

## *A Story of Courage, Determination and Teamwork*

The Minor Atom River Rats entered the Peterborough Liftlock Tournament (Jan. 13, 14 & 15) with high hopes and ended the tournament with their heads held high. Their determination and great River Rat spirit will be remembered by more than one team who realise that the word “minor atom” can in fact translate to “major impact” when a team’s will to win is so strong.

The families drove through the first snow/freezing rain storm of 2012 which prepared the boys for their first game of the tournament. They had a strong game against Highland Storm, scoring two goals in the first period and ending the game with a 2-0 win. Emilie earned a much deserved shutout. After the game, all of the families enjoyed a great potluck meal back at the Pine Vista Resort where the facilities also provided a great sledding hill and a rink on Stoney Lake for some shinny under the lights.

Saturday’s first game against a strong and very big Woodville Hurricanes team (...is it true one of the Woodville players was seen shaving before the game?) started with 4 goals against in the first period but the Rats bore down and won the rest of the game by outscoring the Canes three goals to the Canes singleton. The final (5-3 loss) was still an eye opener for Woodville as they saw the determination in the Rats team. Spencer played a very strong game and saved the team from a drubbing.

The River Rats tied the Peterborough National Minor 5-5 in the third game but had to play tight to the end after the Nats made a valiant comeback and scored with less than a minute on the clock. The tie was all the River Rats team (2<sup>nd</sup> place Group 2) needed to face the undefeated Stirling Blues (1<sup>st</sup> place Group 1) in the semi-final game. Emilie provided the team with more great goaltending.

Taking a page or two from the Vince Lombardi book of pre-game speeches, Coach Dave did an excellent job of getting the team to realise that if they played “River Rat style” of hockey, they would be able to overcome the size and age difference that the team had to face, yet again. A goal by each team in both the first and second period followed by a scoreless third period meant overtime was needed to decide the 2-2 final. In what turned into the longest game of the 2012 Liftlock tournament, the two teams went on to play four periods of OT with the Rats finally putting away Stirling at 2:58 of period 7. The game started at 5:30 and ended at 7:30 - the fans, the team and the bench staff were drained but spirits were very high....the Rats were going to “the show”!!! Great job Spencer – all of your training with Goalie Coach Andy has paid off!

Sunday’s Championship final, played on the Pete’s home ice at the Memorial Centre saw the River Rats once again facing a strong Woodville team. Although outshot in the first two periods, the Rats entered the third period with a 1-0 lead. The Canes constant pressure finally found a way to score in the third period and in the end they won 3-1. Emilie’s consistent puck stopping frustrated the older Woodville players and it earned her an MVP award.

Congratulations to the Minor Atom River Rats for their very strong performance in Peterborough!!!