



## SASA SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2026

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### **Letter from the President**

Dear SASA Families,

While many of us are enjoying summer, your St. Albans Skating Association Board of Directors, coaches, committee members, and volunteers have been hard at work preparing for another exciting season of hockey. Our goal is simple: to provide every player with a fun, safe, organized, and rewarding experience while continuing to strengthen our association for years to come.

Over the past several months, the Board has made significant progress in a number of important areas. We have focused on improving communication with our families, building schedules earlier than ever before, modernizing our Guidebook, adopting new organizational policies, enhancing player development opportunities, and investing in the future of SASA through equipment, facilities, and volunteer development.

One of our biggest priorities this season has been scheduling. We know how valuable advance notice is for our families, and we have worked hard to begin the scheduling process earlier than ever. While ice availability and league scheduling always present challenges, we are committed to providing as much information as possible, as early as possible.

Player development remains at the heart of everything we do. This year, we will continue emphasizing skating development, ADM principles, age-appropriate skill progression, dryland training, and Hockey IQ.

You'll also notice several exciting additions this year, including new home, away, and practice jerseys, continued expansion of Pop's Pro Shop, improvements to our equipment program, and our first SASA Kickoff & Orientation Day.

Behind the scenes, many volunteers have dedicated countless hours serving on committees responsible for fundraising, scheduling, facilities, finance, communications, policy development, coaching, technology, and much more. Their commitment allows SASA to continue growing while keeping hockey affordable for local families.

As a nonprofit organization, SASA depends on the support of our volunteers, sponsors, and fundraising efforts. Registration fees cover only a portion of the cost of operating our association. Every family that volunteers, every business that sponsors our programs, and every supporter who contributes to our fundraising efforts plays an important role in providing opportunities for our players.

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, thank you for your continued support, trust, and commitment to SASA. Whether this is your family's first season or you've been part of our association for many years, we are grateful you have chosen to be part of our hockey family.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the rink and making the 2026–2027 season one of our best yet.

**See you at the rink!**

**Kevin Smith**

President

St. Albans Skating Association

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 2026–2027 SASA Board of Directors

**Executive Committee**

Kevin Smith

**President**

Chris Heald

**First Vice President**

Emily Norris

**Second Vice President**

Colin Branon

**Secretary**

Andrew Norris

**Treasurer**

**Directors**

David Blatchly

Jason Brace

Mike Irwin

Nathan Liese

Joseph Montagne

Ryan Ovitt

Kelsey Rouleau

Adam Routhier

JP Routhier

Danielle Snelling

 **2026–2027 SASA Committees**

**Discipline Committee**

- Chris Heald
- Emily Norris

- Mike Irwin
- JP Routhier
- Jason Brace

### **Head Coaching Committee**

- Tommy Waltz
- Scooter Desmond
- Toby Alexander
- Shea Spannier — Goalie Coach

### **Finance Committee**

- Andrew Norris
- Chris Heald

### **Snack Bar Committee**

- Kevin Smith
- Colin Branon
- Betsy Christie

### **Fundraising Committee**

- Adam Routhier
- Tasha Dickinson
- Kelsey Rouleau
- Danielle Snelling

### **Scheduling Committee**

- Tommy Waltz
- Chris Heald
- Emily Norris
- Adam Routhier

### **Facility Committee**

- David Blatchly
- Adam Routhier
- Andrew Norris

### **Pop's Pro Shop Committee**

- Joe Montagne
- Kevin Smith
- Ryan Ovitt

### **Technology Committee**

- Nathan Liese
- Dana Boomhower

### **Nominating Committee**

- Andrew Norris
- Marnie Carlton
- Dana Boomhower
- Jason Booth
- Colin Branon

### **Policy Committee**

- Emily Norris
- JP Routhier
- Joe Montagne

### **Head Referee**

- Mark Deso

### **State Representative**

- JP Routhier

### **Young Blades Committee**

- Melissa Viens
- Rachel Berthiaume

- Jason Leahy
- Ben Roberts
- Kyle Taylor

### **Mite Committee**

- Chris Heald
- Kevin Leahy
- Kelsey Ploof
- Sam Driver

### **Dryland Program**

- Shawna Mead

### **Communication Committee**

- Emily Norris
- Colin Branon

### **Equipment Committee**

- Kevin Smith
- Ryan Ovitt

### **Volunteer Coordinator**

- Kelsey Rouleau

### **Registrar**

- Trish Lanfear

### **SafeSport Coordinator**

- Mike Anderson

### **By-Law Committee**

- David Blatchly
- Mike Irwin
- Jason Booth

## **Photography**

- Katie LeClerc
- Stina Booth

## **Video**

- Jason Brace

## **Social Media Committee**

- Emily Norris
- Chris Heald

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## **Summer Hockey Happenings**

While school may be out for the summer, SASA has been busy preparing for another exciting hockey season!

From summer training opportunities to planning for the upcoming year, there's plenty happening behind the scenes to ensure our players are ready to hit the ice this fall.

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## **Summer Ice**

Summer Ice has been a great opportunity for players to stay on the ice, sharpen their skills, and prepare for the upcoming season. We have had over 200 SASA Skaters sign up for the summer skates!

Sessions have focused on:

- Skating
- Puck control
- Shooting
- Game situations
- Offseason development



## Remaining Summer Ice Dates

- Wednesday, July 22
- Thursday, July 23
- Wednesday, July 29
- Thursday, July 30
- Wednesday, August 5
- Thursday, August 6
- Wednesday, August 12
- Thursday, August 13
- Wednesday, August 19
- Thursday, August 20
- Wednesday, August 26



**Location:** Gutterson Fieldhouse



**Goalies skate FREE!**

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## Summer Dryland Training

Our free Summer Dryland Program continues throughout the offseason for players at the 10U level and older.

Designed to improve athletic performance both on and off the ice, dryland sessions focus on:



Speed



Agility



Strength



Balance



Coordination



Endurance



Injury prevention

These sessions help players return to the ice stronger, faster, and ready for the season ahead.

 **Location:** Collins Perley Sports Complex

Check your crossbar for schedule!

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## **Hockey Hits the Street This Summer!**

The St. Albans Recreation Department has partnered with NHL STREET to bring a whole new kind of hockey fun to St. Albans this August!

Open to players ages 7–12, NHL STREET offers an affordable, neighborhood-based way for kids to play hockey off the ice, with games taking place Monday evenings in the Collins Perley parking lot.

### **Game Nights**

- Monday, August 3
- Monday, August 10
- Monday, August 17
- Monday, August 24

Players can register with friends as a team or sign up individually and be placed on a roster.

Teams may include a mix of boys and girls, and each team chooses an available NHL team identity to represent.

One of the coolest parts is that every registered player receives an official logo jersey featuring an NHL team!

No hockey equipment is required, although helmets, mouthguards, and gloves are recommended. Goalies must wear a helmet, and all players need closed-toe athletic footwear.

Teams do not need a coach, but each team must have a parent volunteer to help manage substitutions during games.

## Questions?

Contact Lee Barrett at the St. Albans Recreation Department:

 802-524-1559

 [l.barrett@stalbansvt.com](mailto:l.barrett@stalbansvt.com)

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### **Season Scheduling Is Underway**

Planning for the 2026–2027 season started earlier than ever before.

Our scheduling team is working hard to provide families with as much advance notice as possible for practices, games, and tournaments.

### **Every Full-Season Team Will Receive**

 One home tournament

 One away tournament

 Participation in a Jay Peak tournament

### **Scheduling Support Contacts**

Scheduling Support Contacts have been assigned to assist each age level beginning at 10U.

**10U:** Emily Norris

**12U:** Tommy Waltz

**14U and Older:** Adam Routhier

These volunteers will assist with securing away tournaments and serve as scheduling resources throughout the season.

Away tournaments are expected to be finalized by the end of August.

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 **You Spoke. We Listened. We Got to Work.**

Last year, SASA asked families to share their experiences, priorities, and ideas for the future of our organization.

**185 player families were invited to participate.**

**67 families responded.**

**80% reported being satisfied with their SASA experience.**

But we didn't just look at a satisfaction number and move on.

Families told us they wanted:

- Stronger communication
- More support for coaches
- Better practice planning and structure
- Improved scheduling
- More equitable access to resources
- Better tournaments and experiences
- More opportunities for connection
- Recognition of team accomplishments
- Names on jerseys

So we got to work.

**Over the Past Year, SASA Has:**

- ✓ Introduced new uniforms and practice jerseys
- ✓ Created and continued distributing a SASA newsletter
- ✓ Improved our social media presence
- ✓ Launched a new website
- ✓ Successfully hosted eight tournaments
- ✓ Created Friday Night Lights
- ✓ Expanded player development through summer ice and dryland
- ✓ Added Friday night clinics for players and goalies
- ✓ Purchased new video equipment
- ✓ Launched a YouTube channel

- ✅ Strengthened relationships with Collins Perley, BFA, the Leafs, VSAHA, and community partners
  - ✅ Continued investing in the overall player and family experience
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## **Save the Date**

### **SASA Season Kickoff & Orientation Day**

**Sunday, September 27, 2026**

We're excited to kick off the 2026–2027 season with a new tradition—SASA Orientation Day!

This event is designed to bring our players and families together before the season begins to ensure everyone starts the year informed, prepared, and excited.

### **What to Expect**

Throughout the day, families will learn what a typical season looks like at SASA, including:

-  Season expectations for players and families
-  Practice and game-day routines
-  Communication tools and resources
-  Volunteer expectations and opportunities
-  Tournament information
-  Policies and procedures
-  Equipment and uniform information
-  An opportunity to meet coaches, Board members, and program leaders

Our goal is simple: to ensure every SASA family receives the same information, at the same time, from the same source.

By creating a shared understanding of our programs, expectations, and values, we can provide a more consistent experience for every player and family throughout the season.

### **Consistency Is Key**

When everyone is on the same page, we create a stronger organization, better communication, and a more positive experience for our athletes.

More details, including the day's schedule, will be shared as we get closer to September 27.

We can't wait to officially welcome everyone back to the rink! 🏒 ❤️ 🧡

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### **❤️ Fundraising Efforts Are in Full Swing!**

SASA's success extends far beyond the ice, and our fundraising efforts play a vital role in supporting the programs, equipment, and opportunities we provide for our players.

This season, we're excited to introduce **Vertical Raise** as one of our newest fundraising initiatives.

This easy-to-use online platform will help players and families connect with friends and supporters near and far, making it easier than ever to support SASA.

In addition to Vertical Raise, families can look forward to:

- 📱 The new Vertical Raise fundraising campaign
- 🎫 Exciting raffles throughout the season
- 💡 Fresh new fundraising ideas and events
- 🤝 Opportunities for every family to help support SASA's continued growth

Every dollar raised helps strengthen our association by supporting:

- Player development
- Equipment purchases
- Facility improvements
- Tournaments
- New programming

We appreciate the incredible generosity of our SASA families, sponsors, volunteers, and community partners.

Your continued support allows us to provide the best possible hockey experience for our athletes.

Together, we're building an even stronger SASA—both on and off the ice!



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### **Preparing for the 2026–2027 Season**

Planning for the upcoming season has been underway throughout the summer.

The Board, Head Coach, Scheduling Committee, and volunteers have been working together to organize another successful season with an emphasis on communication, organization, and advance planning.

#### **Every Full-Season Team Will Receive**



One home tournament



One away tournament



One Jay Peak tournament

To improve scheduling and communication, SASA has assigned Scheduling Support Contacts for each age level beginning at 10U.

#### **Scheduling Support Contacts**

**10U:** Emily Norris

**12U:** Tommy Waltz

**14U:** Adam Routhier

These volunteers will assist with securing away tournaments and serve as scheduling resources throughout the season.

The goal is to finalize away tournaments by the end of August and provide schedules to families as early as possible.

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### **Strengthening SASA Through Policy**

One of the Board's major initiatives this offseason has been strengthening the organizational foundation of SASA.

Throughout the summer, Board members and committees have been developing, and reviewing policies designed to improve consistency, accountability, and transparency across our association.

#### **Recently Drafted Policies-**

- Discipline Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Exit Policy

Additional policies and updates to the SASA Guidebook are currently being developed to provide clear expectations and ensure SASA continues to operate as a well-organized, professionally governed association.

Please visit the policy section of [stalbanshockey.org](http://stalbanshockey.org) to review official policies that support in the governance of our organization!

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### **Behind the Scenes**

Several exciting initiatives are currently underway.

## **Guidebook Update**

The Board continues to modernize the SASA Guidebook, transforming it into an easy-to-use living document that will guide future Boards and provide clear organizational expectations.

## **Volunteer Program**

A new volunteer tracking system is being developed to make volunteer hours easier to track while providing additional opportunities for families to contribute.

## **Pop's Pro Shop**

New merchandise and equipment are arriving this season, including youth favorites designed to enhance the Pro Shop experience.

## **Facility Improvements**

Recent investments include:

 New mite goals

 New camera system

 Continued improvements to the Collins Perley facility

## **Championship Banner Recognition**

The Board is exploring opportunities to recognize last season's championship teams by unveiling their championship banners during a special event, potentially in conjunction with Friday Night Lights early this season.

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## **Thank You for Being Part of SASA**

Thank you to our players, families, coaches, volunteers, sponsors, and community partners for your continued support of SASA.

Your time, energy, and commitment help make each season possible and create a positive experience for our athletes both on and off the ice.

We are excited for everything ahead and look forward to another fun, successful, and memorable season together.

Please continue to watch Crossbar, email, and SASA's social media pages for important updates and upcoming events.

**See you at the rink!** 🏒 🏆 🍀 🍀