



**AAU CHAMPIONSHIP WEEKEND**

**“TRULY AN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIR”**

**Feb. 28 – March 2, 2020**

**London, Ontario, Canada**

The 2020 AAU Ice Hockey Championships were a huge success this past weekend in London, Ontario, Canada. In total there were 52 hockey teams that participated in all divisions from Novice 6U through to Midget 17U. There were 117 hockey games played over the weekend on 8 different pads of ice in 3 different facilities.

The event was truly an international affair. Teams from Ohio, Michigan, Illinois and Ontario, Canada participated. One of the teams Cube Development - Global (based out of Illinois) had 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s of their team fly in from Serbia just for the event. The players spoke very little English so fortunately there was a coach from Serbia with them to help translate. Major thanks to Tom Creale, Cube Development in Illinois for organizing this team and the 2 other teams that came to previous AAU-ORHL Events this past season!

Sunday was Championship Day with 8 Finals. Of the 8 Gold Medal games, 3 games had international teams. National Anthems were played for each of the countries represented (including Serbia) at the beginning of each game. Michigan was represented in the Novice Division with Brighton Ice. Cube Development Illinois in the Atom Division and Cube Development Global (Illinois and Serbia) in the Peewee Division. Both of the Cube Development teams took gold medals in their respective divisions. It was a very exciting day with 3 of the 8 championship games going to overtime; one game going through to a shootout!

Listed below are the AAU Champions for the various divisions:

<b>Division</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Winning Team</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Opponent</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Novice</b> ( '11 & '12)	Hall	Tri-City Titans Gold	3	London Cobras	2
	Marnier	Wellington County Tauros	4	Tri-City Titans Black	0
	Andersen	Vaughan Golden Knights	4	Brighton Ice (Michigan)	1
<b>Atom</b> ( '09-'10)		Cube Development - Illinois	8	London Cobras	3
<b>Peewee</b> ( '07-'08)	Matthews	Tri-City Titans Gold	3 (OT)	Stratford Silver Knights	2 (OT)
	McDavid	Cube Development - Global	5	Tri-City Titans Black	4
	MacKinnon	Halton Rage	4	London Cobras Red	1
<b>Bantam</b> ( '05-'06)		Carlisle Chill Blue	4 (OT)	London Red Circle	2 (OT)

<b>Midget</b>	Ovechkin	Tri-City Titans White	6	London Cobras Red	1
('02-'04)	Crosby	Tri-City Titans Gold	2	Carlisle Chill	1 (OT)
	Gretzky	Norfolk Nationals	4	Royal City Kings	3

Lastly, on a side note, this weekend was truly indicative of what the AAU and the ORHL (Ontario Rep Hockey League) are all about. We had a family with 2 players from Serbia whose equipment did not arrive. The mother spoke very little English and the boys did not speak English at all. The older brother was participating on the Cube Global team with a few of his teammates and their Serbian Coach Nenad. For the first day, the player on the Cube Development Global team wore a teammates' equipment and the coaches' skates (quite a bit too big!).

On Saturday morning, the hockey bags had still not arrived. When asked, we received huge support from the Canadian teams to help the boys out! A HUGE thank you London Cobras, Royal City Kings and the Milton Stars for lending equipment to this family to allow the boys to play. Once we had a complete set of equipment, the younger brother, who did not speak any English went into the Cube Development Illinois team not knowing anyone. Walking on to this team by himself, not understanding a word of English. The coaching staff were so accommodating as this little boy just wanted to play hockey! After that first game on Saturday, he spent the rest of the day with his "new" American teammates. A memory, they will all remember about this Tournament.

Their equipment did arrive late Saturday afternoon and both teams made it through to Championship Day. Both teams won gold medals and the younger brother, scored a goal! It was reported that the younger brother was so excited, that he slept with his medal on that night!

I believe that this truly exemplifies what the AAU and the ORHL are all about. Providing wonderful childhood experiences and memories while participating in the great sport of ice hockey!

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