

CONCORD

The final puck drop



ANDREA MORALES / Monitor staff

Ed Repins (15) of the Concord Budmen drives the puck past Chris Halecki (19) of the Agawam Chiefs during the final game in the 35+ division championship at the 1883 Black Ice Pond Hockey Championships at White Park yesterday.

Victors crowned at 1883 Black Ice Pond Hockey Championships

By **KATHLEEN RONAYNE**
Monitor staff

After day two of the three-day 1883 Black Ice Pond Hockey Championships, the Agawam Chiefs of Manchester, Mass., decided it was time for a new strategy. They had shot at every chance they could that day, scoring more than 50 points in two games to ensure a spot in yesterday morning's semifinals.

So the group of seven, most of whom coach for the Agawam Youth Hockey league in northern Massachusetts, sat down with some beers and devised a new game plan: Two men on defense, one in the middle and one up near the net to score.

It worked. The team overtook Concord High School '92, who had handed them their only loss on the tournament's first day, in the semifinal game

The Champions

18 OPEN DIVISION: Jack Edwards Teeth def. Concord Capitals, 13-10.

18 RECREATIONAL DIVISION: Granite State Minutemen def. Queen City Kings, 7-6.

35+ A DIVISION: Agawam Chiefs def. Concord Budmen, 12-8.

35+ B DIVISION: 180 Proof def. So Sick Swamp Rats, 8-5.

50+ DIVISION: St. Nick PHC def. White Park Hockey Club, 8-5.

WOMENS DIVISION: Newts def. No Stars, 9-7.

and defeated the Concord Budmen 12-8 to be named champions of the 35+ A Men's division of the tournament.

"It took us three games to figure it out, but we finally figured it out," said David Gillis, an Agawam player.

It was the team's first year

in the tournament, although several had played on other teams last year, and they only made it at the last minute when another team dropped out. Like most of the members of the 85 teams in the tournament, the players of both Agawam and the Bud-

men have been playing hockey since childhood. Nearly all of the Budmen players are part of the association that started the tournament three years ago. Between the two teams, the players had once represented the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Merrimack College, Villanova University and Saint Michael's College on the ice.

But pond hockey is a different game than professional or collegiate hockey – it's just like a game of street hockey or shinny that neighborhood kids would play. Each team has four players on the ice at a time. Instead of facing goalies, players must shoot the puck through one of two holes in a wooden box to score points. There's no intentional hitting or fighting, and the closest the game comes to stopping is when the puck goes out of

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