

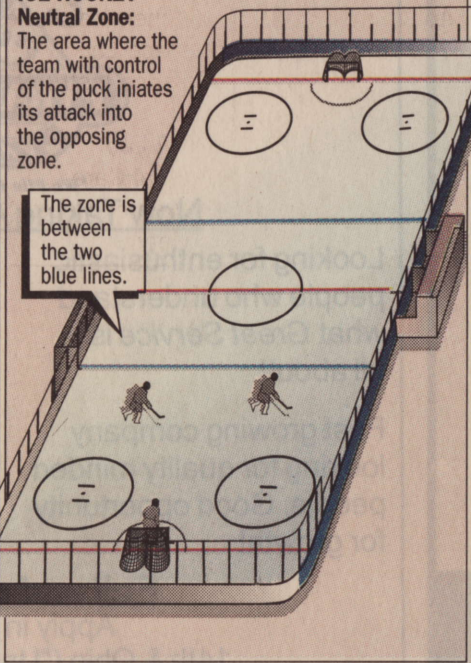
Sports Facts

ICE HOCKEY

Neutral Zone:

The area where the team with control of the puck initiates its attack into the opposing zone.

The zone is between the two blue lines.



Hockey back at Kansas after 3-year freeze

Practice begins in September for new club team that will play Big Eight Conference rivals

By Dan Gelston

Kansas sportswriter

Fall in Kansas conjures images of a bone-jarring hit by a Kansas linebacker or 90 mph serves by a tennis player. It rarely has been associated with ice or men on skates.

That might change as hockey returns to Kansas after a three-year absence. The return of the sport was led by Bill Jensen, Westbury, N.Y., graduate student. A life-long player and fan of the game, Jensen decided last year that KU students should be exposed to and given the opportunity to play hockey.

"There was definitely a void that needed to be filled," Jensen said. "Kansas has all these great traditional sports like basketball and baseball, but I felt it needs hockey. I saw a good opportunity to start one up."

The hockey team was suspended three years ago after allegations of improper money management by team managers.

Jensen took his idea last fall to Rick Rosenstengle, the club sport director. Rosenstengle allowed Jensen to try out his idea with a roller hockey team.

"I think when Rick saw how good the leadership was and how organized we were, he figured we were capable of running a hockey team," Jensen said.

Jensen took some holdovers from the roller hockey team and began building a hockey team. Jensen has set dates to play all Big Eight Conference schools and other colleges throughout Kansas and Missouri that express interest.

The opportunity to resume his playing career excited Derek Mescato, Font Hill, Ontario, graduate student. Mescato, who had been playing since he was 6 years old and competed at Heron College, thought his competitive days were over.

"I'm sure there's going to be some growing pains — we're a young team," he said. "But we have some experience on both the

coaching and playing sides. It's going to be a new and exciting experience here at Kansas."

Part of the growing pains of a new sport are getting funds. Rosenstengle gave the club \$7,000, and the team must raise the rest. Players must pay \$250.00 and provide their own equipment.

The team expects to begin practice at the end of September and will play at King Louie Recreation Centers in the Kansas City area until a new rink is completed in Shawnee.

Jensen said the team had been approached by the Kansas City Blades to play Missouri before a Blades game, provided the team could sell 500 tickets at \$10 each.

Jensen said he hoped to have a squad of 15 to 20 players. Because it is a club sport, nobody can be cut.

"Most students at Kansas have never really been exposed to hockey," Jensen said. "I think if they come out and support us, they'll see some of the most exciting and competitive action sports has to offer here."