

Northern Stars wrap up hockey school



By Nate Smelle

The Northern Stars Hockey School (NSHS) wrapped up over the weekend with a triple-header, that saw the 99 boys and girls in each age group face off against one another in one final showdown. The NSHS aims to improve young players skills on and off the ice by enhancing their fitness and developing their character.

“We try to teach the kids to set goals and to work hard to achieve them,” said NSHS head-instructor and founder Duane Wiltshire.

“We focus on their skills and on getting them better, but we also try to infuse the concept of character in hockey. We don't want to see any negative attitudes. Good sportsmanship; that's what it's all about.”

Recognizing a need in the community for youth to develop their hockey skills, fitness and social skills in the off-season Wiltshire started the hockey school back in 2001. The weeklong program, which lasts a week, puts the kids through drills designed to improve shooting, power-skating, puck control, contact, fitness, passing, pass reception and some of the other aspects of the game.

With 99 positions available for players to sign up, the NSHS reaches its maximum capacity each year. Wiltshire said a big part of the reason why the hockey school is so successful is because of his excellent staff.

His senior staff includes: Mike Rupnow, Tyler Harvey, Travis Kauffeldt, Brian Harrison, BreBrennan Bierworth and Jeff Mann. His team is also comprised of some of the players who are now too old to participate as students, but have returned to work as youth councilors.

“Our staff is second to none,” Wiltshire said.

“I would put my staff up against anybody, just because they are such great people.”

For more information on the NSHS visit www.leaguelineup.com/welcome.asp?url=northernstars.