



# RAIDERS HOCKEY

SPRING 2025 NEWSLETTER

[www.raidershc.ca](http://www.raidershc.ca)

#WEARERAIDERNATION

# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello Raider Families,

Just like that, another season has come to an end. We would like to thank all of our teams for a great season. Congratulations to those teams that proudly brought home banners in Esso Minor Hockey Week and City Championships. Congratulations to the U13-6 Black players for being this year's City Champions! Congratulations as well to the U15 BC2 White team who also won gold in Cities and whom, along with our U21, team made it to provincials! We hope everyone enjoyed the season, made some new friends, and had fun.

Congratulations to our U18 graduating players. We wish you all the best, and hope that you are able to enjoy hockey after high school. Whether it be U21, a recreational league, transitioning from a player to a coach, or continuing to referee, we hope that you are able to use the skills that you learned from your minor hockey career to excel at whatever you choose to do.

As the Board of Directors closes out the season and prepares for our upcoming AGM, we would like to encourage you to consider running for the Raiders Board of Directors. As per our bylaws, there are multiple positions available and many more volunteer opportunities within the club. Please see the AGM information that is included in this newsletter for more information.

As the season has ended, the time has come for our year end survey. Please check your email for the link to the 2024/25 survey. Providing the board with respectful, constructive feedback on the appropriate platform is essential for us to implement any changes you would like discussed for next season. All feedback is kept confidential.

Lastly, we would like to thank all of you for your support and hard work. Thank you for volunteering and dedicating your time to support the sport we all love. This hockey club is what it is because of the efforts of our volunteers and we are very grateful.

Leslie





## Volunteer of the Year Trish Solobay

The Calgary Raiders Hockey Club is proud to announce Trish Solobay as the club's Volunteer of the Year.

Trish has been an exceptional volunteer with the Raiders for the past two years, bringing energy, organization, and heart to everything she does. Prior to joining the Raiders, she was already a committed hockey parent and volunteer with the Simons Valley Storm, always stepping up where needed.

As a Team Manager for her sons' teams, Trish has organized tournaments and managed countless team logistics with care and professionalism. But her contributions extend far beyond the team level. Last season, she served as the Manager Mentor for U7-U11, guiding new team managers with her experience and insight. This season, she took on the role of U11 Division Coordinator, continuing her leadership and shouldering even more responsibility.

And if that weren't enough for this mother of two and dedicated educator, Trish also spearheaded the U15 Stick It to Kids' Cancer Charity Tournament, a massive undertaking that was in danger of becoming just a legacy in name only until Trish stepped up!

In its 10th year, the tournament needed someone to step up and lead, and Trish answered the call. She assembled and led a team of volunteers who ensured this legacy not only continued, but was a huge success, with over \$70,000 raised for the Kid's Cancer Care Foundation.

Trish doesn't do any of this for recognition or awards. She does it because she's deeply committed to giving back, supporting youth, and ensuring every player has an experience that's not just about hockey, but about connection, growth, and community.

Congratulations, Trish, and thank you for all that you do for the Raiders family!





# RAIDER NATION NEWS

## Raider of the Month

### Russell Calafatis U18 BC3 White

When Russell Calafatis first laced up skates in grade 4—after moving to Arbour Lake and watching his friends at Crowfoot—he had no idea he was embarking on a lifelong passion. By the next season, he'd earned a spot as a second-year U11 defenseman, and his love for the game only deepened from there. Year after year, Russell's relentless work ethic carried him through every level of hockey, even bouncing back stronger than before one season, after breaking his arm that summer.

As Crowfoot evolved into the Raiders, Russell entered his third U18 season making BC1—and was quickly elected co-captain. His leadership, both on the bench and in the dressing room, "shone brightest" when it mattered most. "Russell's commitment and passion for the game of hockey is infectious for anyone who knows him," says Coach Chris Smishek. "His competitive drive is always on display, and when he speaks, the players are the most attentive."

After finishing high school, Russell didn't hang up his skates—he traded them for a coach's clipboard, joining the Raiders U18 BC3 White team as assistant coach. Here he worked one-on-one with the defensemen, passing on the skills and insights he honed over years of competition.

Off the ice, Russell balances full-time studies at SAIT with a part-time job at the Crowfoot Arena skate shop—and still finds time to volunteer. On his days off, you'll catch him leading our "Introduction to Hockey" program, fitting skates and teaching drills to future Raiders stars.

Russell's journey—from latecomer to captain, from player to coach, from student to volunteer—embodies the Raider spirit. His dedication, leadership, and generosity make him our clear choice for Raider of the Month. Congratulations, Russell!





# RAIDER NATION NEWS

## Board of Director Nominations Now Open!

Are you interested in getting more involved and helping shape the future of our association? Members in good standing are invited to submit their names for consideration for any vacant Board positions ahead of our Annual General Meeting (AGM).

### Vacant Positions Include:

#### President:

- Hockey Calgary Operations, YMCA contact, oversees all roles & sits on all committees

#### Vice President On-Ice:

- Coaches & coaching, Development, Ice Scheduling, Team/Player support, Spring & Summer Development Programs

#### Vice President Off-Ice:

- Player Evaluations & Placement, Equipment, Branding, Managers & Off-Ice Team support

#### Vice President Communications, Safety & Conduct:

- Communications (Email distribution, Newsletter & Social media), Community engagement & Promotion, Kick off BBQ, Community Service Programs/events, Policy development & review committee, Safety regulations & certifications, team educational programs, & General Conduct

#### Director of Arena Operations:

- Supports Crowfoot Arena General Manager, supports strategic planning & funding initiatives; requires knowledge/training in facility operations, maintenance, & safety - experience in sports administration or ice management an asset

#### Director of Development:

- Development partners, & On and Off-Ice Player Development

#### Director of Equipment:

- Apparel & equipment procurement, Equipment distribution, Apparel Vendors & General Vendors

#### Directors at Large (4):

- Association Tournaments (Raid the Rink; Future Stars; Stick it to Kids Cancer), Vivo Liaison partnerships and ice costing, Intro to Hockey Program, & Elite Programming (U13 AA)

To be eligible, **nominations must be submitted in writing to the President at [president@raidershc.ca](mailto:president@raidershc.ca) by April 28.**

Please include a brief introduction, which position(s) you may be interested in assuming and for which you feel you are well suited, your connection to the association, relevant experience, and why you are interested in serving on the Board. This information will be shared on May 1st, via an email to the Raiders membership. The email will list all nominees and their submitted information to help inform voting decisions at the AGM.

Elections will take place at the AGM, and each member in good standing is entitled to one (1) vote. Proxy voting is not permitted for Board elections.

Anyone passionate about our association and willing to contribute is encouraged to consider putting their name forward.

## Raiders Hockey Club Annual General Meeting

**Date:** May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**Time:** 7:00 PM

**Location:** Dalhousie Community Association (5432 Dalhart Rd NW)



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[Raiders Contacts](#)



# RAIDER NATION TOURNAMENTS



## Stick it to Kids' Cancer Tournament

The Stick it to Kids Cancer Tournament is a charity event where 100% of the proceeds go directly to the Kids Cancer Care Foundation of Alberta, supporting children and families affected by cancer across the province. A heartfelt thank you to every single team that participated—your fundraising and support helped us come together as a hockey community to stand behind an incredible cause. Together, we're helping stick it to kids cancer!

A MASSIVE THANK YOU to all the volunteers who made this tournament a success!!!

### Huge Thank You to Our Sponsors!

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all the incredible sponsors who supported this amazing tournament. Your generosity helped make this event a success, both on and off the ice!

Special thanks to: **Papa John's Pizza, Costco, Spolumbo's, Puck Sudz, Terry's Twig Wax, Big Chief, Grinder Skate Specialists, Kona Ice, Bare Fern Apparel, and Bell's Balloons.** We truly appreciate your support and commitment to our hockey community and the Kids' Cancer Care Foundation!



### #1 Fundraising Team: Junior Oil Barons

A huge shoutout to the U15A Junior Oil Barons, who were the top fundraising team, raising an outstanding \$5,200 for the Kids' Cancer Care Foundation! Their incredible effort and commitment to making a difference off the ice truly embodies the spirit of the game. Way to go, Oil Barons!



### #2 Fundraising Team: GHC Ignite

Not only did GHG Ignite bring home gold in the NBC4 division, they also secured second place in team fundraising—raising an incredible \$4,670! A huge congratulations to the players, coaches, and families for their outstanding performance both on and off the ice!





# RAIDER NATION TOURNAMENTS

## Stick it to Kids Cancer Tournament Medalists



OPENING CEREMONIES



RAIDERS U15 BC3 BLACK BRONZE MEDALISTS



RAIDERS U15 NBC3 GOLD MEDALISTS



RAIDERS U15 BC2 SILVER MEDALISTS



CALGARY TOWER IN RAIDERS PURPLE



RAIDERS U15 NBC2 BLACK GOLD MEDALISTS





# RAIDER NATION NEWS

## Raiders Hockey Club Wraps Up a Championship Season

The Calgary Raiders Hockey Club had a season to remember, with teams across multiple divisions achieving remarkable success on the ice. From league play to tournament championships, Raiders teams demonstrated skill, resilience, and teamwork, with several earning top finishes this season.

Five Raiders teams advanced to the Adrenalin City Championship Semi-Finals, showcasing the depth of talent within the club. Three teams fought their way into the Finals, with two capturing gold medals and another securing silver.

The Raiders U13-6 Black had a stellar year, taking gold in Esso Minor Hockey Week and following it up with another championship win at the Adrenalin City Championships. The Raiders U15 BC2 White dominated their division, finishing first in their league and securing gold at the Adrenalin City Championships. Their success also earned them the honor of representing the Raiders and Hockey Calgary at Provincials in Athabasca. Thank you for being amazing ambassadors for our club and our city! Additionally, the Raiders U18 NBC3 White made an impressive playoff push and secured silver in the City Championships! Finally, adding to the club's success, the Raiders Junior C team also qualified for Provincials, demonstrating the continued strength and competitive spirit of the Raiders program across all levels and proving that there is space for all in hockey!

This season was a testament to the dedication and hard work of Raiders players, coaches, and families, whose commitment to excellence shone through in every game. Congratulations to all teams on an outstanding year—your efforts and achievements have made the Raiders Hockey Club proud!



U13-6 Black Captains with Hockey Calgary League Chair, Brittany Polski





# RAIDER NATION NEWS

Celebrating the Adrenalin City Championships 2025



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[Raiders Contacts](#)





# RAIDER NATION NEWS

## Hockey Alberta Provincial Silver medalists: U15 BC2 White



What a season for U15 BC2 White! This incredible team wrapped up a super successful year with a silver medal finish at Provincials.

Their hard work, determination, and team spirit were on full display all season long, and we could not be prouder of their achievement.

Congratulations to the players and coaches on an unforgettable run!

## Raiders Junior C Provincial Qualifiers

### Is Junior C Hockey for You??

to all graduating U18 players—just because your minor hockey journey is wrapping up doesn't mean your days of organized, sanctioned hockey are behind you. The next chapter could be just getting started. If you love the game, crave competition,



and want to be part of a tight-knit team that plays for the love of hockey, consider trying out for the Junior C Raiders next season.

U21 is a great way to stay in the game, keep your skills sharp, and be part of a driven, supportive hockey community.

Stay tuned for more info on tryout dates and messages from Coach John—and don't hang up those skates just yet!





# RAIDER NATION NEWS

## Thank You - U18 Yelnats Tournament Committee

We want to extend our deepest gratitude to the U18 Yelnats Tournament Committee in Cochrane for the incredible tribute they paid to one of our own, Samuel Nleya, during their March 28–30 tournament.

As part of their tradition, the committee hosts a graduation ceremony following each team's final game, recognizing the contributions of graduating players. This year, the ceremony held special significance for our Raiders U18 NBC2 Black team. Sam, who we tragically lost in November 2023, was a graduating player and honoured in this ceremony.

In a powerful and moving moment, the committee presented Sam's graduation gift to the head coach and read aloud Sam's biography, previously shared in our December newsletter. Sam was more than a player—he was a leader and a changemaker. During the summer months, Sam facilitated a learn-to-skate program specifically for kids of colour, working to ensure that all children feel welcome, empowered, and confident on the ice.

To honour his legacy, the tournament committee also announced a \$1,000 donation to the Raiders for the 2025-2026 season. This donation will cover the registration fees and team cash call for one U7 player of colour in financial need—an incredible way to keep Samuel's spirit of inclusion and generosity alive in our hockey community.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you to the U18 Yelnats Tournament Committee for this beautiful act of remembrance. Sam's impact continues to be felt, and we are proud to carry his legacy forward.



## Raiders Social Media

If you aren't already following us on social media, this is an invite to do so! Throughout the season our social media platforms celebrate and showcase our Raiders players and teams. This said, our social media is quieter once the season ends, and so we encourage you to continue to submit content through spring and summer by showcasing your off-season highlights, whether you're honing your hockey skills, playing other sports, hitting the gym, or enjoying a well-deserved vacation, we still want to celebrate our Raiders.

**Our social media platforms are entirely reliant on submissions from our members—if you don't send it in, we can't post or celebrate it!**

Please DM your photos, videos, or stories to @RaidersHCYYC on Facebook or Instagram so we can keep the Raider pride alive until the puck drops again.



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[Raiders Contacts](#)



## Raiders 2025 Summer Development Program

We are thrilled to announce the RAIDERS 2025 Summer Hockey Development Program — a high-energy, skills-driven, and fun way to get ready for the upcoming season!

All programs are led by experienced, professional Development Partners to help our athletes sharpen their game.

 **Registration Now Open!**

Spots are limited and these camps will fill fast — register ASAP!

◆ Note: Camp age designations are based on the 2025–26 season. For example, if your child is entering U9 in the upcoming season, they are eligible for U9 camps.

### U9 & U11 Conditioning Camps

Development Partner: P3 Sports Inc.

At P3 Sports Inc., athletes train with customized, position-specific programs designed to build strength, skills, and mental toughness. Their proven methods help players maximize performance both on and off the ice.

Program Focus:

- Skating Skills
- Puck Skills
- Shooting
- On-Ice Conditioning



Option 1: August 18–22 (Mon-Fri)

- 5 On-Ice Sessions (60 minutes each)
- Maximum 30 Athletes
- U9/U11: 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM
- U11/U13: 5:45 PM – 6:45 PM
- Location: Crowfoot Arena

Option 2: August 25–29 (Mon-Fri)

- 5 On-Ice Sessions (60 minutes each)
- Maximum 30 Athletes
- U9/U11: 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM
- U11/U13: 5:45 PM – 6:45 PM
- Location: Crowfoot Arena

### U13, U15 & U18 Conditioning Camps

Development Partner: Dynamite Boxing (Hockey)

Dynamite's development programs focus on building speed, strength, confidence, and hockey IQ, while incorporating nutrition, flexibility, hand-eye coordination, and recovery.

Program Focus:

- Skating Skills
- Puck Skills
- Shooting
- On-Ice Conditioning



Option 1: August 18–22 (Mon-Fri)

- 5 On-Ice Sessions (60 minutes each)
- Maximum 30 Athletes
- U13/U15: 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM
- U15/U18: 8:15 PM – 9:15 PM
- Location: Crowfoot Arena

Option 2: August 25–29 (Mon-Fri)

- 5 On-Ice Sessions (60 minutes each)
- Maximum 30 Athletes
- U13/U15: 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM
- U15/U18: 8:15 PM – 9:15 PM
- Location: Crowfoot Arena

 **Register Here For all Divisions:**

[Option 1 Registration Link](#)

[Option 2 Registration Link](#)





# CELEBRATING OUR GRADUATING U18s

## A Tribute in Honour of our Graduating U18s

As you skate into your next chapter, we hope your time in minor hockey has left you with memories to last a lifetime. We hope it gave you lasting friendships, taught you resilience, and filled your days with early mornings, dressing room laughs, big wins, and lessons from tough losses. More than anything, we hope hockey gave you a second family and a sense of belonging you'll carry with you wherever life takes you next. #OnceARaiderAlwaysARaider

**NATHAN ADAM**

**JACKSON BARDWELL**

**EZEKIEL BARRON**

**GAGE BEGALKE**

**ALEXANDER BOEY**

**ABIR BRAR**

**DOMINIC CALON**

**RILEY CAMPBELL**

**BENJAMIN CHOMYN**

**JAYDEN COATS**

**QUINTON COURAGE**

**RILEY DICKSON**

**CALEB DONNER**

**LOGAN GINGRICH**

**XANDER HAMEL**

**RYAN HANN**

**COLE HANNAN**

**BRADLEY HOUGHTON**

**JACK KISS**

**JORDAN LAM**

**MIGUEL LEIVA**

**ERIC LETWINIUK**

**JESSE LEWIS**

**TYLER LY**

**AUSTIN MABLEY**

**MATTHEW PINLAC**

**RAYAN RASHID**

**BENJAMIN ROY**

**HUNTER SCOTT**

**VEERPARTAP SIDHU**

**BRAXTON SINCLAIR**

**ALESSIO VIGNA**

**RHYS WALTERS**

**NATHAN WANG**

**JAEDYN WHITE**

**RYAN WILLS**

