

Sports Outlook

SAFE HOCKEY SPECIAL

Youth hockey injuries alarm eye specialist

Every year, young hockey players are blinded because they neglect to take simple precautions.

A stick that's a little too high, a puck accidentally fired at a player, an awkward plunge to the ice: all these things can have devastating results for players who are not properly outfitted.

Dr. Thomas Pashby, a noted eye specialist and pioneer in safety standards for hockey, has seen lives ruined because of unnecessary hockey injuries.

"Just last year I had a 30-year-old truck driver who lost his eye after taking a puck in it," explained Dr. Pashby. "He couldn't work as a driver anymore. The game was supposed to be fun and he lost his eye and his job. It didn't have to happen."

Fortunately, these tragic injuries are quickly becoming a thing of the past thanks in great part to the recent development of standards for protective hockey equipment. For his key role in this area, Dr. Pashby received the Jean P. Carriere award, the country's highest standards distinction, from the Standards Council of Canada.

With the help of other researchers and experts, Dr. Pashby was instrumental in creating guidelines for safe, effective helmets and masks. Equipment certified to meet the requirements of these standards, published by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), is now widely available in sporting goods stores.

If your youngsters are playing minor-league hockey, they are undoubtedly already wearing this essential equipment. The Canadian Amateur Hockey Association requires it. If you or your children are not wearing masks and helmets, you're playing a dangerous game. Last year alone, 62 people experienced eye injuries on the ice and 11 were blinded in one eye. None of these people were wearing certified masks.

There are two types of masks commonly available: wire and transparent polycarbonate. By law, both types must be certified, and both offer good protection to a player's entire face. But be sure the equipment you choose is intended for hockey or you may find

it does not comply with hockey standards.

The wire mask is simply a protective cage for the face, while the more expensive polycarbonate model is a shell of clear plastic. Its sophisticated, high-tech look may be attractive to older players but the plastic needs more careful handling. Cleaning and storage should be done as specified by the manufacturer since some chemicals may weaken the shell. Polycarbonate masks that are severely scratched or cracked, or have undergone heavy impact, should be replaced.

Dr. Pashby, a minor league coach for many years, stresses the importance of choosing the size and style of equipment suited to a player's individual needs. Avoid ill-fitting hand-me-downs: an oversized helmet, or one with a worn-out lining or damaged shell does not provide adequate protection.

The cost of proper protection is low when you consider the alternative. Helmets cost between \$32 and \$55. A wire mask may put you back \$20 while a polycarbonate protector costs in the area of \$35. And remember, children aren't the only ones who can be injured. According to Dr. Pashby, the average age for eye injuries has gone from 14 to 26 years because older players are reluctant to wear masks.

Once you've selected the equipment that is appropriate for your child or yourself, be sure to follow the mask's mounting instructions closely, or ask your sporting goods dealer to do the job for you. The time you take to select, size and install equipment will ultimately pay off in more enjoyable, safer hockey.

For more information about Dr. Pashby's contribution to hockey safety standards, be on the lookout for a Standards Council of Canada public service announcement being broadcast on television stations nation-wide. Information about the world of standards can be obtained by writing to the crown corporation responsible for promoting and co-ordinating standards activities in Canada: The Standards Council of Canada, 350 Sparks St., Suite 1200, Ottawa, Ont., K1P 6N7.



The eyes have it

It's all eyes on the puck as the Raiders show a blanket defence in last Saturday's 3-1 win over Burlington in Jr. B action at Alcott Arena. Goaltender Curtis Green gets help from Rob Doucette (33), J.P.

Latour (5) and Trent Cull (9) in this goalmouth scene. Raiders host Oakville Blades tonight in their final regular season game. (Outlook photo)

Pacemakers making Zone nervous

The Pacemakers continue to breath down the neck of the first-place Blue Zone in Georgetown Ladies Basketball League standings.

After last week's games, the second-place Pacemakers remained only a half game behind the Zone with both teams coming off victories.

Blue Zone got 13 points from Sandy Brownridge and 12 from Linda Robson as they stopped the Steroids, 60-45. Anita Stankus bagged 26 points to lead the Pacemakers to a 59-44 win over the Celtics. Lisa Allen (16) led the

Steroids while Michelle Miehm (19) was high-scorer for the Celts.

Meanwhile, in other action the 76ers nipped the California Raisins 50-48 with Chung Kim leading the way with 14 points. Raisins got 21 points from Carol Kovacevic.

In Jan. 25 GBLB play, Blue Zone topped the Cal. Raisins 51-41, with Judy Thompson (13) leading the winners and Carol Kovacevic (16) starring for the Raisins.

The Celts outgunned the 'Roids 57-48 as Michelle Miehm (15) and

Boo Tufford (14) were tops for the winners with Lorraine Capreol (18) and Penny Wright (16) hoop-ing high points for the losers.

Anita Stankus crushed 28 points as the Pacemakers bombed the 76ers 50-18

GEORGETOWN LADIES BASKETBALL LEAGUE (Standings)

	GP	W	L	T
Blue Zone	14	11	3	0
Pacemakers	14	10	3	1
Celtics	14	6	8	0
Cal. Raisins	14	5	7	2
76ers	14	5	8	1
Steroids	14	3	11	0

"Smart Hockey" video

TORONTO—Neck and spinal cord injuries could be reduced significantly with the help of a 12-minute video promoting safe hockey, Ontario Minister of Tourism and Recreation, Hugh P. O'Neil told a group of medical professionals recently.

The "Smart Hockey" video, featuring former National Hockey League star Mike Bossy, supports the elimination of checking from behind, which is responsible for the majority of neck and spinal cord disabling injuries. Over 100 hockey players have been crippled in recent years due to illegal body contact.

Mr. O'Neil made his remarks at Toronto's King Edward Hotel, site of the second International Symposium on the Prevention of Catastrophic Sports and Recreational Injuries to the Spine and Head.

"There is nothing heroic about hitting someone from behind," Mr. O'Neil said, echoing the video's key message. "We are promoting clean, safe, hockey that helps to eliminate unnecessary injuries that disable our athletes."

The video demonstrates how most spinal injuries occur and how to avoid them by playing good hockey. It was financially supported by the Ministry, the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association

and the National Hockey League Players' Association. It will be available from the Canadian Sports Spine and Head Injuries Research Centre.

The video is part of the Ministry's commitment to reduce injuries in sports.



February Hours

Mon. closed
Tues. 9:30-6:00
Wed. 1:00-6:00
Thurs. 9:30-9:00
Fri. 9:30-9:00
Sat. 9:00-5:00

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