



GEOFF FORESTER / Monitor staff

A city of Concord snowblower works on removing the snow off of the pond at White Park in anticipation of the Black Ice Pond Hockey Tournament. The tournament, now in its eighth year, was originally scheduled to take place Jan. 25-28 but was postponed due to temperatures in the 40s.

CONCORD

After two-week delay, annual pond hockey tourney begins tonight

Warm weather, rain expected this weekend could impact event

Monitor staff

The puck drops Thursday night for the first games of the Black Ice Pond Hockey tournament that runs through Sunday.

The tournament, now in its eighth year, was originally scheduled to take place Jan. 25-28 but was postponed due to temperatures in the 40s. This weekend isn't looking much better - Saturday has a projected low of 33 degrees and a high of 44 degrees, and showers are expected to accompany similar warm weather Sunday.

The first games Thursday night are for youth hockey players, while Friday is the start of adult games.

Unpredictable weather is built into the Black Ice contingency plans, and a backup date two weeks after the original date is advertised along with the original date.

Black Ice has been delayed four times since the tournament began in 2010. The event was pushed back two weeks last year but otherwise carried on per usual; 2016 saw a delay, and then temperatures were so warm during the tourney weekend that participants played "boot hockey," which is ice hockey on foot, on Saturday and then the final matches indoor. A two-week delay in 2012 resulted in several games being canceled due to slushy ice.

The city of Concord closed White Street from Washington Street to Blanchard Street on Wednesday, and it will remain closed until Monday at 10 a.m.