

WINNING IN STYLE

We're proud to support a championship-winning girls hockey team and promote equity, access and inclusion on the ice.

A Sports Matter grant helped the North Eastern girls ice hockey team look the part. Then, they played it.

The team, based in the northeast pocket of Maryland, weaved through the unknowns of a season played during the pandemic and ended it in the most permanent fashion as champions of the Maryland Student Hockey League (MSHL).

When it was all said and done, they returned to DICK'S Bel Air Store #079 and celebrated with our team and the trophy in hand. The local store had selected North Eastern for its annual Sports Matter Store Community Grant Program which provided jackets and gear.

"I quickly knew they were our store's choice for our Sports Matter grant and The DICK'S Sporting Goods Foundation answered the call," said store manager Matt Murray.



The new gear didn’t push the team to the title. They earned it all on their own. What it did provide the team was a sense of belonging and the look of a unified group.

Girls ice hockey is growing in Maryland, but still lags behind the boys in key areas, explained North Eastern coach Brian Reider, who co-founded the girls program. The girls teams don’t have the same access to resources, including the ice time to practice and improve.

“For me, it wasn't about winning the trophy as much as giving the girls an opportunity to play ice hockey and look like a team,” said Reider. “I get more satisfaction out of seeing these girls get an opportunity to play.”

It wasn’t easy. Games and practices were constantly in danger due to COVID. The locker rooms were closed, so the girls had to arrive in their gear, put guards on their skates and walk through the parking lot into the rink. That was if they could get the ice time, which is hard to come by because there aren’t many rinks. The cost -- about $400 per hour -- and the fact that longer-established programs generally get first dibs, added to the difficulty.

But once North Eastern hit the ice, they showed what they can do and capped the season by hoisting the championship trophy after winning an overtime thriller, 2-1. The first goal in that game was netted by Charlotte Labre, who is the granddaughter of former NHL player and Washington Capitals legend Yvon Labre.

The MSHL was founded in 1988, but only within the past two seasons have there been dedicated girls teams. Team North Eastern has now made back-to-back title game appearances.

Some of the girls had experience, while others never skated before joining North Eastern. They all ended the season the same way, as champions.

"It was an unforgettable year that went past just having fun and on to the championship," said Reider, who added "...and we did it in some nice-looking uniforms."

Members of team North Eastern include: Sydney Armstrong, Emmie Caulfield, Claire Cook, Guin Donovan, Addie Erdman, Alex Erdman, Payton Greaver, Tori Hayes, Jade Kendall, Morgan Kovacic, Charlotte Labre, Kipper Ledford, Monica Mumma, Ava Pierro, Michelle Radov, Heather Reider, Michelle Reynoso, Olivia Rissling, Rylan Sachs, Eva Schisler and Anna Stamatos.
The team was coached by Brian Reider, Brian Hayes, Ron Pierro and Jay Rissling.