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SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Hockey's future in San Diego is brighter than ever

Student-athletes honored at IHF gala

By Jay Piz

Stars lit up the night for the Inter-Scholastic Hockey Federation's inaugural all-star event at the 949 Roller Hockey center in Irvine as hundreds of fans filled the stands in a four-hour, graduation-style event to salute the league's division finalists, special achievers and 55 all-stars, some of whom would play in their last high school game.

Emceed by the author and introduced by 949 host **Eddie Limbaga** and IHF president **Art Wells**, the event opened with a parade of eight division finalist teams receiving their trophies before the cheering crowd. The spotlight then refocused as the audience was presented, one by one, with 14 student-athletes.

In a significant first, these student-athletes were recognized for their academic and social achievements by an award from Anaheim Ducks executive VP-GM **Brian Burke**.

"This is an important first for the inline hockey community," said Wells in his address to the audience.

Presented by Wells, every award was hailed with applause and pride in their recognition of these honorees and for the inline hockey community.

Honorees included: **Chasen Davis; Dylan DeCarlo; Matt Brown; Josh Winters; Tyler Hainey; Brett Olinger; Ryan Tyson; Brock Booth; Raffi Tchekmedyan; Kevin Brooks; Yen Le; Jordan Wallace;**

Jake Konoske; and Mary Quayle.

Yen Le, a senior who maintains a 3.77 GPA who helps with local charities, is the founder of the Loara roller hockey club and captained them to the quarterfinals this season.

"I'm just a kid that loves the sport," said Yen. "After graduation, I'll attend Cal State Long Beach. I'll also be playing on their roller hockey team."

"What an amazing award for Mary," said mother **Patty Quayle**.

Mary is president of the Mater Dei roller hockey club and founder of the Give Blood Play Hockey Inline Hockey Charity Tournament, which raised \$32,000 and 107 pints of blood for local charities.

With emotions elevating, the JV stars of the Mascot Cup were introduced to the anxious crowd.

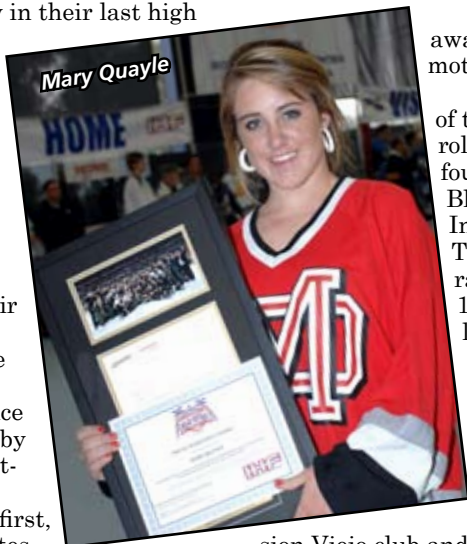
Coached by **Jim Irwin** of the Mission Viejo club and **Dave Feld, Sr.** of El Modena, stars from each of the leagues' JV clubs would compete in two, 12-minute periods of stop-clock action using penalty shots instead of power plays.

Commentators **Miguel Castellanos** and **Kyle Mathews** hyped the crowd into a hockey craze with music and hot microphones while the JV Stars played feverishly in a game-long offensive frenzy.

The game went on to see penalty shots and two goals each scored in the first period, but it would be Irwin's team outscoring Feld's home team, 5-3, in the second period for the victory.

"What a good time we had and I'm pretty sure all of the boys had a great time," said Irwin after the game. "I made some new friends and am already looking forward to next year."

The announcers kicked it up a notch as the Varsity Stars were announced to the rink. The lineup included the league's top-ranked players and goalies from each club, including some from the national champion teams of Marina,



Santiago and Los Alamitos.

The roster also included **Ja'Nien Barber**, the only female star and the only goalie to defeat the dynasty Marina team in over three years of league games.

The crowd rose to its feet for the national anthem sung by **Katie Piz** of the Northwood club. Her brother, **CJ**, a varsity star, waited anxiously with the others to hit the rink.

Coached by **Ken Gibo** of Marina and rival Terry Winters of Santiago, the stars took to the rink to play for three periods in an unplugged, uncaged and turned-loose all-star hockey game, with Winters' team winning by a final count of 11-8 to clinch the inaugural victory.

The evening festivities drew to a close with medal awards and industry sponsor gifts from Revision, Mission and Harrow being presented to these shining stars.

In a closing statement by guest **Jerry Nestlerode** of the CIF-sanctioned San Diego Metro roller hockey league, Nestlerode thanked the attendees for their generous donations of hockey gear to benefit his community outreach program resulting from the event's donation drive.

The inaugural event theme - **HOCKEY HELPING HOCKEY. ONE COMMUNITY UNITED.** - was realized at the event through the community action by the Anaheim Ducks, from a host of volunteers who helped in producing the event and sending Nestlerode's truck home full to those helping introduce hockey to new youth players and keeping the sport growing and spirit strong. ☺

