

CENTER ICE

The Official Newsletter of The New York Islanders Booster Club



VOLUME 34 - NUMBER 2

Our 34th Year

NOVEMBER 2005



Brent Sopel at our first meeting after the lockout

Brent Sopel Gives The Club His Take On The New Rules, Coaches, and More...

Road Trip Report Charities Hockey's Back...Are You Ready?

by Jim DiStefano

Who knew what to expect at this Booster Club meeting on October 24th at the Marriot? There was much grumbling about how the game of hockey changed after the lockout. Fans were disgusted by losing a season. Many fans didn't like what management was doing to try to win them back. Would they come back? The rules were changed, some said for worse, some said for the better. Player movement was rampant throughout the league as teams rebalanced personnel under the new salary cap. Indeed, the Islanders lost some pretty good players in the process. But we also got some pretty good players in return. To top it off, our guest, Brent Sopel, was one of those newly acquired players. What kind of reception would he face? And one of the biggest questions for the Club: how many members would even come to this meeting?

Brent addressed an audience of about sixty people and he didn't look out of place at all. In fact, he was pretty candid with some of his comments and wasn't afraid to voice his opinions, both positive and negative. It appears that he has the right temperament to handle the changes that the lockout presented and a trade that brought him from Vancouver.

"The last two months since I got traded have been a whirlwind for myself and my family." He started skating when he was two years old, played on a Pee-Wee team when he was four and hasn't stopped since. "My first break was last year during the lockout. I took the whole year off with my wife and kids." He started playing junior hockey in Saskatoon and Swift Current (WHL) when he was sixteen. He signed his first pro contract in 1995 then went to Vancouver's farm team, the Syracuse Crunch (AHL). He went up and down from the minors until 2001 when he stayed with the Canucks for good until the trade that brought him to the Islanders last August. "I'm trying to put two kids in school and trying to find a place to live. It's been pretty busy, but the kids are happy." Like any other dad, he told us, "I don't have

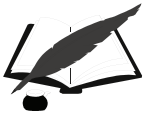
any free time when I go home." He appreciated the time spent with his family during the lockout, but did admit "It's good to get back to work."

We talked at length about the new rules, but one of the first questions we asked Brent was about his first Isles/Rangers experience. "It was pretty interesting! We had a lot of heavy rivalries in Vancouver, but it's a little different atmosphere here with the fans. It was a lot of fun playing in their building and playing them here at home." The buildings actually make a difference for him "because they've got character. When you go into a new building it has all the bells and whistles and everything you need. But it's always nice to come back to an old building and the atmosphere that comes along with that building." He appreciated the fact that the Islanders won their Stanley Cups here.

Brent showed us a little diplomacy at times, too. We asked his opinion about the shootout. "Well, sixty-five minutes later my feet are sore, I'm getting off the ice and ready to go home. In any other sense I would leave it as a tie. For you guys (fans) I'm sure it's a little bit more excitement knowing that we are going to have a shootout, but I don't like it." You could tell he was trying to walk both sides of the street with this one, but he was just getting warmed up.

He turned the tables on us a little bit and asked the Club what we didn't like about the new rules. There were many answers. Some included too many calls by the referees and that the game's not as physical as it used to be. That only spurred additional questions such as whether the players didn't have to try as hard because of the fear of being penalized. Unnecessary cracking down on obstructions "is the one rule I hate the most. As a defenseman, I'm always caught in that position." And about the reduction in the amount of force you can use on approaching forwards as they stand in front of the net? "It's god-awful! Defensemen thrived on a little cross-checking, pushing and getting guys out from in front. That was my job. Now

continued on page 3...



President's Message.....

It's official, Hockey is Back! Already, the first month of hockey is over and so much has happened. The Booster Club just picked up where we left off a year ago. Unfortunately, opening night was a rainout for our annual tailgate party, but the fans came back in force. Our Special Events Coordinator, George Schutz, was able to sell over 60 tickets for opening night and we came away winners against the Hurricanes. Then, before we knew it, we had to endure a home and home series against the Rangers, and another game with them the following week, but we won two out of three! Those games were exhausting for us, as fans; imagine how the players felt?

Thanks to some early planning by our Trips guy, Ronnie Kind, we traveled to Montreal. Approximately 35 members attended and enjoyed club seating with unlimited food - not a bad deal! Although the Isles lost the game, it was exciting and we were commended by the Canadiens staff as being "a class group!" This "class" was again displayed when our bus developed a problem due to water in the gas line. Everyone handled the delay in stride. I personally want to thank everyone, again, for their patience and understanding. I must say that it was an experience to be towed while still on the bus.

Our guest for our first general membership meeting was Brent Sopol. He was a great guest and everyone enjoyed his candid comments and especially his opinions on some of the new rules. A donation will be made in Brent's name to Companions in Courage, Pat LaFontaine's charity.

Congratulations to Islanders player of the month for October, Alexei Yashin. His 7 goals and 8 assists led the team, a great start so far. Coincidentally, Alexei will be the guest at our next general meeting, **Wednesday, November 30th**. We anticipate a large turnout for this meeting and have arranged for a bigger room. We ask members to bring their membership cards to this meeting and all subsequent meetings to expedite check in. Also, at this meeting we will be collecting non-perishable food for distribution this holiday season to the Mary Brennan Inn in Hempstead. So don't forget; please be generous.

In an effort to accommodate as many members as possible, we are trying to schedule general meetings on different days of the week. Our December meeting will be on **Sunday the 11th at 2:00PM** and our guest will be Trent Hunter. We hope that some of our members that can't make it during the week will be able to attend this meeting.

One of the things I wanted to do when I took office was to revise the Constitution of the club. At each Executive Board meeting we are reviewing articles one by one and taking steps to amend any that we feel need to be updated. In the next edition of this newsletter the information will be published and subsequently voted on at a general meeting.

Just in time for the holidays, we have made arrangements with an online company that will manufacture items with our Booster Club logo. On our website, click on the link for Café Press and it will take you to the site. Items such as T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats and other novelty items are available. Order online and have items shipped directly to your home. If you do not have online access and are interested, we have a printout of the available items and you can order through us.

By the time this newsletter is received, anyone who was a member during the lockout will have received a car magnet as special thanks for staying with the club, along with this year's membership gift. This is just a small token of appreciation to those members. For those of you who joined this year, we do have some magnets available for purchase. We are selling them for \$3.00 each or 2 for \$5.00. We are selling them at games.

The Booster Club is always involved in Charity work. This month we donated \$1,000 to the American Red Cross for the victims of Katrina and \$500 to support Pat LaFontaine as he competed in his second Ironman Triathlon. Pat completed this race in 11:45:37; his personal best. Congratulations to Pat and continued success as he raises money through his CIC Foundation to help build interactive playrooms in children's hospitals throughout North America. We also participated in the Making Strides against Breast Cancer Walk and raised over \$1,000 (see article in this issue). Our Charity Chairpersons, Rose Muller and Jill Kozik, are always looking for charities in need of help. The raffles that you purchase at meetings are put into a separate Charity fund in the treasury, specifically for this purpose. For instance, Jill donated the pumpkin with the Islanders logo at our first meeting and we raised over \$50 through raffling it off. Every little bit helps and we appreciate your generosity.

Our membership is growing steadily and I am pleased to see that we are getting a lot of new members as well as returning ones. I thank you all for your support and hope to see you at upcoming meetings. Come and introduce yourself to us at games or meetings. It's nice to put a name with a face. I can't guarantee we will remember everyone's name, but we will try!

Best wishes to all for a Happy Thanksgiving and a wonderful Holiday Season!

Claire

New York Islanders Booster Club 2005-2006

President.....Claire Le Compte
Exec. Vice President.....Diane Hesse
Second Vice President.....Danny Parisi
Treasurer/Past President MaryannFilangieri
Recording Secretary.....Rose Muller
Corresponding Secretary.....Bill Finck

Board of Committees

Art.....Dennis Coburn
Charities.....Jill Kozik & Rose Muller
Constitution.....Bruce Schneider
Historian.....Jean Nebiosini
Membership...Rose Muller & George Schutz
Newsletter.....Jim DiStefano
Novelties.....Bill Hayes
Publicity.....Donna Coughlin
Special Events.....George Schutz
Trips.....Ron Kind
WebMaster/Convention.....Gary Harding

Sergeant-at-Arms.....John D'Errico
Trustee.....Ed McGloin

Printed by: On The Spot Printing
1916 86th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11214
(718) 259-8200

Center Ice, the official publication of the New York Islanders Booster Club, is published monthly during the hockey season and once during the summer. Opinions expressed in articles printed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Booster Club or of the New York Islanders. Submissions should be sent to:

NY Islander Booster Club
PO Box 502
Hicksville NY 11802-0502
ATTN: Newsletter

Deadline for an issue is the preceding month's membership meeting.

The New York Islanders name and logo are registered trademarks of the New York Islanders. Used with permission.

Special mention to Scott Coates who redesigned the "shooting puck" logo now featured on our masthead.

Moving? Make Sure **Center Ice** goes with you! Please notify the Membership Committee of both your new and old addresses. **Have an e-mail address? Let us know that, too!**

All Photos by.....Jim DiStefano
(unless noted otherwise)



Brent Sopol on some of the rule changes: "As a player, I think we've done a good job adjusting to the new rules, all in all. We have a hard time adjusting to the refs. There's no consistency from one ref to the next. They're having a harder time with it. That's why you're seeing some of these completely outrageous calls..."

Photo: Executive Vice President Diane Hesse (L) and President Claire Le Compte flank Brent Sopol at the meeting.

you can't do it. You can't touch a guy. Either he falls and you get a penalty or they call it automatically."

One of the things that the new rules allow is for the players to suggest rule changes every year. "These (current) rules aren't set in stone. They are evaluated game by game, period by period and shift by shift. We'll sit down with the league and if certain rules don't work out, if we don't like them and fans don't like them, we'll find a way to change them back or tweak them and make sure they get better." So when fans and players talk about phantom obstructions, this will be one of the changes to bring up at the end of the year. "I talk to guys around the league and they're not happy about that rule also."

Now that we got him going, another pet peeve he has is the penalty for directly shooting the puck over the glass into the crowd. "I think that's completely absurd. We have to change this. It's terrible and makes no sense." He could see if a player was in a battle along the boards and if he intentionally shoots or throws it out, that should be a penalty. "But as it stands now, (the rule's) completely stupid." One strange side issue though, is that you're not penalized if you shoot the puck into one of the player benches. Anyone noticing if that's done deliberately?

But for all the complaining about the new rules, one of our members brought up the fact that players don't ice the puck as much, they don't shoot the puck over the glass as much, and the holding, clutching and high-sticking has been down a lot. So where lies the problem, exactly? "As a player, I think we've done a pretty good job adjusting to the new rules, all in all. We have a hard time adjusting to the referees! There's no consistency from one ref to the next." Even in the same game, the calls are not enforced equally. "I find that we're adjusting very well, but the refs are having a harder time with it. That's why you're seeing some of these outrageous calls. Obviously, I can't say we're not at fault half the time or three quarters of the time, but sometimes they just close their eyes, hope for the best and blow the whistle." While complaints about the refs were a dime a dozen even before the lockout, player and fan reaction to the new enforcement has reached an incredible level.

Some of the penalty calls take away from the battle level in the corners." You can't pin a guy against the glass or hold him or hit him the way you could previously. "You can't do that kind of stuff now. This is what NHL hockey has been known for: being

rough and tough and physical down low. Now if you get caught on the wrong side, they call a penalty. You get your stick above his waist you're going to get a penalty. You have to be cautious before you play aggressively."

Add to the list of discontent the new goalie rules about handling and playing the puck. "I feel bad for Ricky (DiPietro), Ed Belfour and Martin Brodeur." They've made their careers on puck-handling. The new rules put limits on where they can go. "I think that's a skill and they've mastered this skill. If you take his tools away, he can't do his job. I think that's what (the league) has done to these goalies." Brent went on to say that when a goalie plays the puck behind the net and passes it off to another player, "it helps me out and it helps the team out." He thinks the restrictions belittle their abilities.

On the contrary, the other rule about having smaller goalie pads, "hasn't made much of a difference. Have you noticed a difference? They're athletes. Some of the goalies (in the past) tried to get the biggest pads and cheat. But I think now they're better than they anticipated. Now they have lighter pads and they can move more quickly. In a way, it's helping them!" In Brent's opinion, if you ask the goalie, "it would give them more reflex time to react to a shot."

With so many new faces on the Islanders, team chemistry was brought up. "Chemistry's the biggest thing right now. Every team's different. The players are different, the coaches and management are all different." Brent recalled that when he played in Vancouver, he could close his eyes and know where a player was going to be. Now he's paired with Alexei Zhitnik and he feels comfortable knowing where his partner is on the ice. As a team, "we have to communicate more. You've got to know the habits and tendencies of each individual. And you learn that quickly. Every day at practice I try to learn a little bit more." Becoming familiar with your new teammates is a job happening all around the league, not just with the Islanders. "We need to keep working at it."

Brent had an interesting take on coaches. Comparing Steve Stirling with his previous coach Marc Crawford in Vancouver, he said, "Both guys are completely different. Steve Stirling is more of a quiet guy. He sits back and observes. When something needs to be said, he says it. Crawford observes, doesn't think and then does it! He gets himself in a lot of trouble. He's a very intense guy! He gets carried away more times than not. Steve tends to sit back, observe and watch. He takes it in, thinks it through, then dishes it out from there." I don't know if this would get put up

continued on page 4...

Our next Booster Club meeting will be Wednesday, November 30th at 7:30PM. Our guest will be our captain, Alexei Yashin. Because a large turnout is anticipated, we ask our members to bring their membership cards to this, and all meetings, to expedite check-in. We are also asking that each member only bring one item to be autographed. We do not want to take advantage of Alexei's good nature. Your cooperation is appreciated. Thanks!

Brent Sopel...continued

on Vancouver's bulletin board when the Isles visit there next, but Brent certainly didn't mince words!

While he was in the anti-establishment mood, what was Brent's take on Yashin's captaincy? "Yash does a pretty good job in the dressing room. It's not up to just the captain to stand up and vocalize. We've got guys who've been around the league a long time (who voice their opinions)." Apparently, Alexei says what needs to be said. You can't argue with results, though. Yashin has been putting up the points and is leading by example.

With the Olympics coming up, we asked Brent who had the most realistic chance to win. You could tell he was being a little politically correct when he didn't want to come right out and make a prediction. "Obviously, I'm from Canada. Canada's deep. The U.S. is deep. When you look around, you can't really break it down." He mentioned a few other teams, but you got the feeling he was partial to his own country. "The Olympics are a big thing for everybody. Everyone wants to represent his country and win a gold medal." He knows all the players will be watching for names when the 45-man rosters for each country are released in the next few weeks. He ended the question by saying, "It all comes down to goaltending." Now wouldn't it be interesting to see a DiPietro/Brodeur matchup for the gold medal?

Todd Bertuzzi was another hot topic that we brought up. While Brent was on the Canucks when Bertuzzi brutally mugged Steve Moore (then with Colorado), it was clear that talk about the incident had played itself out. We asked if Brent thought Todd would be apprehensive with his first meeting between the Avalanche and the Canucks in Colorado. Clearly frustrated, Brent said, "It's over with and done with. It (Moore's lawsuit) got thrown out of court in Colorado. So everything is cleared. None of that is left. Now it's just business when he goes there. I'm sure he'll hear it from the fans when he goes there. For any of the players on Colorado, he's not going to have any of that to deal with except for the hockey game." [Ed. Note: *In reality, the two teams had already met in Vancouver two days earlier. The Canucks won 6-4, Bertuzzi had one assist. Their first meeting in Colorado was an Avalanche win, 6-2, on Oct. 27th. Bertuzzi was booed every time he touched the puck.*]

The problem we had as Club members and hockey fans was the negative headlines all that violence garnered. Incidents like that are why some people don't like hockey. The PR wasn't good. Brent agreed. "We had phone calls from the *National Inquirer*, *Oprah Winfrey*, and *The Today Show* for all the wrong reasons. It got a black label. They got it from people who don't know the game, don't watch the game, don't deal with hockey, but who want to take positions on it (Bertuzzi's violence) and make comments towards it. They know nothing about the intensity of the game." To be clear, Brent said emphatically, "Todd shouldn't have done it and I definitely don't agree with it."

You could certainly understand the frustration Brent felt from the constant attention at the time, and now we were opening up a fresh wound with these questions. Many people believe that you don't have to be a student of the game to get a grasp on what happened. Not knowing some additional details about the teams or their history or their rivalries doesn't mean you can't have an opinion. It's human nature to dwell on the negative and the media is no exception. Despite Sopel's *continued on page 5...*

October 22nd Road Trip To Montreal Wasn't Very Kind To The Booster Club

By Gary Siegel

We started at Nassau Coliseum early Saturday morning with a light rain falling. Destination: Montreal. Thirty-seven members of the Islanders Booster Club were heading to enemy territory: the Bell Centre in Montreal to watch the Isles play the Canadiens.

Although it's my second year as a Booster Club member, it was the first time I joined in a road trip. Everyone was friendly as we gathered to board the bus. People were excited. After a quick check to make sure everyone who signed up for the trip was on board, Earl the bus driver pulled out of the Coliseum parking lot around 5 a.m.

Minutes later the bus lights were dimmed and most of the riders went back to sleep until the sun rose around 7:30. After stopping for breakfast at Denny's, we re-boarded the bus. Gary ran a first goal and a first penalty pool, and Ronnie the trip guy put on a video of classic hockey fights, followed by a video history of the Islanders.

The second video was better and drew more interest, although we never saw the end. Before the film finished we were at the Canadian border and everyone had to get out their IDs as we passed through customs. Shortly thereafter, we were in Montreal at our hotel. Ronnie handed out room keys and we were on our own until the game.

Shopping for souvenirs on St. Catherine St., many friendly faces and Islanders jerseys passed by. Then came lunch and more shopping, and some laser tag before returning to the hotel to get ready for the game. A group congregated in the lobby around 5:30 and we proudly displayed our orange, blue and white jerseys as we trolled a block and a half to the Bell Centre.

Good-natured barbs passed between us and Canadiens fans and we found some people who cheered us on. Thanks to Ronnie's planning, we had club seats – a separate entrance, coat checking and all the concession food we could eat.

The Bell Centre is a new facility and still extremely clean. It was also the largest arena I'd ever been in, seating more than 21,000 people. And it was full by game time. Things didn't look promising after the Isles failed to convert on a two man advantage early in the first period while the Canadiens scored quickly on the first shot of their first two power plays (10 seconds into the first penalty and 6 into the second).

The cheers continued from our section despite the score and increased when the Isles tied the game in the second. But the Islanders could never take the lead and fell by a 4-3 score. Disappointed, we headed back to the hotel. Some people went out, but my son Josh and I just watched the World Series (with French play-by-play).

The bus ride home was quite eventful as the bus broke down shortly after we left. It took about 2 ½ hours to get towed and we ate lunch while the bus was repaired. After a stop at the duty-free shop and showing our IDs at the border, we continued our journey. We watched movies and some people napped as we drove homeward. Those who stayed awake got to see snow by the side of the road in the Adirondack region.

When we arrived at the Coliseum at 11 p.m., everyone cheered. It was a great trip, lots of fun. I'm looking forward to the next trip. •

Brent Sopel...final part

feelings, it doesn't matter what side of the argument you fall on. The challenge is how do we get past this? "It's up to us as players to find a way to get that black label removed from the NHL. It's definitely going to take some time."

Speaking of when Brent was with the Canucks, he did have some memories of the Islanders and the New York teams. It was Adrian Aucoin who scored a goal in overtime that broke a 14-game unbeaten streak the Canucks were enjoying at the time. The Canucks would usually visit all three area teams in one swing. They would stay in Manhattan and commute to each venue. "We would always get stuck in traffic, and we'd always be late coming out. When you played one of the three NY-area teams, we always knew it was going to be a fun night. The fans were going to come out, except for New Jersey. The buildings would have their "old" atmosphere and we would be excited to play and see something different."

By the time the meeting ended, we came to know a little more about one of our newest members. We even found out that "There was no specific reason why I wanted to become a hockey player. I loved it right away. Nobody in my family has ever played the game. My whole family lives in Calgary and Saskatoon. I'm not going back there. If they want to come visit me I'll tell them to come here!" Even his mother gets into the act. "My mom is always on the internet trying to listen to games. She knows what's going on. It didn't take her long to switch over from the Canucks to the Islanders!"

Whether he was telling us about his father keeping him outside for three hours to practice hockey in the cold, complaining about the refs not calling diving penalties, commiserating with the fans that NHL scheduling prevents some fans from seeing the stars of the game, or telling us the red-line not counting for passes is one of the *good* rule changes, we found Brent Sopel was just the tonic we needed to get our hockey fix after the lockout. He fit right in. You could see he was serious when he told us that "We were lucky enough to have a rivalry like we have with the Rangers. That's something other teams don't have and only wish they could have." The Islanders are lucky to have that kind of commitment from a player. Let's hope it's contagious to the rest of the team.



We had a good turnout for our first Booster Club meeting post lockout

Did you like our "Hockey Is Back" ribbon magnet? Free to members who stuck with us, you can buy additional ones for \$3 each or two magnets for \$5. They make great holiday stocking stuffers! Available at the general meetings or at the Booster Club table at the games.

Get Yours Today!

Haven't Been To A Good Islander - Ranger Game In A While...? We Have Tickets!

The Booster Club is offering tickets for the Islanders vs. the Rangers game on **December 28, 2005.**

**Tickets are for Center Mezzanine, Rows F through O
Price is \$70 per ticket
These are sold on a first paid, first served basis**

To order tickets, please send a check made payable to NYIBC, and mail to:

George Schutz
14 Sterling Place
Malverne NY 11565

Please include the address where you want the tickets mailed along with your Booster Club membership number.

Requests will be processed in the order they are received. Please mail promptly! Sales will stop when all available tickets are sold. Don't get shut out!

Any requests or checks received after the tickets are gone will be promptly returned.

You can email George if you have a question at:
Tripguytoo@optonline.net

Or leave a message on the Booster Club hotline.

Trips, Part II New Jersey Devils

Saturday, January 21st, 12 Noon

The bus leaves the Coliseum at 8:00AM
Tickets are in Section 240 - Rows 11-15
Price for the trip

\$70 each (includes the bus)
Ticket Face Value is \$52

Mail payment to the same address as above.

Come Join Us!

BREAST CANCER WALK 2005

by Claire Le Compte

Sunday, October 16th, Gary Harding, Donna Coughlin and I met down at Jones Beach to participate in the annual Making Strides for Breast Cancer Walk. This year's walk took place on the Sunday following a week's worth of rain. We were thankful that the sun was shining, even though it was quite windy. As we walked we were surprised by the effects of the storm. The basketball courts were covered by about a foot of water; the pitch and putt course had more water hazards than greens and the water had made its way up to the dunes alongside the boardwalk. It was amazing to see.

Each year we find that more and more people take part in this great event. This year we were among 40,000 walkers, of which, more than 1,200 were breast cancer survivors! I was disappointed that only three of us were able to walk, but soon realized that our efforts paid off. The three of us were able to collect over \$1000 in donations...not bad! It was a small portion of the \$2.3 million that will go to the American Cancer Society research, education, advocacy and quality of life programs and services for breast cancer survivors.

We left with a great feeling of satisfaction and fulfillment.

Please bring your Booster Club membership card to the meetings. It will help everyone get settled quickly so we can start the meetings on time. Thanks!

Holiday Time Is Islanders Booster Club Charity Time

Through your generosity, the Booster Club is able to make a difference to many young children and needy families with donations of food, toys, school supplies and everyday household items. With the lockout over, our fundraising for many worthwhile causes can begin in earnest. Some of our upcoming events:

November 30th Meeting:

Our Annual Food Drive for the Mary Brennan Inn located in Hempstead. Remember to bring only non-perishable food items.

January Meeting:

We will be collecting arts and crafts kits, board games and children's books (ages 7-12). You can get some great buys during the holiday season; why not pick up a duplicate item or gift while you're doing your holiday shopping and bring it to this meeting?

April Meeting:

We are looking for liquid detergent for the Ronald McDonald House.

Remember to keep saving those pennies! This is an ongoing program. Give us your loose change, even the pennies. We'll convert the amount into bills and donate the total to the Leukemia Foundation at the end of the season.

Thanks, again, to all of you.

Rose Muller

Don't Forget

Your Booster Club membership includes a goodie package. The following people need to pick theirs up at gate 3 at the Coliseum during a game or at the meetings. Mailing is available for a \$3 postage fee:

Bill Dickhut Lawrence Schatz Tyler Southard Fran Stein Scott Sullivan



In 2001, the FDNY Hockey Team founded the Teddy Bears That Care Program, Inc. a not-for-profit charitable program that gives teddy bears to children throughout the United States. The program donates teddy bears to hospitals, shelters, burn camps, social workers, public safety agencies, child advocates, and not-for-profit organizations. Over 16, 900 teddy bears have been distributed, so far.

Help the FDNY Hockey Team continue to help kids by buying a raffle for a jersey signed by the entire team. Tickets are at the games and at meetings. The drawing will be held at the last general meeting.



Tickets are \$2 each or 3 for \$5

The Booster Club Now Has An Online Store

Just in time for the holidays, you can order New York Islander Booster Club merchandise for holidays gifts or for yourself!

Available through www.cafepress.com, you can order any of 32 different products that have the New York Islander Booster Club logo on it. There is no minimum. You can order one t-shirt, for example, and it will be mailed straight to your door.

If you don't have online access, we can order for you. See us at any game or general meeting. We made a folder you can look at that has pictures of the items on the website.

Prices listed on the site don't include postage and handling (about 15% extra), they are added at the end of the transaction.

Go to:

www.cafepress.com/nyiboosterclub

We've been challenged!

Our sister club, The Bridgeport Sound Tigers Booster Club has challenged us to a Broom Ball game!

Actually, they would like us to participate in a Broom Ball game in between periods of a Sound Tigers game. They are still working out the details on their end. Club President Claire Le Compte is looking for anyone who is interested in playing. She doesn't know how many are needed to play, but she needs to know who would like to participate.

Leave a message on the Booster Club Hotline:
(631) 547-NYIB (6942)

Islander Birthdays

October

Alexei Zhitnik - Oct. 10th
Miroslav Satan - Oct. 22nd

November

Alexei Yashin - Nov. 5th

Convention Package is Out The Sabres Booster Club Is Hosting It Their Theme Is: Buffalo, Feel The Warmth!

Official Dates are August 11-12, 2006

The hotel is Adam's Mark Hotel in Buffalo, NY

It is located on the waterfront in Buffalo's downtown business district. It is within walking distance of the HSBC Arena (home of the Sabres).

Costs

Single	\$450	Double	\$340
Triple	\$310	Children under 16	\$175

There is a \$50 per person non-refundable deposit due to Buffalo in early December. Please make the check out to the NYIBC and mail it to

Gary Harding
6 Everett Place
Halesite, NY 11743-2211

For anyone who hasn't been to one of these before, it is a great way to have a vacation, hang out with some great hockey people, make lots of new friends, and have a great time.

To get more information, go to the NYIBC website and look for the Buffalo "Booster Club Link" on the left side of the page. Click on Buffalo's name to get to their site. Once there you can scroll down for their Convention information link.

There Shoulda Been An Award Dept.

N.Y. Post reporter Phil Mushnick in his Equal Time column of 11/18 gave the New York Islander's radio tandem of John Wiedeman and Chris King a compliment for their work. His paragraph reads:

"New York's most underrated team broadcasters? We'll go with play-by-player John Wiedeman and analyst Chris King, the Isles' personable, 1130-AM radio team. Wiedeman's accurate on-the-fly descriptions are enhanced by good mind's-eye word choices. And he works well with King, who's on top of the team and the league, and has no trouble giving the other teams credit."

And recently, Phil again gave his readers another Islanders quote in his 11/21 Equal Time column:

"The Isles' backup goalie, Garth Snow, after helping beat the Thrashers, Wednesday, was asked by Howie Rose and Joe Micheletti how he's so often able to play well after long layoffs. Snow smiled and said, "What you're trying to say is that I don't play well when I play a lot."

It's nice to know that Phil listens to the Islanders! Thanks!

Booster Club Meetings.....

Wednesday, November 30th - Captain Alexei Yashin

Please Bring Your Membership Card

We Expect A Big Turnout - One Autograph Per Member

Sunday, December 11th - Trent Hunter

Note This Is A 2:00PM Meeting At The Marriott

- All meetings will be in the downstairs amphitheater at the Marriott across from the Coliseum. Call the Hotline or visit the website for up-to-the minute details about meeting locations.
- Meetings start at 7:30PM.
- The Booster Club Booth at the Nassau Coliseum is located between Gates 3 & 4, and is open before every home game. The booth closes 10 minutes before game time, and reopens between periods.

You Can Reach Us On Our Booster Club HOTLINE: (631) 547-NYIBC (6942)

OR Our WEB-SITE: <http://www.nyiboosterclub.org>

OR E-mail: webmaster@nyiboosterclub.org

**NEW YORK ISLANDERS BOOSTER CLUB
P.O. BOX 502
HICKSVILLE, NY 11802-0502**

