

High River Times

Sports

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Hockey Canada endorses Sprung arenas

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Hockey is Canada's game; it has been for years and will be for years to come. But enrolment rates are declining and part of that is because there is not enough ice to go around. From big cities like Calgary to small communities like Cayley and even our own High River, ice time has become a precious commodity.

Players are practising at 5:30 a.m. and playing until nearly midnight just to get a taste of the ice, and this is happening all over Canada.

That is why Hockey Canada stepped up and endorsed locally owned and operated Sprung Instant Structures Ltd.'s newest venture, Sprung Performance Arenas.

"This is fantastic," said Sprung President Phil Sprung Jr. "This will help us get out across the country."

Sprung structures recently completed the Edge School in Calgary, which includes two full-size hockey rinks.

"The Edge School was kind of our pilot project," said Sprung. "When we completed the Edge School, word got out like wildfire. A lot of people from Hockey Canada got up there to see the facility. They got excited and we started

talking to them."

This endorsement is huge for Sprung structures as they will now be able to approach smaller communities with their rinks and let them know that there is another alternative.

"It's huge for the future of arenas across the country," said Sprung.

The Sprung arena can be made into any size, can be constructed in about six months and costs millions less than a typical structure.

"We can go \$5.7-million, all in except the Zamboni, for an arena in some cases," said Sprung. "Traditional single arenas can cost anywhere from \$8.5-million to \$20-million, and take over a year to build."

The Sprung arena features the same construction as a typical Sprung structure. It has an aluminum structure, covered in a tough membrane, then insulation, which is covered by another membrane.

"Some misperceptions people have is we are a temporary solution... that is completely and totally inaccurate," said Sprung.

Sprung believes the

endorsement by Hockey Canada is just the first step in taking Canada's game back where it belongs; in small-town community rinks all across the country. He believes that by having arenas readily available to kids all over the country will not only bring back the small-town feel when everyone gathers at the local rink but it will also reduce costs of everything across the country.

"I have such a passion and such a belief in sport and what

it does for a community," said Sprung, who believes having a place for kids to play hockey will benefit every resident of Canada. "It's good

for everybody, it's good for taxpayers, it's good for youth, and it's good for crime (rates.) It's getting kids off the streets.

There's hundreds of millions of dollars associated with kids who are out of shape and not involved in sports."