

Puck Junkies Origin

A historical must-read by Assistant Captain Ayla Owens



Once upon a time, a long, long time ago in a land far, far away there was a wee lad playing hockey in a backyard rink. His name - Robbie Owens. Little did we know, this lad would start & nurture the Puck Junkies storied franchise in the Kimmitt Cup.

Having skated, deked (or tried to...) and shot as many pucks as one could imagine in his own backyard, Robbie would decide to take his game and venture far and wide from his little town. After a long and arduous journey, Robbie would find himself in the small town of Cochrane with a new family (Annette, Ryan, Ayla and Cody). It is here where his scouting and tutoring would begin.

Two key turns of fortune would happen for Robbie in Cochrane: "The Mann" family became his neighbors and he joined the legendary Ranchmen Oldtimers hockey team. Robbie would unknowingly begin his scouting and training for a team that was only at the edge of his imagination. It started with a family tradition of a backyard rink, where Ryan, Ayla, Cody, Alex, Chris, and Nick would learn all the fundamentals of outdoor hockey. While fun, this preparation did have its hardships: Bruised shins from the serious foul of a lifted puck; Black & Blue knees from falling and the occasional (or frequent depending on your point of view) brawl were just some of the struggles that these young prospects faced.

A whole wealth of "creative talent" was introduced to Robbie when he signed with the Ranchmen: One of a kind Christmas gifts; Inspirational beer cards and the world renowned Richard Award. All of this creativity would play a part in the future Puck Junkies.

However, Robbie seemed dissatisfied with just organized, indoor hockey to scout players for the Puck Junkies. Thus began the annual Boxing Day Barrier Lake Outdoor Classic. If ever there was a venue made for pond hockey, it would be Barrier Lake in Kananaskis: Crisp temperatures, polished ice, and nestled in the heart of the towering Rocky Mountains. To-die for conditions for any outdoor hockey enthusiast.

Finally, unbeknownst to Robbie, the day would come when all his hard work would be realized when Joe MacLellan and Jason Baserman started the Kimmitt Cup, a 3 on 3 pond hockey tourney on Mitford Pond in the dead of winter. A fitting tribute to Lindsay Kimmitt who passionately did everything she could to bring the joy of hockey into the hearts and souls of friends and co-workers, many of whom had never skated before. No other hockey team in the world had so many "one-of-a-kind" name bars, an innovation started by the one and only "Monumental", #25

The first Puck Junkies team were few in numbers but large in heart, following Annette "the Hockey Mom" team catchphrase, "Play hard, Play safe, and Have fun." The team consisted of all the Owens, Liz Stewart and a small, unheard of hockey family named the Shelly's. This team would go onto win the ultimate prize of the Shottie Stick.

With competition even stronger than the first year, the Puck Junkies would take on a few new additions and repeat as Shottie stick champs. The third Kimmitt Cup would begin a dry spell for the Puck Junkies, but don't tell that to this team as they continue to "play hard, play safe, and have fun." It would also see some roster changes with the Shelley family moving on and Blake Morris, the Mann, Brady, Kwas and Mitchell families joining the squad. All these new additions scouted over the years on the ponds, rinks and Ranchmen events.

On to Kimmitt Cup 7, where the Puck Junkies have been training hard in the offseason with trips to Barrier Lake, Booze Cup and other pre-tournament activities. They have their skates sharpened, helmet straps tightened, and sticks taped and are eagerly awaiting the chance to "play hard, play safe, and have fun".

A motto that Lindsay lived so passionately every time she hit the ice.