

The “Brotherhood” of Hockey

By: Eliza Baker

I've played hockey for as long as I can remember. I started out as most girls do, as the only girl on a boys team. I played with only boys until I was a u-10. At this point, I switched to an all girls team. My first girls team was with the Polar Bears program and now I play for Northern Lights. These programs were where I met my first best friends, girls that I still see today. Although we are no longer the little girls having our dads tie our skates and getting pancakes together after the 8 a.m. practices, we run into each other at tournaments and on rival teams. When we see each other, we greet each other with a hug and catch up, just like we are 10 years old again. These girls are my family. We share a bond a commonality that cannot be broken; The love of the game.

Now we are all 17 and 18 years old, competing against each other every week in the high school and prep school world. Last year, my high school co-op team of East Catholic, Glastonbury and South Windsor played Simsbury in the State Championship. On that Simsbury team were girls I had played with since I was 12, girls who I share a bond with over our love of hockey. Girls who stood together with their respective teams on the ice in a moment of solidarity after the Newtown Shootings. During the game, and all hockey games, we are all business. We play to win. Friendships do not matter. We work hard. We want the “W”. After the games we talked, congratulate one another, joke around. We do this regardless of the team we play on. We are friends, family. We are part of the fabric of girls hockey.



Not only do I share a sisterhood with former teammates, but we also share one with our team. My team is a band of sisters. Everyone on that team has someone to call a friend, someone they are close to and someone they can count on. Everyone on that team supports the other girls, both as players and individuals. We support each other both on and off the ice. We are all equals and we all have the same goal...to play at our best level as a team. Not only do we challenge and support each other on the ice, we also do so off the ice. This is regardless of whether support is needed with homework, boyfriends, parents or college decisions.

Hockey is where I met my best friends, people I can trust and rely on, and a group of girls who will always have my back. Hockey has given me courage to strive and be my best. It has taught me to win and that winning is great. It has also taught me that winning is not the most important thing. The bond formed between girls is so much

more important than winning, and through playing the game, we are all winners. That is the sisterhood of hockey.

