



USA Hockey National Championships

Alliance News and Notes



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Game summaries and other Alliance news from the USA Hockey National Championships will be posted here and on the Alliance Web Site before and after each game. For the official USA Hockey web sites with schedules, standings, stats, and more, go to.....

PeeWees... http://usahockey.com/2004nationals/main/t_ii_12u_livo/

Bantams... http://usahockey.com/2004nationals/main/t_ii_14u_burli/

PeeWees & Bantams:

USA Bronze Medalists

Both Alliance Teams Earn 3^d Place In the Nation

PeeWees Come Up Just Short, Fall 4-2

Alliance PeeWees Play Like Champions

In their first National Semifinal appearance the Alliance PeeWees played like Champions, but lost to the Michigan Devils 4-2, who went on to beat the Philadelphia Phantoms 8-3 and are now the reigning 2004 U12 National Champions.

At 13:29 in the first period, Alliance player Matt McKinney sprawled on the ice for a defensive play and met with tragedy. A Devils player's skate sliced through his left forearm. Matt tried to skate to the bench with his injured arm, and was assisted by the Devils coach who jumped onto the ice and helped him the rest of the way. The injury was severe, and there was tremendous blood loss.

Due to the amount of blood on the bench, there was a delay of game while arena staff cleaned up the

Comeback Stalls, Bantams Beat 6-4

Bulldogs Fall in Semi-Finals to #1 San Jose

The Alliance Bantam AA Bulldogs did not have the same success playing a team for the second time as they have had recently, as they played the Pacific District Champion **San Jose Jr. Sharks** for the second time this season Saturday night. The Sharks took the Bulldogs as a major threat to their National Championship hopes, and worked hard to keep those hopes alive for a 6-4 win in the Semi-Finals of the USA Hockey National Championships in South Burlington, Vermont.

Alliance lost one of their top forwards, Jason Roemer, to a major knee injury in the 1st period while the game was still tight at 1-1. The loss of one of their high energy sources and seeing him taken off the ice on a stretcher was devastating to the Bulldogs, and they slumped quickly to fall

PeeWees, Continued

bench. All the players skated around and tried to stay focused, but it was very unsettling to see their teammate injured in such a fashion. It was a huge blow to the offensive strength of the team. Matt was leading the team with 15 points for the tournament.

The first period was scoreless for both teams. Alliance killed off two penalties successfully, but in the opening minutes of the second period while still on the penalty kill, the Michigan Devils had their first goal. Twenty-Eight seconds later the Devils had their second goal. Following that, Alliance killed off several penalties successfully; They even went 3 on 5 for a full minute without allowing a score. The penalty-killing unit of Blake Coleman, Dru Burns, Corey Ramsey and Kasey Womble did an excellent job. Finally at 8:48 in the second period, Alliance went on the power play and capitalized on the opportunity, as they scored their first goal.

Blake Coleman backhanded a shot in the top left corner of the net after receiving a pass in the Alliance zone from Corey Ramsey. The Devils had finally been scored on, and this was the first goal scored on the Michigan Devils in the National tournament. Until that time they had scored 30 goals and allowed 0.

Following that goal, the Alliance penalty-killing unit had to kill off another 3 on 5, this time for a full minute and a half. With two top players in the box (Christopher Boe and Ryan Daugherty), the penalty kill unit did an awesome job. When the penalty was over, the team went back to full strength but with 35.7 seconds left in the period Michigan slipped in their third goal.

Once more the players left the ice for a 12-minute ice resurface and a rest for their weary legs. The Alliance players came out hard in the third period. At 7:20 into the third period Coleman placed a rebound from Christian Ferm hard in the right side of the net to make the score 3-2 Devils. Alliance was fighting back hard, and they were hot on Michigan's heels.

Michigan's goalie was not allowing many opportunities, as he was cutting off all the angles and not spitting out any rebounds. Then Alliance took another penalty. The Toledo Storm head coach (formerly University of Minnesota coach) who was sitting in the stands was heard to yell, "Come on ref let them play!"

After successfully killing off one more penalty, the players were truly exhausted.

Bantams, Continued

behind at the end of the period 3-1. They fell further behind in the 2nd at 6-2, but added 2 goals in the first half of the 3rd to threaten making a game of it, but just ran out of steam and into a Shark team that would not cave in.

For the 2nd time in the tournament, the Bulldogs struck pay-dirt first, and again for the 2nd time, it would not be a sign of good things to come for Alliance. One fan was noted as saying Alliance should take the opening face-off and go score on themselves on purpose, as they had won each game in the tournament in which they had given up the first goal (3 times). Somehow, this "plan" did not get communicated to Bulldog Coach Miles Newsome.

With the game scoreless early, Alliance defenseman Jordan Hall held the zone at the blue-line along the left-wing boards and dumped the puck back into the offensive corner where forward Andrew Aragona was fore-checking very aggressively. Andrew got the puck and avoided the Shark defense into the area behind the San Jose goal, and then surprised the Shark goalie with a wrap-around to the 5-hole for a 1-0 lead at only 2:10 of the 1st period. It would be a long time and a lot of bad things would happen before the Bulldogs would light the lamp again.

The Sharks did not take long to respond. Just over 3 minutes later, San Jose would tie the score on a goal by John Kiely. The game then settled down until 8:42 of the period, when things really turned south for the Bulldogs. As the puck was cleared from their own end by San Jose, Roemer turned to leave the zone and was hit by a Shark player knee on knee. After flying through the air, he landed at the blue-line and remained there for more than 20 minutes, until he was escorted from the ice on a gurney by Burlington EMTs, and with an air cast on his right leg.

San Jose would take their first lead at the 11:00 mark when Adam Johnson, one of the top players in the tournament, collected a rebound and put it in for a 2-1 edge for the Sharks. Alliance was hoping to get out of the 1st period down only one goal, but it was not to be. On a shot from the point that was going wide of the goal, San Jose forward Christopher Gudmundson re-directed the puck into the net with the shaft of his stick. With only 37 seconds left in the period, that just seemed to take the wind out of the Alliance sails. The Bulldogs went to the first intermission trailing 3-1.

The 2nd period started right where the 1st left off, disastrous for Alliance. Less than a minute into

PeeWees, Continued

Being without Matt was causing some players to be double and triple shifted.

At 12:38 in the third period, the Devils got their fourth and final goal. A pass was sent in from the corner and deflected off one of the Alliance defenseman's skates into the goal.

Alliance still fought hard and had some opportunities, but with only one minute left in the game the referees called one more hooking call and the game was over.

Following the game the Alliance Bulldogs were presented with their 3rd place National Championship medals. The Michigan Devils coach said this was the best game of the tournament and one of the best teams they had played all season.

The majority of this Michigan Devils team will be following their head coach to Tier I AAA next season playing for Belle Tire.

This was a tremendous accomplishment for all of the Alliance Pee Wee players. For a team that was so young and that had only five returning players from the year before, their accomplishments were phenomenal.

They should all be very proud of what they have accomplished this season as the 3rd best U12 Tier II team in the country!!

Injury follow-up:

Matt McKinney underwent surgery on his left forearm Saturday evening. The surgeon attached tendons and ligaments and stitched up the outer forearm.

While there is some slight nerve damage it is not thought to be permanent. Matt should be fully recovered in four to six weeks.

Notes:

The Alliance-San Jose Bantam game was supposed to be audiocast via the Internet, but a scheduling and rink change by USA Hockey officials late Saturday afternoon changed it to the other semi-final game.

The Sharks lost 6-1 to the Troy Sting for the National Championship on Sunday. Go to the USA Hockey.com website for an Internet audiocast replay of the championship game.

Bantams, Continued

the period, another rebound was left to be collected by a Shark forechecker, and it was 4-1. Just over another minute later, another re-direction of a shot made the score 5-1 just 2:05 into the 2nd period. It stayed a 4-goal margin for the next 13 minutes until Alliance turned the puck over in the slot while on a power play breakout, and the Shark short-handed goal made it 6-1. This is when the character of this Alliance team began to show itself. They are called "Bulldogs" for a reason. This team had never quit all year, and always played hard, regardless of the score. This game would be no different.

Still on the power play, Chad Hudson got the puck from Nolan Descoteaux behind the net and made a great pass that Colin Haas one-timed to make the score 6-2 with just 22 seconds remaining in the 2nd period. This made the differential still a wide 4 goals, but with fresh legs at the beginning of the 3rd, anything could happen. It appeared early in the 3rd, that maybe "anything" might just happen.

Alliance defenseman Justin Novak made a nice pass that Hudson used to get himself into scoring position, and that's a position he usually thrives in, and Chad trimmed the lead to 3 just 4:16 into the final frame. It would be just over 4 minutes later that Novak again figured in the scoresheet, this time getting the goal, as he worked a 3-way give and go with Aragona and Drew Jenkins to make the score 6-4 Sharks with just under 8 minutes remaining. With a little more than seven minutes to go and down only 2 goals, it was looking like another barn burner for the kids from Texas.

The miracle comeback would not happen though, as the Bulldogs ran out of gas and time, and their season ended with a 6-4 loss in the National Semi-Finals at the hands of the San Jose Sharks. The Sharks would out-shoot the Bulldogs for the game at 20-14. It was a great run for a great team, and a season that no one would ever forget. To help them remember, each Bulldog was introduced to the crowd as they received their 3rd Place Bronze Medal at center ice from a USA Hockey official.

PeeWee & Bantam Accomplishments in 2003-2004

Texoma Travel League Champions
Texas State Champions
Rocky Mountain District Champions
USA Hockey National Championship Bronze Medalists

USA Hockey National Championships - PeeWee Final Standings

<u>Team</u>	<u>GP</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>OTL</u>	<u>PTS</u>	<u>GF</u>	<u>GA</u>	<u>PCT</u>	<u>STK</u>
Michigan Devils	6	6	0	0	0	12	42	5	1.000	W6
Philadelphia Jr. Phantoms	6	5	1	0	0	10	40	15	0.833	L1
Alliance Bulldogs	5	4	1	0	0	8	27	12	0.800	L1
Orlando Stars	4	3	1	0	0	6	16	10	0.750	L1
Toledo Thunderstorm	5	2	3	0	0	4	29	19	0.400	L1
Aftton Americans	4	2	2	0	0	4	16	11	0.500	L2
Livonia Knights	3	1	2	0	0	2	7	21	0.333	L1
PVHC Bears	4	1	3	0	0	2	12	34	0.250	L1
Spokane Americans	4	1	3	0	0	2	5	21	0.250	L1
Alaska All Stars	3	0	3	0	0	0	6	27	0.000	L3
Winchester Sachems	3	0	3	0	1	1	3	11	0.167	L3
Long Island Rebels	3	0	3	0	0	0	4	21	0.000	L3

USA Hockey National Championships - Bantam Final Standings

<u>Team</u>	<u>GP</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>OTL</u>	<u>PTS</u>	<u>GF</u>	<u>GA</u>	<u>PCT</u>	<u>STK</u>
Troy Sting	6	5	1	0	1	11	32	10	0.917	W4
San Jose Jr. Sharks	6	5	1	0	0	10	29	20	0.833	L1
Alliance Bulldogs	5	3	2	0	0	6	21	19	0.600	L1
CSB Hawks	5	3	2	0	1	7	24	21	0.700	L1
Pittsburgh Predators	4	2	2	0	0	4	13	20	0.500	L2
Atlanta Fire	4	2	2	0	0	4	19	20	0.500	L1
Arctic Lions	4	1	2	1	1	4	9	11	0.500	L1
Bridgewater Bears	3	1	2	0	0	2	17	15	0.333	W1
Clinton Comets	4	1	3	0	1	3	16	25	0.375	L2
Orland Park Vikings	3	1	2	0	0	2	12	12	0.333	L2
St. Albans Maple Leafs	3	0	2	1	1	2	4	10	0.333	T1
South Shore Seahawks	3	0	3	0	0	0	6	19	0.000	L3

Next Issue: Review of Alliance 2003-2004 Season, and information on upcoming Tryouts and other off-season activities. To get on the email list to receive this newsletter, send an email to.....

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