Masters Division

ith 8 teams in the mix, not even half the size of the Super Masters, the Masters remains the cozy event of the Shootout. Presumably the rat race chase along with the "child bearing" and rearing years that are such a part of being thirty something make it difficult to swing a trip. Later, with things going along pretty well by the time lax playing lovers are 40, they come back with the whole family for the complete Super Masters mid-life experience.

In 2005, Rusty Red (Cornell University Alumni) returns as two-time defending champions. This team has dominated the Masters over the last two years, displacing the STX Long Island Masters, and the Colorado/Rock-it Pocket team that won three in a row earlier this century.

Last year, the Big Red Machine, led by all-Everything defenseman Gerry Byrne, playmaker and former MAB Paint standout G.T. Corrigan, and scoring machine and former U.S.A. World Teamer Tim Goldstein made a shambles of the 2004 tournament. The final score in the Championship game was 13-2. This team of "oldsters" likely could have made plenty of waves in the Elite/young guys Division.

Long Island STX Masters will likely try and load up for this trip after the beating they took in that final a year ago. We will have to wait and see what the Islanders bring. Rocco Gugliano can still be a force on the face off, and Mickey Menna might have more collective points accumulated in more Divisions in Vail than anyone else in Shootout history.

Third place for 2004, Boathouse/Rock-it Pocket is always a potential giant. Former Duke player and Colorado product Sam Hovey always puts together a bunch of good players. Peter Scott can still find the back of the other guy's net, and Dan Cisneros can still protect his own.

The rest of the field rounds out with Team Meineke, the Middlebury alumni team, and Middle Aged Crisis.

The Masters has a unique style of its own. There is a great deal of skill and still enough youth to make the Masters game fast and exciting at a very high level. Look for the semi-finals on Monday to showcase some great games with outstanding talent.



