

As a Knick-name, Admirals will float

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The Admirals. The Albany Admirals.

The rip-snorting, ice-shaving, hard-skating, back-checking, corner-digging, spit-in-yer-eye, tougher-than-nails Albany Admirals.

Go, Ads. We're mad for the Ads. The Ads is rad. Rah, rah, rah.

Now we know the name of Albany's newest pro sports franchise. We don't know for sure if it'll actually play here – that depends on a few thousand more folks coughing up the bucks to reserve if-and-when season tickets in the next 5 1/2 weeks – but we know what to call it.

The Albany Admirals.

After soliciting suggested names from the community the past few weeks, the owners of Albany's Global Hockey League franchise picked a winner and ran it up the flagpole Thursday to see if anyone saluted.

The name they chose, from a list of more than 500 entries, is the Admirals – a wonderful tribute to the historic America's Cup decision currently being cogitated within the city limits by the justices of the state Court of Appeals.

There are a lot of cute things they plan to do with the nickname (or is it Knickname?), such as calling the penalty box "The Brig" and dressing the ushers in sailor outfits. They promise much more; maybe they could flog anyone guilty of a game misconduct.

Naaah – players union would probably squawk. Still, the TV ratings....

Now, no matter what name the organizers chose, it would have been easy to poke fun, because any name sounds a little funny until everyone gets used to it. Utah Jazz? Los Angeles Clippers? Miami Heat? Those names don't even draw a blink anymore.

If you think you could have done better picking a name, talk to your kids, Homer and Penelope.

Picking a nickname isn't as easy as it used to be. Among the suggestions were the Mohawks, Algonquins, Chiefs, Braves, Eries, Mohicans, Aztecs, Iroquois and Indians.

Ask the Siena Saints *nee* Indians why those are a big no-go.

Then there were the standard hockey-cute suggestions: Pucks, Blades, Blade Runners, Silver Skaters, Silver Skates, Silver Blades, Slapshots, Sticks, Stix, Ice, Icemen, Ice Men, Icers.

Too obvious, although Knix Sticks has charm.

Admirals looks better and better.

One nickname solution is to draw on what the area is known for. Capitals (which edged Blades for most entries), Caps, Advocates, Senators, Statesmen – geez, don't you read the sports pages to get away from those guys?

One clever trend is to try to rhyme all the franchises in a city, as with the New York Nets, Jets, Mets and Sets. My favorite from the list of suggestions was the Dragoons – appropriately threatening and ominous for hockey and a good play on Albany Patroons. Then the Albany-

Colonie Yankees could become the Spitoons, we could call the soccer team the Festoons ... guess not.

Or chuck the name Albany altogether. Several suggested using Capital District instead, and I agree: We could have the C.D. Players.

Albany Larks. Albany Lazars. Chills. Alarms. Sabots. Speed. Beavers. Huskies. Stars. Blues. Pippins. Machines.

Sparks. Royals. Albanians. Aliens. Flying Dutchmen. Sleet.

Albany Cobbers?

Hmmm. Maybe Admirals is the right choice.

No – wait a minute, here it is. This one's great. Hardly been used. Can't miss. No one will forget. No idea how anyone thought this one up, but here it is, way down on the sheet of entries.

The Spitting Squids.

The Albany Spitting Squids.

The rip-snorting, ice-shaving, hard-skating, back-checking, corner-digging, tougher-than-nails, don't- step-on-me-Admiral-or-I'll-squirt-in -yer-eye Albany Spitting Squids.

Go, Squids. Put a lid on the Squids. Here's a quid for the Squids.

Admirals sounds just fine to me.