

WAIVER WIRE

RBC awards Female Hockey Winnipeg Play Hockey Grant

Winnipeg –

Close to 250 female hockey players took over the Jonathan Toews Community Center this past Saturday as part of Female Hockey Winnipeg's annual All-Star celebrations.

Game action got underway at 8:00 am and filled up both ice surfaces for most of the morning as fans caught the best Pee wee, Bantam, and Midget players competing as the A1, A2 and AA divisions skated in Light versus Dark contests.



This year's All-Star day had a special feel as RBC sponsored the event and provided a pancake breakfast for all players, coaches, and families in attendance. Hiring out the services of a local United Church Women's group, meals were served to close to 1000 people.

RBC's participation stemmed from Female Hockey Winnipeg being selected as a recipient for an RBC Play Hockey Grant of \$25,000.



Along with the grant, RBC hosted a Hockey Shootout for fans and players which also included an appearance by Fiona Smith-Bell, an Olympic Silver Medalist at the 1998 games in Nagano, Japan.

Smith-Bell spoke to the young female players as the presentation was being made to Hockey Winnipeg VP of Female Hockey, Joan Todd. Speaking to the quality of players competing as part of the All-Star festivities she noted, "Manitoba has an extremely high level of female players; looking around the room you can be sure there is an future Olympian sitting in here, maybe two or three."

The infusion of \$25,000 into the female hockey program in Winnipeg will be used in large part to provide development opportunities to players. Being a non-profit organization, the funding of Hockey Winnipeg programs comes solely from the participants. Adding such a large amount of money into the program ensures more can be offered to players, without having to raise fees.



Joan Todd of Female Hockey Winnipeg was quick to point out the benefit of such a grant being provided to the program, "We will continue to expand and flourish with the help of corporate sponsors like RBC."

There is no question the day was special, and the support from RBC, both in the meals and the generous RBC Play Hockey Grant made it one not many involved soon will forget.

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