Thanks For Our Past
Proud Of Our Present
Thrilled About Our Future
The story of Colgate women’s hockey is a remarkable one. Since its 1973 start, the program has been in a steady state of transition. With each new season, students players, coaches and managers aimed high, gave it their best, raised the program to new heights - and had a blast!

Hearing the story through your alumni and student voices, we are struck by how much Colgate women’s hockey has been shaped by each of us and how much hockey has meant to all of us. Woven through four decades of perspectives in the pages that follow are the connecting themes of our title – thanks for our past, proud of our present, thrilled about our future.

We hope you enjoy this archive and the accompanying directory, and that it brings back memories that reconnect you to your Starr Rink days. We also hope it helps you link your experiences to those from other eras and see how it has all added up to something very special.

Many thanks to the 90 alumni and students who responded to our summer survey, and to the alumnae volunteer team whose valuable contributions brought this project to life.

Visit www.gocolgateraiders.com/whockey for more hockey history and team updates. Go ‘Gate!

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January 2006
Women's hockey: a step up

by Carol Auster and Madeline Bayliss

Several years ago no one would have thought that women would be seen as permanent members of the Colgate community. Now would have not only penetrated the classrooms, they have also invaded the ice. Maybe the Colgate men expected to be surrounded by girls skating around much in the style of old-fashioned farm pond skating parties, but that is not necessarily the case. Many Colgate women play ice hockey and the interest in increasing.

Women's participation in ice hockey began last year. In order to secure ice time for intramural games, interest in the sport first had to be established. Although the women were a bit hesitant at first, the sign-up sheets for teams posted in the dorms were soon filled.

Four teams, two freshmen and two upperclass teams, organized themselves and hit the rink in January. Despite their figure skates, women with their helmets, shin guards, elbow pads and mouthguards looked as much like hockey players as their male counterparts. Interest persisted (as did some wobbly skating) and the season continued through the beginning of March.

This year the number of teams has doubled to eight with three freshmen and five upperclass teams. One team has even gone as far as renting the ice on Saturday or Sunday afternoons for practice. The women have learned to skate better and have acquired some of the finer points such as stickhandling and passing.

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Now women are looking beyond the intramural scene to the opportunity of competing with other schools. Cornell, Brown, Princeton, Boston University, and Colby College as well as other American and Canadian schools already have women's intercollegiate ice hockey teams. The first step in organization at Colgate is to prove that the interest exists by establishing a Women's Ice Hockey Club. This group would function much like the Rugby Club and Fencing Club. Another possibility is the organization of an Intramural All-Star team. A tentative game has been scheduled with Cornell for February 23rd. Furthermore, there is a chance of participation in a tournament at Cornell the first weekend in March.

A meeting for all those interested in whether the All-Star Team or the Club will be held before the end of this semester. Any women who wish to be active in these programs should dial 824-0981 and ask for Carol Auster or Madeline Bayliss.

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1st Women’s Ice Hockey Team
1973-74
Keeping the Club Team Going

1979-1980

1986-1987
Still Keeping the Club Team Going

1993-1994

1995-1996
1st Division III Varsity Team
1997-1998
1st Division I Varsity Team
2001-2002
A History of Transitions
Women’s hockey through the decades

'90 –'91

'77–'78

'04-'05

'83-'84

'90 –'91
For the early players, it was all pretty new

For the classes of ’74–’83

- 57% never played a team sport before Colgate hockey
- 92% never played hockey before Colgate

- 62% started Colgate hockey on figure skates… 83% finished on hockey skates
Later players had more experience, but it still varied a lot

For the classes of ’84–’99

- 83% played a team sport before Colgate
- 48% started hockey at age 8 or younger…
  43% started hockey at Colgate
- 91% started and 100% finished on hockey skates at Colgate
Recent and current players arrived ready to compete

For the classes of ’00-’09

• 53% started at age 8 or younger
• 100% played hockey before Colgate
• 100%, of course, started on hockey skates
Life in the 1970s…

• Hockey started my junior year. We often had practice at midnight on Friday or Saturday night. We drove ourselves to away games, and had student coaches. But it was an awesome part of my college experience. ’75

• Memories - Being one of the first coaches…Bringing hockey skates back from Minnesota to replace the figure skates….Our first game at Cornell, watching their fully equipped team taking slap shots from the blue line and hitting the glass behind the net. Almost beating Cornell two years later. ’77

• We did it for the love of the sport. I was able to graduate from Chief Bench Warmer to co-captain and president. We formed close friendships with teammates. The struggles we endured made us closer. ’78

• We were enthusiastic but pure amateurs! Most of us wore figure skates, some of us (me too!) could barely stop on the ice, and our stick and puck-handling skills were rudimentary at best. But we were competitive. ’78

• We were only a club team. Our equipment was left over men’s – the pants were like barrels as we skated down the ice, they would wiggle from side to side. ’79
Life in the 1980s...

- I loved looking up at the score board from the rink, especially at RPI and Cornell where they had the score board above center ice. I felt like a professional. My teammates were wonderful and we all tried so hard. Everyone gave it their best and we were proud to be a team. We all improved tremendously while at Colgate and were always welcoming talented new players... I will never forget that feeling of coming from behind and winning a game. Especially, when people thought you were going to lose...that thrill of actually winning was fabulous. ’80

- The days of student coaches, driving vans, piling into hotel rooms or on floors of people’s houses. ’81

- Loved the feeling of being part of a team, being able to improve, traveling, representing Colgate in some small way, doing something most other girls would never get to do. Sleeping in the wrestling room at St. Lawrence, using cast-off intramural pads, playing in Boston on an outdoor rink. ’81

- Playing women’s hockey was an absolutely key part of my Colgate experience. As president, I scheduled the games and made travel arrangements. We played mostly Varsity teams and were one of the few remaining clubs – but we held our own very often, won quite a bit and I think we had about a .500 record. ’85
Life in the 1990s…

• We were student coached and student run. And we had a lot of fun. We took our hockey seriously, but not so seriously that we didn’t have cold cases of beer in the locker room after practice (and a few for the Zamboni guys, too.) ’91

• I had played sports my entire life... soccer, lacrosse etc... so it seemed strange to me to have to fight for opportunity in girls sports. ’93

• We had people who had been playing hockey all their lives and people who were just learning how to skate. Somehow, we made it work. ’96

• I remember the day we found out that the Title IX lawsuit had been settled. Coach Bartlett greeted me by saying congratulations. Sensing my confusion he explained that the lawsuit had been settled. When I told the juniors and seniors I ran into on the hill that afternoon, they reacted to the news with disbelief. That evening after practice we celebrated in our old locker room with a cake that one of my classmates made in her dorm kitchen and a bottle of non-alcoholic champagne supplied by Bartlett. ’99
Life in 2000s…

• I was there during such a transitional period - new status, new uniforms, locker room, recruiting, it was great to see. Now I tell people I played hockey at Colgate, and there is an 'Ooohhh' factor. ’00

• Bus rides, parties, hotels, locker room moments…. I think of these moments and laugh out loud to this day. One great memory is when a teammate forgot her skates for an away game and rented the blue plastic ones for our pre-game practice! ’02

• I played with some awesome people and had great times on and off the ice. We went from being an average D-III team the first year to finishing second in the league the next year, and then two years later moving to D-I. We always managed to play hard and have fun (sometimes a little too much fun for our coaches’ liking!) ’02

• Between my freshman and sophomore years we jumped (perhaps leaped is a better word) up to Div. 1. Our first game against Harvard with all their Olympians was unreal. I think most of us just sat on the bench in awe of them and how good they were. Now to see the team not just keep up, but out play them is unbelievable to watch. ’04

• Our team was underestimated and surprised every team we played, really challenging some of the top teams in the country. ’07
“What an adventure!” ’74

My hockey career

’79 - ’80
What prompted you to play hockey?

Top 3 answers in early years – Fun thing to do (59%). Friends convinced me (41%). I liked to skate (35%).

Top 3 answers in recent years - Sibling played (77%). Parent played (35%). Popular sport where I grew up (35%).
How I got started…

• My dorm's intramural team needed a goalie, so I played on borrowed figure skates that broke in the first 5 minutes. But I stopped every shot and was hooked. '79

• I found my uncle's old leather skates in my grandmother's basement, headed to the pond and jammed my feet in. '98

• I wanted to date someone on the men's team. '76

• I played field hockey in high school and also played some pond hockey growing up. Love the sport and was totally psyched to get involved at Colgate. '85

• In my era, boys played hockey and girls figure skated. Although I was an athletic figure skater, I was not a graceful figure skater. Sometime after I arrived at Colgate I learned there were already 8 intramural women's ice hockey teams and I thought it sounded like a good use of my athletic skating. '76

• My mom had a traumatic experience learning how to skate on figure skates, so she got me hockey skates because she thought they would be more stable. The figure skating lessons wouldn't let me in because I didn't have a toe-pick. Pretty much snowballed from there. '02

• I started playing rugby freshman year, but that was so dangerous that I figured hockey would be a little safer with all that equipment. '85

• My brother and I went over to Potsdam to see the Colgate women's team play. My brother encouraged me to go out for the team when I returned to Colgate that spring semester -- I did, and never looked back. I've been playing ever since. '80
We’re still going strong!

Still playing, coaching, or involved in skating:

- 18% of ’74-’80 grads
- 28% of ’81-’90 grads
- 42% of ’91-’04 grads
“I still play.” ’80

- I played on a women's travel team for a while (Wolves in Washington, DC) and now I play with a men's pick-up league also in the DC area. ’97

- I am now 31 years old and still playing 9 months a year on at least one team. As I watch adult women learn to play, I realize you are never too old to learn to play hockey! ’96

- I play in the local in-house league and I play and manage the travel team. The only years I have not played are my first year out of college when I couldn't find a team and the years I was on maternity leave. ’90

- I have played on a hockey team ever since graduation and when I cannot, I really miss it. I have played hockey in Washington DC, Albany NY, Japan, and now in Pensacola FL ’89

- I play on a men's team at the Pettit Ice Center in Milwaukee. I am one of only two or three women in this league of 600 players. ’88

- I was hooked on hockey. Continue to play in rec leagues, but mostly finance and chauffeur kids to their hockey events. ’85

- Men's club team at grad school, various women's traveling teams since at Senior B level and currently at Senior C level. ’79

- I played on a coed intramural team at grad school until ’81 and didn’t play again until July ‘04. Inspired by my teammates skating at a Colgate alumni weekend, I bought skates and a helmet, played in a pick-up game, saw a sign for the Central Penn Blades women's team and, well, that was the beginning. I am now on the roster and recently elected an Alternate Captain. It's been a great comeback and I even scored 4 goals in a 4-game all day tournament! ’76
“I’ve been coaching.” ’03

• I knew upon graduation that I would always have hockey as a part of my life. For now, that means coaching has become a part of my career. ’04

• I played with the Bridgewater Wings, was a volunteer assistant with the Philadelphia Little Flyer Girls program, and then played with the Chesapeake Bay Lightning. ’03

• I became a hockey coach, first at the prep school level and now the college level. ’02

• I continued to coach, in part because of my great experiences coaching the Women's Club. It raised my awareness of many issues in coaching beyond the X's and O's of the game such as personality management, team motivation, and the need to connect on an individual level with players. ’90

• After graduation, I moved to Denver and played on a women's team. In 1986 I moved back to NY and started a women's team in Saranac Lake that is still in existence. I've coached in the Saranac Lake Pee Wee Hockey Association since 1991 and I currently coach my youngest son's Bantam team. ’80

• My time with women's hockey began what is now a 30-year-long career coaching women athletes at the prep school level. While I haven't returned to hockey, the lessons I learned coaching those pioneer women athletes have stood me well each of the last 30 years. ’74
The impact is lasting
Colgate women’s hockey has stayed with me
“It always felt special.” ’85

• My daughter was coached by a Colgate women’s hockey alumna – we had an instant relationship with Colgate hockey in common. It was a great experience for all three age groups! ’76

• It was definitely fun to be in on the start. I feel proud to have been a part of it. ’77

• It was wonderfully fun. We worked hard, but we laughed a lot and had a wonderful time together. ’79

• Being a club team has its own flavor. There were disadvantages to be sure, but also many benefits as well. I am forever grateful for having the opportunity to participate. It is one of my fondest memories of my time at Colgate. ’83

• I continue to cherish my hockey days at Colgate, along with my semester abroad in Geneva. They are key highlights of my time there. I continue to love the game even though I am not involved personally. ’85

• Playing hockey at Colgate was more than just being able to play a sport I loved--it was my de facto sorority and it means that I will always feel a link to Colgate that I might not have had I not played. A handful of us who live in Washington get together as often as we can for dinner and drinks. ’97

• I always love the ‘getting ready’ part of the game. People walking around, warming up, doing anything they need to do to feel prepared for the big game ahead. The music is playing, people are talking, laughing, dancing, or maybe sitting down and focusing hard on what they want to accomplish. Its a really unique time that only hockey players can share because we have to spend so much time in the locker room getting dressed. ’05

• A high point for me was putting on the Colgate jersey for the first time! ’08
“It was great resume copy!” ’76

- My mentor in graduate school is such a big hockey fan I'm pretty sure that's half the reason I got in. ’02

- It is the line on my resume which never fails to draw questions during job interviews! ’99

- I think that when I go for job interviews, people are always impressed by the fact that I played 4 years of varsity athletics in college--and then they realize that it was hockey, and they're shocked! ’93

- It may have actually gotten me into medical school! When I interviewed for residency, people were also extremely interested in my history of women's hockey. Until recently was playing in a men's league, and met a bunch of nice people I never would have know otherwise. ’91

- It gave me confidence to do things not traditionally thought of as being for women. ’81

- Moving into a highly competitive field (medicine) seemed natural after hockey. ’78
“It taught me a lot.” ’81

• My involvement in Colgate hockey had a huge impact on me post-graduation. I am a teacher and thus consider myself part of a perpetual team. Each of us has a role on the team, some days are better than others, and differences of opinion are plentiful. This was also true on the hockey team. My skills of being a good teammate were taught to me through playing hockey. ’03

• It reinforced being a team player and the importance of working together for a common goal. It helped me learn to never give up and to be proud of my efforts, even if I didn’t win. It also helped me keep life in perspective by having a life outside studying and social pressures. It taught me the importance of doing something just for me…for the fun of it. ’85

• As an assistant coach, I learned to work under the coaches system. I’ve had to interact under someone else’s system in subsequent stages of my life. In addition, I had to coach drills, plays and techniques. To do this, I had to understand these better than what I knew as a player. This is another skill that has served me well. When you have to teach something, you learn it from a whole new, and valuable, perspective. ’84

• It reminded me that I had the skills to accomplish what I needed to accomplish. That is, if you reach deeply enough, you can find the strength, courage and inspiration to do anything! ’79
“I'd always be willing to give anything back to Colgate hockey that I can.” ’04

Students want to…
- hear about career experiences
- clear up career confusion
- get resume and interview tips
- learn about being part of hockey after Colgate

89% of alums want to help!
“I look forward to being more connected.” ’99

More than 90% of alums want to…
  – Connect with their teammates & coaches
  – Get updates on the current team

More than 75% want to…
  – Connect with hockey alums from other eras
  – Connect with current players
“I will remember that moment for the rest of my life.”’03

• Double overtime, short handed win vs. Vermont at Vermont. Club championships at MIT in 1990. ’91

• We finally scored against Cornell and we all went nuts. You would have thought we won the game but we just finally broke the endless 12-0 shutout streaks. The Cornell team didn’t get it at all. ’89

• Beating St. Lawrence in the second game of the ECAC Quarterfinals. ’05

• Senior year at Hamilton. We always thought we should beat them and I don’t think we had the last 3 years. It was 3-3 with 1:23 left in the game. I got a breakaway and scored on a back-handed fake to win the game. ’85

• Having Sunshine LaRue from Cornell get 3 breakaways and go one-on-one with me in goal. The first 2 resulted in scores and the third she ended up against the boards when I came way out and used my stick to hit away the puck but got her also! ’76

• In my final game at Starr Rink we faced Harvard. Earlier we had lost to them badly. I watched most of the game from the bench. In the final minute I was put on the ice. I felt like I had a lot to prove and I scored my final and only goal of the season in the last couple of minutes.’03
“Thanks to all who made a difference through the years.” ’76

- At a time when there was no feeder system, Colgate gave college-level female athletes an opportunity to play the great game of hockey. For many of us, it was our first chance to play the game, which is unusual for college athletics. For that we are grateful. ’80

- Thanks to terrific coaches who were students with many other obligations but still willing to spend their time teaching us the game of hockey. ’83

- Thanks just doesn’t cut it for those who came before us. Colgate hockey wouldn’t be what it is now if it weren’t for all of you!!! As for those who come after, you guys are amazing. We are proud of you, and your current reputation makes us look really good. ’98

- I’m very grateful to those who came before us and helped us fight for varsity status, and very proud of the women after us who took the team to Division 1. ’00

- We are lucky to have the experience of being a Division I school. We do not forget how much the women and men who were part of the program before us had to fight for what we have now. ’05

- We appreciate so much what those Colgate female hockey players have done before us. We know that we would not be here if it weren't for each and every one of them. We're a hard working bunch of girls, just as they are, and this next season we are taking Colgate Women's Ice Hockey to the top of the ECAC! Git-r-done 'Gate!!! ’07
Share your memories. See great hockey. Meet players, coaches and alums. Create new memories.

Attend Center Ice Club Weekend
February 10-11, 2006

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