



LUNACY, MADNESS, JOY & DELIGHT

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Youth hockey is getting up at 4 AM to make a 5 AM practice.

It's at least three cups of coffee to wake yourself while waiting for your child to finish practice.

It's tying all the children's skates in the locker room because none of the other parents are there yet, with chapped fingers, from the cold, while your beloved child whines for you to tie his/hers.

It's checking score sheets to make sure your little darling got the assist he/she was entitled to.

It's missing a glorious weekend in Las Vegas, or Sunday morning brunch at your favorite restaurant, because the sweetheart had two practices and a game.

It's being the parents of a goalie and reaching for a Valium after you've dressed and undressed your blossoming superstar (you always knew goalies were eccentric, but you keep asking yourself. "Why my kid?").

It's having 15 miniature monsters breathing and drooling down your neck in the back seat of the station wagon or camper enroute to a game 60 miles up the highway or to a hockey tournament anywhere in Canada.



It's an executive board member hitting you up for another donation and reminding you that the cost of hockey is going up, up, up.

It's not going out to dinner because it's the first of the month and hockey tuition must be paid.

It's running to the sport shop every other week for a new stick or gloves or skates or a helmet or elbow pads or practice socks.

It's getting to the rink and finding out that you forgot to put the skates in the bag.

It's opening the bag, which is like opening a 12 year old, occupied coffin and finding only one elbow pad.

It's, forgetting to get the skates sharpened and having you kid blame you for falling all over the ice.

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It's skate-a-thons, candy bar sales, rummage sales, paper drives, can drives, and other fund raisers that automatically qualify you for food stamps.

It's carrying a bag full of equipment because you don't want your future Gretzky to pull a muscle or strain his/her back.

It's having a litter of children who all want to play hockey ("What the heck, Mom the tuition is only \$500.00 a year").

It's having three children playing, hockey in three different divisions, with games at the same time in three different rinks.

It's taking enough movies and still pictures to qualify you as a majority stockholder in the Eastman Kodak Company.

It's practices and games and hockey camps and hockey schools and home teams and travel teams and power skating classes and private lessons.

It's putting 12 months a year into the sport (even seven year locusts take a vacation).

It's taking turns selling coffee at 5:00 AM practices.

It's sleeping in until 6:00 AM on (whatever day) because your child was lucky enough to get the 7:00 AM practice one week.

It's screaming and yelling and getting hysterical during a game.

It's having a better view to call penalties than the referee, no matter where you are sitting.



It's eating a doughnut for breakfast, a fast-food burger for lunch and a pizza to go for dinner.

It's father's hockey, mother's hockey, father and son hockey, mother daughter, son, uncle, and aunt hockey.

It's putting up one or two foreign hockey players during a local tournament, and then spending a month's salary entertaining them.

It's forgetting your coat and having to watch a game inside the coldest rink in the league.

It's putting your love life on hold.

It's blue lines, red lines and never quite remembering what they stand for, and getting a crash course on offside, icing, the tag-up rule and freezing the puck.

It's accusing the coach of not giving your child enough ice time.

It's accusing a coach of giving your child too much ice time (he/she was so tired no wonder why the opponent skated around him/her and scored the winning goal.)

It's waiting outside a rink in February (coldest day on record) at 5:00 AM, rink staff is late, and no one else has the key to get in.

It's lunacy, madness, joy and delight.

It's Youth Hockey!