Hockey hits the streets

Annual street hockey tournament set to begin in Gjoa Haven

by Danielle Sachs
Northern News Services
Uqsuqtuuq/Gjoa Haven

Melting ice across Nunavut didn't stop Gjoa Haven residents from bringing hockey into the community.

Ninety-six people laced up their sneakers to compete for the title of best street hockey team in Gjoa Haven.

NORTHERN Lights

The Northern Meltdown Street Hockey Tournament was organized a little differently this year, a direct outcome of the high number of people registered.

"For the first time, as a direct result of the high number of teams, the tournament was structured as a single elimination type, so every game saw one team knocked out and another get one step closer to the ultimate victory," said organizer Matt Gee. "Also this year, a stricter attendance policy was enforced, causing two teams to default but also contributing to a more cohesive, team-centric event."

The final game on May 12 pitted the Northern Underdogs against Impact. The final score ended up being 8-4 for Impact.

"It was a close game, with some great individual and team efforts, but the Underdogs could not hold off the Impact onslaught," said Gee. "This year, it was very nice to see a lot less tobacco use by young people, both players and spectators."

First- and second-place teams received T-shirts donated by the Northern Store, and first place Impact will have its team name engraved on a trophy, which is displayed year-round at Northern. This year marked the eighth anniversary of the tournament, and Gee said he is looking forward to next year, with plans to improve the nets, and he is also excited for two years from now, when a second tier will have to be added to the trophy.

"It's so awesome to see this event growing every year and more importantly I like how there is less tobacco use," said Sarah Guy.

Lots of fresh air, exercise and fair play made for another fun annual Northern Meltdown Street Hockey Tournament.

"The kids all played really hard and every team scored a few goals. It is neat for me to see people playing in the tournament for the sixth or seventh time, now that they are a lot bigger and winning," said Gee.

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photo courtesy of Noreen Sacs

***The champions of the Northern Meltdown** will get their names engraved on the trophy displayed year-round. Pictured are the winners: back row, from left, Halluq Porter, Walter Porter, Warren Rudolph and Joseph Okpakok.*

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