

**3/27/09**

Being the President of a Minor League Hockey Team definitely has its peaks and valleys. One of the more challenging aspects of the job is to schedule playoff dates. On the surface, it seems easy. Find out which team you are playing, find out which team has home ice, schedule games on weekends and the job is done. Unfortunately, the stars do not usually align that way.

Think of each team as a three headed monster....Business, Hockey and Building. Some teams have the luxury of perfect synergy between these three heads. In this model one person controls all three aspects of the organization. Most teams however, are lucky to get two heads to agree.

The Stingrays are very lucky in one regard, Head Coach and General Manager Jared Bednar takes the approach of "You set em up, we knock em down!" The challenge for the Rays then becomes the availability of dates set out by the building. The North Charleston Coliseum works diligently to maximize the number of dates that the facility is in use throughout the year in order to be a true amenity to the community and to be a profit center of the City. Recently this plan has run contrary to perfect playoff scenario for the Rays. However, we do have a small handful of available dates in the first round grid allotted by the ECHL.

The fun really begins when the three headed monster of the opponent comes into play. Remember, the opponent has its agenda as well and each team seems to look at the balance between hockey and business a little differently. As one can imagine, communication is key.

When communication breaks down, you are left with two three headed monsters battling for seven dates in a two week time period, while fitting in NBA basketball and a Cheeseburger in Charleston.

Fortunately, the lines of communication remain strong between the Stingrays and our rivals/business partners the Checkers, Gladiators, Sea Wolves and Everblades!

See you at the Coliseum for Round 1!

*"All you need is one puck to scrimmage"*S.K.

All for now ...Hockey, Hockey, Hockey.

**3/19/09**

Hall of Fame night is always a fun way to take a trip down memory lane. Over the years I have been able to reminisce about big goals and big saves as the likes of Marietti, Seitz, Daubenspeck and others have been inducted into the Post and Courier Stingrays Hall of Fame. Although I was privileged to ride the bus and share friendship with most of the members of the Hall, somehow this year seems more personal. It was just over three years ago that Jerry Zucker took a chance when he called me into his office to offer me the position of President of the Stingrays. Before this day, as a radio broadcaster, I had enjoyed brief conversations with Mr. Z about calling hockey games on the radio, keeping up with the opposing players' numbers and filling dead air. Now I realized that I was stepping out of my comfort zone behind the microphone and entering his world, I had made my "last call". The conversation on this day was different as he began his mentorship with philosophies on leadership, decision making, passion, work ethic and much more. It was not a lecture, although he was teaching, it was a conversation filled with amazing stories about business trips to the far reaches of the world complete with interesting characters and interesting meals. It was a conversation about the joy of raising a family and balancing life. It was an afternoon I will never forget.

As the owner of the Stingrays, Mr. Z treated every person in our organization as family even braving a snow storm in Toronto to make sure that he would not miss our annual holiday party. He did not want to miss a chance to remind us to wear our name tags on our right sides and to make his yearly passionate speech reminding us to do more than our share in the community, to make our world a better place. It is because of this passion that we will be very proud to present our first annual Jerry Zucker Community Service Award, which will go to a member of the Organization that has displayed the greatest commitment to community service. We look forward to seeing Jerry Zucker's name permanently in the rafters alongside players, coaches and the championship banners that he helped achieve.

All for now, Hockey, Hockey, Hockey!