**The Ice Rink: a lot of old memories**

By Gordon Haff

For several weeks posters advertising "Briggs Arena's last game" had been hanging on various bulletin boards around the Institute. The game was between this year's Club team and Club alumni teamed with the ill-fated Varsity, which disbanded three years ago. It was to have been held two weeks ago today. Unfortunately, a snowstorm changed a Friday game which might have drawn a fair crowd into a Sunday game with fewer than a dozen spectators. While the lack of a crowd could certainly have been in part attributed to the deuce possibility that this would not be the last game played on the rink, it is still an interesting case of a lack of appeal of sports at MIT. The lack of any sort of desire to see what could be the last game ever on the old rink is quite unusual, though not unique. Perhaps this is due to the fact that not many MIT people have ever seen a varsity hockey game that not many MIT people have ever taken it seriously enough to want to see. Perhaps this is due to the fact that not many MIT people have ever taken it seriously enough to care.

The present ice rink was dedicated on February 20, 1954, over 22 years ago. It was intended as a temporary rink, which had sufficient area for possible future covering and expansion. One hockey game, The Tech September 18, 1954, was played on it by the varsity team. This game "owed its existence to some of the primary architects of MIT's present sports system, was the person most responsible for the construction of the rink. He was also the person in charge of the purchase of the Rockwell Cage from the Army and its subsequent transportation to its present site. Unfortunately, he died shortly before the rink was completed.

At the time the structure was quite impressive. In 1955, even in the Northeast, artificial ice surfaces were not that common and MIT's new ice was larger than most. The cooling system was ingenious as well: it doubled as an air conditioning system for Kresge Auditorium which was also nearing completion at the time. In short, in the words of the President's Report of 1955: "The new additions [1955 also featured the addition of the basketball floor to the Cage] represent the most significant growth in our athletic and recreational facilities since the construction of the Rockwell Cage.

The President wasn't the only one who was pleased. Ben Martin, the Beaver hockey coach, saw the rink as little less than a godsend according to a February, 1955 The Tech. The hockey team seemed to agree. They best UNH 9-2 in their first game on the new rink and prompted a The Tech sports writer to write: "Playing on their own rink, the red-hot Beavers were to any interested team from the squad that lost six games during December and January."

All of this brings us to the following question: Where are we now and where do we go from here? The first part is relatively easy to answer, though the answer is in some ways not particularly pleasant.

The 23 year old "temporary" facility is vastly overloaded and its cooling system and other facilities deteriorate more rapidly every year. An Athletic Department publication, "A New Athletics Facility and Special Events Center at the Mas-tech book example of the problems of an outdoor rink. Warm fall weather and blizzards in January destroyed hours of ice time. The present ice rink was dedicated on February 20, 1954, over 22 years ago. It was intended as a temporary rink, which had sufficient area for possible future covering and expansion. One hockey game, The Tech September 18, 1954, was played on it by the varsity team. This game "owed its existence to some of the primary architects of MIT's present sports system, was the person most responsible for the construction of the rink. He was also the person in charge of the purchase of the Rockwell Cage from the Army and its subsequent transportation to its present site. Unfortunately, he died shortly before the rink was completed.

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- General Skating: 12,700
- Intramural games and practice: 8,650
- Intercolligate games and practice: 9,000
- Physical education classes for academic credit: 2,550
- Other: 1,000

Total: 27,600

Since 1974-75, these figures have doubled or even tripled. This hockey season provided a perfect example of the problems of an outdoor rink. Warm fall weather and blizzards in January destroyed hours of ice time.

Where do we go from here? Plans are presently being drawn up for the new athletic complex which will include an indoor ice rink, open from October to March. When Prof. Ross Smith, director of Athletics, was asked if this was being done to make sure the rink didn't ruin the team's spirit, he responded that it would be economically unfeasible to do so. The present ice rink was dedicated on February 20, 1954, over 22 years ago. It was intended as a temporary rink, which had sufficient area for possible future covering and expansion. One hockey game, The Tech September 18, 1954, was played on it by the varsity team. This game "owed its existence to some of the primary architects of MIT's present sports system, was the person most responsible for the construction of the rink. He was also the person in charge of the purchase of the Rockwell Cage from the Army and its subsequent transportation to its present site. Unfortunately, he died shortly before the rink was completed.

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Over twenty years of IM hockey contain unforgettable memories of games, celebrations, and powerful teams which have won the championship year after year. Lambda Chi, SAE, Thea Chi, Biker, Fuji, and Burton are a few of the names that come to mind from over the years. IM Hockey has become an important tradition in many living groups and an unforgettable part of their history. The game pictured above is between Lambda Chi and Fuji-Baker two years ago. Although Lambda Chi won this vicious fought contest with Paul Thompson '78 scoring the single goal of the game against Dave August '70, the Lambchops were doomed to lose in the playoffs. (Photo by Gordon Haff)

Gary Watson, a former member of the Club team, qualify some brew after the Alumni hockey game. The score was about 8-5 in favor of this year's team, but hard to be sure. (Photo by Gordon Haff)