

Mason City hockey club has first game Friday

By Jim VanHeel
Sports editor

Mason City will have a hockey team participating in regular competition this winter, an outgrowth of five years of competition in the youth hockey league.

This is a "club" hockey team. While all team members are from the Mason City public schools ranging from 8th through 12th grades, there is no connection between the athletic department of the school and the hockey club. Hockey is not a sponsored sport of the Iowa High School Athletic Association.

There are two leagues operating in Iowa. Mason City will be in Division II, which will include Des Moines Lincoln, Ankeny, Ames and Webster City. All are newcomers to organized hockey at a high school level.

Division I is composed of seven teams which previously have been in competition and all have access to indoor facilities. They are Waterloo Columbus, Urbandale, Waterloo Public, Roosevelt-Hoover of Des Moines, Dowling, Sioux City and West Des Moines.

The first game for the Mason City team will be Friday at 8:30 p.m. against Lincoln in the Des Moines Ice Arena.

Phil Stephan, 40, and Don Anderson are the coaches of the Mason City team. Stephan played high school hockey at Rochester.

The Mason City team has been having workouts since the second week in November. The drills were held at Albert Lea and Austin where the rental charge is \$40 per hour. The players paid for the rental (about \$2 each per trip), and eight hours of workout time was used.

A third rink for the M.C. Hockey Club

has been built adjacent to the two rinks in northwest Mason City, which are used by participants in youth hockey. The Mason City Hockey Club, which has a 13-member board, put up about \$4,000 for materials. The construction was done by the city Parks and Recreation Department, which also will be responsible for maintenance.

Money for the operation came from many sources. One was a candy sale. There have been business donations and private donations, free work on equipment, a donation for transportation of the players, and 18 individual sponsors each kicked in with \$200.

The schedule calls for eight games with the possibility that Mason City may also participate in a tournament. The first home game will be Sunday and it's at 10 a.m. — to avoid conflict with the Super Bowl.

There is a limit of 20 players for the traveling squad and a roster already has been submitted.

Here are the Mason City players: Paul Despenas, Greg Dorenkamp, Mark Fisher, Todd Fitzgerald, Mark Giordano, Russ Hansen, Scott Huff, Dale Humphrey, Lloyd Johann, Jim Johann, Brad Kittleson, Jim Mackin, Tom Mackin, Bill Maginnis, Nick Niedermeyer, Steve Nielsen, Wayne Soloman, Mark Stephan, Dave Wilson and Dave Killpak.

Stephan says it is planned that all the players in uniform get into action in each game.

The Mason City schedule:

- Jan. 7 — Lincoln D.M., away 8:30
- Jan. 9 — Ankeny, home 10 a.m.
- Jan. 16 — Ames, home 2 p.m.
- Jan. 23 — Webster City, away 2 p.m.
- Jan. 29 — Lincoln, home 2 p.m.
- Feb. 5 — Mason City at Ankeny (D.M. Ice Arena) 10 p.m.
- Feb. 7 — Ames, away 9 p.m.
- Feb. 12 — Webster City, home 2 p.m.