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## Empire Junior Report: Friday, November 4, 2011

Volume 1 Issue 9 Week ending Sunday, October 30, 2011

### Upcoming Weekend Games:

There are 25 Empire Junior Hockey League games on tap for this weekend: November 4-5-6

A complete schedule of league games can be found on line at:

<http://www.pointstreak.com/stats/pro/league/schedule.html?leagueid=362&seasonid=7391>

Visit the Empire Junior Hockey League at:

[www.empirehockey.com](http://www.empirehockey.com)

### PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

This section will be used to promote our **Players of the Week**. Each week the League will select a Forward, Defense and Goaltender as Players of the Week.

Teams are to make nominations no later than Tuesday of each week by 6pm. Players of the Week will be announced on Friday's.

### This week's Players are:

**Forward: Brian Ruff - Buffalo Stars**  
**Goalie: Joe Keyser - Florida Jr Blades**  
**Defense: Michael Addison - Hampton**

See their write up's next page.

Congratulations to these fine players.

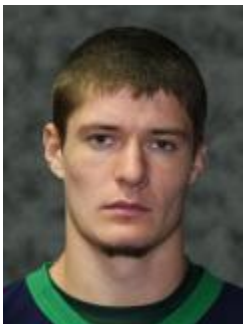
Make submissions, along with picture to Pete Preteroti at: [SportsNiag@aol.com](mailto:SportsNiag@aol.com)

## PLAYERS OF THE WEEK (Week ending October 30, 2011)



### **Forward - Brian Ruff - Buffalo Stars - 1994 (Clarence, NY)**

Rookie forward Brian Ruff erupted with a **6 goal** explosion on Sunday over the Potomac Patriots. After falling behind 3-0 Ruff scored 4 straight 2nd period Buffalo goals en route to a 7-4 victory. Ruff added 2 in the 3rd period. Ruff also scored a goal and an assist the day before as Buffalo defeated Potomac 3-2 in a shootout. Ruff finished the weekend with **8 points**.



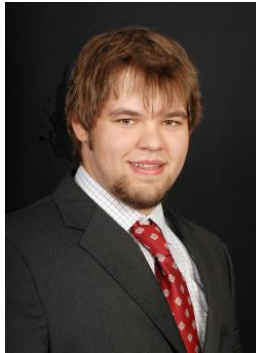
### **Goalie – Joe Keyser– Florida Jr Blades – 1992 (Albany, NY)**

Joe Keyser is continuing his sophomore season in style. This past weekend Joe backstopped the Florida Jr Blades to their 12th win and his second shutout of the season against the cross town rival Florida Eels. Joe currently sits 2nd amongst all Empire Goaltenders with a 6-0-1 record and an impressive Goals Against Average of .96. Keyser a native of Albany, NY decided to bring his talents south last season and helped lead the Jr Blades to nationals. He enjoyed the experience and player development so much so he decided to return for his sophomore season. "It's an incredible family here, we train hard and we have created a winning culture that we all feed off of, this past weekend was an extension of that." stated Joe Keyser. "Joe is a workhorse he logs long minutes between the pipes and works extremely hard on and off the ice, he definitely doesn't ever miss a rep." stated Associate coach Jake Laime. Joe Keyser has continued to stack up impressive numbers for the Blades he currently is 6-0-1, has two shutouts and only six goals against his save percentage is .945%.



**Defense - Michael Addison - Hampton - 95 (Chesapeake, VA)**

Addison is a rock on the blue line for the Whalers. A young defenseman, in his sophomore season Michael puts up big minutes every night and is a staple on the top pair. Also seeing considerable time on the PP and PK. Addison Had another good showing against the East Coast Eagles Scoring the game winner on Saturday Night in a 4-3 win.



**Coach of the Month - Justin Stanlick - Jersey Wildcats**

It says a lot about the head coach when his team has 4 more points at the end of October than they did at the end of the prior season. Whether it is off season recruiting, the "X's & O's" or force of personality, Justin Stanlick has found a recipe that sees the Wildcats at the top of the Western Conference on All Soul's Day. With the exception of a long week in early October where they dropped one to a much improved Pics team and then two to perennial powerhouse Apple Core, Justin has had his team on the right side of the score sheet since day one.

Justin is a home grown product, having been a player for the Wildcats in their inaugural years. When his playing years ended, Justin moved into the coaching ranks. In late 2006, Justin founded the Wildcats Elite Organization which assembles high level tournament teams to travel to top east coast events, such as the Chowder Cup, International Pre Draft Showcase, Toronto College Prospects and Hub City tournaments. The teams have been a great success, seeing many NCAA Division 1, Division 3 and Junior A players filter through the program.

Coach Stanlick, a Level 5, is in his 5th year of coaching and his 2nd year as Empire HC.

## Neither snow, nor burning bus keep Buffalo Stars from victory



The **Buffalo Stars Empire Junior** team loaded the bus at Holiday Rinks on Saturday morning at 5:45am with a routine just like any other Saturday. The team departed 10 minutes later on a trip that would become anything but routine.



The Stars started out just like always. Load the bus and sleep until hungry. The team headed to Woodbridge, VA for a pair of league games against the **Potomac Patriots**. After stopping for breakfast near Williamsport, PA, the team boarded the bus and shortly thereafter, the adventure began. Smoke started to billow from the heat vents on the bus. We pulled over and evacuated the bus. The driver managed to get a temporary fix in the hopes of getting us to a truck stop. That didn't happen. We found ourselves on the side of a highway in Pennsylvania in the middle of a heavy snow squall. No tow truck; no police support; no heat, no food... nothing. Our team on the side of the road stranded for 4 hours. We finally received police support and managed to make it up the road a mile to where a replacement bus met us.

The replacement driver was a part timer with no GPS or directions. Needless to say it took a while to get to Woodbridge. Would the game be held? The scheduled start was 5:30pm. Our opponents, the Potomac Patriots own their rink so in a spirit of class and sportsmanship they moved their other customers around and made arrangements for the game to be played. We finally pulled into the brand new Prince William Ice Arena at 7:30pm: 13 and a half hours after departing Buffalo. The team was cold and hungry and our gracious hosts had some pizza and hot chocolate ready for us. After a quick bite, the team changed quickly and was on the ice by 8:05pm ready to play. With the time constraints, it was determined that the game would be played in the showcase format of 2 25 minute halves.

Potomac came storming out and quickly got on the board just 4 minutes in off the stick of Peter Wydler. The score held until the 24:20 mark when Christopher Moses tied the game for Buffalo and the half ended at one all. Potomac came flying out again in the 2nd half and quickly went up again as Wydler notched his second of the game. Buffalo fought back hard but didn't find the back of the net until 18:14 as Brian Ruff scored on the power play and forced the game into OT.

After a scoreless overtime, the teams went into a 3 man shootout and Buffalo won the shootout 3-1 as Luke Swimline, Chris Moses and Brian Ruff all scored. Nic Pagano was stellar in net turning back 32 Patriots shots.

We finally got to our hotel at 11pm, checked in, ate some pizza and shut down for the night. It took about 5 minutes for the entire team to be out cold.

On Sunday morning we looked a bit sluggish to start. Would the experience of the past 24 hours slow us down? Potomac came storming out right from the start and took it to the Stars. The Pats scored twice in the first period and outshot Buffalo 19-5. The team seemed a bit dazed and confused and certainly tired. They came out in the second and Potomac quickly took a 3 goal lead and the game seemed destined for a blow-out. Then something that only happens in sports occurred. The Stars got mad. They got angry. They were not going to lose. They refused. Brian Ruff led the charge and turned in one of the most spectacular and strange performances in Empire League history. Brian proceeded to score 2

consecutive power play goals a minute apart to cut the Pats lead to one. Potomac then went up by 2 again but then the Stars went to work. Ruff scored twice more followed by Patrick Schmelzinger and the Stars found themselves with a 5-4 lead to close the period.

Buffalo was not over as they stormed out in the 3rd period and went up by 2 as Ruff scored his 5th goal of the game. Potomac fought back and peppered the Buffalo net but goalie Alex Willis was an invisible wall in net making save after save. The game would have one more goal as Ruff registered his 6th of the game into an empty net and wrapped up an impressive 8 point weekend. A jubilant Buffalo team skated off with a well earned 7-4 victory.

The strange Buffalo weekend was not over though as the bus driver took some unusual route home through God knows where and a routine 8 hour trip turned into a 12 hour marathon as the exhausted Buffalo Stars returned to Holiday at 11:45pm Sunday evening, tired and 4 points richer in the standings.

The Buffalo Stars want to thank Potomac and Prince William Arena owner **Bill Hutzler** and his General Manager **RJ Zeigler** for their display of sportsmanship and class. They could have taken a forfeit but in the spirit of competition they made sure the game was played. I want to personally thank both of these men for their fine gesture.

The Stars return home this coming Saturday and Sunday as they host **Applecore** at Holiday Twin Rinks during the **Stars Annual Health & Fitness Expo** that features a blood drive in support of the **Upstate New York Transplant Services** Organization.

For more information about the Buffalo Stars visit us on line at:  
[www.buffalostars.com](http://www.buffalostars.com)

**SUCCESS IS A MARATHON: ONE SHIFT AT A TIME**

## **Junior Bruins Eichel to represent Team USA**

### **B's Forward Heads to Austria in January for Youth Olympics**



**MARLBORO, MA-**B's forward and captain Jack Eichel has been named to Team USA's roster for the Youth Olympics taking place in Innsbruck, Austria this January 13-22. The team, comprised of some of the top 1996 born players in the United States will play Austria, Canada, Finland and Russia in round robin play.

Eichel, coming off a strong second half to the 2010-2011 season, his first with the Empire team, has continued to impress all who watch him. He followed up his strong inaugural campaign with the B's, one that saw the team win a National Championship, with a great summer at events such as the USA Hockey National Festival and Beantown Classic events. Through the early part of the season, despite having just turned 15 and being one of the youngest players in the league, he is one the league's best.

He is among the league leaders in scoring en route to the B's being in first place in not only the Eastern Conference but also tied for the league lead (25 pts) with the Florida Everblades.

While details of the event are not fully realized at this time the talk is that this will mirror the Winter Olympics and will include opening and closing ceremonies and additional winter sports in addition to the hockey component. Innsbruck, Austria has twice hosted the Winter Olympics (1964 and 1976).

Eichel will be joined by two former 1996 Junior Bruins AAA team teammates in Joe Wegwerth and Nate Billitier.

## 'CORE EMPIRE SWEEPS SYRACUSE IN TWO GREAT GAMES WINS 4-3 AND 5-4



LONG BEACH, NY.... The **Applecore** Empire team looked forward to the Syracuse weekend, as this would be a great test for the team playing one of the top teams in the Empire League. The Stars have some of the best young talent in the Western Conference and the two game set proved to be a great weekend of hockey for the 'Core. In the Saturday game, the Stars took a quick 2-0 lead on goals by Yule and Kirwin. Mark DeV Vaughn answered back on the PP off assists from Mike Dellatto & Ed Shinnick. With the Stars leading 3-1, "General" Brandon Fusaro made the score 3-2 Stars converting on a scramble. Keegan Travers & Connor Finocchio assisted on the play. The game was tied 3-3 when Ryan Cheng scored on the PP, assisted by Mike Dellatto & Ed Shinnick. The game went into the third period tied at 3-3. With 15 minutes left in the game, Matt Bavaro scored what would be the winner on assists from Mark Devaughn & Jon Kaszuba. Justin Kapelmaster shut the door for the rest of the way to preserve the 4-3 win. "The team showed tremendous character in coming back from the (2) goal deficit and playing a great 3rd period" stated Coach Henry Lazar.

Sunday's game was loaded with action also. Goals by Keegan Travers, Matt Bavaro, Joe Bochichio (2), & Philipp Kreuzer led the way for a 5-4 win. "The (4) points move the 'Core closer to first place, and when the games are equal we hope to be on top" added Assistant Coach Jon Sandos.

**APPLE SAUCE**.....On the injury front, Mike Conslato (2 weeks), Alex Harwood (1 week) and Ben Sorkin (3-4 weeks) all should be back for December.....The team travels to Buffalo to play the Stars next weekend, then heads to Boston to play in the Warriors Classic Showcase.....





## ***Jr. Blades sweep home-and-home series vs. Florida Eels***



*Estero, Fla.*— Last weekend, the **Florida Jr. Blades** faced off against their cross-city rivals the Florida Eels in contests that put the Jr. Blades on top.

The home-and-home series began on Saturday, October 29 on the Eels home ice. The highly-penalized game saw the Jr. Blades claim a 16-4 victory. Fifteen Jr. Blades recorded points in the contest lead by defenseman Kristian Avellanet (3g, 2a) and forward D.J. Thomas (3g, 1a).

The Jr. Blades power-play unit robbed the Florida Eels for five power-play goals on 14 opportunities. Blades peppered Eels goalie Dylan Knox with 72 shots in the contest while only allowing 20 to reach net-minder Eric Sugrue.

“It’s two teams in the same city battling for bragging rights,” said forward Eryn Siracusa. “I think we came out strong and won that battle.”

The Jr. Blades returned to home ice on Sunday. Jr. Blade Troy Degler scored the game-winning goal at 3:23 of the first period. It would be the only goal in the first two stanzas.

“Coach gave us a nice little speech in the locker room,” said forward D.J. Thomas. “He told us to get ourselves together and we all decide pick it up and we came back and won the game.”

The Jr. Blades never faced a deficit and tallied five third-period security goals to win the contest 6-0. Second-year Jr. Blades goaltender Joe Keyser stopped all shots faced earning a shutout win.





With forward Mike Bambi being promoted to the **Philadelphia Revolution** EJ team, and a couple of injuries, Philadelphia was looking for players to step up their game. The current Empire points leader, Sean Fleming, answered the challenge in the 1st shift of the game when he received a pass from center James Wallace and made no mistake in putting the Revolution up 1 - 0 early in the game. Maksymum evened the score at 1, until on a 2 on 2 rush, Clint Aussprung 1 timed a pass from winger Mike Young that found its way over the shoulder of maksymum's net minder. Sean Fleming added to the lead and his stronghold as the Empire points leader when he wacked in a net front pass on the power play from line mates Kyle Jennings and James Wallace. Holding on to the lead proved difficult for the Revolution as Maksymum struck with back to back goals in the second to once again even the score. A power play blast from the point from the stick of Revolution captain Ryan O'Malley and another tally from Fleming to complete the Hat trick, found Philly once again with a two goal lead. The grit of Maksymum shined through as they tallied 2 in the third to even the score for the 3rd time that night. In the closing moments of the game, Fleming entered the offensive zone on his off side, a shoulder slip move outside followed by far side shot that rang the post before tickling the twine gave Fleming his 4th goal of the night and the Revolution a hard earned 2 points.

After a high scoring last minute victory for Philly on Saturday night, both the Revolution and Maksymum arrived Sunday morning with a higher focus on defensive play. After the 1st period the score was even 0 - 0 with neither team's goal tender showing any sign of weakness. Despite outshooting Maksymum 18 to 10 in the second period, Philly headed into the locker room after the period down 1 - 0. It took 31 Revolution shots to finally sneak 1 past the strong goaltending of the opposition. Once again, Sean Fleming opened the scoring doors for the Revolution on a bang, bang play that started with line mate Kyle Jennings behind the net and ended with a 1 timer from Fleming finding its way through the 5 hole of Maksymum's goalie. Just 2 minutes later Fleming added his second of the night and 6th of the weekend on a down low power play goal. Philly held onto the lead until desperation payed off for Maksymum with the goaltender pulled and under

a minute remaining they evened up the score at 2. A shoot out ensued. Both goaltenders, Joe Marshall for the Revolution, and William Massey played strong games and both stopped 1st shooters in the shoot out for their respective teams. 2nd shooter for Philly, Kyle Jennings, threaded a forehand to backhand 5 hole shot through Massey's legs to put the Revolution in the lead. However the next to Maksymum shooters were able to find the back of the net, and that was enough to take the shoot out victory for Maksymum.

## Hampton Roads Junior Whalers



The **Hampton Roads Junior Whalers** returned to league play this week with a set of games against the East Coast Eagles. Coming off a good weekend with 2 wins against the Little Flyers (MJHL) winning both games 6-2, the boys looked to continue their success against the Eagles Saturday Oct. 29 and Sunday Oct 30.

The Whalers Empire team won a hard fought 4-3 game Saturday night over the Eagles. Nathan Kanter got the team going at 7:21 of the 1st from Jeremy Wilson and Taylor Paasch. The Eagles knotted the game at 1-1 with a breakaway goal at 12:16. Keegan Howver gave the Whalers a 2-1 lead at 13:56 of the 1st on the power play unassisted.

In the 2nd period it was all Eagles, picking up goals at 9:45 and 13:23 to take a 3-2 lead into the 3rd period. In the 3rd Jeremy Wilson ties the game at 3-3 at 2:17 from Nathan Kanter and Jackson Braniff. Michael Addison let a bomb go from the point to give the Whalers a 4-3 win at 16:18 from Chris Neff. Alan Johnson picked up the win in net with 43 saves. The Whalers kicked off Sunday's game the same way it ended the night before when Jeremy Wilson took a feed from Nathan Kanter and buried the puck in the back of the net to give the Whalers a 1-0 lead, Taylor Paasch also assisted on the play. The Eagles would tie the game at 1-1 towards the end of the 1st period. In the 2nd the Eagles scored two more goals at 0:52 and 11:24 to take a 3-1 lead into the 3rd.

In the 3rd period the Whalers cut the lead to 3-2 on the power play when Keegan Howver one-timed a feed from Damon Ascenzi into the back of the net at 6:43.

The Eagles would extend the lead at 13:14 and finish it with an empty netter at 19:38 to seal the 5-2 win. Grant Laughrey took the loss in goal, turning aside 38 Eagles shots.

All Attention is now turned to the Atlanta Knights. The Whalers will play a 3 game set at the Chilled Ponds Ice and Turf Complex against the Knights with games Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. The Whalers have sole position of third place in the Southern Conference looking to gain ground on the Knights in the standings. "This will be a tuff weekend. Anytime you play a team three times in a weekend things will get challenging. Atlanta is above us in the standings and our boys want their spot. This weekend will tell us a lot about what kind of team we got here." Said head coach Brad Jones.

**Transactions:** On October 20<sup>th</sup> starting goalie Blake Scott got called up to the EJHL South team after Dylan Snyder came down with mono. Scott made the trip with the team to New Hampshire for the Monarchs Showcase. Scott earned 2 starts on the weekend playing against 2 of the top teams in the EJHL. Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup> Scott saw the Jr. Monarchs and came out with a .895 SV % turning away 34 of 38 shots. Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> Scott was up against his toughest challenge yet taking the net against top ranked South Shore Kings. Scott put up a .865 SV % and turned away 32 of 37 shots. "We are very proud of Scott. I have watched this kid play goalie since he was a mite. After seeing the amount of dedication Scott has put into being a top end keeper I am positive the kid will only go up from here. He will be missed but we are in the business of advancing players." Said assistant coach Kevin LaPointe. With a hole to fill the EMPIRE team signed Goalie Holden Melgoza from Torrance, CA and spent last season with California Wave U18 team. Melgoza got his first start against the Little Flyers (MJHL) Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> and posted a .935 SV % and turned away 29 of 31 shots from the Flyers.



The **Boston Bandits** hosted the red hot South Shore Kings this week. The game had plenty of ups and downs as the two teams battled hard. The Kings out skated the Bandits in the first and had a 2-0 lead. In the second the Bandits would turn the game completely around and out skate the Kings. However the Bandits could only score once on a nice play set up by Tyler Drevitch 95' (Middleboro, MA) and scored by Paul Fregeau 93' (Sylmar, CA). In the third both teams had chances with each team

scoring once early. The Bandits scored on the PP on another great pass by Tyler Drevitch this time to Will Platt 94' (Pleasanton, CA) The Bandits could not come up with another and the final was Bandits 2 Kings 6.

After a quarter of the season the Bandits are 4-6-1 in the league, 5-7-2 overall. The Bandits have this weekend off. Some of the players are using this weekend to visit colleges of interest. The Bandits return to action November 11 - 13 weekend at the Valley Junior Warriors Showcase Event.

## Empire South News & Notes

### Saturday, October 29th Empire South:

#### **Florida Junior Blades 16, Florida Eels 4**

D.J. Thomas and Kristian Avellanet scored 3 goals each, Chaise Howard and J.P. Larmoyeux 2 each and Eric Sugrue made 16 saves for the Junior Blades, who scored 8 times in the second and 5 times in the third. Dominick Rovito with 2 and Erik Allard and David Block with singles, were the goal scorers for the Eels, who saw Dylan Knox make 56 saves. The Junior Blades were 5-for-14 on the power play, while the Eels were 3-for-11 with the man advantage.

#### **Tampa Bay Juniors 5, Atlanta Jr. Knights 4**

Dustin Disbro scored a power play goal just past the midway point of the third period, sending the Empire South Juniors on the way to a 5-4 win over Atlanta. Ben Winter scored a pair of first-period goals, while Jeff Meyer and Michael Hirschauer scored in the second period for Tampa Bay, which got 41 saves from Kyle Gertz. The Knights were led by Brandon Harley, who scored three times in the first period. Richard Privette scored in the second period for Atlanta. Zachary Voskamp had 14 saves. The Juniors were 3-for-8 on the power play and 4-of-4 on the penalty kill.

#### **Hampton Roads Whalers 4, East Coast Eagles 3**

Michael Addison scored at 16:18 of the third period to propel Hampton Roads to the win. Nathan Kanter, Jeremy Wilson, and Keegan Howard also scored goals, while Alan Johnson stopped 43 shots. The Eagles got goals from Dakota Beaulieu, Samuel Banasiewicz and Joshua Martinez, plus 40 saves from Cody Smargiassi.

### Sunday, October 30th Empire South:

#### **Atlanta Jr. Knights 9, Tampa Bay Juniors 3**

Atlanta scored four times in each of the first two periods in their 9-3 win. For the Knights, Richard Privetter had 2 goals and 3 assists, Brandon Harley had a goal and 2 assists, James Ugone had a goal and an assist, Wesley Davis added 3 assists and Patrick Wenzell made 24 saves. Goal scorers for Tampa Bay were Brendan Nicholson, Jeff Meyer and Daniel Fritz. Kyle Gertz was busy in net, making 40 saves. Both teams were 1-for-2 on the power play.

#### **East Coast Eagles 5, Hampton Roads Whalers 2**

Dakota Beaulieu scored twice, with Kevin Mullaney, Chris Magee and Joshua Martinez once each, as the Eagles gained a split of the weekend set. Scott Jackson made 35 saves for East Coast. Jeremy Wilson and Keegan Hower scored for Hampton Roads, with Alan Johnson making 37 saves.

#### **Florida Junior Blades 6, Florida Eels 0**

Joseph Keyser stopped all 14 shots he faced, while Troy Degler (twice), Ross Kovacs, Daniel Thompson, Sam Mancini and D.J. Thomas scored goals for the Junior Blades. Jacob Widmer stood tall in goal for the Eels, making 77 saves.



## Here are some good Junior Blogs to follow:

**USA Junior Hockey:** <http://www.usacollegehockey.com/cgi-bin/UBBCGI/ultimatebb.cgi>

A great board for Junior Hockey discussion. I post in here all the time and am a moderator.

**American Junior Hockey:** <http://www.americanjuniorhockey.com/>

Another good site I always post in.

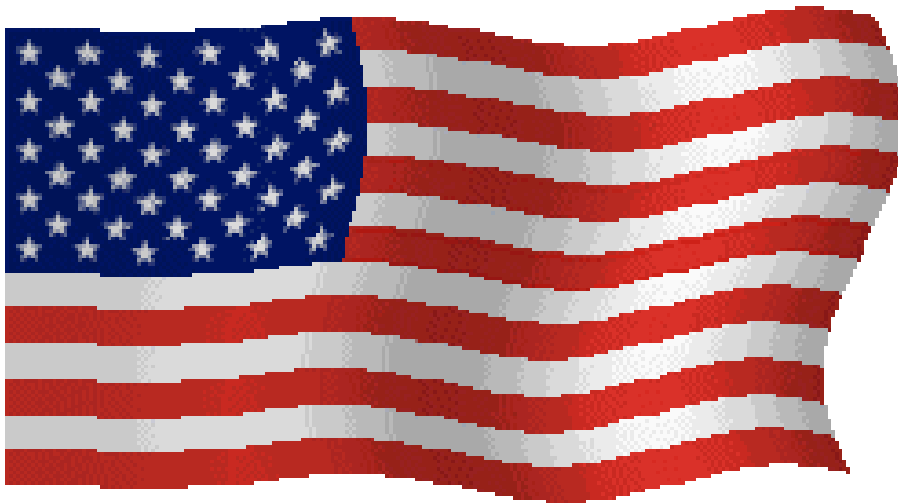
**Wrist Shot Hockey:** <http://www.wristshothockey.net/>

**and of course our own blog at:** <http://juniorhockeytalk.proboards.com/>

**Please give us your feedback on this Newsletter and make sure to get it into the hands of your players and parents. This is only our first issue. It will only be as good as you make it. Make sure to keep news flowing in. [sportsniag@aol.com](mailto:sportsniag@aol.com)**

**Pete Preteroti**

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## GOD BLESS THE USA