

YK Separate School System 1952 2002

The Wade Hamer Challenge Cup, Sir John and St Pat's

The inspiration for this game began in the fall of 1985 when Wade was captain of the midget team. He had really looked forward to the game between them and the Canarctic Dusters which was made up primarily of teachers (with the dispositions of right wing Dobermans!)

The game turned out to be a disaster. It ended with one member of the Dusters squaring off with one of Wade's teammates during the handshake. A sad conclusion to what was intended to be a fun, exhibition game. Wade was royally upset by all this and he ended up stepping between the two combatants. After the game, he asked the coaches in his dressing room to leave while he chewed out his own team for their disgusting display, then he walked down the hall and suggested the same to the teachers. One of the teachers, possibly Gerard Landry, possibly Les Cameron said it was about the worst dressing down a few of them ever received,

and he wasn't too proud of the way things had gone either.

Wade said he couldn't remember being in a game that had disappointed him more. And he wondered what could be done to get the teachers and kids to play together instead of apart, where fun would prevail.

He eventually came up with the idea of a game where the teachers and players from one school would play the teachers and players from the other school. I think the preliminary discussions were in Les Cameron's class, (Les might be able to fill you in more here.)

When he asked me what I thought, the first thought was that St. Pat's would be destroyed, but Wade suggested that with Johnny Bowden in goal, they wouldn't give up too many goals, and might keep it close. If nothing else, he thought it would really be a boost to team spirit at each school, and Wade was the Sports Rep on Student Council.

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He approached Student Council with the idea but was voted down. So he then went to Sir John and asked Paul Keliher (teacher) to issue a challenge, which he then accepted, telling Student Council it would look bad if he refused.

For the next several weeks, Wade lined up the ice time, referees, sponsor (Len Jason, making it the Colonel's Challenge Cup), CJCD interviews and newspaper interviews, really playing it up as much as possible. He still wasn't too sure what the reception would be and on the way to the game that first evening, December 6, 1985, he said it would be nice if they got some fans out. And we parked at CBC!

On the Tuesday before the game, Wade's team played a game and he was horrible, barely able to skate. On the bench, I could see tears underneath his mask, but he wouldn't say what the trouble was. The next morning, he got up, went down into our rumpus room, and tried to exercise on our rowing machine. He had a huge blood clot on his butt, the size of a large grapefruit. He ended up calling up to me, as he couldn't stand up. I ended up carrying him out to the truck and drove him to Stanton.

At Stanton, Dr. Clair Moisey told Wade that he would have to take physiotherapy, ultra sound, and kiss goodbye to contact sports for the balance of the year. Wade said he had no intention of quitting as this was an Arctic Winter Games year and, further, if he didn't play this Saturday, he didn't dare show his face in town. He told me he was already the most despised student at St. Pat's, as all of his friends thought he had set them up for a huge embarrassment.

On the Friday night, his team had another game, but the coaches wouldn't let Wade play because he couldn't bend over to tie up his own skates.

On the day of the game, Wade was still phoning around, trying to find St. Pat's students willing to play (contrasted with Sir John, which had tryouts and had to cut players). He had gotten past asking if they knew how to play hockey, only if they knew how to skate. He was seriously concerned about their ability to field a team at all.

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In the photo afterwards there are only 6 students and 8 teachers who played for St. Pat's.

When the teams came out (St. Pat's wearing the Canarctic uniforms!), Wade skated by me very proudly pointing out the "K" on his sweater as the team had voted him captain. In the warm up, he was still a tad shaky, but the adrenaline had set in.

His first two shifts of the game brought two penalties, interference followed by interference. As he sat there, he said "Dad, I don't know what I'll do if I get thrown out of this game". (He had never gotten 3 penalties in a game, ever -- that was more like the total for a half season). I suggested he just play his ordinary game and forget his owie, (which had lead to the clutch/grab which caused the interference).

After that, you saw the game of course, and Wade was a plus 8 in a 9-1 game, being on the ice for all ten goals. He scored one of goal late in the game and showed zero emotion (he told me afterwards he didn't want to rub Sir John's noses in it as he wanted the game to continue in future years).

After the game, Wade left his girlfriend du jour at the arena door because she was painted in the yellow and blue colors.

One really important contribution made by Wade was game # 2. He was at college in Red Deer and was disturbed no one had made arrangements for the game. So he made the arrangements and I got a phone bill close to a grand (God bless calling cards). The game wasn't played until the spring, and Sir John clobbered St. Pat's that year.

A few items I neglected to mention in the first epistle:

The game was renamed at Len Jason's request and was the first of numerous recognitions to come Wade's way. This happened at the Memorial Service.

Other recognitions:

- His Junior team retired his sweater in a ceremony televised by a station in Red Deer.
- My favorite quote was Ken Miller's: "... the nicest young man to ever lace on a pair of skates ..."

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- Red Deer College -- scholarship
- YK Minor Hockey -- Wade Hamer Award (based on sportsmanship, potential, excellence and congeniality)
- YK Rec League -- most valuable defense man (Wade awarded posthumously)
- Your League of course -- perhaps my favorite recognition
- Wade Hamer Hockey School -- 10 years, 3000 or so participants, and the only reason we stopped is that I was completely worn out and hadn't had a vacation with my family for over a decade.
- Wade Hamer Mini-Golf -- 143 volunteers participated, including some given lifetime passes! and the game of course.

Students Stage Match

Exchanging Salvos of Bragging

“Sir John is ‘going down bad. They’re lucky the scoreboard goes only to 99. St. Pat’s hockey team player Wade Hamer said as the two school teams were preparing for a match of the century scheduled for this Saturday night at the Gerry Murphy arena at 6 p.m.

The two teams, which are made up of students and teachers from each of their respective schools, will play for the Colonel Saunders Challenge Cup. The winning teams students council will receive the proceeds of the ticket sales. Wade Hamer, a player on the St. Pat’s team, originally thought of the game, hoping to pit his team’s ‘quality’ against the ‘quantity’ of the Sir John players.

Rec League rules will apply, wit the one modification that at least two teachers or two students must be on the ice at all times, to avoid any all student or all teacher lines.

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Both teams are very confident of victory, and are making their opponents aware of this fact. Russ Connors, another player on the St. Pat's team, is also confident of his team winning. "Come on, you'll never beat the dogans," he said when asked about the outcome of the game.

Sir John's Kerry Booth was quick to counter these claims, saying, "St. Pats is history. They should be thankful that there are only 18 spaces on a score sheet." Paul Kehleher is also sure of his team's dominance. "St. Pat's is going to suffer such a devastating loss to their already small ego that they will not want to return to the ice for the second or third periods," he said.

The coach for the Sir John team, John Rouble, thought that his team would do most of its talking on the ice, by living to up to its "reputation for performance."

Guy Tanguay, coach of the St. Pat's squad, is also confident of his team's abilities, but he wants "to see some support in the stands."

Tickets for this match can be purchased for \$1.00 at the schools, or \$1.50 at the gate.

St Pat's Skates to Colonel Cup

by Cam Lockerbie 1985

The Sir John Franklin hockey team has a new assignment. They have to determine if eating raven Is the same as eating crow.

The Falcons were trounced 9-1 by the Saint Pat's team in the Colonel's Challenge game, held Saturday night at the YK arena. The Pat's, led by exceptional goaltending from John Bowden and Gary Schauerte, dominated for most of the game.

After killing off several penalties, including a two-man disadvantage, the Pat's scored the opening goal seconds into the first power play. Gerald Landry flipped a rebound past the sprawling goalie from a scramble in front of the Falcons Net. The Falcons had a chance to tie the game minute later, but Pat Keliher missed the open net. "I saw Bowden go left, so I shot right, he said. He didn't make a good save, I hit the post.

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St Pat's had more opportunities to increase their lead, but goalie Steve Robak held off the attack, making the best of the save of the game on a screen shot late in the period. After being robbed twice in the first, Steve Langan notched the eventual winner early in the second period, blasting a high shot into the top corner. "Their guy lost control of the puck along the boards," he said. "I kicked it free and went in alone. I didn't know whether to deke him or go upstairs, so I shot for his glove hand.

The Pat's added three more goals in the second period. Their defense, led by Wade Hamer, was also very effective in keeping the Falcons from getting good scoring chances.

They were to be denied their shutout when Jamie Chambers jammed one by Gary Schauerte midway through the third. What could I do? It was a three on none, Schauerte said. "But I give them credit, it was a good goal."

Though he did give up the only goal, Schauerte did make a very spectacular stick save on Wilson Shea late in the game.

Coach Guy Tanguay was very pleased with the outcome of the game. "The fan support was great. It helped our guys a lot," he said. "We knew we would play well tonight. We plan on keeping this cup for a long time."

John Rouble, coach for the losing team, left the dressing room without a comment.

Falcons Down Fighting Irish

By Brad Heath, December 2, 1987

Sir John Franklin's Falcons emerged victorious from Round Three of an annual challenge hockey match with St Patrick's Fighting Irish. The falcons defeated the Irish 10—3 last Saturday to win this year's Wade Hamer Memorial Cup and take a 2—1 lead in the ongoing series.

More important than the outcome however, were the spirit and funds generated for charity by the game, says Paul Keliher, an instructor at Sir John Franklin and a member of the Falcons' squad.

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About \$300 was raised for charity as more than 250 fans gathered at Gerry Murphy Arena to watch students and staff from the two high schools compete.

The annual game also promoted, “spirit within the schools and between the schools,” said Keliher. “It also teaches the value of cooperation and competition, it can be healthy if done properly and in the right atmosphere.

The challenge was renamed this year in honor of its founder, Wade Hamer, a former student at St. Patrick’s High School who died in an automobile accident earlier this year.

The game was formerly known as the Colonel’s Cup in recognition of the ongoing sponsorship provided by Kentucky Fried Chicken.

St. Pat takes Wade Hamer

1989 by Bev Gray

St. Patrick High School beat Sir John Franklin Territorial High School at hockey for the first time in four years, by a score of 6-3, Thursday night in the Wade Hamer Challenge Cup. Gerry Murphy arena heard the chanting of hundreds of enthusiastic hockey fans from each side.

The Wade Hamer Challenge Cup was started by the late Wade Hamer. Wade was captain of the initial challenge cup team in 1985 and the creator of the game along with Paul Keleher, a teacher at Sir John Franklin Territorial School.

"Without Paul going along with it, the whole thing would have died" says Ter Hamer who was the announcer at the hockey game.

At the end of the first period, the score was 3-1 for St Pat's. Teachers and girls played the first period then the boys hockey team went for the remaining two.

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The first period was cut short because the lights went out. The Sir John cheer leaders overloaded the circuit with their music says Ter Hamer.

When the girls were playing against each other they were lined up the wrong way. The referees tried to get them to face the right direction, but when they wouldn't the ref dropped the puck anyway and away they went.

After the game was finished, referee Dave Grundy was rewarded with a pie in the face. Proceeds from the game go to the Wade Hamer Hockey School.

St Pat's wins Wade Hamer Cup

by Karen Lajoie 1990

St. Pat's hockey team defeated Sir John Franklin 4-3 Thursday night to win their third Wade Hamer Challenge Cup in six years, part of an enduring emotionally-charged cross-town rivalry.

'It's satisfying. We're kind of the underdog. St. Pat's being a small school and Sir John the big school. It's a good, healthy rivalry between the two," co-coach Randy Rivers said after the game.

About 550 boisterous fans packed Gerry Murphy arena for the game, sporting blue and gold for Sir John and green and white for St. Pat's.

The game was originally organized by St. Pat's captain Wade Hamer to foster school spirit and get students and teachers working together, his father, Ter Hamer, says.

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At the 2:40 mark of the second period, a Sir John rush ended with a goal off Earl Koch's stick, bringing the Sir John crowd to its feet. The blue and gold added a second goal five minutes later so jump to a 2-0 lead over the Irish.

Kevin Hewitt opened the St. Pat's scoring at 10:19 and a shorthanded goal from John Wyse at 14:59 evened the game at two.

Emotions were running high on the ice as well as in the crowd, resulting in aggressive physical play. St. Pat's goalie Troy Barry was shaken up near the end of the second period when he was flattened by a Sir John forward in the crease. Barry remained in the game.

Third period action got off to a flying start, Shawn Talbot's unassisted goal at the 4:13 mark giving St. Pat's the lead, and bringing the other half of the crowd to its feet.

The Irish defense core rallied, repeatedly stripping the rushing Sir John offence of the puck, frustrating the team and turning up the heat. Hewitt's second goal of the game at 9:30 opened up a 4-2 lead for the St. Pat's.

Barry stopped four slap-shots in short order from Koch to keep things close, but Sir John's John Rennie scored unassisted with 4:13 left in the game to bring the score to its final 4-3.

For the second consecutive year, Randy Rivers and Fraser Oliver coached the Irish to victory, holding four practices to bring players from the rec and minor leagues together.

"It could've gone either way. The goaltending was a key defensively and everybody played with their hearts, We played strong and waited for the breaks." Oliver said.

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Falcons down fighting Irish

By Kevin Porter Northern News Services Nove 25, 1992

The Sir John Falcon's have kept their claim to the Wade Hamer Challenge Cup. They defeated the St. Pat's Fighting Irish 5-3 to retain the Cup in the event's eighth year.

The game, held at the Yellowknife community Arena last Thursday, marks the second consecutive win for Sir John, and their fifth victory in the Cup's history.

The event began with a 30 minute open period played by teachers, girls and boys from the schools.

That ended in a 1 – 1 tie. Then the guys faced off for the Challenge Cup portion of the game.

St Pat's came out strong in the second period, but Sir John struck first to take the lead.

There was a tense moment late in the second period when a Sir John rush into the St Pat's zone ended with a pileup on goalie Troy Barry.

Tempers flared after the incident as the Fighting Irish came in to defend their net minder. Referees soon had the situation under control and the period ended with Sir John leading 2-1.

Action in the third period was the fiercest of the game with the Falcon's offence putting increased pressure on the opposition's defence.

But St Pat's didn't let up, and they trailed by only one goal going into the last five minutes of play with Sir John leading 4-3.

"We gave St Pat's a chance to get back into the game," said Sir John coach Mike Madore. "I talked to the boys on the bench and I said we've got to start coming back a little more on defense.

"We let go of that and we started trying to score another goal. We should have been playing both ways and we weren't doing that," Madore said.

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The last five minutes were the strongest of the match, as St Pat's struggled to tie it up with the Falcons. But it was not to be, the Falcon's Andrew Stewart netted the puck with 20 seconds left on the clock to secure Sir John's victory.

"Two areas I think we really played well in was that we played together as a unit on defence, and our goal tending was good tonight too," Madore said of Sir John's performance.

Scoring for Sir John was Stewart, Shawn Murray, Scott Wray and Damian Walsh with a pair. Students Chris O'Sullivan and Matthew Sims, and teacher Kevin Weins scored for St Pat's.

The Wade Hamer Challenge was first played in 1985. It was known then as the Colonel's Challenge Cup after the late Wade Hamer obtained Kentucky Fried Chicken as a sponsor for the match.

In his speech at Sir John's pep rally the night of the game, Ter Hamer said his son, Wade, who was a student at St

Pat's, had organized the first Cup as a way to have teachers and students work together. St Pat's won the first Challenge Cup 8-1.

Each year I pull for Sir John – to win silver," Hamer said.

The Falcon's dashed Hamer's and St Pat's hopes on Thursday night, but there's always next year.

Spirit Comes Through Loud & Clear

November 1993

The 700 fans who packed inot the YK Arena Thursday for the ninth annual hockey challenge between St Patrick and Stir John received all they could ask for in a game. Both parts, the first half with the female students and the female and male teachers, and the second half with the male students, were close as they come.

In both segments, the crowd cheered wildly whenever their team had a shot on net or their goalie make a stellar save.

"Last night was the closest come in the nine years of the Challenge Cup," said Randy Rivers of St Pat's.

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“With a flip of the coin the games could have gone either way. No one team dominated.”

Bill Burlington of Sir John said he was also pleased with the game. “I thought it was the closest game we’ve had,” he said. “I thought it went great.”

The Wade Hamer hockey challenge is used to create school and community spirit through friendly competition.

“It was an excellent crowd,” said Rivers who helped coach the boy’s team with Fraser Oliver. “The only time I see that kind of crowd is at an Arctic Winter Games event.”

Burlington, who was helped behind the bench of the Sir John boys by Scott Daniels, said: “There was great school spirit.”

Although the game is a friendly affair, students had their heart and soul behind their school hoping for victory.

“We’ve put a lot of effort into the signs we made,” said placard waving Laura Howden of St Patrick midway through the boys’ game. “I’m losing my voice already.”

“I’m here because I love my school. I’ve gone to St Pat’s for three years and it would be nice to see us win in our grad year, but we’re here to have a good time.”

Tara Davis a cheerleader for Sir John, was pulling for her team with all her energy. “We win all the time, we have to beat them again,” she said half way through the boy’s game. “But it doesn’t really matter.”

“As long as people aren’t fighting. We’re here to have a good time.”

At the end of the total point game – two points were available in each of the game’s two parts – St Patrick had the luck of the Irish on their side and pulled out a 3-1 victory.

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In the first part of the game, the St Patrick team scored a 2-1 win.

Natalie O'Sullivan and Julie Baird scored for St Pat's. Wilson Shea, an instructor from Sir John who has played in all nine hockey challenges, replied with the Falcon's lone marker.

In the boy's game, Chris O'Sullivan scored both goals for St Pat's in the 2-2 tie. Peter Bergman and Chris Lantz scored for Sir John.

Local RCMP handled the referee duties. CHCD broadcast the game live.

November 1994

Are these hockey fans or what?

Groupies. Painted bodies. The urgent press of humanity. Twitchy security guards. No, this is not a Grateful Dead concert. It's a hockey game.

The Wade Hamer Challenge Cup is the most searing, noisy and colorful sporting spectacle of the season.

Passionate rival schools St Pat's and Sir John faced each other for the Cup last Thursday at the Yellowknife Community Arena. Now in its 10th year, the Cup rivalry continues.

"The last day of school is probably the students' favorite day, but (Cup night) comes second," laughs St Pat's coach Fraser Oliver.

It became apparent early on that on that St Pat's fans were the ones wearing green, fighting Irish patches, fluorescent green face paint and waving shamrock signs.

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At the heart of St. Pat's pride:" We're the little guy, we're the underdogs," says Oliver.

Sir John fans wore team colors, red and yellow, clutching pom poms and blasting air horns. Falcon Fans all.

Sir John scooped the cup again this year, crushing St. Pat's 9 – 0 after a tie game nail biter. In the first game, girls and teachers from each school faced off. Both schools were anxious to get a head start on the points board.

After nearly 40 minutes of play, the game was tied up 2 – 2.

Roger Cameron and Bill Burlington each scored a goal for Sir John. Duane MacNeil and Dan Park scored for St. Pat's.

In the second game, the boys faced each other. Sir John fought with a vengeance. Scoring for Sir John were: Brian Gordon and Troy Stenke each with two goals, Jeremy Stringer, Colin Fraser, Tim Sorge, Cory Randall and Brent Ward scored one goal each.

St. Pat's tried to turn their luck around at half-time. Behind 5-0, they came out, "raring to go, but (Sir John) was too strong, says Pat's coach Oliver. "We had lots of strong players, but we didn't have the depth they had." That makes the 10 year record for this rivalry 6-4 for Sir John.

The Cup has been on student's minds for months, according to Sir John coach Bill Burlington. A month before the big game, hockey players were honing their skills, cheerleaders were practicing their leaps, and signs were being erected.

In other years, rowdiness in the stands sometimes got out of control, prompting discussion to cancel the Cup, according to Burlington. But having security on hand the last two years has kept the crowd in check. While spirits were high this year, crowd control was not an issue.

The first Cup was held in November 1985. Wade Hamer, a grade 12 St Pat's student, organized the event. When Hamer died in an accident two years later, the game was named in his honor. *Glenn Taylor, Northern News Services, November 30, 1994*

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Sounds like teen spirit

Wade Hamer Challenge Cup reverts to St. Pat's in tense, closely fought contest. The white hot rivalry between Sir John and St. Pat's schools was put on ice last week as both schools put on armor and skates and faced off in hockey action.

Rivalry between the schools hits a fever pitch every November during the Wade Hamer Challenge Cup at the arena. Now in its 11th season, the cup is arguably the most exciting sporting event of the season, attracting a packed house full of colorful and noisy fans.

It's as much a hockey game between schools as a spectator sport. The fans paint their faces in school colors and wave flags and pom poms in hearty unison. Green faces and Irish shamrocks meant you were a St. Pat's Irish fan. Blue and yellow meant you were a Sir John Falcons fan.

The format breaks the hockey game into two parts – the female students in Game 1 and the male students in Game 2.

Sir John won the first game, 2-0. Jen Furey threw in the first goal and with seconds left on the clock, Kim Bergman sealed St' Pat's fate by scoring an empty netter and winning the kind of applause normally reserved for a Metallica concert.

The boys took to the ice next, a motley crew of seasoned minor hockey gods and barely-vertical first timers.

St. Pat's took it to their rival in this game, winning 7 – 3. St. Pat's goals were scored by Cory Holzer (two), Brad Brenton (2) Adam Dawe (2) and Justin Boyd (1). Who scored Sir John's Goals? That information was unavailable at press time.

The win forced sudden death overtime – and much nail biting in the stands. The decibel level climbed as the exhausted boys climbed over the boards for one more clash. Overtime was as grueling on the player's bodies as it was on the fans' nerves.

With each clang of the puck off a crossbar or goalpost, the aching tension climbed one more notch.

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About a dozen minutes in, Chris Martin of St Pat's grabbed the puck at center ice and rushed in past Sir John's blueline. With Sir John's defensive lines in disarray, Martin reeled back and blasted one at the net. The buck caught the goalie's shoulder, floated in suspension for a split second, and then wobbled topsy-turvey into the mesh.

St. Pat's - considered the underdog by many going into the series - won the Challenge Cup. Accepted by smiling St. Pat's captain Blair Hamer, the cup once again changed hands, reverting back to St. Pat's - at least until next November.

St. Pat's coach Randy Rivers commented after the game on the rumor that his school was clearly the underdog.

"We had a very young team this year," admitted Rivers. "We didn't have a lot of depth, but we did show a lot of heart. Sometimes it's who wants it the most who gets it."

By Glenn Taylor Northern News Services November 29, 1995

Wade Hamer Challenge Cup

Luck of the Irish

St Pat's delivers at the Challenge Cup

Yellowknifer, Wednesday November 1998

It's all over for another year. The school spirit, fun and intense hockey action that is the Wade Hamer Hockey Challenge wrapped up on Nov. 19 as St Patrick high school went 21 in the three hockey games that make up the event.

Only a 3-0 win by Sir John Franklin high school staff over their colleagues prevented a sweep by St. Pat's. In the female game, the Irish were led by two goals from captain Ally Simpson as they beat the Falcons 3-0. In the male game, St. Pat's won a 10-5 shootout over Sir John Franklin.

Playing before a jam-packed house at the Yellowknife Community Arena, all the profits from the 14th annual Challenge Cup will now be split by the student councils and donated to a charity of their choice.

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No doubt Challenge Cup chairperson and St. Pat's coach Randy Rivers was happy to be on the winning side for two of the three games.

However, he said what he really enjoys is seeing how the event involves so many people from both schools. The game even took on an international flavor this year, as Australian exchange student Scott Doncon and Netherlands exchange student Linda Kluytmans suited up for the Falcons.

“There is no competition that involves as many sectors of the schools and as wide a range of ages as this does,” said Rivers. And it's that fierce school spirit the games bring out among the players and spectators that makes the Challenge Cup such a big event, Ally Simpson said.

“It wouldn't be-as” big a deal if so many people didn't watch,” said Simpson. “The whole school and the parents come out. So many people are watching.”

But make no mistake, it is also a big deal because both schools want to win the games and bragging rights that go with it.

For St. Pat's male team captain and Grade 12 student Adam Dawe, winning this Challenge Cup after losing the last two is a great way to cap off his high school career.

“There's a big rivalry between the schools. You start talking about the game before the first practice. This is icing on the cake,” said Dawe.

Although there were a few moments in both the female and male games where tempers flared, for the most part it was good, clean, fast hockey.

While the male game has been a staple of the Challenge Cup for years, this was only the second year there was a female Challenge Cup game. Simpson said the girls take the game seriously but keep it fun as well.

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“It’s a different attitude with the girls and the guys,” said Simpson. “Lots of the girls aren’t worried about scoring three goals. It’s more getting out there and having fun.

Green Day - Irish take two titles

St Pat's pulls out hard fought wins at Challenge Cup

Jeff Bowden wanted to go out with a bang. At the 15th annual Wade Hamer Hockey Challenge, he and his St. Patrick high school teammates did just that with a thrilling 5-4 win over Sir John Franklin high school.

The game, one of three played on Nov. 18, capped off a big night for the Irish. St. Pat’s also won the female student’s game 6-3. The staff game ended in a 3-3 tie.

Bowden was a big reason why St. Pat’s beat their rival. He made several key stops in the final period as his team came back from being down 3-1, to eventually taking a 5-3 lead. A late goal by Sir John’s Ryan Sweeney with just 53

seconds left in the game made it 5-4. But the Falcons could not get another one by Bowden.

Bowden was in the nets in 1998 when St. Pat’s drubbed Sir John 10-5.

The graduating student said that win was nice but this victory was even better. “This was a lot sweeter because it was such a close game,” said Bowden. “Our guys wanted to win, all the senior guys wanted to go out with a bang.”

Scoring for St. Pat’s in the win were Sam Shannon, Phil Martel, Derek Sangria and brothers Ashley and Nolan Rivers. Sweeney was the big gun for the Falcons netting three goals. Steven Thomson added the fourth.

In the female game, St. Pat’s also won their second straight Challenge Cup. However, it was not easy. The Irish were up 3-0 before Sir John mounted a big comeback and tied it at 3-3 with 4:15 left in the game. But after Sir John tied the score, St. Pat’s fired back scoring three more. Ally Simpson who scored twice in the game, and teammates Tara Sutton and Patricia

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Parker put the game away.

Also scoring for St. Pat's' were Charity Mohr and Jessica Crawley. Sir John got goals from Lesley Brandford, Jane Park and Sophia Pin.

Although the Falcons came out on the losing end of two of the three games, a man who has seen many Challenge Cups, Sir John coach Bill Burlington, said he could not complain about the effort his teams gave.

“You never give up to the final bell and that's what made me proud with the girls and the guys,” ‘said Burlington.

“The kids were giving ‘er

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Cup Crazy

Challenge Cup is more than just a game.

Let's get ready to rumble! That could be the cry on Nov. 19 at the 14th annual Wade Hamer Hockey Challenge, running from 6-10 p.m. at the YK Community Arena. One of the biggest high school sporting events of the year in Yellowknife, students and staff at Sir John Franklin high school and St. Patrick high school will square off for three separate hockey games that evening.

The schedule will see the staff from each school play each other, as well as the female and male students.

The games are always entertaining and the competition is often fierce. But Randy Rivers, co-coach for St. Pat's, said the Challenge Cup is about more than who wins and who loses.

"It's a community builder at the school level and even at the city level." said Rivers

"It's great for morale at the school. It's the only event where you have such a wide variety of students and staff from the school. Most sporting activities only involve a small amount of people.

"It's a rivalry but, in most cases, it's a good rivalry." said Burlington. "There is nothing wrong with being competitive, as long as you don't hate your competitors."

The first Challenge Cup took place in 1985 and was called the Colonel's Challenge Cup. The name was changed in 1987 to the Wade Hamer Challenge Cup, in memory of Hamer who died in a car accident in June, 1987. Hamer had helped organize the first Challenge Cup.

In the 14 years since the event began, it has grown and evolved. Last year, that growth took on a new twist as they had the first female Challenge Cup, which was won by Sir John Franklin.

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The girls are back this year and Rivers said their game would differ from the boys' game in that it won't be as pressure-packed or competitive. "They don't take it too seriously, they just enjoy the outing." said Rivers.

But, having said that, Rivers did offer some observations on how his girls' team will do on Thursday. "We play with a lot of heart and we'll give it our best shot. And we have one player, Ally Simpson, who can wind up and put the puck in the top corner.

As for the boys, Rivers said it's too close to call at this point. "I think it's a flip of the coin. Either team could win. I just hope it's a close game and it's entertaining for the fans, said Rivers.

Meanwhile, Burlington said his main concern is the small number of players on this year's team. "I've got some gamers, some good kids and it's only a one-game deal, so anything can happen," said Burlington.

"But I'm just a little leery about the numbers," again," she said half way through the boy's game. "But it doesn't really matter." "As long as people aren't fighting. We're here to have a good time."

At the end of the total point game – two points were available in each of the game's two parts – St Patrick had the luck of the Irish on their side and pulled out a 3-1 victory.

In the first part of the game, the St Patrick team scored a 2-1 win.

Natalie O'Sullivan and Julie Baird scored for St Pat's.

Wilson Shea, an instructor from Sir John who as played in all nine hockey challenges, replied with the Falcon's lone marker.

In the boy's game, Chris O'Sullivan score both goals for St Pat's in the 2-2 tie. Peter Bergman and Chris Lantz scored for Sir John.

Local RCMP handled the referee duties. CHCD broadcast the game live. All the profits from the event are donated by the student council of each school to a charity of their choice.

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Ivy for Ali

Cornell University women's hockey team recruits Simpson

To go where no NWT woman has gone before. That is exactly what Yellowknife's Ali Simpson will be doing when she suits up for the Cornell University women's hockey team next fall. After recently learning she had been accepted to the prestigious Ivy League school in Ithaca, New York, Simpson will head south and start a new chapter in her young hockey career. The 17-year-old Grade 12 St. Patrick high school student, who has hopes of making the Canadian national team someday, said it is an exciting time for her right now.

It's really exciting, just being from the NWT. It's something different that no one's ever done," said Simpson. "That's kind of why I wanted to do it. I wanted to do something completely different than everybody's ever done"

And just how did Cornell women's coach Carol Mullins find out about a female hockey player from Yellowknife?

Well, admits Simpson, she actually recruited Cornell at first. Wanting to play a higher level of women's hockey and get an education at the same time, Simpson attended a hockey school at Cornell this summer.

Mullins was running the school and Simpson's plan was to tell Mullins to keep an eye on her at the school because she was interested in playing hockey for Cornell.

As it turns out, Mullins did keep an eye on Simpson and liked what she saw. But Cornell would not be the only ones who recruited her. "The University of New Hampshire, Princeton University and Niagara University also expressed interest.

But Simpson decided on Cornell because she fell in love with the campus and liked Mullins as well.

Ali's father, John, said he and his wife, Deborah feel as strongly as their daughter that Cornell is the right place and Mullins is the right coach for her.

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“Ali could have gone to Harvard or Princeton but Ithaca’s a small town of about 35,000,” said John. “It gave us a very safe feeling and it was very important to us that she was going to be with someone we trusted.”

Now that Simpson has been accepted, she said she’s looking forward to furthering her hockey career. She will play center for Cornell and play a 30 game regular season schedule. It also sounds like Mullins expects Simpson to be a key player for Cornell, which plays in the Eastern Collegiate Athletic Conference. Mullins has told her recruit she could be a star in the conference in the future.

And after watching a couple of women's games at Cornell during a November recruiting trip there, Simpson feels confident she is not in over her head.

"They're good hockey players and it's challenging hockey, " said Simpson, "But I think can help the team and do a lot for the team."

Not only is she looking forward to continuing her hockey career, she is also looking forward to playing on a women's team full time. Since taking up hockey at the age of eight, Simpson has always played on boys' teams in the Yellowknife Minor Hockey Association. This will be the first time she has played and practiced regularly with a women's team.

Along with hoping four years of playing university hockey allows her to develop enough to eventually make Canada's national team, Simpson said she hopes she can inspire girls in the North to believe they can excel at hockey as well. “It’s neat to pave a new road, especially for girls hockey,” said Simpson.

Wednesday Dec 22 1999, Yellowknife, November 18, 1998

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Adam Dawe.....

Remembers the Challenge Cup

I remember watching my older brothers and schoolmates playing in the challenge cup. I couldn't help but be nervous about my chance. All the fans and the awesome cheers that more than filled the little arena.

It was always such a big deal. Falcons or Irish, who's it going to be? You could feel tension building and energy rising weeks before the big game. Whether or not you were playing it was exciting. More importantly, it was fun.

Most of the guys you played against were your team mates in local hockey leagues. If you won the game, you won more than pride and a trophy and praise of all your school you won bragging rights. It was great when you won, but with 4 years of high school, you knew your day might come

to be trashed talked.

I remember the early 6 am practices, The ever so frosty wind outside was sometimes challenge by the cold air hovering at GM Place. That's what we called Gerry Murphy Arena. A classic Yellowknife trademark for any Yellowknifer.

Everybody strapped up the blades and Randy Rivers and Fraser Oliver would run the drills and then have a scrimmage.

Without these coaches' time and help the Challenge Cup would not have been what it was. They were always there contributing their time and helping out.

Once we had a team formed we had a few more practice and then we played with lines to se who played well with who and try to build the best possible lines, even strength, power play and short handed. Once the lines were set and practices were done it was almost game time.

The pep rally of course had to take place before any game was

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played. The entire school students and teachers came together in the gymnasium to their support for their warriors getting ready to do battle.

The rallies were an awesome show of emotion whistles, horns, bells and screams filled the gym as the team captain ran with his team behind him and the girls' captain led her squad in the gym. They would individually introduce each player and usually have a video pre-made by the team and cameraman depicting the brutal slaying of the Falcons. It was awesome!

Game time! The first time I stepped on the ice as an "Irishman", I was so nervous, I didn't know what to say or do. You could hear the fans rumbling, cheering at the top of their lungs down in the change room as tension built while first the teachers then the females played.

When we finally stepped on the ice, I remember seeing all my friends and mates cheering me on that was reassuring and comforting the thousands of butterflies in my stomach. But, like Fraser Oliver said, "If you don't have butterflies,

you aren't nervous, and if you're not nervous, you're not ready"

I wasn't ready when the puck dropped, I must have been sleeping the first two shifts, they were a bit shaky, but confidence built and things slowly got better. I remember the feeling of that first goal, with my name on the speakers. My second was even better, it was the goal that tied the game and sent us into overtime.

Nerve Racking!! I couldn't even hear my line mates on the ice. But I didn't have to hear big Chris Martin to pass him the puck and watch him blast in an 85 foot slap shot to win the game. I soon found myself under 225 pound Gordon McKercher, Justin Abbot, Mike Frano and Blair Hamer, the captain.

They were all seniors, I was about 100 pounds at the time, but I was on top of the world, what a rush! The crowd absolutely exploded; what an awesome experience.

We lost in grade 10 by five goals or so. In grade 11 the Challenge was a memorable nail biting nerve wrenching

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double overtime loss. I didn't mind losing that one; it was a battle.

Ter Hamer, what has overseen every Challenge Cup said it was in his son Wade's honor said it may have been the best of the 15 annual games.

We came back in Grade 12 to win and draw even at 2 games won and lost. It didn't really matter that we won although it did feel better. But it was for fun, after the games, I remember celebrating with the other team, we all just had good things to say. No hard feeling. And that what it was all about - getting together with your friends and having fun.