



### **Schwan's Cup Bantam A Tournament**

Wouldn't it be great if immediately following a tournament coaches could have access to measurable data that they could use to help educate and develop their players? Most Bantam teams participate in three to four tournaments each year aiming to take home a trophy. Ultimately, they finish each tournament without any personal data that gives them information regarding specific developmental growth of their team or players. While practices, games, and tournaments are fun and challenging, how accurately can you create a developmental plan for your team's success if you don't know exactly where each player stands?

What this year's lucky participants are aware of is that the Schwan Cup hosted its first Bantam A Division. The teams and players were tested together and recognized for their accomplishments both on and off of the ice. It was another fantastic event in the already prestigious Schwan Cup. Four different division champions were crowned at The Varsity and Junior Varsity levels.

In its inaugural year, the Schwan Cup Bantam A teams engaged in on *and* off-ice competitions hosted by FHIT Players at the Herb Brooks Training Center. The teams went head to head in tests of athleticism and on-ice performance to prove which team was best prepared to take home the Schwan Cup title. All of the Bantam players involved had a great time competing and bonding as a team, while they learned some of the necessary physical skills that are important to play at the next level.

The Bantams were not only competing with each other, but were chasing after personal standards set by thousands of hockey players at the Bantam, High School, and College ranks. Every year, FHIT Players Human Performance Division tests many of Minnesota's top prospects. These test results provide players with information on where they stand compared to other athletes.

Some of the exceptional off-ice performances by the Bantams included Douglas Montgomery of Blaine; scoring a crushing 152lbs in the grip test. Not surprisingly, Montgomery also went on to win the hardest shot test with a slap shot measured at 80 mph. Also, Minneapolis Storm athlete Owen Larson displayed great speed and agility, winning the 20yd sprint and modified pro-agility test. He then showed the translation of off-ice preparation to on-ice performance. Larson was the fastest Bantam tested in the skating Acceleration test and S-tests. At the end of the team off-

ice competition, Blaine claimed the overall team victory. Blaine's off-ice preparation, overall skill, and training were directly related to their success on the ice as well. Blaine claimed the tournament title in the championship game against Minneapolis Park. It was great to see the top two teams according to their test scores (Minneapolis Park's entire team did not test, so they did not score high enough to win the team title) competing in the championship game.



Bantam players are at the perfect age to take their physical and mental preparation to the next level. It is no mystery that the players who educate and apply themselves are the athletes who continuously rise to the top and reach their goals. Those who are constantly focused on training and learning to become better hockey players are more likely to reach their goals than those who put in time on the ice, but neglect off-ice training. They are often left wondering why they were unable to advance to the next level. In the words of the late, great Herb Brooks "Competition without preparation is anti-development".