

OPP outlast students in charity game

theobserver.ca/2017/01/29/former-nhl-referee-don-van-massenhoven-oversees-charity-game-between-lambton-opp-and-lambton-c



Don Van Massenhoven referee a charity hockey game between Lambton Ontario Provincial Police officers and Lambton College police foundations students at Progressive Auto Sales Arena on Sunday, Jan. 29, 2017 in Sarnia, Ont. Van Massenhoven, a 56-year-old Strathroy resident, is a former Lambton OPP officer. (Metcalf Photography)

Officiating a hockey game featuring current and future police officers is right up Don Van Massenhoven's alley.

After all the former NHL referee was a member of the Lambton County Ontario Provincial Police for 10 years, including during his first two seasons in *The Show*.

"Rather busy," said Van Massenhoven, who was an officer from 1984 to '94 even though he joined the NHL in '92.

How'd he balance the two jobs for two years?

"Looking back, I'm not sure," he said. "I still have my same wife after 35 years, so thankfully I still have her."

Now an off-ice official, Van Massenhoven was invited to strap on his skates and oversee a charity hockey game Sunday at Progressive Auto Sales Arena between members of Lambton OPP and police foundations students from Lambton College. The afternoon event, staged after the Sarnia Sting defeated the Saginaw Spirit, raised money for

The Push For Change, an organization battling youth homelessness, and a Sarnia youth drop-in centre called The Hub.

"It's a great cause," said Van Massenhoven, a 56-year-old Strathroy resident. "Honoured to be asked."

Cameron Orrange, an 18-year-old police foundations student from Camlachie, enjoyed playing under Van Massenhoven's supervision.

"He's a big dude, he's nice though," he said. "Really nice guy."

Harold Coffin, a Lambton OPP detective constable working out of the Point Edward Casino, coached Team Police. The bench boss was impressed Van Massenhoven participated.

"It's pretty neat to have him come back and donate his time to do the game," Coffin said.

The police, with the help of their head coach, won 6-5.

"They looked pretty good, a little slower than the Lambton students," Coffin said. "We had a good time, the guys enjoyed it."

Orrange said his squad enjoyed it, too, even though they came up short.

"It was a good game, close call, think we could have had her but that's the way she goes," he said. "Good way to get to know the cops, people you might be working with."

Van Massenhoven, who retired from on-ice officiating three years ago, is now the NHL's director of officiating operations. Although he supervises the world's best professional players and referees, he enjoyed watching the two amateur teams face off.

"It was pretty good," he said. "I enjoy these things, it's always fun to see different groups get together for a good cause."

The amount of money raised for the two charities was not available as of press time.

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