First, many of the Gold Kings such as Roger McKinnon served as coaches for youth hockey teams, providing a high-level of instruction, and passing on knowledge of the game to younger generations. Second, as an integral component of the Fairbanks community, the Gold Kings performed community service, such as visiting schools to inspire children, restoration of the SS Nenana, and Christmas donations. Third, the Gold Kings depended on the goodwill of Fairbanks to operate. The amateur status of the team until 1995 necessitated that local residents fill volunteer roles such as transportation for visiting teams and running ticket sales. Fairbanksans supported the Gold Kings through these acts, truly making the team the community's. Fourth, the Gold Kings' competitions against international hockey teams expanded Fairbanksans' exposure to other cultures. These cultural exchanges likely would not have occurred had it not been for the Kings. Finally, many Gold Kings such as Rob Proffitt and John Haddad elected to settle down in Fairbanks after hanging up their skates. These individuals continue to contribute to the social fabric and economy of Fairbanks by staying involved in the local hockey scenes and running businesses. As Shirley Schneider articulated in her 1989 guest opinion piece published in the *News-Miner*, "there is no other non-profit organization which returns so much to the community."²⁰⁶

Unfortunately for the players and the community, the Gold Kings' run in Fairbanks came to an end in 1998. By the early 1990s, the National Hockey League had expanded into nontraditional markets in Sunshine Belt states such as Florida, California, and Texas. Along with such expansion at the top tier came aggressive growth of minor league hockey and junior hockey into more cities. At the end of the Gold Kings' Alaskan era in '97, John Rosie pointed out that the Gold Kings were trying to compete in a time when hockey could be played in any climate in any major city with far more financial backing than in a town less than 200 miles south of the Arctic Circle. Also on the rise in the 1990s was junior hockey, a fast and hard-hitting brand of hockey that enabled local youth to aspire to higher, more competitive levels of play. Fortunately

²⁰⁶ Schneider, "Gold Kings provide much to city," June 7, 1989.

for Gold Kings fans reeling after the relocation of the team to Colorado Springs, the Ice Dogs, Fairbanks' junior hockey team, filled the void left by the Gold Kings' departure. For those interested in the history of hockey and sports, and even the intersection of sport with culture and economics, the Gold Kings are a worthy case study of amateur senior men's hockey in the late twentieth century. The team rose to prominence when senior men's hockey still meant something in cities and small towns across Canada and the northern United States. As a relatively small town with plenty of cold weather for hockey, and a hard working blue collar attitude that embraced the tenacious playing style of the Gold Kings, Fairbanks was a perfect fit. This blue collar attitude was accepting of hockey players who busted tail working construction by day, and practiced outdoors at 20 below at night. Gold Kings were not pretentious professional athletes with massive salaries and mansions, making them a natural fit for Fairbanks. While the city's allegiance to the Gold Kings waned when they went pro in '95, playing hockey against squads from sunny, pampered California, the team's legacy is still deeply embedded in the town's sports culture.

Like that of any legendary sports team, the history of the Gold Kings endures, partly through projects such as my own, the team reunions, and the collection donated to the university. More importantly, the Gold Kings' legacy lives through the players, many of whom reside in Fairbanks, and have passed on their knowledge of the game to others. It endures through the die-hard fandom of many Fairbanksans for whom best memories were made watching the Gold Kings in the Big Dipper in the middle of an Interior Alaska winter. The Gold Kings are an essential piece of Fairbanks' social fabric, and the town's history. While the team reunion on March 8th, 2020 may be the last, the Gold Kings will always be a part of the Golden Heart City.

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