

TOUGH ENOUGH

Q: WHY DO YOU BELIEVE THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN SPORTS?

A: "For me, it's important to show young girls that they can play hockey and that they have lots of options. Now with the PWHL, women can play professionally and we truly get to show those young girls that they can play at every level. The PWHL gives girls the chance to dream bigger than I ever could... not only is it important to have female representation it is equally important to have demographically diverse female representation in sports."

NATALIE CASTILLO, 12

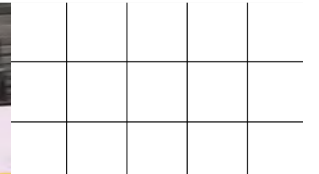
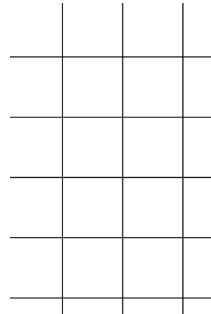


A: "Especially with the first women's professional [hockey] games happening I think its important to have female representation now so that little girls don't see hockey as something weird but as kind of normal and an option for their future."

MAPELEINE RETURETA, 12



Photos by M. Watts



1. TAKING THE FACEOFF, JACOB ZIER, 12, pushes the puck forward to try and get it out of the defensive zone. During the face off, Zier focused on lifting his opponents stick and winning the puck. "My favorite player is Connor Bedard, I love watching him play and i try to play and get better like him," Zier said. Photo by Mae Watts.



2. ADJUSTING HIS HELMET, KELLEN MCGARVEY, 12, sits on the bench with his teammates mid-game. McGarvey was resting on the bench after a hard fought shift. "My mentality on the bench is to try and keep my teammates up and to keep battling," McGarvey said. Photo by M. Watts.

3. TARGET IN SIGHT, JONAH ROWLISON, 12, lines up for a hit against an opponent. Rowlison tried to keep a calm mind on the bench in order to make calm decisions on the ice. "I'm inspired by old teammates who believed in me from the start," Rowlison said. Photo by Mae Watts.

4. OBSERVING A PLAY, KELLEN METSKER, 11, prepares for action. Metsker was inspired by his teammates and players in the NHL such as Patrick Kane. "I wear number 8 because Patrick Kane was my favorite player as a kid and his number was 88 but our numbers didn't go past 35," Metsker said. Photo by Mae Watts.

5. CELEBRATING HIS GOAL, ROWYN GWINN, 12, high fives his teammates on the bench. Gwinn's favorite part about hockey was the friendships he made. "The feeling of scoring a goal is one of the most exciting things someone can experience," Gwinn said. Photo by Mae Watts.



6. ON A RUSH, SAMUEL "SAM" SOKOLOWSKI, 11, quickly moves the puck on a breakout. Sokolowski grew up playing hockey with his brother. "I wear number nine because it was my older brother's number when he played for Heritage. It is a way to remember playing hockey together," Sokolowski said. Photo by Mae Watts.



STICK'N TOGETHER

BY MAE WATTS

HOCKEY PLAYERS SHARE ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE ON THE CO-OP TEAM

Often in high school sports, teams are made up of students who all attend the same school, but

hockey players in the Heritage Hockey program had the unique opportunity to play besides students from across the district. Students from all three Littleton Public School District's high schools were represented on the Heritage Hockey team. Despite the numerous other sports rivalries off the ice, the Heritage Hockey team was able to come together and succeed as one team. Emily Levesque, 11,

viewed her teammates as brothers, getting to beat them in drills, but sticking with them when it mattered. "It's almost like we have built our own community under one team and there isn't a bunch of turmoil from who goes where," Levesque said. Most skaters spent four years together building both their skills and friendships. "The relationships you gain throughout your years of playing on the team are unmatched," Owen Persichetti, 11, said. Persichetti had been playing on the team since his freshman year and was a JV captain.



TAKE A CHANCE

FRESHMAN AND SOPHOMORES DEVELOP THEIR SKILLS ON THE PROSPECT TEAM

The Prospects Team was a team focused on developing players during their freshman and sophomore years to prepare for the fast paced JV and Varsity level teams. Many players such as Edward "Eddie" Metsker, 09, already had hockey experience when entering high school. "I've been playing hockey for a while so I decided to keep playing in high school," Metsker said. As players on The



Prospects Team developed their skills, the varsity hockey team set an example for the younger skaters and inspired them. "Someone who inspires me to improve is my brother. When I was a kid, I used to go to his games. I watched him play and wanted to be just like him," Wyatt Wrigley, 10, said. Photos by Mae Watts.

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