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TOP STORY EDITOR'S PICK TOPICAL

Pro hockey return to Richmond area? 'There's desire and interest and intention there.'

John O'Connor 8 hrs ago



hat's Todd "Parney" Parnell up to?

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Todd Parnell played a major role in the return of professional baseball to Richmond as a **Flying Squirrels** executive. He's exploring the possibility of doing **the same with professional hockey**.

Parnell said he is in the process of learning similarities and differences of minor league baseball and minor league hockey, and additional research will determine if he can help return hockey to Richmond. Professional hockey was last played in Richmond in 2009, and it began in 1971 at the Coliseum, with starts and stops for different organizations.

"The hockey movement in Richmond is very, very strong," said Parnell. "I've had several meetings with youth hockey people and hockey fans ... I just have keen interest in being involved in some way, shape, or form, in bringing – eventually – pro hockey back to Richmond.

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"There's desire and interest and intention there."



Richmond Renegades player Kerry Ellis-Toddington pushed Atlantic City's Scott Matzka during a game at the Richmond Coliseum in 2002.
MARK GORMUS, TIMES-DISPATCH

Venue 'to be determined'

Bringing a new hockey franchise to Richmond could take several years, Parnell said, if groundwork he is currently performing signals that would be a good plan. The leadership group is "to be determined," said Parnell, as is the venue at which a new Richmond hockey franchise could practice and play.

Parnell would not specify an ice location, but options would appear to be the new GreenCity Arena, capacity 17,000, coming to Henrico County at an undetermined time. The masterplan for GreenCity Arena lists hockey as a potential tenant, as well as use by touring shows, concerts and basketball. Or, a new facility could be developed to accommodate a Richmond hockey team, and other area hockey organizations.

Th

Also potentially involved in a plan to perhaps return hockey to Richmond is Lou DiBella, the managing general partner of the Richmond Flying Squirrels, according to Parnell.



Todd Parnell: "I think what the Squirrels have accomplished can be transferrable to something else, like a professional hockey team."
BOB BROWN, TIMES-DISPATCH

Parnell said the next step is continuing to explore the hockey industry. The Norfolk Admirals play in the ECHL, which was the East Coast Hockey League until 2003, when it gained a nationwide membership. The Charlotte Checkers and Pennsylvania-based teams play in the American Hockey League. Both of those leagues are attractive to Parnell, he said.

R



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Richmond's association with professional hockey on the minor-league level goes back to 1971, when the Richmond Robins played at the Richmond Coliseum, which opened that year. The Robins were succeeded by the Richmond Wildcats (1976-77) and Richmond Rifles (1979-81).

After several years without hockey at the Coliseum, the Richmond Renegades arrived in 1990 and remained until 2003. The Richmond RiverDogs took over the Coliseum ice when the Renegades left and stayed in town for three seasons. After the RiverDogs ceased Richmond operations following the 2005-06 season, the Renegades returned and played through the 2008-09 season.

Richmond hasn't had professional hockey since then. In 2008-2009, the Renegades averaged 3,302 fans at the Coliseum.

'A different world now'

"I think it's a different world now, right?" said Parnell. "I think the hockey community has missed having a professional hockey team. That's coming through to me loud and clear. And I think what the Squirrels have accomplished can be transferrable to something else, like a professional hockey team.



Richmond Renegade Danny White went airborne after colliding with Fayetteville's Tim Velemerovich in a 2007 game at the Richmond Coliseum

MARK GORMUS, TIMES-DISPATCH

The Face of the Franchise is still at The Diamond, sort of

"I think if you take that type of philosophy and the connectivity to the fan base of Richmond ... Generally speaking, I think that would be a sure winner, in my opinion. But again, this is just at the very beginning stages of an idea. There's a million things th

P

Parnell is a senior adviser for the Flying Squirrels, as of this year. He largely led the Double-A franchise from the time the organization arrived in Richmond for the 2010 season. The Triple-A Richmond Braves left the city following the 2008 season because of dissatisfaction with The Diamond. Parnell directed the Flying Squirrels' ascension to one of the top attendance draws in the minor leagues and a year-round community presence.



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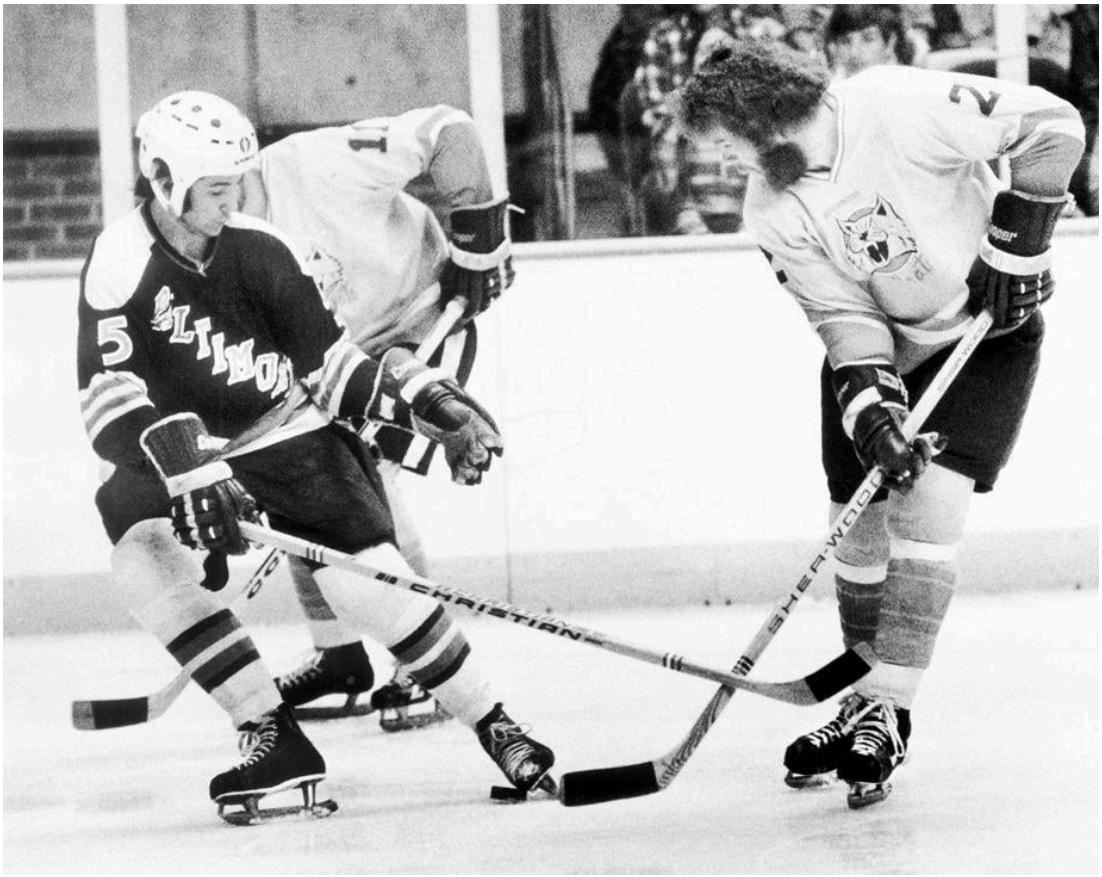
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Since Parnell announced last year that he would step away from his day-to-day role with the Flying Squirrels, he has continued to advise the team, is helping the organization's drive for new ballpark, and is also president of the Double-A Montgomery Biscuits.

He is a member of the ChamberRVA board of directors, was sworn in last week as a member of the Henrico Sports & Entertainment Authority board of directors, is involved with Richmond Region Tourism, and recently launched a podcast.

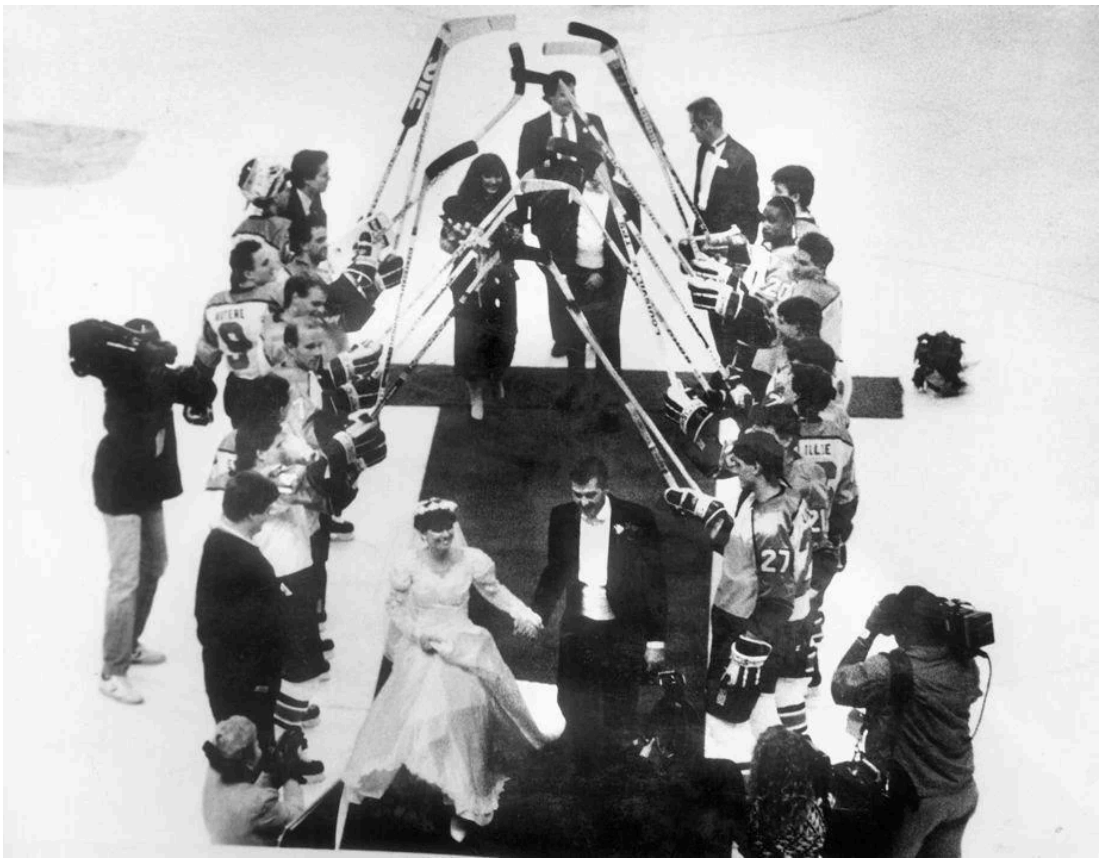
Parnell also envisions the possibility of operating a "Parney's Pub" in the Diamond District, the retail, residential and business area that's expected to rise around the new ballpark on North Arthur Ashe Boulevard.

From the archives: Wildcats, Renegades and Riverdogs. 115 pics of pro h



In December 1976, Jim McCrimmon (right) of the Richmond Wildcats tried to dislodge the puck from Dave Elliott of the Baltimore Clippers during a game at the Richmond Coliseum. The Wildcats were part of the Southern Hockey League, which folded the following month. The Richmond Rifles of the Eastern Hockey League brought the sport back to town in 1979.

Gary Burns



In December 1990, hockey fans Billie Mottley (left) and Berny Parton tied the knot during intermission of a Richmond Renegades game at the Richmond Coliseum. As they walked down the icy aisle, the Renegade players gave them a high-sticking salute.

Staff photo

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In April 1981, Dick Harman – shown preparing for his role as broadcaster for a hockey game in Richmond – was about to begin a call-in sports talk show on WLEE radio. In 1988, Harman became the public announcer for Richmond City Council meetings, and after an estimated 700 meetings, he retired in 2018.

Staff photo



Richmond's Steve Dumonski (12) runs into the net as Pride goalie Mark Richards tries to find the puck. The goal, which would have put the Renegades up 2-1 in the first period, was not allowed.

DEAN HOFFMEYER



Hockey fans nearly filled the Coliseum. RIVERDOGS VS. FLINT GENERALS

Joe Mahoney



The Richmond Renegades' A.J. Bucchino guards the goal during a game against the Knoxville Ice Bears.

P. KEVIN MORLEY



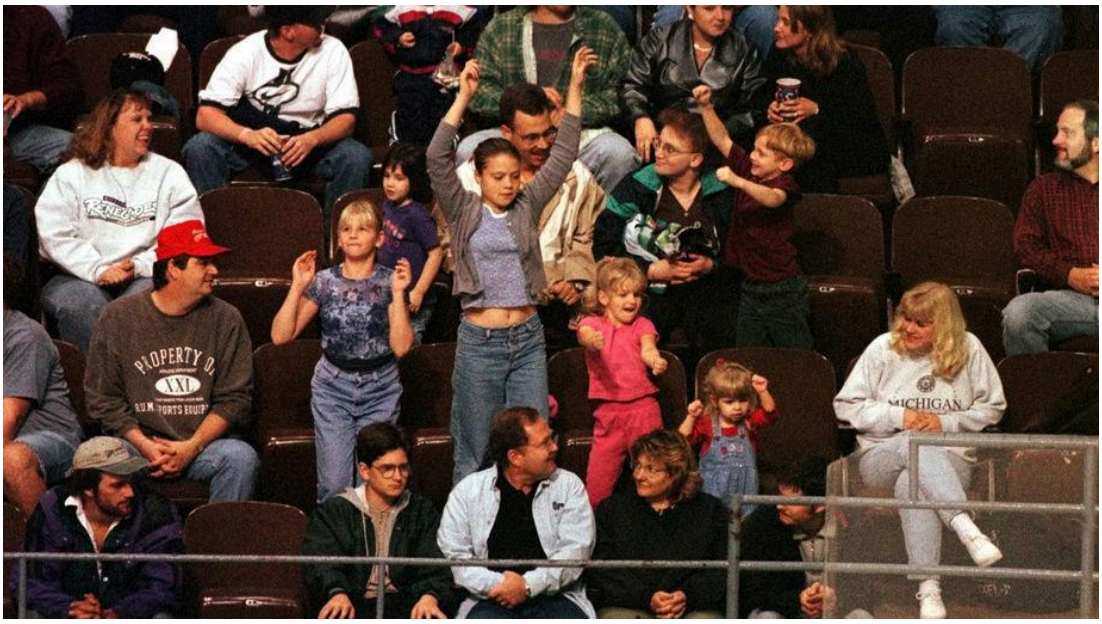
Spectators throw foam hockey pucks onto the ice at the second intermission of a Richmond Renegades game against the Roanoke Express.

BRUCE PARKER



Hockey fan Clint Gunn, 10 yrs. old, enjoys the hard hitting on the ice at the Richmond (VA) Coliseum Sat. Dec. 27, 2003 as Columbus Stars' Chris Thompson,(36) tumbles over Richmond Riverdogs' Darren Wetherill,(center) and Dave Shields,(12) during the first period of play. HOCKEY

MA



Gino Chavis (left, red cap) , Amanda Chavis 10 , Jenny Hevener 11 ,Chelsea Chavis 6 , Lindsey Chavis 2 and Nancy Chavis (right) at the Renegades game against the Roanoke Express.October 30 ,1998.

CLEMENT BRITT

IN THE WHAT TOOK THEM SO LONG DEPARTMENT: 3 seconds into the game, Renegades' Clay Lewis,L, and Jacksonville's Jason Bone squared off at center ice.

JOE MAHONEY

Fayetteville FireAntz' Chad Wilcox (facing camera) and Richmond Renegades' Dennis Sicard settle their differences during the game at Coliseum; both went to the penalty box.

BRUCE PARKER



Renegades forward Ryan Busby gets shoved by a Fayetteville FireAntz player.

Devon Ericksen



Columbus' Tim Green has the puck in front of Renegades goalie Ryan Scott but could put it past him in second period play.

JOE MAHONEY



Renegade forward Matt Larke goes to the ice after taking a poke from Fayetteville's Sean Cryer as Rob Colangelo comes in on the play during first period play in Richmond.

JAM



The official gets out of the way as the Richmond Renegades' Kyu-Hyun Kim (#22) and Kevin Harris (#4), of the Knoxville Ice Bears, struggle during Friiday night's game at the Richmond Coliseum.

EVA RUSSO



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Richmond Renegades goaltender Doug Groenestege (#40) reaches for the puck as his teammate Joe Pace flies overhead into the goal during the second period of Thursday night's game against the Pee Dee Cyclones at the Richmond Coliseum. Groenestege was not able to block the shot and the Cyclones scored their third goal bringing the score 3 to 2.

EVA RUSSO



Renegades' Matt Larke burns Huntsville goaltender Ross Cherry for a first period goal at the Richmond Coliseum, Friday, Jan. 23, 2009

JOE MAHONEY



L-R, Huntsvilles Jeff Winchester (24) and Richmond Renegades' Matt Larke (18) collide during the 2nd period at the Richmond Coliseum Thurs. Dec. 25, 2008.

MA



Richmond Renegades' Brian Goudie (7) takes a shot that scored a goal against the Jacksonville Barracudas at the Richmond Coliseum Sat. Oct. 28,2006 during the team's home-opener.

MARK GORMUS



Richmond Renegades' JJ Wrobel (29) during a game against the Jacksonville Barracudas at the Richmond Coliseum Sat. Oct. 28,2006 during the team's home-opener.

MARK GORMUS



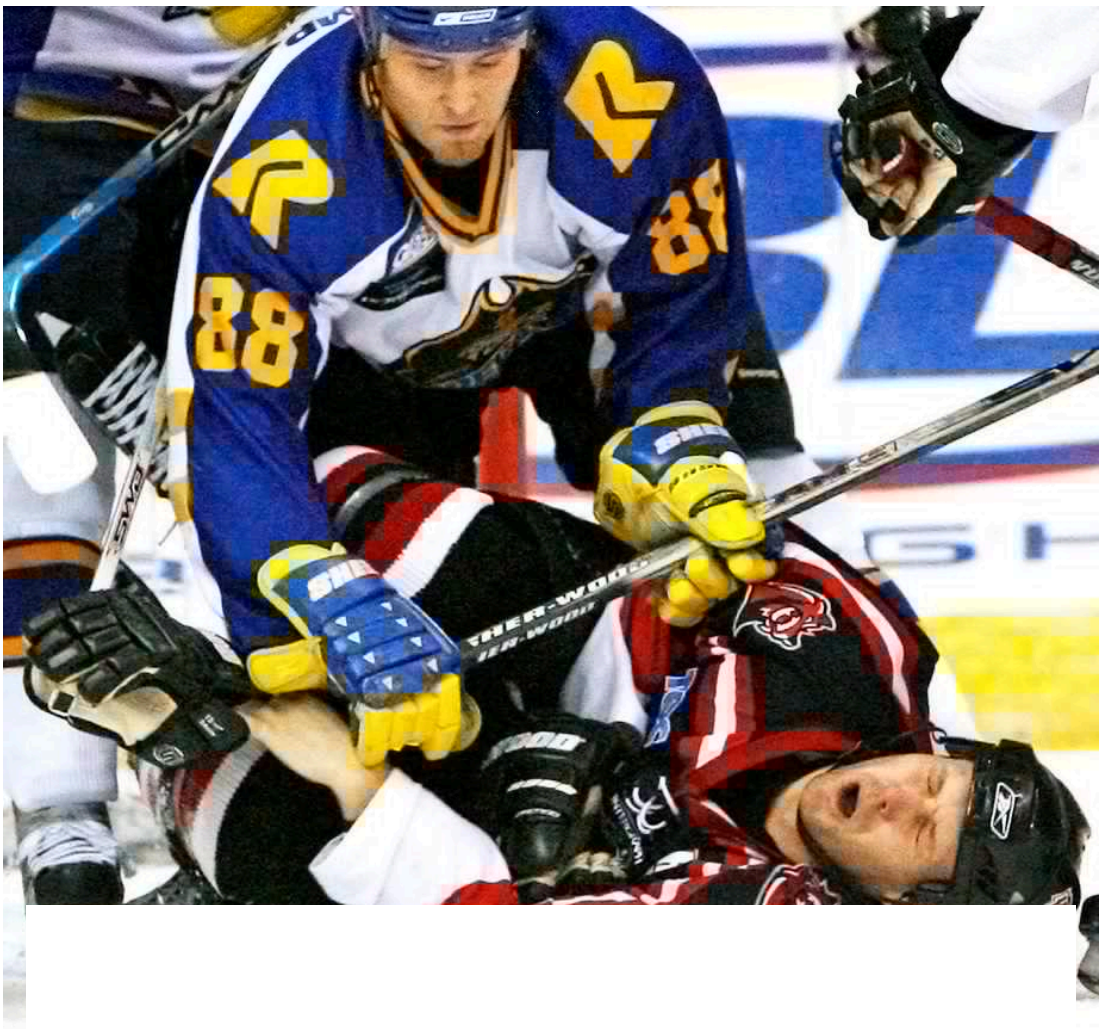
Huntsville's Jonathan Lounsbury (11) gets some lumber courtesy of Richmond Renegades' Justin Joy (9) as they hit the ice in front of the Huntsville goal during the 2nd period of play at the Richmond Coliseum Wed. Jan. 30,2008.

MARK GORMUS



Richmond Renegades' Andre Gill (10) celebrates one of his goals during the 2nd period of play at the Richmond Coliseum against Huntsville Wed. Jan. 30,2008.

MARK GORMUS



Richmond Renegades' Tyler Schremp (88) gets the better of Huntsville's Edan Welch (14) during the first period of play at the Richmond Coliseum Wed. Jan. 30,2008.

MARK GORMUS



Roanoke's Tim Christian (24) is sandwiched between Renegades' Keith O'Connell (left) and Mike Morrone.

BRUCE PARKER



Renegade fan Barbara Houston looks concerned as the third period winds down with the Gades trailing Mississippi at the Coliseum on 5/28/99. Renegades lost 7-3.

DEAN HOFFMEYER



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Renegade's goaltender Taras Lendzyk deflect a shot on goal in first period action.

Stuart T. Wagner



Renegades' Trevor Senn (right) has to cope with the unusual defensive tactics of the Admirals' Derek Ernest during the second period of ECHL playoff game at Richmond Coliseum.

BRUCE PARKER



Renegade's special guest George Allen celebrates a Richmond goal from the team box during the Gades matchup against the Wheeling Nailers at the Coliseum on 12/29/2000.

DEAN HOFFMEYER



Kelsey deSostoa backs away as Fayetteville FireAntz #11 Tim Velemirovich puts Renegades #16 Dan Vandermeer into the glass during 2nd period action at tye Coliseum

CLEMENT BRITT



Renegades #11 Marlon Joseph gets the puck away from his goal during 1st period action at the Coliseum . March 1 , 2008
CLEMENT BRITT



Richmond race team owner Junie Donlavey walks from center ice after unveiling his team's new car during an intermission of the Richmond Renegades game on 12/30/2000. Walking beside the car is Donlavey driver Hut Stricklin.

DEAN HOFFMEYER



Renegades' goaltender Sean Matile sits and watches a fight being broken up by officials during Richmond's game with the Trenton Titans at the Coliseum.

BRUCE PARKER



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DE



The Renegades celebrate one of their four first period goals against Toledo. November 17, 1999

STUART T. WAGNER



Renegades vs Goaltenders ice hockey. On their knees for the puck Renegades # 13 Forrest Gore and Goaltenders #17 Terry Lindgren.

DON LONG



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Renegades Dave Jesiolowski celebrates a goal in first period action at the Coliseum. February 14, 1998

STUART T. WAGNER



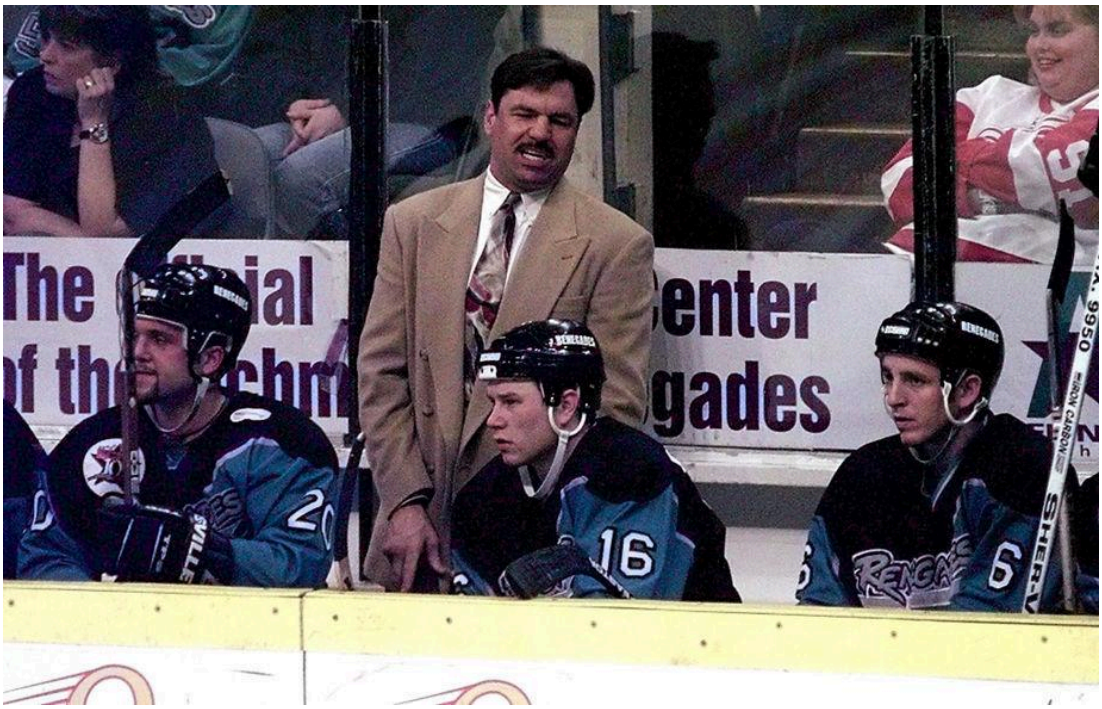
Richmond Renegades' Danny White (#42) makes his way toward the goal with Marcus Forsberg, of the Knoxville Ice bears, close behind during Friday night's game at the Richmond Coliseum.

EV



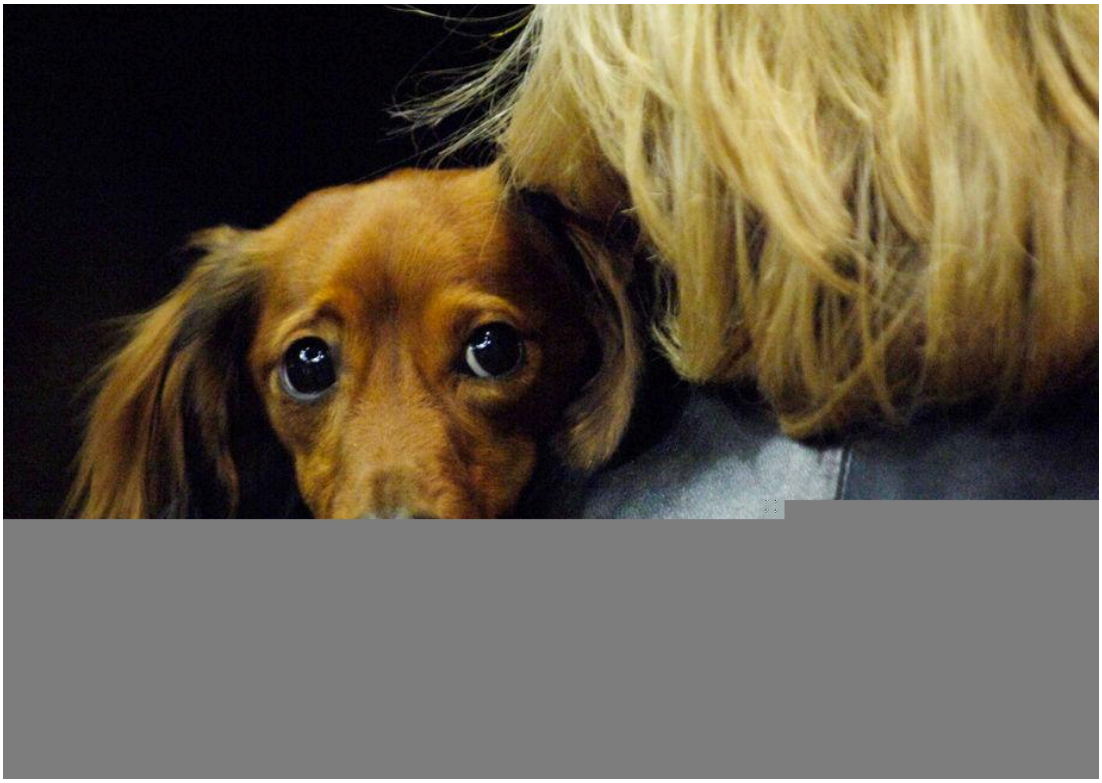
Renegades #25 Trevor Senn attempts a goal during hockey action Tuesday night, March 21, 2000. Generals #20 Igor Boiko is on the right.

ALEXA WELCH EDLUND



Renegades coach Scott Gruhl during first period action at the Coliseum. March 18, 1998.

STUART T. WAGNER



Donna Turner's dachshund Toby gets a ride with mom after the dachshund race that took place at intermission during Friday night's Renegades game at the Richmond Coliseum.

EVA RUSSO



Richmond Renegades Nate Forster (8) checks Toledo's Tim Verbeek into the boards in the 3 period at the Coliseum on 11,

DE



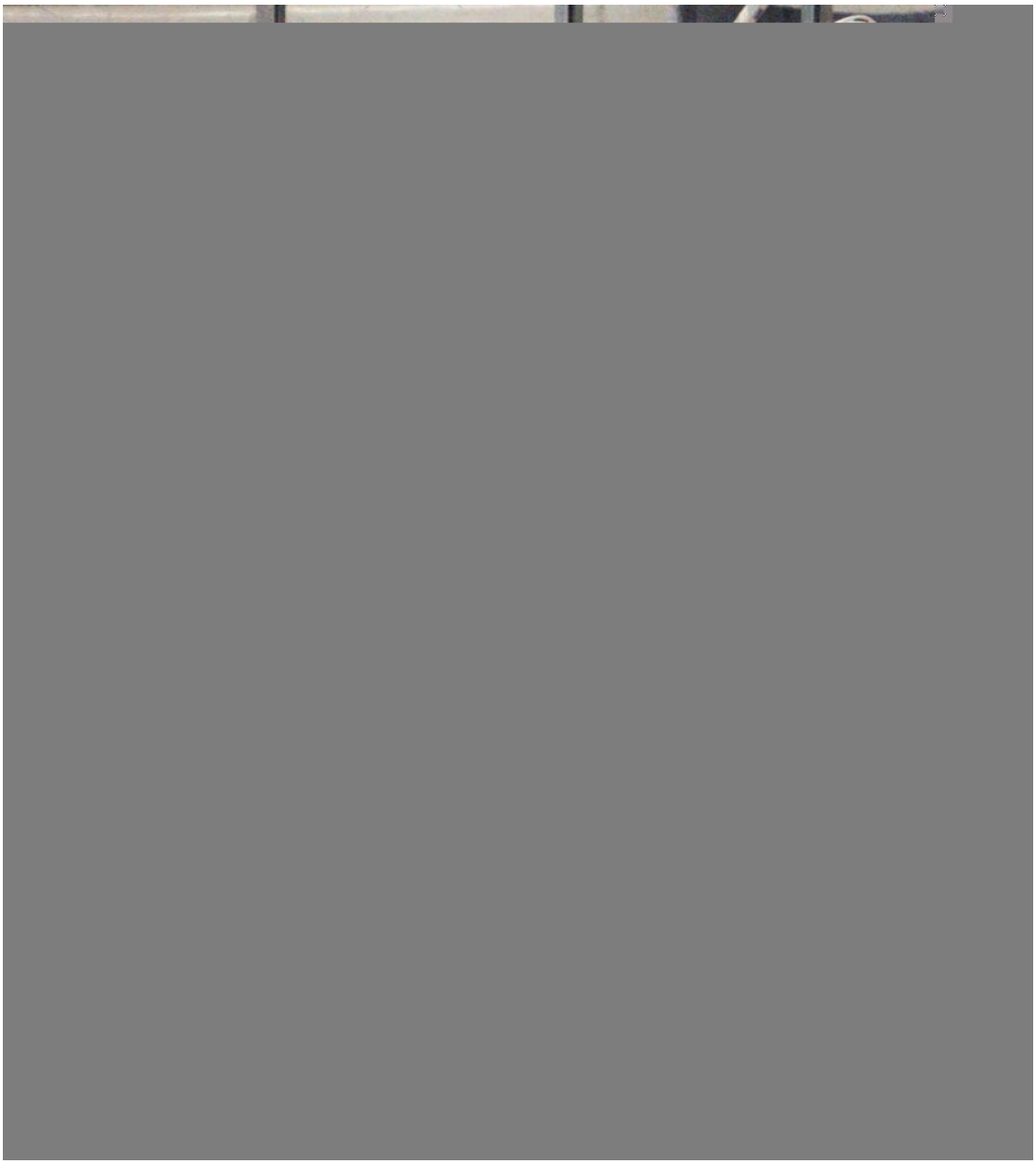
Richmond Renegades Danny White (42) gets airbourne after colliding with Fayetteville Fireantz Tim Velemerovich (11) during the first period Sat. Oct. 20,2007 at Richmond Coliseum.

MARK GORMUS



Richmond Renegades #1 Ryan Senft watches Twin City Cyclones #24 Paul Falco advance with the puck during the 2nd period . The Cyclones made their 2nd point on this attempt . March 22 , 2007

CLEMENT BRITT



Richmond Renegades #54 Clay Lewis puts Twin City Cyclones #12 Allan Sirois into the boards during the 2nd period . . March 22 , 2007

CLEMENT BRITT



Renegade goalie Doug Groenstege watches helplessly as the puck dribbles into the goal during first period play.

JOE MAHONEY



Richmond Renegades #41 Brett Needham gets a shot over Columbus Cottonmouths' goaltender #33 Ian Vigier during 1st period action at the Richmond Coliseum . December 29 , 2007

CLEMENT BRITT



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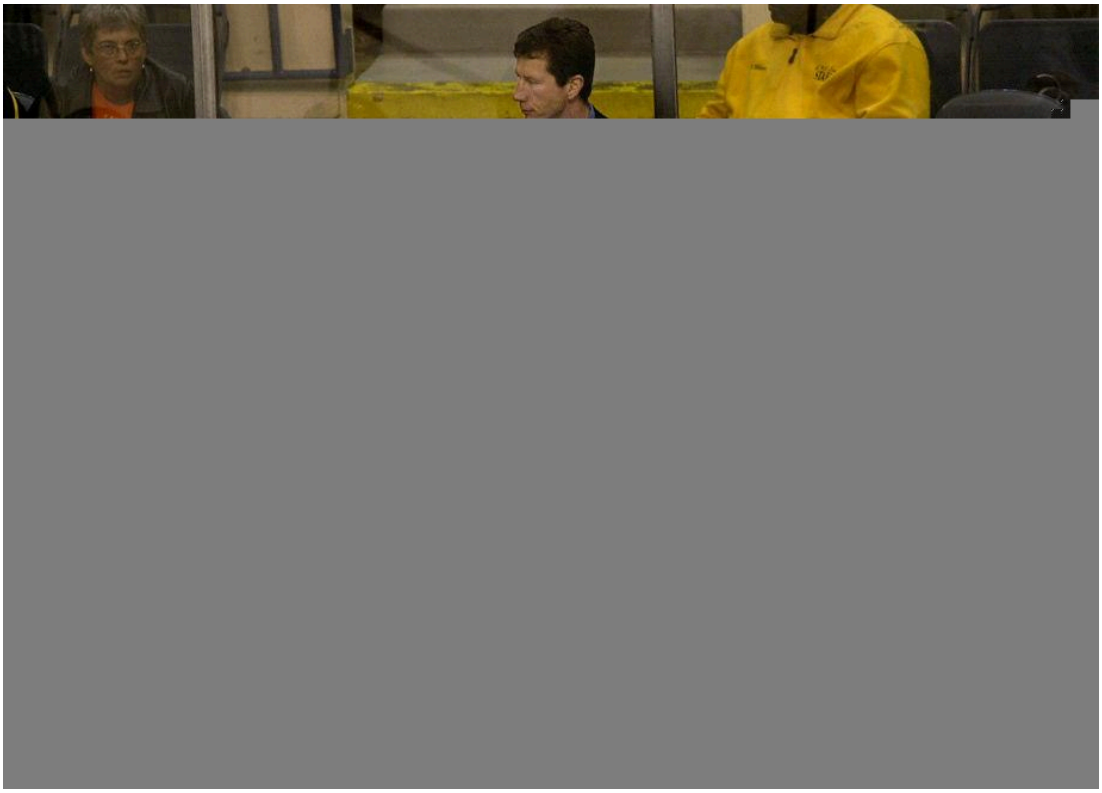
Richmond Renegades celebrate after a Trenton Titans error allowed the Gades to take the lead , 3 to 2 , in the 3rd period at the Richmond Coliseum . Titans #24 Geoff Peters (left) and goalkeeper #29 David St. Germain react . December 16 , 2001

CLEMENT BRITT



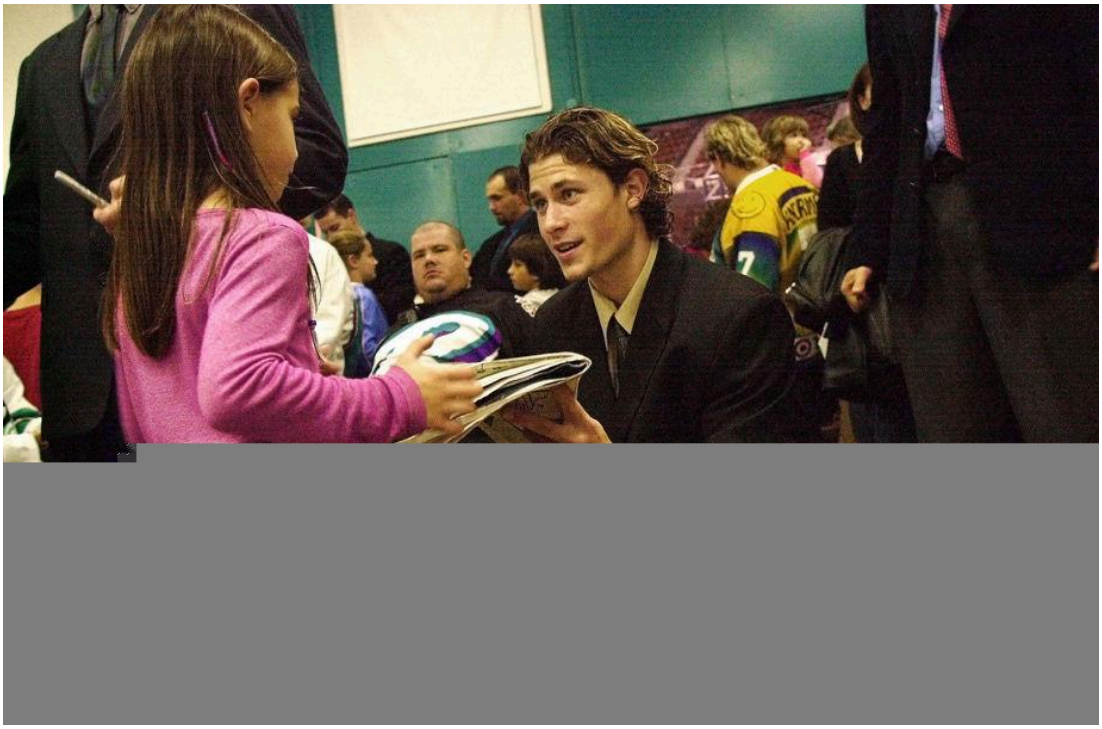
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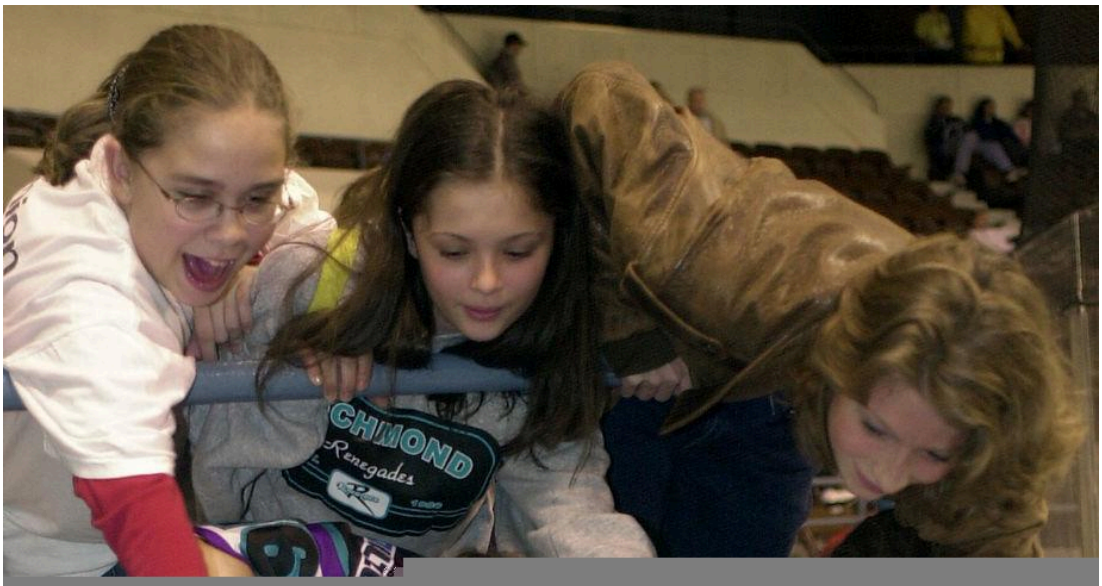
Renegades right wing David Brosseau,left, and defenseman Jayme Filipowicz hop out of the bench during a line change in the game against Columbia at the Coliseum on October 25, 2002.

ERIN FREDRICHS



Renegades rookie defenseman Ian Turner hands the newspaper pullout a fan used to collect the player's autographs. Coach Gord Dineen officially introduced the team to season ticket holders after the game against Trenton on Oct. 19. Players signed autographed and posed for pictures with fans for almost an hour.

ERIN FREDRICHS



Renegade fans reach to meet the glove of a Richmond Renegade as the team returns to the ice after the second intermisson during the game against Columbia at the Coliseum on Oct. 25, 2002.

ERIN FREDRICHS



Four-year Renegade vetern Dan Vandermeer leans his head back as his foot soaks in a bucket full of ice in the Renegade's training room at the Coliseum. Vandermeer blocked a puck with his foot during the previous nights game in Charlotte. Despite barely being able to walk the next morning, Vandermeer skated in practice.

ERIN FREDRICHS



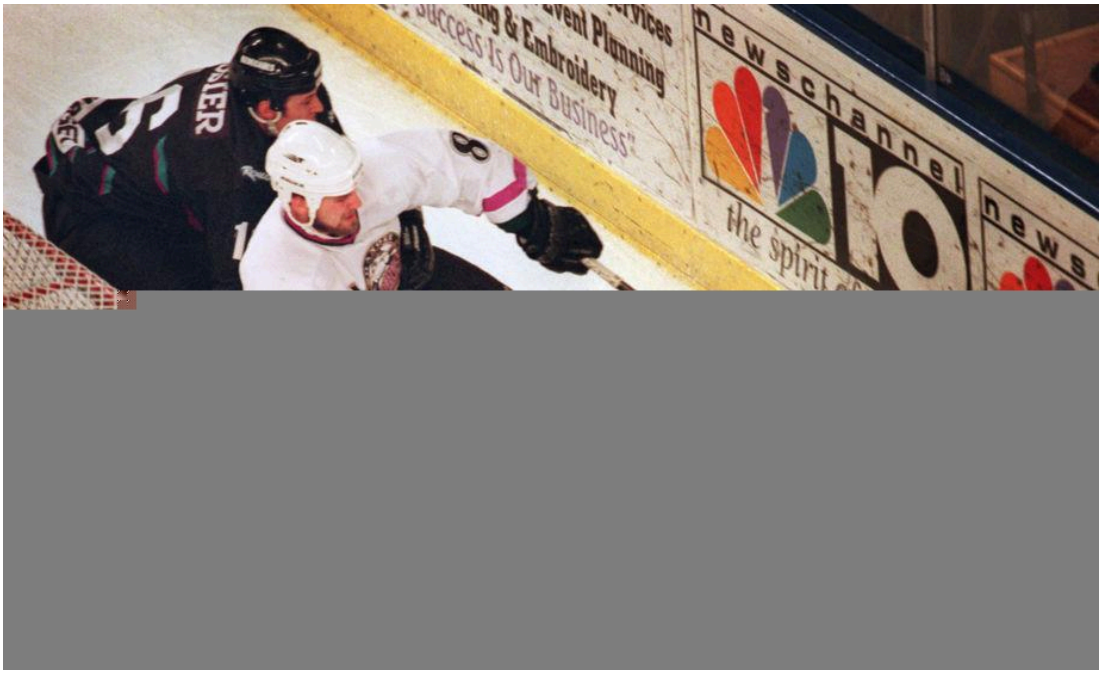
Refs seperate Renegade's #12 Steve Dumonski from South Carolina Stingray Trevor Johnson Saturday Nov. 17, 2001 at Richmond Coliseum.

DIPTI VAIDYA



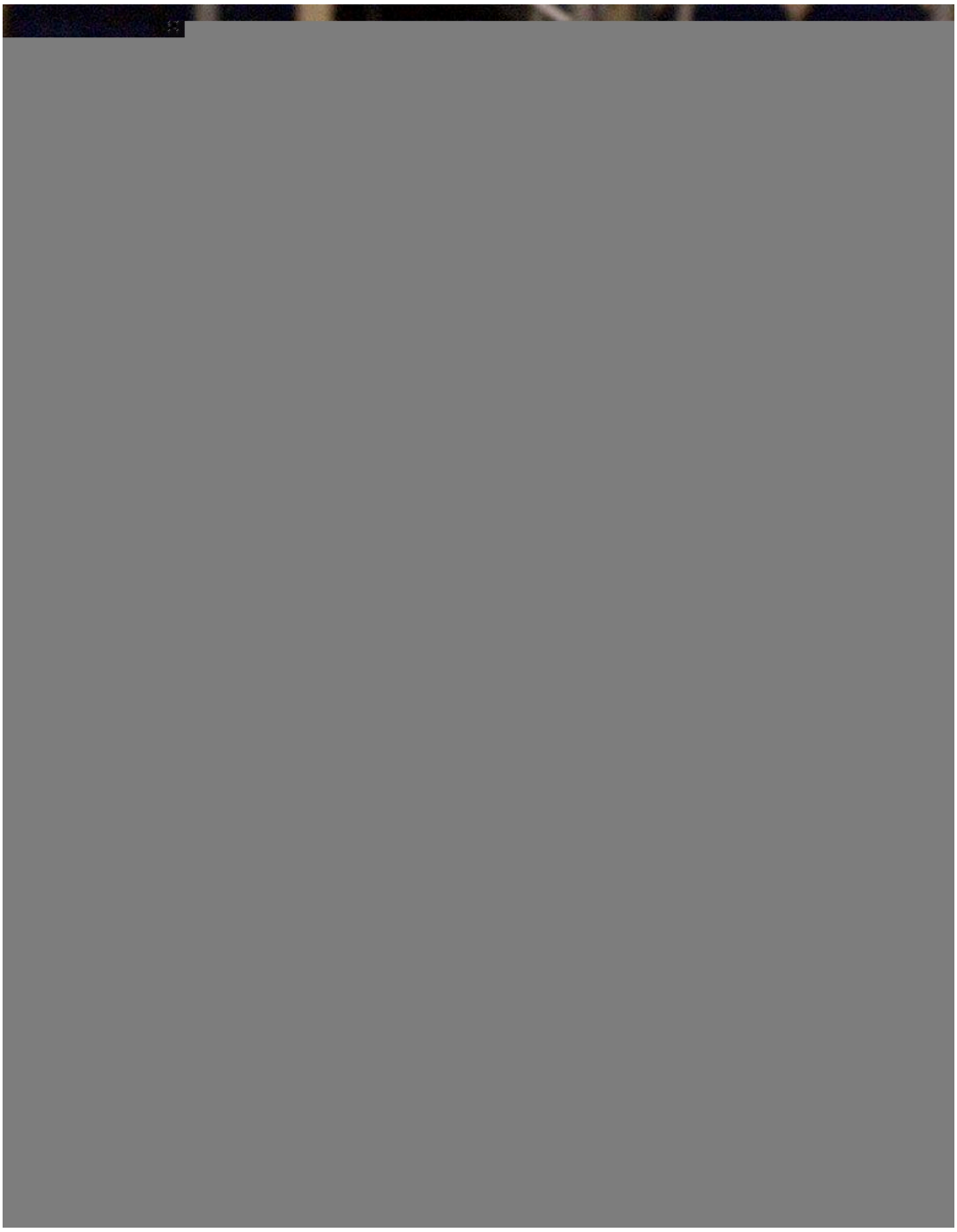
Riverdogs #13 Jay Murphy plays against the IceHawks during hockey action Friday, March 26, 2004.

ALEXA WELCH EDLUND



ERIC BRADY/The Roanoke Times Shot on 5.01.99 Duane Harmer of the Roanoke Express comes behind the net with the puck as Richmond Renegades defender Jean Paul Tessier comes from behind in second period action.

ERIC BRADY



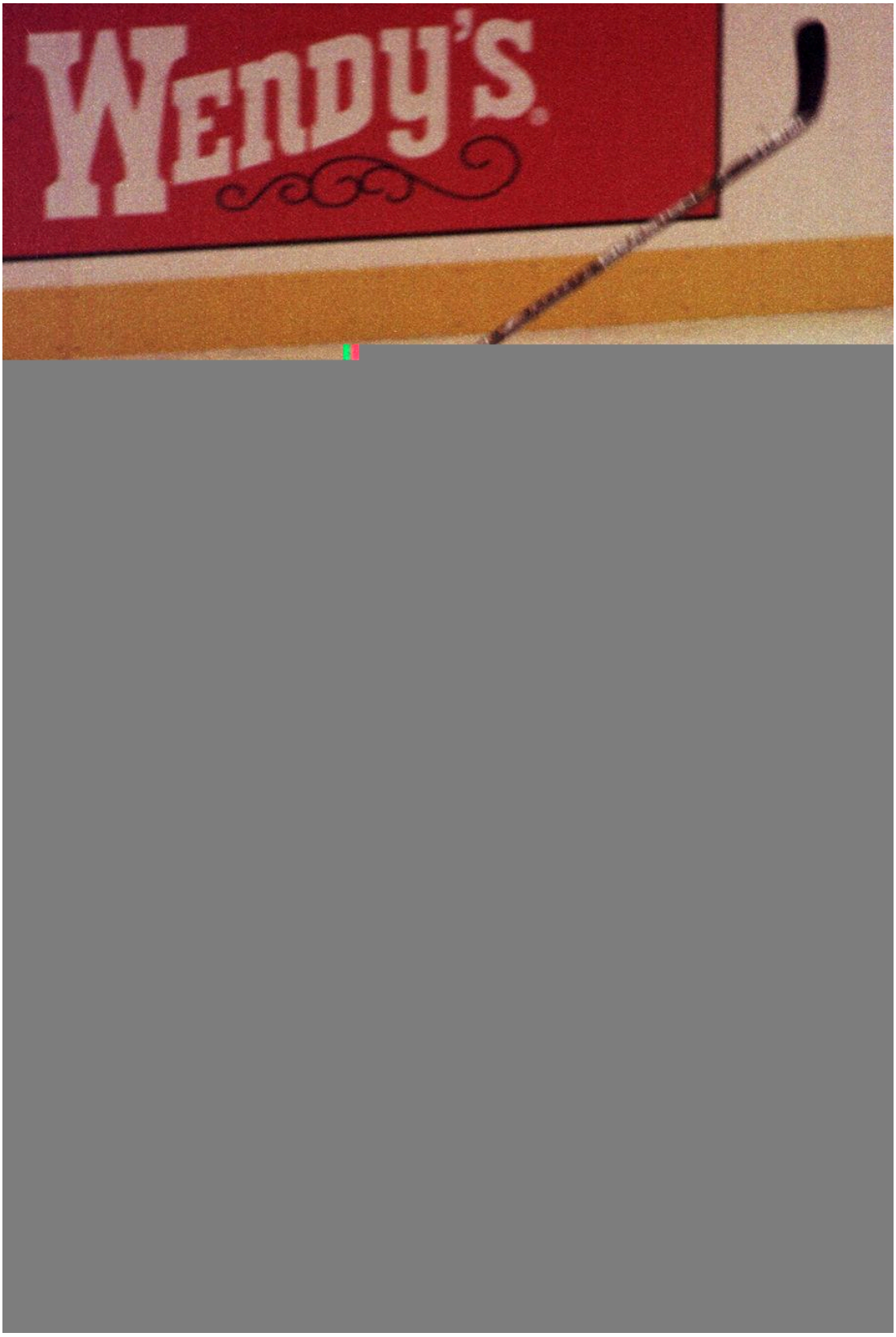
David Hymovitz, veteran forward for the RiverDogs. NOW WITH THE DANBURY THRASHERS

LINDY KEAST RODMAN



Renegades goalkeeper Sean Matile blocks a shot by Cyclones' Curtis Huppe. The shot was blocked.

P. KEVIN MORLEY



The Renegades' Keith O'Connell (in black) was penalized for two minutes for holding the Toledo Storm's Shawn Maltby.

P. KEVIN MORLEY



The Freezer Renegades vs Chiefs. Renegades #13 Joe Bianchi scores in the 1st period, against goaldie Matt Eisler.

DON LONG



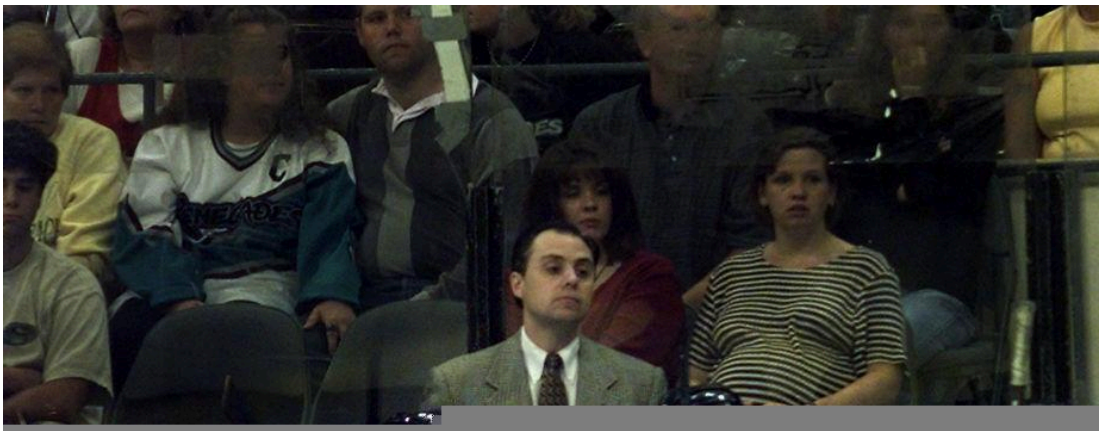
Richmond's Trevor Senn (left) exchanged pleasantries with Hampton Roads' Milt Mastad during the first period of an ECHL game at the Coliseum on Dec. 26, 1998. Senn piled up 1,787 penalty minutes across 261 games with the Renegades and RiverDogs.

1998, DEAN HOFFMEYER/times-dispatch



Johnstown goalie Dan Dennis turns away a shot as Renegades' Daryl Lavoie tries to get a stick on it during first period action at The Freezer 3/21/98.

Joe Mahoney



Coliseum Richmond Renegades. Coach Mark Kaufman.

DON LONG



Richmond Renegades' #27 Ryan Kraft celebrates his second goal of the game as he put Richmond up 4 to 3 against the Hampton Roads Admirals at the end of the second period of play 12/26/99.

MARK GORMUS



An official is knocked to the ice as Richmond Renegades' Dan Vandermeer handles the puck during a game against Johnstown Chiefs 3/29/00.

MARK GORMUS



Renegades' Brad Ackerman (top) has Titan's Lee Jinman bent over backwards in front of the 'Gades bench during a first period altercation.

Joe Mahoney



The Renegades' Rod Taylor celebrates a goal with teammates Chad Ackerman (#4) and Richard Pitirri.

P. KEVIN MORLEY



Richmond Renegades' #33, Kyle Clark and Peoria Rivermen's #25 Jesse Rezansoff fight during the first period of ECHL Northern Conference Quarterfinal Series D Game Three 4/12/01.

MARK GORMUS



Referees break up a fight during the Renegades vs. Greensboro Generals game.

P. KEVIN MORLEY



I-r, Richmond Renegades' #12 Steve Dumonski and Roanoke Express' #15 Derrick Byfuglien trade punches during the first period of play 2/2/02.

MARK GORMUS



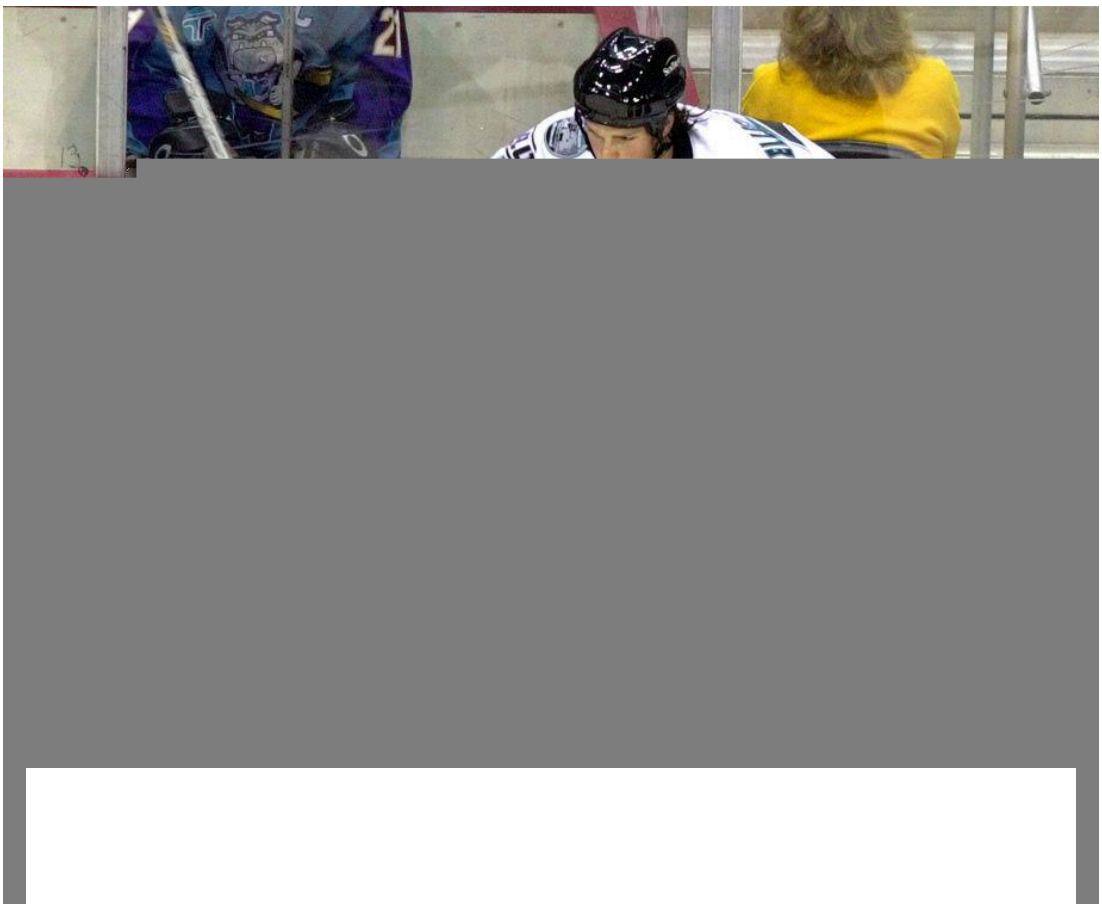
Renegades' Trevor Gillies (R) prepares to unload on Reading's Kevin Bergin during second period play at The Freezer, Friday March 22,2002.

Joe Mahoney



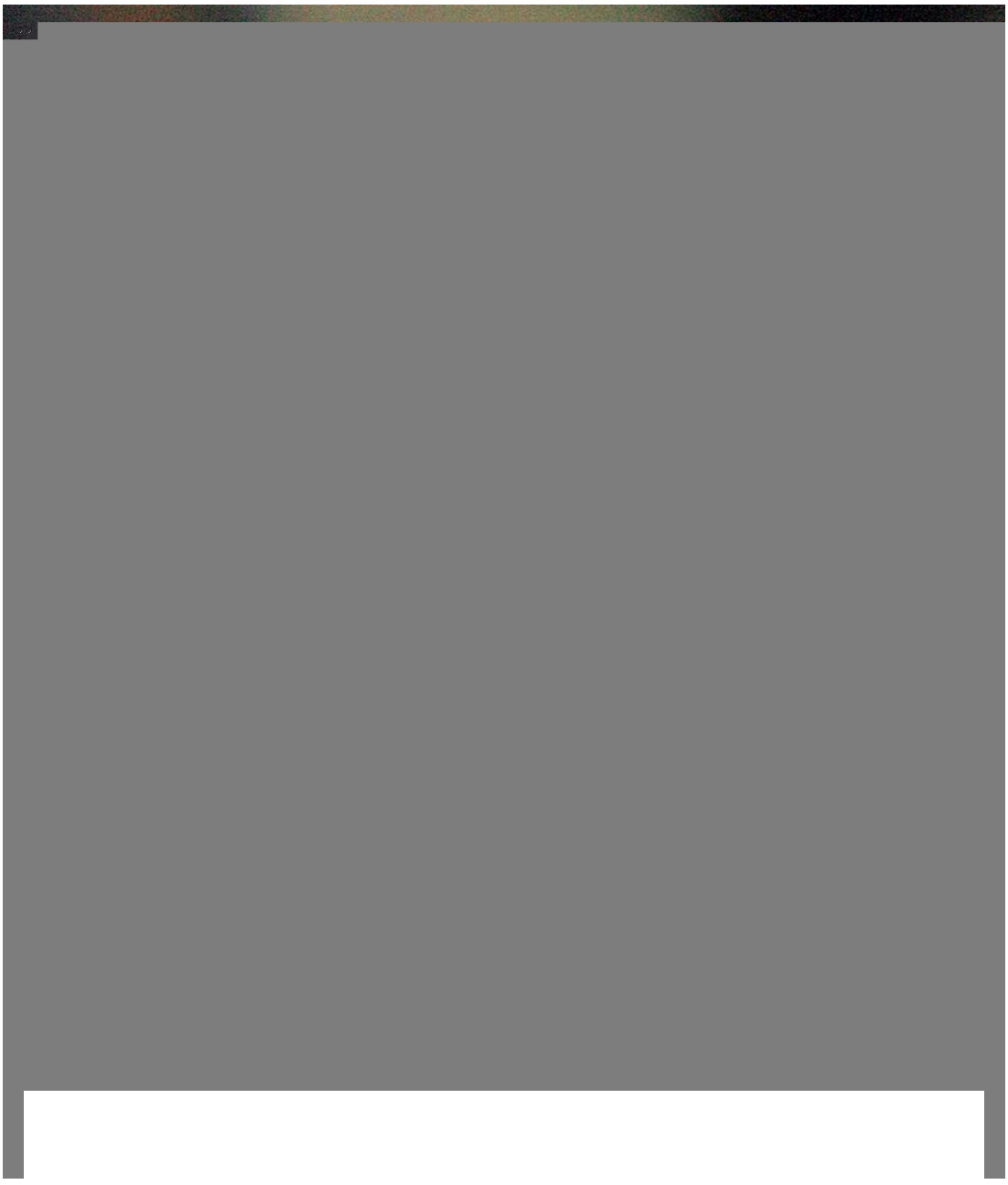
Richmond Renegades goalie, #35, Marc Magliarditi tries to fall on the puck after it bounced out of the goal to put Atlantic City up 3-2 in the 2nd period of play 12/01/02 at the Richmond Coliseum.

MARK GORMUS



Richmond Renegades #27 Kerry Ellis-Toddington pushes Atlantic City's #13, Scott Matzka during the 2nd period of play 12/01/02 at the Richmond Coliseum.

MARK GORMUS



Richmond Renegades' Justin Joy (9) leaves the ice, grimacing due to a cut around his eye during the first period against Knoxville at the Richmond Coliseum Sat. Jan. 12,2008.

MARK GORMUS



Richmond Renegades goalie A.J. Bucchino (40) makes a save against a Knoxville Ice Bears during the first period at the Richmond Coliseum Sat. Jan. 12,2008.

MARK GORMUS



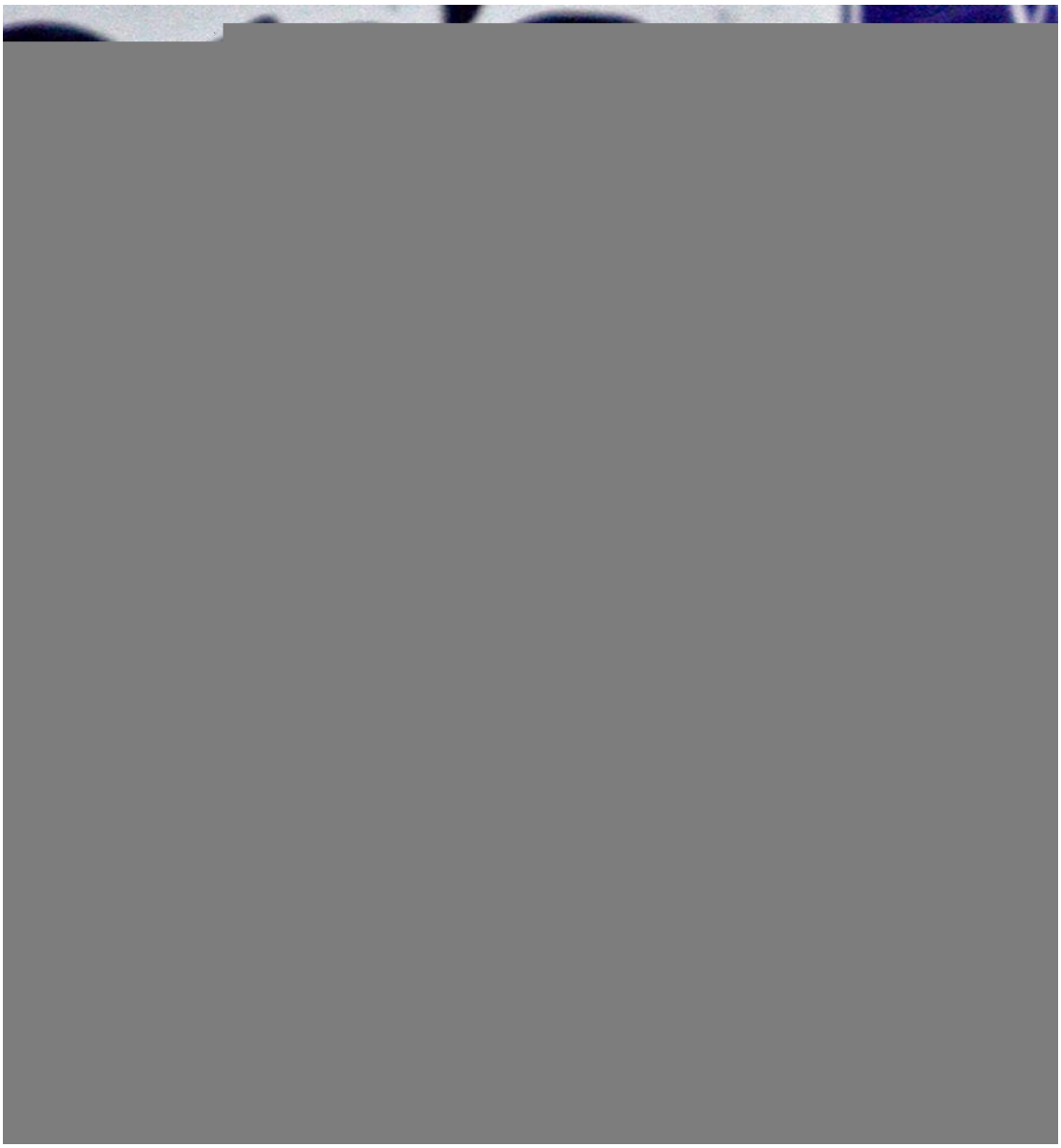
Renegades goalie A.J. Bucchino reacehs for a Fayetteville Fireantz shot in the second period of their game at the Coliseum on Dec. 28, 2007. CUTLINE SAYS KNECTEL

DEAN HOFFMEYER



Richmond Renegades' Mat Goody (24) pops Pee-Dee Cyclones' Scott English (4) in the face during the first period of play at the Richmond Coliseum Fri. March 9,2007.

MARK GORMUS



Richmond Renegades' goalie Doug Groenestege (40) makes a diving save during the first period of play against the Pee-Dee Cyclones at the Richmond Coliseum Fri. March 9,2007.

MARK GORMUS

NOTHIN' BUT NET: Greenville Grrrowl's goalie Paxton Schafer tries to keep the net from engulfing him as his teammate Charles Paquette pushes on it from behind. Renegades' Ryan Kraft skates past the scene in first period play.

Joe Mahoney

Hampton Roads Admirals' #24 Chad Ackerman slams Richmond Renegades' #22 Joe Bianchi into the boards 12/26/99.
MARK GORMUS

Renagades' Bret Norris is tripped up after getting tangled with Jacksonville's Jim Murphy (right) in the first period of their match at the Coliseum on Feb. 2, 2008.

DEAN HOFFMEYER

Allen Williams shows his moves during a Richmond Renegades game against Fayetteville at the Richmond Coliseum Fri. Nov. 28, 2008.

MARK GORMUS

Richmond's Dan Vandermeer lands a left under the face shield of Johnstown's David Gove during the second period of the Renegades and Chiefs match at Richmond Coliseum on 11/30/01.

DEAN HOFFMEYER

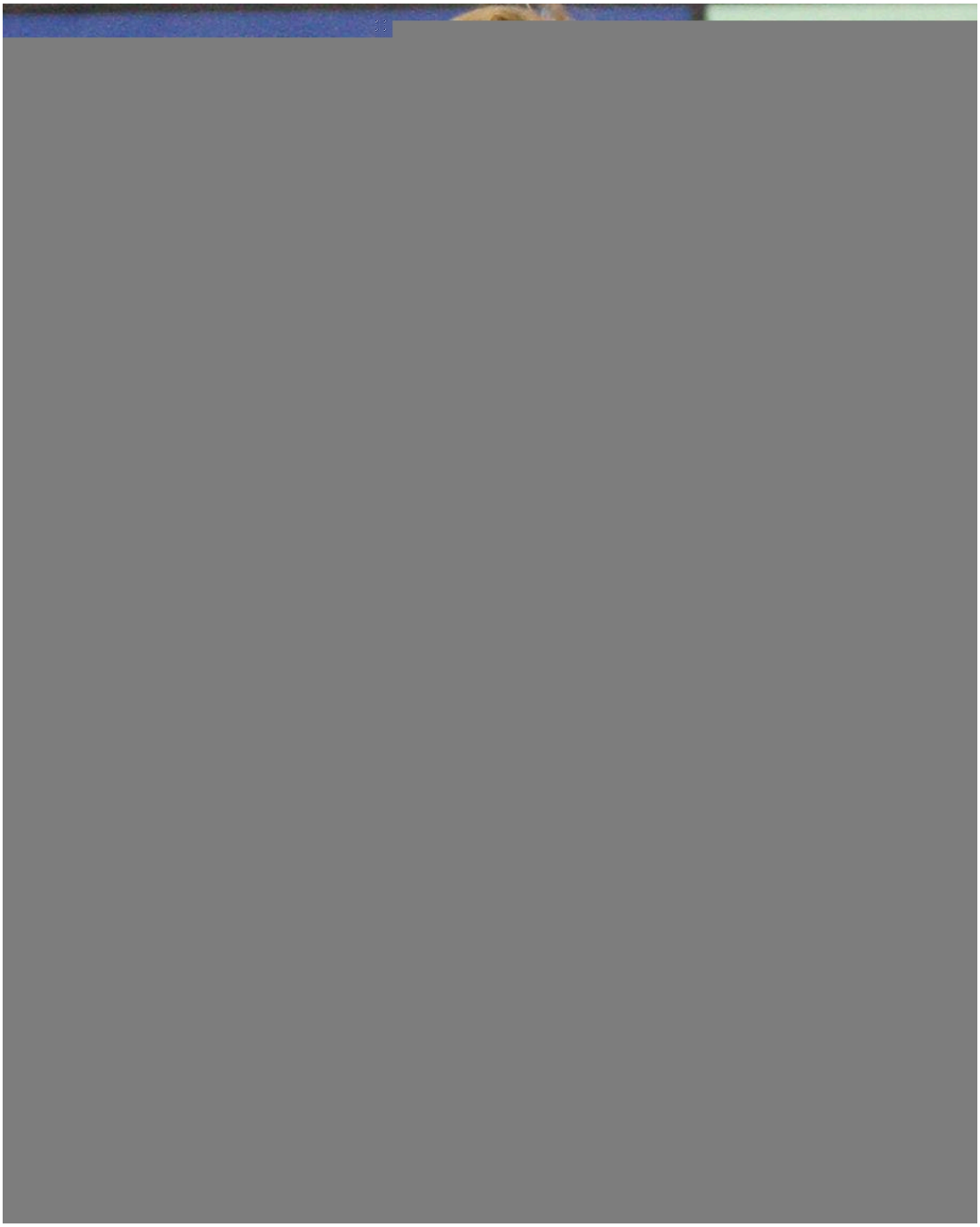
Officials (possibly linesman Jason Discini and referee Joe Ernst, but not sure) separate Richmond's Dan Vandermeer, right, and Johnstown's Mark White, left after a fight that closed the second period of their match at Richmond Coliseum on 11/30/01.

DEAN HOFFMEYER



Richmond's Ryan Busby celebrates his goal in the second period as the Renegades take on the Cottonmouths at the Co

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Richmond's Bill Zalba fights with Knoxville Ice Bears Travis Martell at the opeing of period 1 at the Coliseum.

DEAN HOFFMEYER



Officials pull apart Richmond's John Halverson as he fights with Knoxville Ice Bears Caleb Moffat at the opeing of period 1 at

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Richmond's Matt Withers gets to Knoxville Ice Bears rookie defenseman Jared Siganuk at the opeing of period 1 at the Coliseum. Siganuk, who broke Dan Vandermeers arm was the first of four fights to open the game. Withers caught Siganuk over the eye with a right hand and left a cut that required four stiches.

DEAN HOFFMEYER

Renegades' goalie Maxime Gingras turns aside a shot as South Carolina's Brett Marietti digs for the puck while Renegades' David Lambeth pulls from behind during 1st period play 1/23/99

Joe Mahoney

Richmond Renegades' Joe Blaznek (18) cuts through the crease on Hampton goalie, Steve Valiquette (35), during first period action at The Freezer in Richmond 11/27/98.

Joe Mahoney

Renegades' Steve Dumonski celebrates his first period goal, Wednesday, May 19, at the Freezer.

Joe Mahoney

Renegades' Kelly Selix loses the puck to the Chiefs' Jeff Sullivan during the second period Sunday, December 8, 2002.
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