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IcePlex: Action Friday through Sunday

FROM 1S

Americans alumni — including several former Junior A and college starss — will battle the Billings Stampede, a veteran squad that may include two former National Hockey League stars — Murray Brumwell and Greg Smith.

Those games will be played Friday night at 8 and Saturday night at 6:30. Local favorites competing for the Americans side include Brandon and Casey Baker, along with Matt and Mike Pancich, Dereck Besich, Mike Rydell and Tanner Heck.

DiMatteo, who played for the Americans Junior A team here in 1995, will be skating as will Josh Frider, an officer at Malmstrom Air Force Base who played Division I hockey for four years at the Air Force Academy.

"This guy is really good," said

DiMatteo. "He could be playing pros if he didn't have his (service) commitment."

The foundation will pay expenses for the Stampede to come here and provide the competition. Admission for the games is just \$4 for adults and \$2 for children, and refreshments will be available.

The Silver Foxes oldtimers' team will have two games Saturday afternoon against Canadian opponents, and there will be more adult games Sunday as well as a Squirt league contest.

"We want to expose the facility to as many people as possible so they know we've got a lot going on up here," said DiMatteo, who was hired last summer by the foundation to run the rink.

The facility is busy three nights a week with adult league games. There are nearly 130 men playing on eight teams.

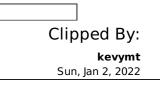
The facility also rents time to Great Falls Youth Hockey Association teams in the Squirt, Bantam and Midget divisions, and the once-thriving figure skating club is slowly rebuilding its ranks.

Folks who want to enjoy the ice can skate for free Saturday night after the exhibition if they have purchased a ticket. There are lots of rental skates available.

Dr. Mike Dube, who has daughters in the hockey programs and also skates himself with the guys, is president of the foundation.

The building has seating for about 700 fans and the building can hold more than 1,000 with standing room.

United Materials has begun the process of grading for the parking lot, although it likely will be a few months before paving is finished.



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