

# Field hockey camp is fun, games and credit

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youngsters were divided into teams — Pink (Perlis), Green (Kasper), and Blue (DeCesaris) — and taught teamwork, skills such as dribbling, pushing, and driving, and the rules of the game. At the end of the day they were evaluated and rewarded with candy. There were grand prizes at the end of the week; certificates for most valuable player, most pulls, most improved, and farthest drive. There also was a competition between teams for the "championship."

"We play lots of fun games so they won't get bored," Jonelle explained, and with plenty of water breaks the long hours in the sun were tolerated by the energetic girls. "Not only are we teaching kids about field hockey; we and they... are having fun," Melissa noted.

"It's fun to come out in the morning and stay in shape," Rachel said. Staying in shape they were. Most of the campers admitted they would be lounging around home or in front of the television and bored if it weren't for the camp. Many of them did put in a fair amount of time watching the Woman's World Cup soccer games and believing they could be a member of the team or perhaps just Mia Hamm.

Britney Hoprich, a fourth grade camper, watched the soccer games and sometimes watches the Lehman high school hockey team play. She enjoyed the camp and plans to be on the hockey team when she is in seventh grade. The hardest part about the camp was "learning everything," she admitted.

The hard work paid off at the end of the day as two teams played each other while the third cheered them on. While on a water break, Jaime Lipski spoke for many of

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**Judy Kasper**  
Mother of camp organizer,  
Rachel Kasper

the campers when she said, "I like to play the whole field." She added, "I like to play against each other." Jaime is inspired by her mother, the head coach.

Coaches Lipski and Boyle were present to offer guidance, and to be a resource if they were needed, but the girls had everything under control. For Lipski, "field hockey is almost an obsession." Since there is no youth field hockey in the area as in other sports, the camp is a way for younger girls to get an understanding of the game so they can make a decision on where their interest lies.

"I like field hockey and I did it last year in fourth grade," said fifth grader Danielle Mitkus. "The high school kids came to my school and passed out forms."

Rachel Harrison, a member of the varsity team and an incoming senior, was a volunteer at the camp for the second year in a row. "It's beneficial for them to get an early start, it gives them a way to experience what we do," she said. "It's working a lot better than it has in the past, being more organized. We never had this when we were younger."

Ninth grader Kristin Lipski, a member of the junior varsity team and a niece of Jean Lipski, came to the camp to enhance her basic skills and get tips not taught at other camps. "They break down

harder skills into easier steps, doable steps for the young girls to understand. That is the mark of a great coach and athlete," Lipski said, in complimenting the organizers.

The coaches, children's parents, and the girls' parents gave Melissa, Jonelle, and Rachel tremendous support. Every day the three girls' mothers supplied refreshments, took photos and videos, and were a helping hand when they were needed.

"I think it's great that the younger kids are able to be involved," said Donna DeCesaris. "Field hockey is so successful at Lehman; this is a great feeder program." She was busy taking pictures of the activities and a video of the special awards and games Melissa, Rachel and Jonelle created for the camp, because their project requires pictures, but also for memories.

Judy Kasper commented on the project after the final events had taken place and the awards were given out. "The girls have enjoyed it. It was a positive experience. It's fun to watch the kids; they're so innocent and they are playing for the sheer joy of the sport."

"Best camp we ever had and incredibly organized," said Sandy Boyle, the assistant varsity coach and the three girls' mentor for their project. "I look forward to it next year." She is hopeful next year's seniors will follow in the trio's footsteps using the camp as a project.

For now, Melissa, Jonelle and Rachel may have met all the requirements to complete the project but they had so much fun with their young friends they plan to meet once a week to go over some skills, have scrimmages, and more fun times throughout the rest of the summer.



Field hockey camp for 4th-6th graders was fun and games for the campers, and a senior project for the organizers. In top photo, Rachel Kasper took a break with her team. Above, Jocelyn Mahon, left, battled for control with Ashley VanScoy. Melissa DeCesaris, far left photo, gave a tip to Jaime Lipski. Jonelle Perlis, near right photo, did the same with Lauren Spencer.

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