

What's On THE SUMMERLIN MAGAZINE

# What's On

**FOR  
LOCALS  
ONLY**

December 2004

THE SUMMERLIN MAGAZINE

December 2004

**SANTA BABY,**  
*Slip A Diamond  
Under The Tree*

**10 Places To Go  
Wireless In The Valley**

**Spend Christmas In Hawaii**

**Win A Chance To See NFR—FREE**

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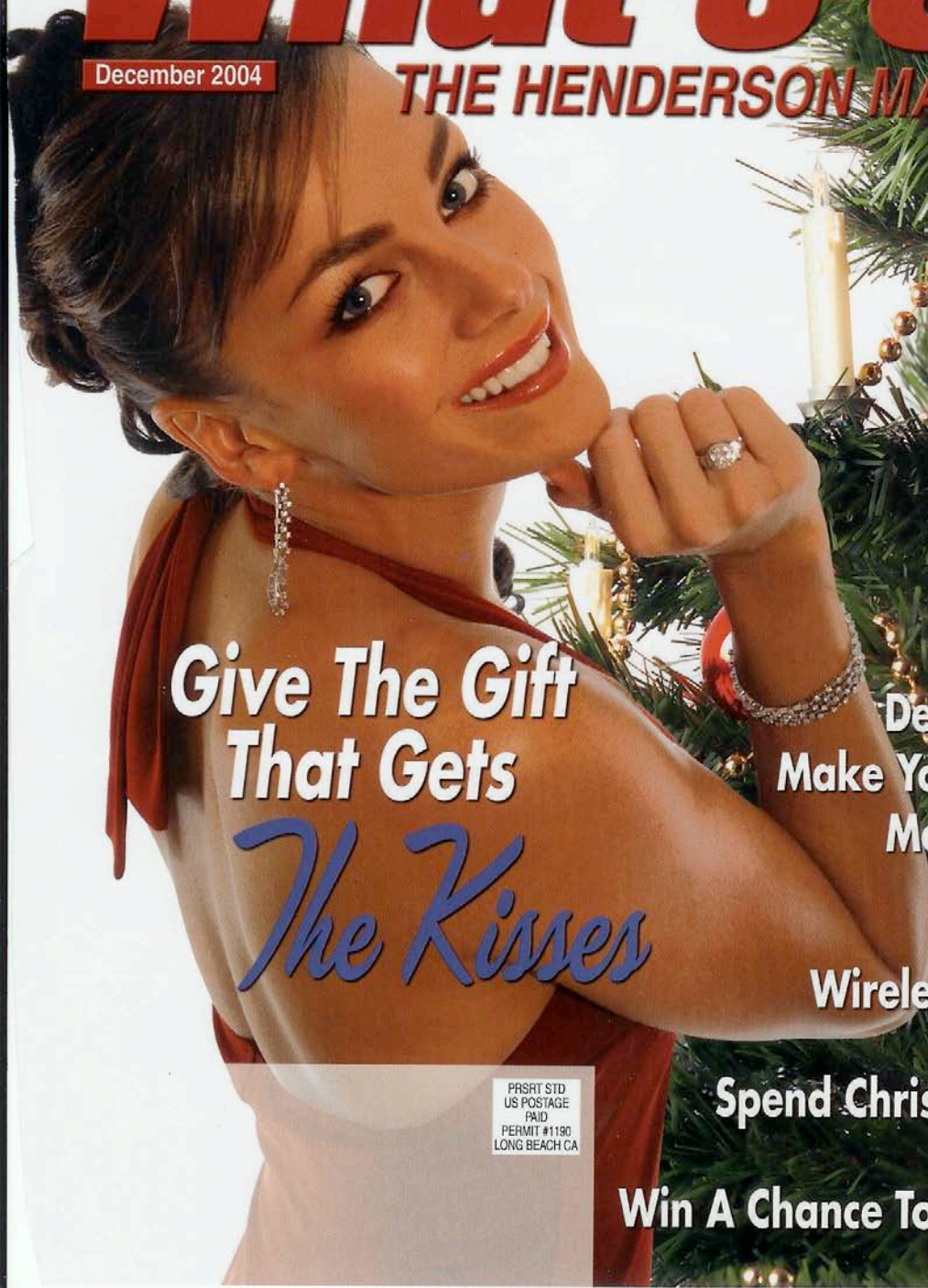
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# What's On

**FOR LOCALS ONLY**

December 2004

THE HENDERSON MAGAZINE



**Give The Gift  
That Gets  
*The Kisses***

**Designer Secrets—  
Make Your Living Room  
More Comfortable**

**10 Places To Go  
Wireless In The Valley**

**Spend Christmas In Hawaii**

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# BURNIN' ICE

## the WRANGLERS SECOND SEASON

By Jaq Greenspon

It's December. The air is cool, Christmas is just around the corner and there's nothing like watching your hometown professional team take on one of their longtime rivals as the puck drops on center ice.

Finding a home at the Orleans Arena, the Las Vegas Wranglers are knee-deep in their second year, hoping to repeat the great run the team had during the inaugural 2003-2004 season, when they made it to the first round of the Kelly Cup Playoffs.

The professional hockey team is filling the gap left by the now defunct International Hockey League's Thunder, which played their last game at the Thomas & Mack Center in 1999. The Wranglers, an affiliate of the NHL's Calgary Flames, are playing in the recently expanded East Coast Hockey League, an AA league made up of 28 teams. And they're doing really well.

This season, they are off to a great start, winning or tying four of their first five games. (Including two dramatic wins with overtime shoot-outs).

Glenn Gulutzan, the Wranglers' head coach and general manager, likes his team's chances to continue in the direction they were headed last year when they were derailed by the Idaho



Captain Jason McBain  
protects his goalie.

### DECEMBER HOME GAMES

The Wranglers play their next home game Dec. 14 against the Greenville Grrrowl at 7:05 p.m. Here is the schedule for the rest of the home games this season. All matches are played at the Orleans Arena and start at 7:05 p.m. (unless otherwise noted). You can get the complete schedule and buy tickets up until 3 p.m. the day of the game by logging on to [lasvegaswranglers.com](http://lasvegaswranglers.com). You can also get tickets at the Orleans Arena Box Office, 702-284-7777.

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Dec. 16</b> —Bakersfield Condors         | <b>Feb. 12</b> —Idaho Steelheads      |
| <b>Dec. 17</b> —Long Beach Ice Dogs         | <b>Feb. 18</b> —Long Beach Ice Dogs   |
| <b>Dec. 20</b> —Fresno Falcons (midnight)   | <b>Feb. 19</b> —Long Beach Ice Dogs   |
| <b>Dec. 26</b> —San Diego Gulls (5:05 p.m.) | <b>March 11</b> —San Diego Gulls      |
| <b>Jan. 4</b> —San Diego Gulls              | <b>March 12</b> —San Diego Gulls      |
| <b>Jan. 7</b> —Peoria Rivermen              | <b>March 15</b> —Bakersfield Condors  |
| <b>Jan. 8</b> —Peoria Rivermen              | <b>March 18</b> —Fresno Falcons       |
| <b>Jan. 10</b> —Fresno Falcons              | <b>March 29</b> —Fresno Falcons       |
| <b>Jan. 13</b> —Victoria Salmon Kings       | <b>April 1</b> —Victoria Salmon Kings |
| <b>Jan. 14</b> —San Diego Gulls             | <b>April 2</b> —Bakersfield Condors   |
| <b>Jan. 29</b> —Victoria Salmon Kings       | <b>April 5</b> —Alaska Aces           |
| <b>Jan. 31</b> —Victoria Salmon Kings       | <b>April 8</b> —Alaska Aces           |
| <b>Feb. 8</b> —Long Beach Ice Dogs          | <b>April 9</b> —Alaska Aces           |
| <b>Feb. 11</b> —Idaho Steelheads            |                                       |

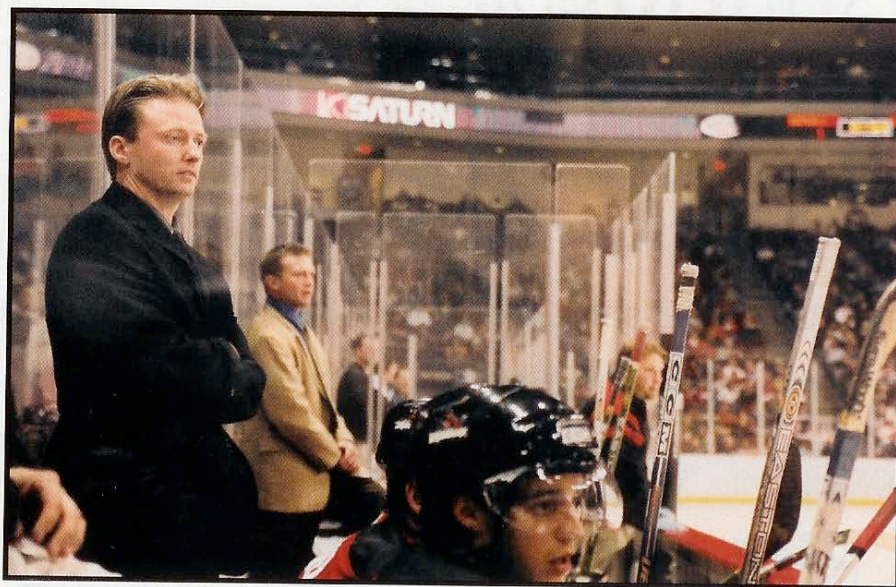
Steelheads, the team that went on to win the league's championship. With seven players returning on the team's 20-man roster, there is a nice mix of tempered experience and youthful exuberance.

"[Our guys run] the full spectrum," Gulutzan said. "We've got guys just starting their careers and guys on the tail end—going up and coming down. Then there's the ones in the middle who are playing just to enjoy themselves. And for a lot of these guys, that's what it's all about, playing for the sheer love of the game."

And it's a great game to love. When seen in person, nothing matches a professional hockey game for excitement, action and speed. There's no more violence in a hockey game than in a traditional football match, and for complete family entertainment, it really can't be beat, especially right now. With the current NHL lockout, the players from the major leagues who are still looking to get ice time are signing up with their minor league affiliates, and this has a trickle-down effect. For Gulutzan, it means he gets better players. When an NHL player signs up with an American Hockey League team like the Lowell, Mass. Lock Monsters, the Wranglers' AHL affiliate, then their bottom rung players get sent down to the Wranglers. In effect, you get major league and Single A players on the ice in an AA game, which can only bring up the level of play for the guys already on the team.

The only thing the Wranglers really need to complete the dream is a crowd, a fan base, to support them. When the Thunder played their last game, the crowd was more than 13,000, almost twice the capacity of the Orleans Arena's 7,800 seats. And yet, at almost every Wranglers' game, seats are available even after the puck drops.

The problem, as Gulutzan pointed out, is that "Vegas in not a hockey hotbed."



Coach Glenn Gulutzan leads the Las Vegas Wranglers into their second season.

The Wranglers are doing their best to change that and have reached out to the community since the team hit the ice a year ago.

Last summer, Gulutzan led a four-day mini-camp for about 60 kids. The players are also getting into the act, participating in school visits and library reading programs. In fact, any non-profit organization can request the team or the mascot, the large, green alien bull known as "The Duke," stop by and meet the kids.

Add to that the Orleans Arena, a state-of-the-art facility, where Gulutzan hopes that "hockey will be played a long time," and you have all the makings of a fun-filled evening. So why aren't more people filling the seats? It could be cost and lack of knowledge about the sport.

The first is easy to counter. Wranglers hockey provides some of the lowest ticket prices in all of professional sports. Tickets range from \$7 to a high of \$30 and the concession snacks are the cheapest around. A family of four could see a game and have a meal for not much

more than the cost of an evening movie. There's even a special area, the "family value zone," where no alcohol or swearing is allowed. Let your kids enjoy the fun without worrying about what they're hearing or smelling. The kids will also have a good time on the mezzanine between periods where The Duke is wandering and souvenir stands are open. After the games, often a couple of players will take a seat and sign autographs and answer questions.

The questions they answer, though, probably won't explain what icing is, why cross-checking is bad or how many men are too many on the ice. For that you need to consult a program. The Wranglers took the non-initiated into consideration and have included brief explanations of the referee's signals, what each penalty is and how scoring works.

Santa may still bring the Wranglers what they want for Christmas (besides their two front teeth)—another shot at the Kelly Cup and more fans. It is a magical time of year, you know. **wo**

...And for a lot of these guys, that's what it's all about, playing for the **sheer love of the game.**" —Glenn Gulutzan, Wranglers' Head Coach