



HERSHEY JR. 'BEARS'



NEWSLETTER

A Message From Our Club President

On behalf of the Hershey Junior Bears Board, I am pleased to welcome both returning players and newcomers to our organization for the 2025-26 hockey season.

This marks my second season serving as President. As previously mentioned, I have invested many years in providing support to both the Hershey Junior Bears and the Hershey Bears organizations. My reason for participating is that this Program aims to promote hockey within the community and provide opportunities for players to compete in a historic venue. My son Gavin started with Bear Bites and is now in his second year on the A National Peeewe travel team and looks forward to growing in this organization.

My main goal as President, for this upcoming season, is to continue to enhance the overall experience for all players, coaches, and families – by focusing on our Mission Statement - ***Promote, Encourage, and Govern hockey for boys and girls in the Central Pennsylvania region. We will strive to teach the coaches, parents, boys, and girls respect for the concepts of sportsmanship, fair play and ultimately foster a love for the game of hockey, for life.***

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To achieve this, all of us together – board members, coaches, players, and parents – have certain responsibilities, both to the organization and to each other. The Hershey Junior Bears organization is only as good as its members. My hope is that all members will strive to set good examples and model positive behavior on and off the ice. Together we must continue to manage its operations and plan for its future in a way that is true to its mission, but is also flexible, adaptable, and economically responsible.

The main objectives of any youth sports organization – should be having fun, making friends, exercising, learning about values such as teamwork and responsibility, and improving skills in the sport of hockey. It is the responsibility of adults, including board members, coaches, and parents to ensure that children's experiences are positive, emphasizing instruction, encouragement, and opportunities appropriate to their developmental stage, while eliminating negativity, bullying, and harmful speech or behavior. It is critical that each coach models such positive behavior to his or her teams, specifically by preparing players for success on and off the ice and communicating information and expectations clearly to families.

Throughout the past year, we have taken significant steps to improve communication during the season. We distribute information via our website, Facebook page, email communications, and our rapidly growing newsletter. The sustained success of the Hershey Junior Bears relies on the commitment, effort, and ingenuity of our volunteers, as well as the ongoing support and active engagement of families in our programs.

During the offseason, we expanded our travel program by introducing a 19U Girls team competing in the MAWHA, as well as adding a second House Select Team at the Minor Midget level to complement our existing Bantam level team. We extend our best wishes to all teams for a successful season.

The Hershey Junior Bears are distinguished as one of Pennsylvania's longest-established youth hockey organizations. It is the responsibility of the Board to continue to manage in the best interests of the association and to adapt to the challenges we face to accomplish our goals. The Board dedicated significant time and effort during the off-season to developing strategic objectives for the short, medium, and long term.

I hope all our players have fun on and off the ice this season. Let us do our best to make it an overall positive and worthwhile experience for all members.

Sincerely,

Michael Schmelz
Hershey Junior Bears President



Featured Coach

Scott Cranston 18U



Coach Cranston has been around the sport of ice hockey since 1980. He played his youth hockey here in Hershey in both the House and Travel programs. In 1992, he began coaching with the State College Icercs. His teams have won many championships to include the Pittsburgh Amateur Hockey League, Central Pennsylvania Ice Hockey League (High School), and numerous other tournament championships in Pennsylvania and other states. He began coaching with the Hershey Jr. Bears in 2011 when his sons were started playing hockey with the Bear Bites. Coach Cranston enjoys helping and developing young hockey players."

Fact file:

Hometown: Hershey, Pennsylvania

Playing experience: 7 years

- Hershey Jr. Bears (1980-1987)

Coaching experience: 22 years

- Head Coach State College Icercs 14U/Peewee A through 18U/Midget AAA (1992-2001)
- Head Coach Hershey Jr. Bears (2011-2015)
- Head Coach Elizabethtown High School (2018-2023)
- Head Coach Hershey Jr. Bears (2024-2025)

Highlights:

- PAHL Championship as a coach (1994 & 1998)
- Silver Stick finalist (1995)
- Elizabethtown High School League Champions (2020), Viola Cup Champions (2021) & finalist (2023)
- DVHL Playoff appearances in 2013 and 2025
- Tournament Champions in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Maryland

Featured Coach

Rob Shearer 16U



My Coaching history began in 1986, when I graduated high school at age 17. I've Coached numerous teams at numerous levels and age categories in various cities such as Lancaster, Hershey, Capital City, Bloomsburg (to name a few). But Hershey will always remain nearest and dearest to my heart.

My Staff and I have achieved great success, many times going into Championship rounds and Finals, but none greater than during the 2023-2024 season, when the Hershey Jr Bears Bantam team went undefeated (25-0-1) and won the Regular Season Championship Banner, the DVHL Championship AND the Atlantic Amateur Hockey Association District Championship!

Definitely a season that will never be forgotten!

My favorite part of Coaching, however, isn't the victories, rather, it's TEACHING THE GAME and hopefully, the players learn LIFE LESSONS along the way. I feel that it's not my job to just make them better hockey playersit's my job to make them better young people. Many pictures that adorn my home reflect that philosophy.

In closing: WE ARE HERSHEY
WE ARE HOCKEY
WE ARE TRADITION
WE ARE FAMILY

Thanks for allowing me to be part of the GREATEST HOCKEY TOWN EVER !!

In addition to being the Head Coach of the HJB Midget 16U A team, Coach Shearer will also be a part of the following teams this season:

AC Midget 16U AA

AC HJB Quebec Team

AC HJB Peewee A

HC Bear Bites

Coaching Coordinator for the HJB Board of Directors

HJB Team Spotlight

The HJB Mites kicked off their season this fall with a mix of familiar faces and new talent. Returning veterans include goalie Carson Long, Mario Scarnati, and William Schrantz. They are joined by six new teammates: Warren Bilger, Teddy Choate, Carter Hildebrand, Joey Holmberg, Lyra Mahay, and Jacob Smink.

September brought the team's first opportunity to skate together at the DVHL Mite Jamboree in Aston, PA. The Jr. Bears looked sharp, coming away with 3 wins and 1 loss as they began building chemistry on the ice. Even more exciting — every single player came away with a goal for the weekend!

Looking ahead, the team is eagerly anticipating one of the most exciting events of the season — the Mites Beach Bash in Ocean City, Maryland. With big energy and even bigger smiles, the Jr. Bears are ready to make waves both on and off the ice!



HJB Team Spotlight

The HJB Squirts participated in the Eastern Junior Elite Prospects League August Showcase, held on August 23 at the Ice Palace in New Jersey and August 24 at the Red Bank Armory Ice Complex. The showcase featured competitive matchups and provided an early test for the team as they work toward advancing in the league standings.

On opening day, the Bears dropped a close contest to the Peconic Wildcats by a score of 6–5, before responding with a decisive 7–0 victory over the Prestige Stars. The following day, the team faced the Long Beach Lightning, falling 9–1, but closed the event on a strong note with a 5–4 win over the Nassau County Lions.

Several individual performances stood out across the weekend. Jackson Lee and Alex Stone led the offense, each recording four goals. Goaltender Koen Myers delivered several key saves, anchoring the defense in critical moments. Additionally, Travis Krikorian and Leo Kocuba returned to the Squirts roster and contributed offensively, each scoring during the event.

Away from the rink, players and families gathered at the beach on Saturday. While swimming was restricted due to the aftermath of Hurricane Erin, the outing served as a valuable opportunity for team bonding.

With balanced scoring, strong goaltending, and renewed depth to the roster, the HJB Squirts remain focused on building momentum and positioning themselves at the top of the standings as league play continues.




























Sponsorship Opportunities!


Greetings from the Hershey Jr. Bears!

Not for profit programs like ours would not exist without support from our families and members of the community like you, and we sincerely hope you will consider supporting us now.

It is no secret to members of the hockey community that youth sports, especially hockey, are becoming very expensive. Large corporations are being formed to take over youth sports, trying to capitalize on players and parents' desire to play the game they love, sending prices even higher and leaving the average players' experience lacking. Through generous support, the Hershey Jr. Bears can continue to operate in the Central PA area while keeping costs down and expanding our organization's programs.

We kindly encourage you or your company to look at our sponsorship opportunities this season. If you have additional questions or would like to offer alternative ways of helping our organization, please visit our [sponsorship](#) page.

Hershey Jr. Bears Annual Sponsorship Levels						
	MVP Sponsor	Play-Maker	Hat Trick	Shutout	PowerPlay	Top Shelf
	1 or 2 Available	Limited Quantity				
	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$3,000	\$1,000	\$750	\$500
Helmet Stickers for all HJB Players						
2 Dasherboard Ads at HersheyPark Arena						
4 Tickets to Hershey Bears Game						
Concourse Advertisement at HersheyPark Arena						
4 HersheyPark Day Passes						
2 Mite Dasherboard Ads at HersheyPark Arena						
Logo on Jersey for one House Team						
Company Link/Logo on HJB Website						
Social Media Promotion & Spotlight						

 Indicates inclusion in package

Our Sponsors

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