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**PRESS RELEASE****For immediate release**

McGill University's hockey teams make Place Bell their home for the 2024-25 season

Laval, April 15, 2024 – The City of Laval is set for an exciting 2024-25 hockey season with two top teams joining Place Bell's line-up, this time on its community hockey ice rink. Since major renovations are taking place at McConnell Arena, the McGill University's men's and women's hockey teams are taking up residence in Laval's top-notch facilities.

Two teams to watch next season

From September 2024 to March 2025, fans will have the opportunity to watch 30 weekend games, all played against other Canadian universities. The Redbirds are coming off a third-place overall finish in 2023-24, while the Martlets, are a young, up-and-coming squad.

"We're delighted to see our university teams playing in such an exceptional hockey environment, said Daniel Méthot, Director of Sports Programming at McGill University. It will be an extraordinary opportunity for us to bring men's and women's university hockey to Laval.

A major coup for Laval

The Laval community is pleased to welcome to its downtown area the players, coaches and trainers. With easy access via metro from Montreal, they will benefit from this bustling neighbour on a daily basis. Expect to see the teams engaging with the community early on, as the players have already voiced their enthusiasm in getting involved with local organizations in order to fully integrate into their new host city.

"Next season, Laval will host even more hockey! We are thrilled to welcome these talented student-athletes, who are models of perseverance and determination and will inspire our young Lavalites in their athletic and academic development. Welcome to Laval!", said Michel Demers, President of the *Cité de la culture et du sport de Laval*.

Tickets for the games go on sale in August. Fans will be able to enjoy double headers, of men's and women's games. The university season consists of two preseason games in September, followed by the regular season and playoffs in March.

McGill University – a history in hockey

McGill University is steeped in hockey tradition which dates back more than a century. In 2023, the McGill men's hockey team celebrated its 147th anniversary and the women's team turned 129. Each team plays in a different league – the men compete in the Ontario University Athletics (OUA) conference, while the women compete in the Réseau du sport étudiant du Québec (RSEQ). The primary objective of both leagues is to enable student-athletes to experience high-level competition, while pursuing their university studies.



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The women's league is currently comprised of four universities: Bishop's, Concordia, McGill and Montréal with the league champion and finalist representing the conference at the U SPORTS Final Eight national championship.

The men's league features McGill competing in the nine-team OUA Far East division alongside Concordia, the Université de Québec à Trois-Rivières and six other Ontario-based teams. The top two OUA East finalists in the Queen's Cup playoffs qualify for the U SPORTS Final Eight tournament.

Place Bell

Place Bell is a major multifunctional cultural and sports complex in Laval, offering Laval residents a unique experience. It includes a 10,000-seat amphitheatre that can be transformed into a concert hall with an NHL-standard ice rink, an Olympic-size ice rink with 2,500 seats and an NHL-standard community rink that can accommodate 500 spectators.

The Laval establishment is operated by the non-profit organization *La Cité de la culture et du sport de Laval*, which has entrusted the management of its amphitheatre to *Aréna du Rocket* (ADR), which hosts a member team of the American Hockey League and programs international shows through its subsidiary Evenko, both owned by Groupe CH.

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