

## Moms and Hockey Players Play Off by Nancy Archibald

Matt was born on March 4th and I was out of the hospital the evening of March 5th. The hockey playoffs for the Atoms were over and our hockey club had extra ice time. The coaches decided to have a game with the kids against the moms on March 11th.

I was thinking of playing but was discouraged by my friends and family.

“It’s too soon after having a baby,” Mom said.

I agreed reluctantly, but still took my skates and Aaron’s old hockey stick with me to the rink.

I breastfed Matt in the stands at the beginning of the game. When Matt was finished feeding, I could not suppress my desire to be out there with them.

“Do you mind holding Matt?” I asked Denise, a long-time friend from childhood.

“Sure, but I don’t think it’s a good idea,” she said as she saw me take the skates out of the bag.

I put them on in the stands and grabbed the hockey stick I had placed on the floor in front of me. As I stood up everything felt fine so I stepped out the gate and onto the ice. I felt exhilarated, but a little wobbly. It wasn’t until I tried to skate fast, that I realized how out of shape I was. My legs and fingers had been swollen during the last two months of pregnancy resulting in being on bed rest at home for the last month.

Sharon Wagner passed me the puck when we were over the blue line in our end. I tried to stick handle the puck, but instead of skating to the net to score, I ended up on the left side of the net and lost control of the puck.

*It’s not as easy as I thought.*

After a few more rounds, I decided to skate back to the stands to watch. Just as I sat down, Larry Neufeld skated onto the ice in a long red dress and a hockey stick in his hand. Larry and two other dads dressed up as women to help the almost-defeated moms. I am not sure who won the game, but it didn't matter, it was all in good fun.