

Tribe Has Own Night With The Winter Hawks

■ Grand Ronde night at the Rose Garden drew more than 500 Tribal members and their families.

By Ron Karten

It was the 72nd game of the season, the end of the line for one in five teams in the U.S. Division of the Western Hockey League, but onward to the playoffs for most, including the Portland Winter Hawks who played the last season game like they were heading for the finals.

They dominated the Tri-City Americans, 3-0, until minutes before the end of the game. When it was all over, at 4-2, the Winter Hawks were looking toward their first playoff game in a best of seven series against the Everett Silvertips.

But hockey was not all that was afoot at the Rose Garden on the night of March 20. It was also Grand Ronde Night.

Tribal Chairwoman Cheryle Kennedy welcomed 9,713 fans to the Grand Ronde homelands. She invited Tribal members to raise their hands and all of a sudden hundreds of Tribal members — from the 100s seats to the suites high above — appeared.

"It was a strong PR message to the people of Oregon about who we are and where we came from," said Tribal Council member Jack Giffen Jr. who said he had a great time at the game.

This night was about Tribal visibility. With two giant Grand Ronde logos prominent in the ice, with Kennedy's welcome, with Tribal Elder and former Chairwoman Kathryn Harrison offering the invocation, with the Eagle Beak drummers drumming in the Grand Ronde Honor Guard, and with Veteran Royalty and Grand Ronde Royalty along for the dance of it, and with Rebecca Payne, Miss Native American Oregon, on hand, this was a night to be seen.

"It was a really good thing that we were able to bring along Tribal members from Portland," said Tribal member Elaine LaBonte, who is also Tribal Tourism Project Coordinator.

As a major sponsor of the team, the Grand Ronde Tribe has found yet another way to support both its Tribal members and an important regional enterprise.



Tribute — On Sunday, March 20, the Winter Hawks hosted "Grand Ronde Night" at the Rose Garden. In front of a crowd of 9,713, Chairwoman Cheryle Kennedy welcomed everyone and Tribal Elder Kathryn Harrison gave the invocation. The Eagle Beak drummers brought in the Honor Guard with royalty and about 20 dancers following.

For Tribal members Victor Lomboy and his son, 10-year-old Victor Junior, and friend Jessie Smith, the night was "a treat," said Lomboy Sr. Lomboy is a recent fan of the Winter Hawks, he said, but he knew he had a team worth following. "They did awesome for the season."

And still, after providing rousing afternoons and evenings for hundreds and hundreds of Tribal members throughout the Winter Hawks' season, the Tribe also had other fish to fry. Tribal visibility at the Rose Garden also puts a face to the Tribe's business side, said Elaine LaBonte.

Along with Tribal enterprises like the Spirit Mountain Casino and the on-going Keizer development, sponsorships like this one with the Winter Hawks, and another with the Keizer Volcanoes, build the Tribe's status as a business partner, and

will likely open doors down the line.

Questions have come up about the Winter Hawks' logo, an Indian face. Indian sports mascots anger many Indians and Tribes, but an effort to see all of them changed has met with mixed results.

LaBonte wondered, however, if "the business relationship" will give the team "a greater appreciation for what that (logo) means to us."

Following Kennedy's welcome, Grand Ronde Tribal members entered the ice for a posting of the colors. A microphone out in front of Eagle Beak sent the sound of the drums to the far reaches of the arena, and you could see the players on the ice anxiously in motion like thoroughbreds before the race.

And then the overhead said it all: "Let's Play Hawkey!"

Between the first two periods, the Winter Hawks raised money for a former teammate recently diag-

nosed with brain cancer. Between the second two periods, they put a heart on the overhead screens with the words below: "Kiss Me!" Everytime another couple saw themselves on the overhead, they kissed. One little girl got a big one from her dad while she was eating cake. After the kiss, she did what every little kid has done from the beginning of time. Only not usually to such a big crowd. Or such an appreciative bunch. She opened her mouth to show everybody all that great chewed-up food.

It was the first time out to a hockey game for Tribal Elder Gene LaBonte, who was part of the Honor Guard. "It wore me out watching them go back and forth," he said. "I'd do things a little different out there, if it was me, but I don't think they'd let me keep playing if I did."

Good works and fun. ■



The Wave — Tribal Elder Leonard Vivette's grand daughters (from left) Courtney Galligher, Nicole Hoff and great-grandson Nolan Gordon smile for the camera at the Tribe's night with the Portland Winter Hawks as they took on the Tri-City Americans at the Rose Garden in Portland.

Winter Hawks In The Playoffs

By Toby McClary

At *Smoke Signal's* presstime, the Winter Hawks and the Silvertips were tied at one game. On Friday, March 25, the Winter Hawks beat the Silvertips, 3-0. Then on Sunday, the Silvertips tied it up beating the Hawks, 2-1. Both games were held in the Rose Garden. On Tuesday, March 29, the Winter Hawks travel to Everett, Washington to play the third game in a best of seven series.

The Hawks earned home ice advantage after winning four consecutive games and beating the Tri-Cities Americans on Sunday, March 20 in the Rose Garden.

The Hawks finished the regular season with an overall record of 35-27-5-5, beating out Everett for second place.

After the game on Sunday, March 20, forward Cody McLeod, 20, was honored with the team's "Most Valuable Player" award at the Portland Winter Hawks' team Award Show in the Rose Garden Arena. Forward Dan DaSilva won the "Leading Scorer" award, recording 73 points in the 2004-2005 season. Finally, Braydon Coburn won the "Robert R. Boss Memorial Trophy" for best defensive player and Michael Sauer was honored with "Rookie of the Year."