

# the Boiling Pot

Our next Booster Club Meeting is Monday, November 1 at the Bossier Library

The Official Booster Club of the Bossier-Shreveport Mudbugs

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## Best seat in the house?

On opening night, we were all treated to a fantastic show. Lasers and pyro effects before the game, then one heck of an offensive performance by our boys in their 10-1 win over the RiverKings. We had already planned on making the trip up to Southaven for the road game on Saturday, so we were looking forward to another great night. No one had any idea of what was really in store.

Around 9:00 on Saturday morning, Gailyn and I loaded up with Ben and Sue Melton, along with Kimberly Jacks, and headed out for the road trip. We took a slightly different route, making our way to cross the Mississippi River on the new bridge between Lake Village, AR and Greenville, MS. Just east of Lake Village we stopped for lunch at a nice little diner, and that's when the call came through.

I had the phone sitting on the table when it rang. Kimberly and I both looked down to see the caller was Scott Muscutt. We looked at each other and it was obvious neither one could imagine what coach would be calling for. Gailyn and I have on a number of road trips been called on to do things from time to time. In the past we've been asked to bring goalie sticks that were left behind when the team headed out. We've also been asked to pick up cases of energy drinks for the guys. So my first thought was that something had been forgotten, in which case we would be no help, as we were already halfway to Southaven.

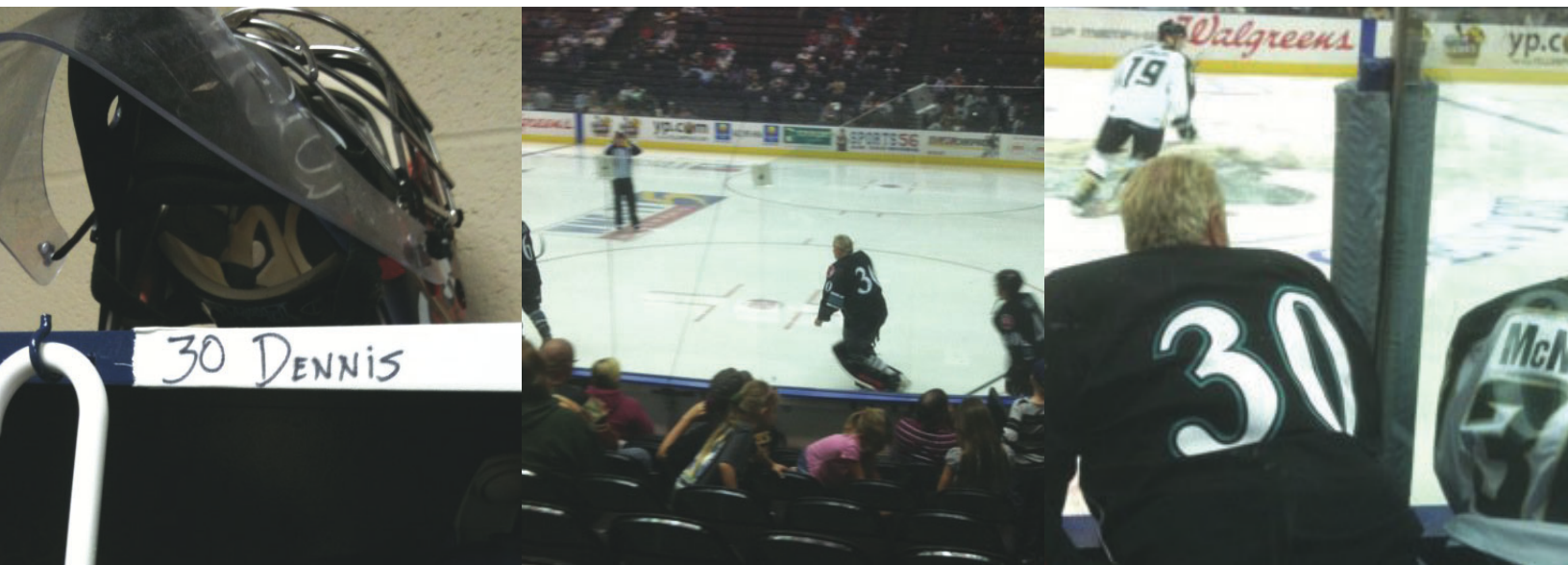
It turns out that wasn't what he was needing.

As most of you know, our backup goalie got a call up from Rochester during the game Friday night. Scotty asked if we were coming up for the game, and of course I told him we were, that we were eating lunch in Lake Village. He went on to say something along the line that "I'm talking to our backup goalie...", which got me to thinking that someone would be flying in to the airport in Memphis, and he would want us to go by and pick him up and bring him to the arena. But no, he said that he wanted to sign me to a 5 game tryout contract. At that point, I actually blurted out something that turned a few heads in the restaurant, for which I apologized later.

Gailyn was on her phone while Scotty and I were talking, and Kimberly went out on the deck to tell her what was going on inside. I'm pretty sure that she figured we were kidding with her, but after telling her the whole story, we all just sat there looking at each other.

Needless to say, the whole situation totally changed the conversation in the car for the rest of the trip. Ben and I both decided that he should be my agent, and we all got some good laughs while discussing what terms we would be asking for during the contract negotiations. In the back of my mind, I was really sure that by the time we made it to the Desoto Civic Center, Scotty would have found a slightly more fitting person to put on the end of the bench. In the meantime, the jokes and crazy ideas continued to flow from everyone in the vehicle.

Just as we were about to exit Interstate 55 to the hotel,



Scotty called again, and started asking questions for the contract, full name, birthdate, home address and a few other things. It really hit home then that this might actually be happening. After we checked in, we got back in the car and drove over to the DCC. We got a pretty good laugh when Ben told the security guys that we needed to drive down to the back door of the facility because he was delivering a player. The guy looks in the car, sees Ben and me in the front seat, looks in the back seat and sees Gailyn and Kimberly, and no doubt was thinking that there was no "player" in the car. He let us through the gate though, so we drove down the hill to the doors.

Scotty had told me that George and Billy would be there, so I found my way to the visiting team's locker room, and caught up with Billy sharpening skates in the hallway. We shared a laugh, and he showed me where my locker was. George even cut a piece of tape and put my name and number on it like the rest of the guys.

Knowing that "goalie skates" were different from regular hockey skates, I wanted to get them on and see if I could even skate with them. It was then that I learned just how freaking big Decaro's feet are. I put on three pairs of socks to help fill the extra space, tied them up, and walked out to the ice to get used to them. This was still a good three hours before game time, so I stepped out on the ice while they were running a zamboni and took a few slow laps around the rink. First thing I learned was that you can't turn on goalie skates like normal skates. Good thing was that I never fell down. So I got to skate around for about 30 minutes, then went back into the locker to hang until the team arrived.

A little after 5 o'clock, the boys started filing in. They were all smiling and telling me that it would be a fun night. I'm sure that below the surface they were praying that nothing happened to Jeff during the game. Trust me, they were not alone in that.

George told me that I didn't need to go out on the ice for the pregame warmup skate, that all they really needed was a body to be on the bench during the game, dressed and on record as the backup goalie. My biggest responsibility would be handling door duties. Figured I could handle that much.

I must admit, I've always wondered about the locker room atmosphere on a game night for hockey. I remember high school and even college football lockers,

and how everyone would be getting "mentally prepared" for games. It's a little different for professional hockey. Best I could tell, Blaz and Limpright handle the tunes in the room. The music is cranked up, and all of the players have their own rituals going. Some are pedaling the stationary bike, others are stretching and getting heat packs applied while a few are playing hackey sack

with a volleyball in the hallway. You could tell that they were all thinking about the game. Some are studying game notes and getting an idea of what they can expect from their opponents once the puck drops.

John came in about 15 minutes before we were to hit the ice and pretty much had to put all the gear on me. That was the first time I had ever seen everything that the goalies wear, and when he finished, about all I needed was a dozen or so folks with ropes. It felt like I was a Macy's Thanksgiving Day balloon.

After Scotty came into the room and delivered his pregame talk, the guys started making their way toward the door leading out to the ice. So I stood up, waddled out into the hall, and we headed out to the ice. All I could do was pray that I didn't trip and fall stepping on the ice. Once out on the ice, we all skated down to our bench and then I learned how hard it was just to get through the small door with all that gear on.

I can tell you this much for sure. The game is totally different to watch from the bench than from our seats. Leaning out over the wall and watching the action puts your senses at a higher level. When there's a collision against the wall right in front of you, and players' sticks get close to your head, it's a total rush. Plus getting to hear the boys chirping with players from the other team. I knew not to get too involved with it, but I did have something to say to Landmesser if the time ever presented itself. I was gonna tell him that they signed me just so he wouldn't be the oldest guy out there. But that never happened. Probably good that it didn't.

The Kings snuck one in just as the horn sounded to end the first period. I started thinking that I might be able to enjoy firsthand a good "discussion" about the clock. But the only question Scotty had for the officials was why the green light never came on when the horn sounded. Oh well, we'll just have to overcome it during the next two periods.

Back in the locker room, gloves were going on the dryers and lots of guys were saying what they all needed to do to improve play in the next period. Limper pulled out a dry erase board and diagrammed what he was seeing, and how they needed to counter it. A little while later, coach came in, added what he wanted to see, and then we once again headed out.

During the first period, our forwards and centers were going in and out of "my" door. For the second period, that changed as the defensive corps would be using the



**Visitor's locker in the DeSoto Civic Center**

door at my end of the bench. The workload got a little lighter, as only two players at a time would be going in and out, rather than the three I was used to during the first period. George figured I could handle a little more responsibility then, and I got “promoted” to holding a towel in addition to taking care of my door duties.

We tied the score during the second period on Smitty's goal, and went back into the locker knotted at one goal apiece.

The atmosphere was a little brighter during the second intermission. Scotty came in just before we headed back to the ice to show everyone something he had noticed about Landmesser during the game, and what our guys needed to do to make his life a little more difficult. It was cool to see how they are all able to break down what's happening on the ice to such simple terms and know what they need to do.

We skated back out for the third, and Shane netted our winning goal fairly early in the period. And of course, Sterling sprawled out on the ice for quite a long time. The RiverKings threw everything they had at Jeff late, pulling Sterling for the extra attacker, and we had some real good scrums in front of our net in the last minutes.

When the horn sounded ending the game, everyone jumped over the boards and headed out to congratulate Jeff. Scotty started walking toward the locker, looked

back to see me wondering what I should do, and said “Go out there and join the celebration!” He didn't have to say it twice. I got so excited about getting to go out and join the lineup that I tripped on the step. I didn't fall, but it was definitely not the most graceful bench exit you've ever seen. I went through the line with the guys, fist-bumping, then hitting Jeff on the helmet. I opted not to do a head bump with the bear noggin against his helmet. Call me a wimp if you want to.

Back into the locker room, and the mood is totally exciting. I make my way over to my locker, and plop down. Clayton calls for everyone's attention, and tells all the guys that Jeff had a fantastic game, and then announces that despite his performance, the night's game puck is going to “our new tender, Brad Dennis.” Then he tosses me the game puck. Wow.

That's definitely one of the coolest things that's ever happened to me. I'd like to thank Coach Muscutt and all the boys for making me feel welcome in the room, and to say that I'm glad I could help out.



Great gum selection!

# November 2010

						HOME	AWAY
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	
	1 Booster Club Meeting	2	3	4	5 Mississippi RiverKings Away Game	6 Allen Americans CenturyTel Center 7:05 pm	
7	8	9 Laredo Bucks Away Game	10	11	12 Rio Grande Valley Killer Bees CenturyTel Center 7:05 pm	13 Laredo Bucks CenturyTel Center 7:05 pm	
14	15	16	17	18	19 Rio Grande Valley Killer Bees Away Game	20 Laredo Bucks Away Game	
21	22	23 Missouri Mavericks CenturyTel Center 6:35 pm	24 Texas Brahmas Away Game	25 <i>Thanksgiving</i>	26 Tulsa Oilers Away Game	27 Texas Brahmas Away Game	
28 Mississippi RiverKings CenturyTel Center 4:05 pm	29 Board Meeting	30	<p>Now that the season is underway, we'll all be keeping up with our Mudbugs when they are on the road. Or anytime we can't make games ourselves. There is now a free Pointstreak app for your iPhone or other smartphone. To learn more, just do a search for "pointstreak"</p>				

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## Coming soon to the Booster Club Table...



## Mailbox Covers

Your mailbox can show your Mudbugs Pride with these new covers. They are made of 13 ounce outdoor vinyl and digitally printed with UV inks for a long life in an outdoor environment. The covers fit just about all standard mailboxes, and attach using magnetic strips. This makes them easy to remove during the offseason if you wish.

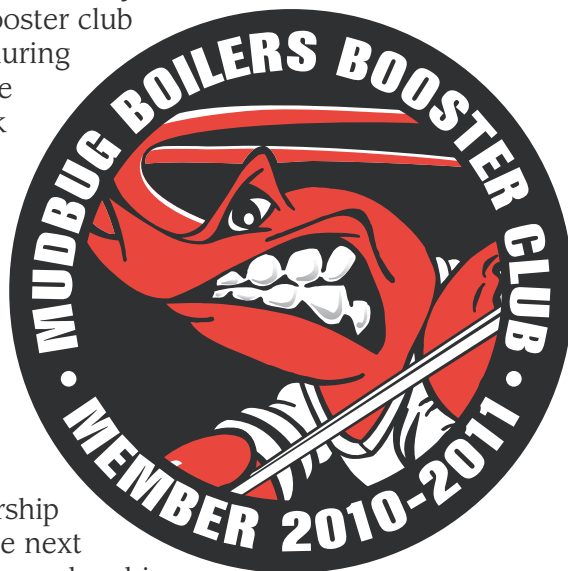
We should have a limited supply of these at the booster club table, so check in often. They will sell quickly and you won't want to miss it.

## Membership Committee

We've enjoyed a great start to the season. And the booster club is still ramping up our activities for the year. Keep in mind that if you get a chance, sign up to help work the booster club table for a single period or intermission during a game or two this year. We don't require that everyone do this, but if we'll all work one or two times, it will make our fundraising efforts easier for us all.

Also, keep in mind that we are always looking for new members to share in the fun with us. If anyone who sits near you at the games is not a current member, get them signed up. We will soon start a membership drive, and offer something to those members who can sign up the most new folks.

If you haven't picked up your membership packet yet, make a stop by the table at the next game. Inside your packet you'll find your membership badge along with this year's membership decal for your car or truck. Display it and let everyone know that you're a part of the best booster club in the CHL!



### **Brad Dennis**

Membership Chairperson