

**Wednesday January 21, 2009**

## **I.F. girls finish third in Utah**

POST REGISTER

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The Idaho Falls U19 girls hockey team posted a third-place finish in the Martin Luther King Tournament hosted by the Utah Lady Grizzlies on Saturday through Monday.

The Idaho Falls Eagles, Utah Lady Grizzlies, Boise Herricanes, Sun Valley Suns, Colorado Selects, Montana Wildcats and teams from Wyoming and Steamboat Springs, Colo., rounded out the eight-team field.

Idaho Falls led off the tournament with a 1-0 victory over Boise. Krystal Porraz scored on a power play with 3:47 left in the first period. Kayla Snyder got the assist as she took a shot from the left point, and Porraz stuffed the rebound in the back of the net.

Gaby Bataldan kept the puck out of Idaho Falls' net, staying perfect on 22 saves. Eagle defenseman Claire O' Brien put in a solid game keeping shooters away from the net.

Bataldan remained nearly perfect in the second game, allowing only one goal and making 24 saves in a 2-1 victory over Sun Valley. Porraz led off the scoring with an unassisted goal from the left face-off circle. Maurgan Scott scored what turned out to be the game winner in the third period. Scott took a pass from eagle defender Katie Contreras in the high slot and beat the Suns' goaltender who was deep in her own crease. Idaho Falls winger Morgan Thornberry was instrumental in the victory as she kept pressure on the Sun Valley players trying to break the puck out from deep in their own end.

In the third game, Idaho Falls ran into a tough opponent in the Colorado Selects from Denver. The Eagles found themselves down 3-0 at the end of the first period. In the second period, Snyder beat the Select goaltender high on the glove side, with an assist from Scott. Halfway through the third period, Scott brought the Eagles to within one goal on an assist from Snyder. Colorado scored an insurance goal late in the third to win 4-2. Bataldan had 28 saves.

In their final game, the Eagles faced Steamboat Springs. Kaisha Merrell got the scoring started only 1:30 into the first period with a goal assisted by linemates Snyder and Scott. Merrell set up Porraz for another score five minutes later. Clara Thomas netted Idaho Falls' third goal of the period on a setup from Marla Francis.

Merrell scored one more for the Eagles in the period on an assist from Snyder. The onslaught of scoring was made easier for Idaho Falls with defensemen like Miranda Blake and Contreras holding the blue line in the offensive zone. In the second period, Francis scored on a pass from Thomas, sealing a 5-1 win. Bataldan finished with 24 saves in the final game.

The three wins put the Eagles in third place to finish the tournament. Idaho Falls will be on the ice again in Sun Valley this weekend.