



# THE SWAMP GAZETTE

Official Newsletter of the Florida Everblades Fan Club

March/April 2006



## President's Message

Doug Byington, President

In this month's President Message I want to make sure that everyone involved in putting together our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Spring Picnic and Awards Party stand up and take a bow. This had to be our best and most successful picnic we've put together. It started on time, we ate on time, we kept the attention of the guys for the right amount of time and we finished and were cleaned up right on schedule. This could not have been done without the help of Bubba and everyone on his committee. As President it was good to observe while the picnic committee took care of everything and made monthly reports to the Board on the progress and details.

I also would like to congratulate the Florida Everblades for making the ECHL playoffs for the 8<sup>th</sup> straight year. I think that may be an ECHL record. If not it should be. When we go to the Kelly Cup Finals it will our 3<sup>rd</sup> straight appearance and hopefully our 1<sup>st</sup> win. The team is playing minus players due to call-ups and injuries and we still find ways to win. There is a good chance that we may even break the 50 win/100 point in a season mark and that has been done only once before. It's a long road (I mean this because we have the longest road trips in the league) and we can't stop till we have the Kelly Cup in hand.

We are attracting many new members to the club this year. If you have not attended one of our Membership meetings I would like to encourage doing so. This is where all our ideas come from for raffles, parties, special events and too many more to mention. I know that somewhere out there someone has a great idea for a raffle or a fundraising project. We would love to hear it and hopefully use it but we can't unless you come to a General Meeting.

In every President's Message I have to ask for the help of our members to make our club be the best one in the ECHL. I want to thank all the new members that have come forward to help out. This really does help but of course we are still looking for more. Remember, this is your club and needs your help. Please contact any Board member when you come by the Fan Club table to ask how you can help. As you read our current edition of THE SWAMP GAZETTE and you have an idea for any article or column put it on paper or email and you could have a byline in our next issue. Our guys are the best in the ECHL and need our support at home and on the road. Last but not least.

**GO BLADES!!!**

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### **Membership** *Gini Hogenson*

We are SO close to my secretly set goal for the number of members for the 2005-06 season. We currently have 198 members! The breakdown is 82 memberships comprised of the following: 23 Individual Memberships; 59 Family Memberships; 138 Adults; 60 Children. This is really awesome for a Fan Club which is only 3 years old. We truly are the best!! Let's welcome our new members:

Rusty, Sally, Cody & Cassidy Ingalls  
Belinda & Keaton Hanley  
Michael & Paula Waldorf, Jon Powell  
Joan Rutherford  
Nadine Gennaro  
Tommy Virsack  
Vicki & Jed Adams, Gary Warnock  
Brandon, Amy, Ethan & Hannah Bennett  
Dawn Felber  
Tammy Doane

The winner of the Recruiting Contest will be announced soon!! Contest ended 3/1/06. P.S. Wear your Fan Club Membership Button so we know who you are. If you don't have one, stop by the Fan Club Table to pick one up!!

Questions – Ideas – contact Gini Hogenson  
At [membershipchair@earthlink.net](mailto:membershipchair@earthlink.net) or cell  
Phone at 239-839-3324

### **Sunshine/Hospitality** *Karen Devan*

We celebrated 3 birthdays in the month of March, Bryce Charpentier, Dustin Johner, and a very lucky Chris Lee. It seems he had 2 birthdays this season, one in October and one in March. There was only one birthday to celebrate in April, Ernie Hartlieb (Big Ern). Each player received a birthday card and an enclosed gift card. Birthday greetings were also mailed to all Fan Club members with March and April birthdays.

### **Road Trips** *Chuck (BUBBA) Devan* **Road Trip Committee**

The players endured a very long road trip in March. We put approximately \$800.00 worth of food on the bus. Thanks to a lot of donated item, the cost to us was lowered to \$500.00. Thank you very much to all, and you know who you are, that helped out with these donations. However, a call from Jimmy the bus driver reported that the guys ran out of food 3 days before the end of the road trip and were chewing the wood on the bus. Okay may not, luckily they still had per diem money. These young guys sure love to eat. With playoff coming, so will road trips, if you would like to donate any items or give a money donation, please call Bubba at 994-4499.

### **Florida Everblades Fan Club Mission Statement**

We, the members of the Florida Everblades Fan Club, are committed to act in a professional manner, as a booster organization, in supporting all efforts for the promotion of professional hockey in Southwest Florida. The objectives of the Fan Club are to have fun, along with providing a forum for hockey enthusiasts to exchange ideas and have opportunities to enjoy the game of hockey. Furthermore, the Fan Club will provide support for the members of the Florida Everblades hockey team and their families.

### **Committees**

Membership – *Gini Hogenson*  
Road Supplies – *Bubba Devan*  
Special Events – *Gerry Hill*  
Newsletter – *Leeann Knapp*  
Fundraising – *Open*  
Sunshine/Hospitality – *Karen Devan*  
Community Services – *Kimberly Christiansen*  
Volunteer Services – *Open*  
Phone – *Sandra Harper*  
Website Coordinator – *Open*

## SLAY THE GLADIATORS!!!

The weather was clear and chilly outside, but the smiles and enthusiasm of the fans warmed the inside of the bus. Early on Thursday morning, February 16<sup>th</sup>, a group of about 40 dedicated Everblades fans left Germain Area. We were on our way to slaying the Gladiators in Gwinnett, Georgia.

The Gwinnett Gladiators play at Gwinnett Center, a newer multi-purpose Arena that opened about 3 years ago, just north of Atlanta. The lobby area is spacious and carpeted. There is a very nice (and good) food court serving such choices as Chinese cuisine, subs and sandwiches, Italian and pizza, as well as other favorites.

When you walk into the arena, you are at ground level. You actually walk downstairs to access your seats as the ice level is below the ground. All of the seats are padded and have a convenient cup holder for beverages.

We attended the games on Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> and Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup>. We suffered a loss on Friday and enjoyed a shoot out win on Saturday. Both games saw the Blades fans very enthusiastic and very loud! The Gwinnett fans knew we were there.

I spoke with Chris Lee (#44), who was hurt during the Friday night game. He went to the locker room for treatment and heard loud screams and shouts from the ice. He said he thought that they (Gwinnett) had scored. He was very surprised and pleased to see that we (Blades) had scored. His team mates pointed to the blanket of white jerseys behind the bench. Smiles lit up the whole team!

Lee said that the Blades were very happy to see such a great turn out of fans while they were in Gwinnett. They felt it was very supportive and motivating to see and hear us all behind the bench.

The Gladiators made their entrance onto the ice with creative lighting and music befitting a battle scene at a Roman coliseum in ancient times. They tried to set the tone of intimidation and victory (it didn't help much).

The Gladiators also have their own fan mascot, much as the Blades have theirs. The Gladiator Mascot wears his special jersey, painted face, and helmet. He also carried his battle sword with a gator impaled on it (ouch)! This fan met and spoke with our very own Blades fan Mascot, John "the Masked Man". These "die-hard" fans were polite, but not friendly as they defended their teams' honor.

After the Saturday night game, some of our group stayed to meet with the Blades outside of the arena. People were surprised to see the players leaving the arena wearing flip-flops (on their feet) when the temperature hovered around the 30 degree mark. The rest of us went back to the nice warm hotel room to get ready for our early morning departure to sunny Florida.

We all had a great time going to see the Blade play and touring the Atlanta area. We even met a celebrity on Saturday evening – Jim Cantore – of the Weather Channel! It appears that he is a Gladiator fan (too bad). We did ask him to send the hurricanes somewhere else this year.

Our trip was arranged by Gary "Go Blades". This was my third trip with Gary as our leader. When he starts walking around with his "Blades Bus Trip" sign next season, be sure to sign up quickly. You will have an absolutely great time!

Submitted by: Sharon Weatherhead (writer for [www.prohockeynews.com](http://www.prohockeynews.com))

The Swamp Gazette is the official newsletter of the Florida Everblades Fan Club, Inc. It is intended for use by current members of the club, sponsors, as well as members of the Florida Everblades organization.

We actively solicit interesting and informative articles, photos, puzzles, poems about hockey from club members, as well as others within the hockey community; however, we reserve the right to edit such articles for length and content.

The views and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the FEFC, its' officers, or the Florida Everblades organization.

Articles for consideration may be sent to the **Florida Everblades Fan Club, 11000 Everblades Pkwy, Estero, FL 33928, ATTN: Newsletter Editor.**

## Frequently Asked Questions

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**How many players can dress for a game?** Teams may dress a maximum of eighteen (18) players for each regular season and playoff game, of which two (2) must be goaltenders. No team can play with only one designated goaltender on the lineup card.

**How many veteran players are allowed on an ECHL team?**

Each ECHL team shall be limited to four veteran players on its active roster during the hockey season (regular season and playoffs).

**What constitutes a veteran player in the ECHL?**

A veteran shall be defined as an individual who has played 260 regular season games of professional hockey. Any player signed to a NHL or AHL contract shall be exempt from the foregoing rule. Notwithstanding the above, any player assigned to an ECHL member team on a NHL or AHL contract shall be deemed to be a veteran if said player is 24 years or older and has participated in 260 regular season professional hockey games as of the opening day of the season of said year.

**What games count towards determining a player's veteran status?**

Games played for the Olympic or National Team of any country do not count as professional games and will not be applicable toward the 260 professional games needed to be classified as a veteran. The ECHL will use the International Section of current and previous National Hockey League Year in Review books to determine professional games played outside North America. If a player's statistics are included in this section, those games will be considered to be professional games played and applicable toward his veteran status. Games played in all professional North American leagues, past and present, will count toward a player's veteran status.

**What constitutes a "Rookie" in the ECHL?**

A rookie is any player who has played less than 25 regular season games of professional hockey.

### *18<sup>th</sup> Annual ECHL Booster Club Jamboree Co-Hosted by Augusta Lynx & Columbia Inferno*

The date for the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual ECHLBC Jamboree has been set for July 21-23, 2006, and the location is Augusta, Georgia. Mark your calendars right now and plan on joining the fun. Augusta is located right on the Savannah River, which is the dividing line between Georgia and South Carolina, just off Interstate 20.

Plan to go early or stay after and take the time to see these two beautiful cities, both rich in historic culture and southern hospitality. You can play golf or visit the historic districts and museums of both Augusta and Columbia. The capital city of South Carolina, Columbia, is just 70 miles away. Or, you can just relax and enjoy the southern lifestyle.

During hockey season the Augusta Lynx and the Columbia Inferno are serious competitors. Off the ice, the Lynx and Inferno Booster Clubs have common ground – "Supporting Hockey". In 2006 these two clubs will join together as one team – hosting the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual ECHL Booster Club Jamboree. Pulling off a jamboree in itself is no small task, but putting two booster clubs together, whose mascots are a "Dog" and a "Cat", will make for an interesting Host Team. In support of hockey and all ECHL Booster Clubs across North America, these two teams have made a statement that they guarantee their two clubs will pull together and make this jamboree "One to Remember".

For more information, visit [www.echlbcjamboree.com](http://www.echlbcjamboree.com). This website is currently under construction, but the Host Teams have promised information will be up soon.

If you would like to go to the jamboree, visit the Everblades Fan Club table and let a board member know of your interest.

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## Spring Picnic

*Terryl Russell*

I'm a new fan club member (I joined in December) and this was my first picnic. It was really great getting to mix and mingle with the players and their families away from the arena. I thought the picnic was very well organized with activities for all ages. The water balloons went over great for the little ones, the badminton for the teens and players. John Adams was right out there playing with the kids. How thrilling for them. I actually got to sit next to Paul Cabana as I enjoyed all the delicious food that was prepared for the picnic. Mr., Rogers' smoked pork was something that I'm looking forward to having at our next picnic (please Mr. Rogers). I had the pleasure of meeting the players' wives and playing with their children. Being a child at heart myself the most fun for me was telling the children about the water balloons. And last but not least was the "Abs, Legs, and Buns" contest that I also got to judge. The players were all such good sports getting up in front of everyone strutting their stuff. The winner of the Best Abs was John Adams, Best Legs was Martin Tuma, and Best Buns was Ernie Hartlieb. If I had known the fan club was this much fun I would have joined last year when I first moved over here. Again Bubba, Doug, Melissa thank you for a great afternoon. I'm looking forward to many more.

**Kudos to the Picnic Committee**

### Newsletter Articles

If you would like to see your name in print, please submit an article for the newsletter. So many of you have encounters with players that we would love to hear about. The deadline for articles is the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. Please email attached articles to [ledknapp@comcast.net](mailto:ledknapp@comcast.net). Please write newsletter article in the subject line.

### *Fan Club Holds Canned Food Drive*

A canned food drive was held on April 1, 2006. Cans and items collected will be delivered to the Café of Life in Bonita Springs. Thanks for helping to feed the hungry of Southwest Florida. Special thanks to Kimberly Christansen for organizing this event as well as the Everblades family for its support.

### **Thanks to our Players**

Sue Hardy

We went to the Spring picnic and my children had a great time. I always love the fact that our players take the time to acknowledge the children at any function. It does not matter how many people are waiting after the games, they always find the time to sign pucks, cards and jerseys or just give a handshake and a smile. I think that tells all. We have the best players no matter what the final game result. They will always be winners in our eyes.

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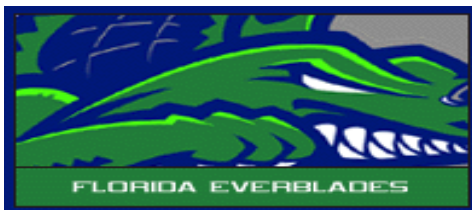
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