Ice hockey may come to Cajundome

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LAFAYETTE — Acadiana sports fans may be able to add another sport to their repertoire, Cajundome officials said Monday.

The dome has been approached by several ice hockey leagues to discuss stationing a minor league team in Lafayette, Cajundome Director Greg Davis said at Monday's Cajundome Commission meeting.

There are about six hockey minor leagues now, each with about 12 to 15 teams, Davis said.

If a team were to locate in Lafayette, there's a possibility that the team's owner would purchase the ice for the Cajundome, he said.

The arena could have permanent ice on its floor, and cover it up for basketball games, concerts and other events, Davis explained.

Having ice would open the Cajundome up for shows like Ice Capades, Disney on Ice and other ic skatings shows, Davis said.

Those shows tend to book arenas that have their own ice rink, Davis said.

The dome also could host its own activities, like open ice skating during the Christmas season, he said.

Some of the minor leagues already in existence have had success because the average ticket price for a game is only about $7, so it's good family entertainment, Davis said.

A team would play about 30 to 35 home games per season, but the owners have been told that University of Southwestern Louisiana games would take precedence, Davis said.

If all the negotiations are successful, and the commission decides to ink a deal, the team could be in place as early as the fall of 1995, Davis said.

In other business, Davis told the commission that February was the most successful month in the history of the arena.

Profits for that month were 10 percent higher than the highest month in the arena's history, Davis said.

The dome collected more than $250,000 in revenues and posted a profit of more than $100,000, said Davis, who was appointed permanent director of the dome last month.

"This is where we want to be financially," Davis told the commission.

The reasons for the increased revenues include high Mardi Gras numbers, high ticket sales for a truck show and a sold-out George Strait concert.

Davis said ticket sales for USL basketball games also were higher than they have ever been.

Sesame Street Live had such good ticket sales here that the company has decided to bring the show back to Lafayette this fall, Davis said.

Davis said his staff also has been talking to officials with the Louisiana Gulf Coast Oil Exposition about moving the show, also known as LAGCOE, to the Cajundome.

Officials with the expo are checking to see if all the show's exhibits will fit in the arena. If they will, the show will be moved, Davis said he's been told.

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