

RINK READER



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TO OMGHA!**

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Dennis Smith, OMGHA President

Welcome & **WELCOME BACK TO OMGHA!**

The 2013-2014 season is off and running! In addition to great hockey, there's a lot of new, exciting things happening this year within OMGHA, one of which is this publication. Rink Reader is our new digital magazine. It will be published monthly during the season, December through April.

Rink Reader will cover a lot of territory. In each edition, we'll spotlight one of our teams, a player, a coach, and a manager. We'll feature the unique and interesting personalities that make up our association, and provide helpful "stuff you can use" as a hockey parent. We'll also keep you updated on how our teams are doing, as well as keep you apprised of all upcoming OMGHA events.

If you have any feedback on Rink Reader or story ideas, feel free to let me know at the rink or give me a call. The same goes, of course, for any other questions, ideas, or concerns you have about our association.

On behalf of the OMGHA Board, again, welcome to another wonderful season of youth hockey. See you at the rink!

– Dennis Smith



Rink Reader is the official magazine of the Osseo-Maple Grove Hockey Association. It is published monthly during the hockey season, December through April. Email questions, feedback, and story ideas to news@omgha.com.

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Team Spotlight

BANTAM AAs



ROSTER

Coach: Tom Adolph

Manager: Suzy Borsch

Goalies: Tom Zeig and Carson Nagel

Defensemen: Michael McNeil, Jack Gilbertson, Jayden Walsh, Tevin Neegaard, Jackson Sonderby, and Hunter House

Forwards: Jacob Vaillancourt, Jarrett Cammarata, Justin Kelley, Dalton Cherro, Matt Jaglo, Dylan Hoen, and Tyler Borsch

RECORD

12-4-2 (through December 1)

STATE RANKINGS

#9 (Youth Hockey Hub, 12/2/13)

#7 (Let's Play Hockey, 12/5/13)

BIGGEST WIN TO DATE

"Beating St. Michael-Albertville in the semi-finals of the Duluth tournament. They were a state tournament team last year and are ranked pretty high again this year."

-- Coach Adolph

WHY ARE THE BANTAM AAs A TEAM TO WATCH?

"Because we have talent, depth, and team chemistry." -- Coach Adolph



*EDITOR'S NOTE:

To see more photos of the Bantam AAs and several other OMGHA teams, visit photographer Brian Wiedeke's [Flickr photostream](#).

Compiled by Erica Dovenberg

Spotlight

by Nicole Kustermann



estella retrum

Estella is the 8-year-old daughter of Mike and Jill Retrum. She and her 6-year-old brother, Oliver, attend Rush Creek Elementary, where Oliver is in 1st grade and Estella is in 3rd grade. Estella keeps busy as the only girl playing on the OMGHA SuperMite Penguins team, in addition to playing soccer and volleyball. Her brother plays on the Mite-2 Wolverines team, and her dad helps coach both teams.

What do you like most about playing hockey?

"I like everything about playing hockey and I really like knowing how to skate. I decided to play on a boys team this year because I think it will make me tougher. It is going really well so far and I am starting to learn how to raise the puck, so that is fun."

PLAYER

What has been your favorite moment playing OMGHA hockey, so far?

"My favorite moment playing hockey was when I scored three goals in the U8 Jamboree last year. That was really fun!"

Who is your favorite NHL player, and why?

"My favorite NHL player is Mikko Koivu. I like him because he works really hard and skates through all of his goals. He passes a lot and I want to be just like him when I grow up."



jon erickson

Jon has been actively involved as both a parent and non-parent coach with OMGHA for nearly 16 years. He coached the Osseo Bantam A team for eight years, before moving on to coach his step-daughter's U10 team, following her through the ranks until she played for the high school team. For the past three years, Jon has been a non-parent coach of the Girls U14A Gold team. Outside of hockey, Jon works as a software developer for the National Marrow Donor Program.

What do you enjoy most about being a coach?

"It is very rewarding to watch the kids develop over the course of a season and to accomplish success because of their development. I love to analyze the team and to piece together a plan for how we are going to get from point A to point B, and then seeing it through. I love coaching kids that are ultra-competitive and hungry; it gives me positive energy and makes me feel young! But without question, what I enjoy most is relishing a victory over Wayzata!"

What's been your favorite OMGHA moment, as a coach or a hockey dad, so far?

"As a parent-coach, I'll never forget my step-daughter's U10 team winning the district championship by beating a team that had thoroughly waxed us by eight goals earlier in the year. Those girls were on Cloud 9! As a non-parent coach, our U14A team has been to back-to-back state tournaments the last two years, despite losing many talented kids to the high school programs. This year's group is going to work like mad to try to make it three years in a row."

Other than a hockey arena, where are we most likely to run into you on the weekend?

"Fox Hollow Golf Course, Lifetime Fitness, and of course, Malone's."

Continued on next page

Spotlight *Continued*



TESA RAYMOND

Tesa Raymond is a first-time OMGHA hockey manager, taking on the roll to support her son, Will, who is playing for the Mite-1 Wildcats team. Tesa is a full-time working mother of three—Madeline (10), Will (5), and Sam (2). She works as an account director at advertising agency Mono in Minneapolis, where one of the agency's clients is the NHL.

What do you enjoy most about being a team manager?

"I enjoy being part of an organization that, at the heart of it, really seems to have the kids' best interest in mind. As the team manager, hopefully I'm helping build that team spirit between both the kids and parents to make it a fun hockey season—and of course, keeping all our paperwork straight!"

What has been your favorite moment as an OMGHA manager or hockey mom, so far?

"I have most enjoyed seeing my little guy out there working hard and improving each practice. He is having so much fun and making new friends along the way. He adores his coach and races to the locker room after each practice to see who earned the gold belt for the day. That's the hockey experience we signed up for, and that's what we see happening each weekend."

Other than a hockey arena, where are we most likely to run into you on the weekend?

"When my husband Jesse and I are not hustling to get our other kids off to their sports activities, I'm usually trying to squeeze in a long run. You will often find me out on Lawndale Lane, alongside all of the SUVs whizzing by with OMGHA stickers in the back window."



omgha traveling teams in state rankings

Bantam AA

#9 (Youth Hockey Hub, 12/2/13)

#7 (Let's Play Hockey, 12/5/13)

Bantam A

#10 (Youth Hockey Hub, 12/2/13)

#13 (Let's Play Hockey, 12/5/13)

Pee wee AA

#9 (Youth Hockey Hub, 12/2/13)

#3 (Let's Play Hockey, 12/5/13)

Pee wee B1 Black

#5 (Youth Hockey Hub, 12/2/13)

#2 (Let's Play Hockey, 12/5/13)

Pee wee B1 Crimson

#11 (Let's Play Hockey, 12/5/13)

Squirt A

#1 (Youth Hockey Hub, 12/2/13)

U14A Gold

#2 (Let's Play Hockey, 12/5/13)

*These rankings were compiled from the December 2 edition of the Youth Hockey Hub Staff Rankings and the December 5 edition of Let's Play Hockey.

Wags

by Avery Appelman



DENNIS WAGNER HAS MENTORED HUNDREDS OF AREA KIDS. HE'S ALSO THE ZAMBONI DRIVER WITH THE "MOST SENIORITY" AT THE TIN BIN.

On a cold and snowy winter night at Osseo Arena (a.k.a. the "Tin Bin"), the Orioles were playing the Crimson in a cross-town rivalry game. Everyone knew everyone.

Near the end of the first period, the Osseo Cheer Team was preparing for their intermission performance. Dennis Wagner, "Wags" as he is known, was patrolling the arena like an eagle, surveying its landscape. Wags happened upon a distraught member of the cheer team.

"She wasn't the best skater and had tears in her eyes," as Wags tells it.

This young lady, as countless other young folks before and after her, simply needed a fatherly boost—one provided kindly and compassionately by Wags.

"I went over to her and I told her, 'you go out there and skate and show everyone you are the best skater in here.' "

Out on the ice she went and, according to Wags, did the "most fantastic spin of her life, and folks in the stands reacted with a standing ovation."

A special way to conclude a day at the rink: Another kid helped—and forever impacted—by Wags.

Born in 1951, the second of seven children to Dick and Leona Wagner, Dennis was raised in a tight family home in North Minneapolis. He grew up going to school and learning to play sports at Unity House, an athletic club of sorts in the neighborhood. There he played all types of indoor games, from "bombardment" to basketball and baseball in the summer.

When he was 12, the Wagners moved to Osseo, where Dennis completed his education, graduating from Osseo Senior High. Wags played hockey until 9th grade, when he decided to dedicate himself to football and baseball. Baseball turned to softball, and recently Wags was nominated for the United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA) Softball Hall of Fame.

After graduating from Osseo, Wags entered the United States Marine Corps and served in Vietnam. It was in the military that he learned invaluable life lessons: "To make my bed, manage money, and know what it meant to be part of a team—if someone didn't do his job, someone else would have to," says Wags.

Wags returned home from Vietnam and met Karen, his wife of "37 or 38 years." They met in Maple Grove, when the Grove was farmland and cornfields. They have raised three daughters, two who married just this past summer.

When asked about his son-in-laws, Wags shrugs: "One wasn't a hunter and fisher...but he is now. The other was a hunter and fisher, so we all get along well."

Wags is most proud about raising his three daughters right: "Respectful, caring, good members of our community."

Wags gets up every day "thankful for the smile on my face, knowing that I have a good day in front of me; and I finish every day knowing that I have done a good day's work, being thankful for my loving family who support me."

For eight months he is a "day laborer" at Osseo Arena. He does not want to be known as the arena manager, or supervisor, although he does

Continued on next page

Wags

Continued

have the “most seniority.” He operates the arena with “the best, most talented” team of folks, who he holds in high regard.

Wags spends the other four months of the year outside, providing assistance “wherever it is needed to ISD 279. I could be digging a ditch one day and cleaning tile the next day,” he says. To his core, he is a man of integrity, hard work, honesty, trust, and, most of all, respect.

The kids motivate Wags. He takes his job seriously, seeking to improve Osseo Arena every day for the kids, “because it is about the kids.” He takes a special interest in mentoring.

“Many kids I see don’t have a father figure, may come from broken homes, and need someone to help them.”

Wags takes this a step farther as he joins the Oriole varsity hockey squad, as he has for the past 15 years, on their annual trek way up north for the Warroad Holiday High School Hockey Tournament.

Wags, the acting Oriole grillmaster, turns meat into culinary delights for the Osseo players. He takes time away from his family to feed and care for the boys he sees daily. The trip is not about winning, he says, “it is about the kids realizing they are part of a team.” Wags wants these players to learn life lessons, much as he did in the Marines, as they spend three days together learning about one another and becoming a cohesive unit, relying on each other and acting respectful.

Respect permeates everything about Wags. He carries himself proudly, and has instituted arena rules designed to protect kids.

“When I am Zam’ing the ice surface, I am looking down at what I am cutting. I am not looking for little Johnny on the ice. If the doors to the ice are shut until the Zam doors are closed, there is no reason for me to need to look up.”

Additionally, the ice gets to settle and the water freezes before the players skate, providing a better ice surface.

Wags says if coaches need to get on the ice before the Zam doors close to set up, they need to come and see him “face to face” and discuss their needs.

“All you need to do is communicate with the arena’s drivers and we will work with you,” he says.

Always respectful, he demands everyone act similarly to him and his fellows.

Osseo Arena is filled with history and stories of hockey glory. These popular bits of historical trivia are not as important to Wags as the impact he has had on the kids that have, do, and will enter the arena. He strives to make a difference in the kids’ lives, wanting them to enjoy every opportunity safely.

Wags’ fondest memories are not of hockey, but instead of legendary skating coach Dick Vraa (who Osseo Arena is named after) mic’ed to the PA system for a lesson; of one of the tirades Wags went into about a kid running on the aluminum seats and causing a raucous; of Donny Gromick as Santa in OMGHA’s initial Santa Skate; of Wags’ relationship with Warroad’s Bantam hockey coach, Gary Tweat, and how welcome he makes the Orioles each year; and of Brian Grant, an OMGHA Mite/U8 coach who worked for Wags “a lifetime ago” and has returned with his “three beautiful daughters.”

Quite a while back, Wags overheard an Osseo varsity player talking trash about the team’s female manager. Wags knew she was challenged by the role, but he told her: “You are being prepared for what is coming later in life, so work hard.”

After talking with the young lady, Wags entered the team locker room and respectfully asked the offending player if he was proud about the way he had talked about his team manager, and if not, he needed to apologize. “Someone needs to guide the youth of today,” Wags says.

Fast forward to a few years ago. Wags arrived home to see his wife crying at the kitchen table,

clutching a letter. “Wags, you need to read this,” she said. Wags read the letter, from the former team manager, thanking him for helping to prepare her for military duty in Afghanistan in a patrol with 11 men.

Much like this team manager and the Osseo Cheer Team member, Wags has touched the lives of so many. He is the friendly face at the arena, a gruff “How are you?” But under the extroverted surface is a kind, gentle man who wants to be remembered for the positive impact he has had on the community.

At the Osseo Hockey Banquet the year he met the fearful cheerleader, Wags was in attendance. The cheerleader’s mother approached and thanked him for being a father figure to her daughter, for instilling confidence in her to try and succeed.

All of our OMGHA kids are fortunate to have Wags watching and knowing when to move in with a kind word, a fatherly voice of encouragement, or a lesson in respect.

Avery Appelman is OMGHA’s marketing director. By day, he is the founder and managing partner of the Appelman Law Firm, one of Minnesota’s largest criminal defense firms. He is married to Cindi and has two amazing children, Lillianna, a soccer player, and Branson, a first-year SuperMite.



Hockey Talk HOW TO SPEAK HOCKEY

By Erica Dovenberg

The hockey season is well underway, and as you are in and around the rink, you will hear many terms and phrases that are hockey related. If you've been with OMGHA for a while, much of this may sound familiar. But if you are new to the association (which I was last year), a lot of this may sound totally foreign.

This is by no means a complete list, but here's a brief synopsis of some key terms and information that should help you in speaking and understanding "hockey talk." Let's Play Hockey!

OMGHA (pronounced O-meg-uh): Stands for Osseo-Maple Grove Hockey Association. OMGHA is an association under USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey-District 3. Our association serves kids living within the Osseo High School and Maple Grove High School attendance boundaries. There are 950 skaters in the program who play on 60+ different boys and girls teams. These numbers make OMGHA the 2nd largest youth hockey association in the state.

MGCC: Stands for Maple Grove Community Center Ice Arena, which has two sheets of ice and is one of two ice arenas used by OMGHA.

OSSEO ICE ARENA, a.k.a. the "**TIN BIN**" (officially Dick Vraa Memorial Ice Arena): The second ice arena used by OMGHA. It also has two sheets of ice and is warmly known for being VERY COLD!

VOLUNTEER HOURS: The time you are required as a parent to volunteer for the association: 14 hours for one player; 20 hours for two or more players.

DIBS: The system on OMGHA's website you log into to claim and report volunteer hours.

DRYLAND: Hockey practice on a solid, non-ice surface with helmet, stick, and gloves.

PYLON: Black tires, orange cones, and large pads used in nearly every hockey practice.

BUCKET: Hockey helmet.

BREEZERS: Hockey pants.

BISCUIT: Puck ("drop the biscuit").

LUMBER OR WOOD: Hockey stick.

HEEL OF THE STICK: The point where the bottom of the stick's shaft and blade meet.

CLAPPER/SLAPPER: Slap shot.

WRISTER: Wrist shot.

SNAPPER: Snap shot.

BACKHANDER: Shot using the back side of the stick's blade.

DEKE: A move an offensive player with the puck uses to get past, or "fake out," a defensive player, or to get the puck past the goalie.

FLOW: Player's hair that sticks out of a hockey helmet (for those of you who grew up in the 1980s—mullet!).

WHEELS: A player with a fast skating ability ("she's got wheels").

RINK RAT: A kid who spends a lot of his or her time at a hockey rink and often needs to be told it's time to get off the ice and go home.

BENDER: Skater whose skates are not tied tight enough, or whose ankles are not strong enough yet, and his or her ankles roll to the inside on skates. This is very common for rookie skaters.

TENDER: Goalie ("goal tender").

PIPE: The goal posts on a net (often referred to as a goalie's best friend!).

CROSSBAR: The goal post, or pipe, across the top of the net.

TWINE: The white netting on a hockey net.

FIVE-HOLE: The space between a goalie's legs.

BARN: Hockey arena.

SLOT: Area on the ice directly in front of the goalie between the two faceoff circles—the prime shooting/scoring area.

NEUTRAL ZONE: The ice is divided by blue lines into three zones: neutral, offensive, and defensive (with a red line at center ice). The neutral zone is the area between the blue lines.

SNOW SHOWER: Spraying another player with ice when stopping.

HAT TRICK: When a player scores three goals in one game.

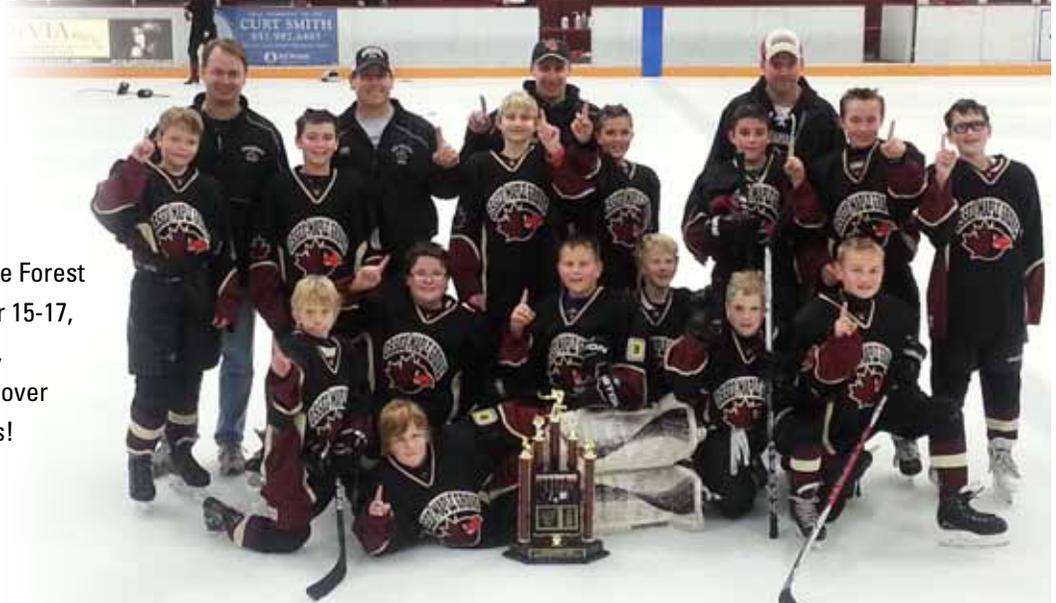
SICK: Means the opposite of what one might think. Sick is cool ("that was a sick goal").

STATE OF HOCKEY: MINNESOTA!



Around the ASSOCIATION

The Pee wee C Crimson team won the Forest Lake Ranger Classic, held November 15-17, defeating Blaine in the quarterfinals, Burnsville in the semifinals, and Andover for the championship. Great job boys!



The SuperMite Red Wings team took 2nd place in the Elk River Thanksgiving 3v3 Barn Burner Tournament, held November 29-December 1. In pool play, the Red Wings defeated teams from Andover, Elk River, Coon Rapids, and St. Michael, before falling to another talented St. Michael team in the battle for the championship. As the first SuperMite team to participate in an out of association event this year, the Red Wings did a fantastic job representing OMGHA!



A bunch of our girls got to show off their skills in between periods of the Gophers versus North Dakota game at Ridder Arena on November 16, as part of OMGHA Association Day at Gophers Women's Hockey. The Gophers, of course, won, and our players impressed the heck out of everyone. Great job, girls!

***EDITOR'S NOTE:**

Coaches and Managers--Did your team do a great job representing OMGHA at a tournament or other event? Send a short recap and photo to news@omgha.com by January 1 and we will highlight your team's effort in the January edition of Rink Reader!

Upcoming
EVENTS

DECEMBER 13-15

OMGHA Lucas Decker Ultimate Showdown Tournament
Peewee B2 & C

DECEMBER 15

OMGHA Annual Santa Skate
5:30-7:45 pm | MGCC

DECEMBER 27-29

OMGHA Squirt Extravaganza Tournament
Squirt B1, B2 & C

JANUARY 10-12

OMGHA Tin Bin Showdown Tournament
Boys Mite A & Girls U8

JANUARY 17-19

OMGHA Tin Bin Showdown Tournament
Boys Mite B

JANUARY 23-26

OMGHA Winter Face-Off Classic Tournament
Peewee B1

JANUARY 25

OMGHA Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser
Maple Tavern | 7:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. | \$10 per person