

Wildcats Advance to Waldbaum's Final

On Sunday, May 18, the Great Neck PAL Wildcats participated in the Semi-Finals of the Waldbaum's Youth Soccer Challenge - Boys - under 10, at the Soccer Complex in Saychem. The Wildcats' opponent was the Smithtown Cobras.

From their previous record, the Cobras were expected to be a formidable opponents. In the earlier rounds of the Challenge, the Cobra's had defeated the Syosset Strikers 3-0 (who the Wildcats tied 1-1 in league play) and defeated the Oyster Bay Wildcats 2-0 (who defeated Great Neck 2 - 1 in league play.) However, the Wildcats were prepared to elevate their game.

In recent weeks, a number of players had shown such improved play, that a new lineup had been assembled resulting in both a strengthened offense and defense.

The Wildcats dominated the first half. Strong play by fullbacks Jory Baron, Matt Klareich and Michael Mattelson, along with the Sweeper Jeff Weiland, pinned the cobras in their own zone. The Wildcats missed on a couple of early opportunities, with one shot bouncing off at the left post. Then Michael Fitoussi took the ball around two Cobra defenders and rifled a shot off of the Cobra goalie, over the goal line and the Wildcats led 1-0.

At the start of the second half, fullback Matt Klareich was assigned the responsibility of marking the



DOCTOR RICK N. LUKASH with some of his kids at the New York Islanders hockey match with the New Jersey Devils.

Doctor 'Rick' Lukash & 100 Kids Win on Ice

By Betty Rosenzweig

Dr. Frederick (Rick) Lukash believes that the best medicine for children involves more than office visits, prescriptions or surgery.

And so it was that this Great Neck plastic surgeon was host to 100 of his pediatric reconstructive patients and their families at a recent New York Islanders game at the Nassau Coliseum.

It was a magical moment: One hundred children, 5 to 13 years of age, some who had been in and out of surgery for years, forgot

and screamed... They were just normal kids rooting for their home team—the Islanders. But in the end it really didn't matter who won; every kid there was a winner.

"Their doctor was their friend.... They were among their peers, other children who faced similar problems... In this atmosphere, new friends were made. Along with the smiles, there were tears of happiness.

"I am grateful to Doctor Lukash... He has made our lives brighter..." she said.

"My husband personally invited each of the kids," Dr. Lukash's wife, Yaffa, said.

them. Some of them he has known since they were born..." she said. "He is an old world kind of a doctor...and comes from a family of doctors. His father is the Chief Medical Examiner for Nassau County.

"No one wanted to leave that night. Some people in the audience, who became aware of what he had done, came and thanked him. He was very touched by their warmth," she said.

Working with the Islander Organization and the Sports Channel's KIDZWIN program, Dr. Lukash arranged for his kids to

Doctor 'Rick' Lukash *(continued from page 56)*

be up close and personal with seats at ice level, and for Islander souvenir hats to be given to everyone.

Greg Bouris, Sports Channel New York's director of public relations, said that the one-year-old program at KIDZWIN tries to reach out to boys' and girls' organizations.

"We hold events that enrich the lives of youngsters and educate them. In our Sports Channel 101, broadcasters and athletes talk to them...give them a behind the scenes look at sports," he said. "They discuss the rules of the game and how dedication and perseverance are the ingredients for success in sports as well as everyday life—you need to set goals and dedicate yourself to achieving those goals."

Yaffa and Rick Lukash's three daughters: Sarah, 15, a student at Great Neck North; Abigail, 12 1/2 and Molly, 8, who both attend North Shore Hebrew Academy, were at the Islanders game with their parents.

"I also take my daughters on rounds with me weekends," their father said. "It takes the pressure off the situation...makes it more humanizing..."

Dr. Lukash has recently completed his term as president of the New York Regional Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. He maintains offices in Manhasset and Manhattan, and divides his time between cosmetic surgery and pediatric facial reconstruction.

He has traveled, lectured and performed surgery with "Surgical Aid to Children of the World" and is presently active with "Operation Smile," a worldwide volunteer organization in which plastic surgeons donate their services to correct cleft lips and palates in children.

Jane Gould, who has worked for Dr. Lukash for eight years, said, "He is amazing... what he does is unbelievable...I remember one patient who had his whole face blown away during a war... I think it was in Afghanistan. Now he is living a vibrant, normal life..."

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