

Seattle Starz Win Mainland Tournament Championship

Vancouver, B.C. 21 April, 2009 – The Seattle Starz traveled to Vancouver this past weekend and left town with the Mainland Tournament championship. The Starz play as the Kent Valley Rainiers during the regular season. The Starz opened round-robin play with a convincing 6-0 victory over the Surrey Jr. Eagles. The Starz came out strong and put on an impressive display of speed and skill to overwhelm the Eagles with a decided 42-8

advantage in shots on goal.



Later that night the Starz ran into the Kelowna Red Wings. The Starz jumped out to a 3-1 lead heading into the 3rd period. At that point, the Red Wings started changing the momentum with the help of 28 penalty minutes assessed against the Starz in the 3rd period and were able to chip away and finally take a 4-3 lead before putting the game away with an empty net goal to make the final score 5-3.

The Starz needed a big win in their final round-robin game to secure a semi-final berth. The Pacific Knights provided the opposition and the Starz took advantage of their speed and skill to score a decisive 14-0 victory. The score was reflective of the tie breaker formula implemented by the Mainland Tournament organizers which emphasized total goals as the first tie breaker among teams with similar records.

The Starz qualified for the semi-finals and met the Vancouver Jr. Giants. The Giants included top players from Burnaby Winter Club and other top PCAHA Tier 1 associations. The Giants took it to the Starz from the opening face-off and dominated the first period scoring the game's first goal and outshooting the Starz 18-2. The Starz got the equalizer early in the second period, but the Giants scored two late goals to take a 3-1 lead into the third period. The Starz got a wake-up call from the coach between periods and started to move the puck better as the third period began. By this time, fans from the other rinks started to gather around the boards to watch these two talented teams battle it out for a spot in the championship game. Within 5 minutes the Starz had evened the score at 3 and continued to put pressure on the Giants goaltender. The Starz got the eventual game winner with 5:32 left and were able to hold on to secure an impressive come from behind 4-3 victory. All of the Starz goals were of the highlight reel variety with strong skating, solid stickhandling, crisp passes, and laser-focused shots.

The Starz would get their rematch against Kelowna in the championship game as the Red Wings posted their own come from behind victory in the other semi-final game. The Starz were determined to take better advantage of their opportunities in the rematch with the title on the line. In the championship game, both teams skated cautiously through the first 10 minutes. The Starz then struck quickly with 2 goals in less than 30 seconds to end the first period with a 2-0 lead. The Red Wings opened the second period on the power play, but the Starz dashed any hopes of another Kelowna comeback with a picture perfect shorthanded goal that pushed the lead to 3-0. The Starz spent the rest of the 2nd period pressuring the Red Wings goalie, but weren't able to put any more goals in the net. The Starz sensed the championship was within their grasp as the third period got underway. Three quick goals in the first five minutes put the game out of reach and the Starz skated out the rest of the game with a 6-0 championship victory and leaving no doubt that they

were the top team in the 97 division. The victory gives the Starz momentum as they head into next month's Challenge Cup in Vancouver.

The Spring tournament season provides the Starz an opportunity to benchmark their progress against top All-Star teams from around Western Canada. The Starz/Rainiers are looking forward to next season when they'll battle for the USA Hockey Pee Wee Tier 1 National Championship.

Please see the Starz team victory photo posted on www.KentValleyHockey.com.

Contact: Lew Sellers, Director of Communications
Kent Valley Hockey Association
6015 So. 240th Street
Kent, WA. 98032
(206) 914-9619 Cellular
Lew@KentValleyIceCentre.com