

A Big Tilt for Grosse Pointe Community

By Melissa Walsh

Hockey is a game of mistakes played by folks who walk on water. Its power transcends the ice pad to the momentum of community.

While the Detroit Red Wings Alumni Association champions several charitable causes, the greatest gift they bring kid players and beer-leaguers is memories of sharing ice with hockey's elite.

Sandy MacMechan and the City of Grosse Pointe Foundation organized last month's charity game between DRWAA and the Grosse Pointe South High School boys' and girls' varsity squads at East Side Hockey Ice Arena (formerly the Grosse Pointe Community Rink).

Pointer Paul Boyer, who as the Red Wings equipment manager, is frequently away to get the team geared up, enjoyed the event as a hockey dad, as his son and daughter are South hockey players.

"It's really special that I can watch my kids play some of my good friends," says Boyer, who has strong ties with the Red Wings alumni. His pre-game prediction was "a lot of smiles." But Boyer's smile shone brightest, as he witnessed both daughter Maddalenna and son Paul Jr. score goals.

Former Red Wing Kirk Maltby, a native of Canada and



Kirk Maltby covering Marshall Vyletel

resident in the Pointes now for many hockey seasons, considers this "home."

"It's a community where you know people," says Maltby, "whether you go to a restaurant or to Kroger to buy your groceries, you see someone you know.... It's a great community to raise a family in."

Maltby's three kids have participated in the array of activities offered in the Pointes, from Little League to dance and swim team to, naturally, hockey. So Maltby's personal goal for this game was "to give back to the community."

"The Grosse Pointe City Foundation does a lot," says Grosse Pointe South Athletic Director Jeremy Hawkins, "but the biggest benefit for us is the game itself."

The South girls' squad faced the alumni in the first half, with Erin Brannagan scoring first, lifting the puck over Eddie Mio's blocker.

"It was awesome," she says. "I know they weren't trying too hard, but it was really fun."

"You can tell they're not trying 100 percent," says tendy Bella Strickler, "but it's still fast."

Mio, who was raised in an era when few imagined females playing hockey, says he's impressed with the girls' skating and passing game. "They got three goals. Kind of ruins by goals against, but I'm happy."

In the second half, the South boys played a quick, battling game to a 2-2 tie, goalie Dante Valente valiantly defending the GPSHS net.

On the score sheet first was Jack Flynn with a greasy goal, achieved by getting the puck through a defenseman, then deking the goalie to the left to slide it in. Flynn says, "I was just trying to show up my coach out there."

Paul Boyer Jr., a.k.a. "Junior," tuned out the chirps from his dad's buddies to score the second goal from a saucy rebound off the post.

The event concluded with the next best thing to a W — a shootout before cheering fans. 🇺🇸



Maddalenna Boyer scoring a goal on Detroit Red Wings goalie Eddie Mio

Photos by Michael S. Doré
Detroit Red Wing Alumni Association