This Bear's Tale

How Blades Became a Bruin

Once, there was a bear -- a very special bear.

He was not special because he was very big.

Most bears are big, after all.

He was not special because he was brown. Most bears are brown.

No, by all accounts, our bear was special because of one trait.

He could not, or would not, hibernate.

When the weather got cold, and the other bears went to sleep for the winter, our bear stayed awake.

And why did our bear not hibernate? He loved hockey.

Having stumbled upon the game while searching for food later one very cold fall (bears eat a lot before they go to sleep for the season, after all), he noticed a group of people playing a fantastic game with sticks and a puck on a frozen pond.

The players, especially the children, glided along the ice, sometimes moving very fast, sometimes tumbling into each other, sometimes celebrating when the puck went into the goal.

One of the players, who was a very good hockey player, was very kind to the children, and often stopped to help them with their sticks or with their skate laces or just to laugh.

And boy, that nice man could laugh!

He wore a snazzy jersey colored Black & Gold. It was decorated with a big B and a number '9' on it and everyone called him 'Chief.'

The players came back every Sunday and the bear could not bear to miss any of the games at the frozen pond so he decided he would stay awake so he could see more games on the frozen pond.

Besides which, he wasn't sleepy -- not at all. But it got cold and our bear started to wonder if he had made a mistake.
Should he have gone to sleep like the other bears?

However, the following Sunday, the man named Chief was talking and laughing with the children and playing hockey on the frozen pond, so the bear snuck into the back of Chief’s truck.

After all, Blades wanted to know where the nice hockey player lived.

But Chief was not going to his home; he was going to the Garden for a Boston Bruins game.

Oh, what a surprise for the Chief when a large bear jumped out of his truck.

But Chief, being the Chief, was not scared and realized that the nice animal was hungry and not a bit scary.

So Chief went to the concession stand to get some pizza, some hot dogs, some popcorn and pop for his new friend.

While the bear munched, Chief decided that the bear needed a name. So he went to the stands and asked some of the young fans what they should name the bear.

One young girl from Winthrop named Jillian Dempsey, who was a hockey player herself, suggested 'Blades.'

Chief liked the name immediately.

"Ok, we'll call you Blades," said Chief who then asked the nice bear, "Do you want to stay here with all the other Bruins?"

Blades, thinking that there were other bears in the Garden, shook his head yes and Chief led him inside to the Bruins locker room.

To Blades surprise, there were lots of Bruins in the locker room -- but no bears. And they all wore the beautiful Black & Gold jersey.

The Bruins players welcomed their new mascot and gave him his own XXXL jersey, some size 13 wide skates and a new hockey stick.

Blades has been a fixture in the Garden ever since.