

Good Evening Ladies and gentlemen and welcome to the GMSHL Annual Banquet and Awards Night. It's nice to see so many people here. We hope you enjoy your evening with us. I have a couple of duties to perform this evening the first of which is a recap of the season.

To get this started we need Warren Wills to come up and occupy this seat please. While Warren makes his way down here I'll give you a bit of background on this year's recap. First the disclaimer. What you are about to hear is mostly factual. There are however some parts where we stretched the truth a teeny weeny bit. This program contains scenes with partial nudity and sexuality and may be offensive to some. Viewer discretion is advised.

Those of you who know me, know that I am severely challenged when it comes to computers. So, to put this summary of the season together I needed a lot of help. I want to take this opportunity to extend a special thanks to AGENT Dwayne Ducommun for the time and effort he put into, not only what you've seen here so far tonight, but also what you are about to see shortly. Many hours spent as a photographer, sometimes undercover, are about to unfold. Thanks very much Dwayne. Ladies and gentlemen, please turn your chairs so you can see the screen, have some dessert, sit back, relax and enjoy our review of the 2002 / 2003 season.

GMSHL's

MISSION IMPLAUSIBLE

Good Evening Mr. Wills. This is Mr. Phil Nott, commissioner of the General Motors Salaried Hockey League. Nott was elected to the position in 2001 by the coaches and managers of the teams in the league. Actually he got the job because 1.) nobody else looked like that or wanted the job, and

2.) more importantly his wife Sharon is an excellent cook. A huge consideration when it came to hosting the Christmas meeting.

Nott agreed to take the position with the understanding that his term as commissioner be a maximum of two years. Like any good leader he immediately surrounded himself with top notch people to help run the league.

His first significant move was to retain this man, Andrew Williams as his chief advisor. Many believe that Williams, who,

sometimes disguises himself as a player, is actually the man in charge of the league. His passion to be on a championship team keeps the coaches and managers on their toes at the September draft meeting as he has been known to try to scoop the best new players

for his team. Fortunately for the league Williams' strength lies in administration skills, not his assessment of hockey talent.

After securing Williams' services Nott convinced Referee-in-chief, Al MacDonald and Director of Player Personnel, Fred Harding to stay on for two more years.

He then hired his son, Bill to be head time keeper.

With Bob Stirling on stats and Ian Mackey on board for Web site development and maintenance, Nott's first year in office, while mainly a learning experience, was by most accounts successful. The year ended with an thrilling overtime finish in the championship game.

At the beginning of his second season in charge, Nott ran into some off-ice difficulties. For starters the sponsor of the Player of the month and Goalie of the month awards went out of business.

These awards, initiated in Nott's first year are given monthly to a player and goaltender who in the eyes of the selection committee have made significant contributions to the success of their respective teams during a particular month of the year. Scoring statistics as well as defensive zone play are taken into consideration for the player award.

For the goalies, while wins are important, strong goaltending and giving your team a chance to win also play a part in the final decision. As with all awards the decision of the selection committee is final and any player who does not agree with the winners can, as Bob Stirling says, "CALL YOUR AGENT".

Nott also got disturbing news when he learned that General Motors would be pulling the funding the league had received in the past as they were doing away with the Rec Council. This left a huge gap on the revenue side of his budget.

Not to worry though, as during the off season, Nott, who is well connected in the community and blessed with savvy and salesmanship, embarked on a hunt for new sponsors.

Nott turned to his other son, Phil Junior, to assume sponsorship of the player and goalie of the month awards. The Keg Steakhouse and Bar became an official sponsor of the league for the 2002 2003 season.

Crows Sports came on board with a number of donations to league special events and the banquet.

Nott sold Roy Nichols on the benefits of team sponsorship thus creating the Roy Nichols Avalanche.

Nichols joined Midtown Saturn, Kerr Industries, Ontario Motor Sales, Gus Brown, Minacs, Gen Auto Shippers and Mackies as returning team sponsors.

With sponsorship entrenched for another season, Nott set out to stock the League with players. Registration was very successful, forcing team managements to debate heavily the merits of having 16 skaters per team. After hours of discussion at the opening meeting the vote was tied.

Nott, who by now fancied himself a business man, had the deciding vote. He realized the main revenue flow for HIS league was player registration. When he cast his vote to add 1 extra skater per team and subsequently \$2,000.00 to league coffers it surprised no one. . If he had his Nott would expand team rosters to 20 skaters.

A difficult, but well handled, off-ice beginning to his second year. The on ice season started October 7th and in week 3, the league experienced its' first ever defaulted game as one goalie was unable to make it on time. This, the first blemish on his record forced Nott to revise the rules governing defaults.

In spite of this minor set back after 6 games only two points separated the eight teams in the league. Nott was on a roll and decreed "parity" had arrived.

Then came more difficulties. In an attempt to increase fan attendance at the games Nott, with encouragement from Williams, decided to experiment with Sunday Night Hockey. On November 24th Nott displaced the Oshawa Generals from their regular Sunday night spot, hoping many of the Generals faithful would, out of habit, make the Sunday trek to the rink to watch HIS league play.

Game time approached and Nott looked like a marketing genius, as about 70 fans were in the stands for the 6:00 P.M. start. The teams were on the ice ready to go but the referees, while aware of the switch in days, were not aware of the switch in start time. Not wanting to disappoint the fans, Nott decided the game would proceed as scheduled. But, confusion was evident. Was it an official game? Would it count in the standings and individual player statistics? The answers to these questions of course depended on whether you were on the Camaros who won, or the Avalanche who lost.

Nott was now faced with a dilemma. His keen desire to at least give the appearance of being fair in his decisions, led to an endless litany of correspondence between the coaches and managers of the teams involved and the league executive.

Realizing his leadership would be questioned regardless of how he ruled, Nott turned to the time tested method of decision making BRIBERY. The one thing Nott truly understands is the value of booze. So when the Camaros dropped off a forty uncer and the Avalanche came in with a forty uncer and a case of beer the decision was a no brainer. Nott declared the game would be replayed.

Once again he was forced to introduce rules on the fly to govern “no referee” situations. As luck would have it, when the game was replayed late in the season the outcome was exactly the same as the first time, 5 – 2 Camaros. It turned out that the only real winner was Nott’s liquor cabinet.

It was now evident that corruption was creeping into his regime and Nott could feel the loyalty of some players beginning to slip away.

In an attempt to win back their support and bring the camaraderie of the players in the league to new heights, Nott with the support of Williams, authorized the first GMSHL Day with the Bills.

The December 2nd game, while anything but a walk in Orchard Park, could be classified as, well memorable.

In the most remote part of the stadium, sitting on aluminum bleachers, in sub zero temperatures and gale force winds the hearty GMSHL bunch huddled to stay warm. It was an exciting, but long game, with the home town Bills rallying for a victory. After freezing for some three and a half hours the guys were looking forward to a nice warm bus ride home.

With everyone aboard settled in with a beverage, the bus began to roll. A full two hours after departure, they had run out of booze and made it all the way out of the parking lot. Messy road conditions, a few missed exit ramps from the highway, and about 10 hours later the four hour bus ride home was over. The trip did however accomplish Nott’s goal of bringing the players closer together, as to a man there was a unified resolve to never again make this excursion in December.

A special bond was formed by Ric Brown, Kevin Cathcart and John MacLean as their most vivid memory of the trip will be recalled every time they hear the name of the home of the Bills,

RALPH Wilson Stadium.

December was not a good month for Nott on the ice either. First the City forced him to reschedule Dec 9th’s games as they needed the rink for a meeting.

Then a mix up in dates for the annual Skating party left many would be participants standing at the doors to the arena while a figure skating company was inside setting up for their evening show.

The one positive off ice development in December was Sharon doing her part to help her man keep control of HIS league by once again serving up a scrumptious buffet to close out the Christmas meeting.

The month of January saw top spot in the standings change every week. The competition remained stiff as the top 5 teams stayed within 5 points of each other the rest of the way. The break in the schedule in March gave Nott one more opportunity to meet with the players in HIS league. Again at the urging of Williams, he authorized the first ever “Meet The Commissioner Night” at the Keg Steakhouse & Bar. Approximately 20 players and coaches attended enjoying a feed of chicken wings, nachos and beer, some of it courtesy of the commissioner.

As the league entered the final night of the schedule first place was still up for grabs and six of the eight playoff positions were still to be decided.

Realizing the potential for an exciting finish, marketing genius Nott, undaunted his first go round, again decided to tinker with Sunday Night hockey. In spite of the fact he was competing head to head with the Oscars, Nott succeeded in providing some thrilling hockey for the many fans in attendance.

The Eldorados, hanging on to top spot since early February, and needing only a tie to clinch first place, lost, opening the door for the Camaros. They took advantage of the opportunity, won their game and moved into the lead for the first time since October 28. By virtue of the win the Camaros claimed the League Winners’ trophy.

The Eldorados on the other hand, devastated by the turn of events, looked like they’d be easy pickings in the first round of the playoffs.

Encouraged by the strong gate at the two Sunday Night tilts, it is rumored that Nott has approached the City to book more Sunday dates next season.

The playoffs began the following night. Williams ability to assess hockey talent was evident again as his Saturn team was the only team in the top four seeds to be eliminated in the opening round. The Eldorados sagged early in their game but recovered for a hard earned win.

The only surprise in the semi-finals was the relative ease with which the Camaros and Eldorados dispatched their opponents setting the stage for the final the following night.. For the first time in many years the top two teams from the regular season went head to head in the final.

The Eldorados, looking to atone for coming up short on the final night of the regular season, came out strong, were all over the Camaros and jumped into an early lead on a power play goal by Muir. They kept the pressure on but Ticknor held the Camaros in it until they found their legs. Late in the second period Smegal beat Beausoleil with a bullet to the top corner to tie the game. It was up and down the rest of the night with both teams having good opportunities to score but the Eldorados seeming to be in control of the hard fought, at times chippie, game. Solid goaltending at both ends kept the score tied until, with three minutes to go in the game, Muir’s one timer from the slot made it 2-1 Eldorados. The Camaros, with the extra attacker on for the final 90 seconds kept the fans

on the edges of their seats and made it exciting as they had a number of opportunities to tie the game. But the Eldorados, as they had most of the night, stood tall and thwarted every scoring attempt. The game ended when the Eldorados cleared the puck with about 8 seconds left.

When winning coach Jim Racknor was asked what he did to inspire his men to rise to the occasion, play hard, and bring their season to this thrilling climax, .. he smiled and replied ...

VIAGRA

Judging by the number of Eldorados at work the next day, with a hop in their step and singing “GOOD MORNING GOOD MORNING” there must have been some serious celebrating around Durham Region on Wednesday night after they got home from The Keg.

It all winds up at the Annual Banquet and Awards Night here at the Kinsmen Hall. An evening where the players, their spouses or girl friends and our special guests gather to enjoy good food and fellowship as they celebrate another successful season. Players engage in some good natured ribbing of teammates, and opponents. Some make excuses for why they lost. Others tell lies about how great they played. As they recall the events of the past season they party and drink responsibly so they can arrive home safely to enjoy the off-season and look forward to next winter in the GMSHL.

Your mission, Mr. Wills, should you choose to accept it, is to take control of the General Motors Salaried Employees’ Hockey League. Keep Williams in check. Establish a policy on the use of drugs and build on the strong foundation created by Nott, to take the league to bigger and better achievements in the years to come.

As always should you or any of your operatives be discovered the league office will disavow any knowledge of your actions. Good Luck Warren. This tape will self destruct in 5 seconds.

Ladies and Gentlemen let’s have a nice send off for outgoing Commissioner Phil Nott and a warm welcome for, depending on his decision, our yet to be confirmed Commissioner Warren Wills.

Thank You.

Now on behalf of the league I'd like to take a couple of minutes to recognize the coaches and managers for their contributions during the year, not only on game nights but meeting nights as well. AND of course their spouses for allowing them to put in all that time and effort. I know a few of the people are not here so they won't be able to stand up when I call their names but those who are here would you please stand and remain standing until everyone has been introduced.

From the Roy Nichols Avalanche, Ed and Brenda Wielgos
From the Mackies Blazers, Geoff and Gail Bailey and Grant and Jane Wright
From the O.M.S. Camaros, Tom and Jan Lovelock and Brad and Lesley Mason
From the Kerr Industries Cavaliers, Todd and Cheryl Bartlett and Dan and Lynda Dus
From the Gen Auto Eldorados, Jim Racknor and Mary Calder
From the Gus Brown Firebirds, John and Maureen Aikin and Warren and Sonja Wills
From the Minacs Montanas, Otto and Mary Ferenc and Les & Heather Kiraly
From Midtown Saturn, Ric and Laurie Brown and Andrew and Susan Williams,
AND OF COURSE Commissioner Phil and Sharon Nott.

Players and guests, let's hear it for the people who help make this league one of the best around.

Commissioner Nott has asked me to make a special presentation to a person who spends many hours for the league behind the scenes, doing jobs like setting up banquet halls, procuring gifts for the ladies, arranging for door prizes, making connections for guest speakers and in general promoting the league. On behalf of Phil and the league executive I am pleased to present this token of our appreciation to Susan Williams.

Thank you. One last word to the coaches and managers. The league has a token of it's appreciation for you to pick up at the front after the evenings speeches. See Phil and Sharon and they will look after you.

Now I'll turn it back to Andrew.