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Lovers try to score with Bruins

By **Scott Van Voorhis**
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How about some speed dating along with some fast skating at your next Bruins game?

The company that owns both the Bruins and the TD Banknorth Garden have teamed up with an Internet matchmaking service in a bid to mix romance with a nice hip check here and there.

It's not clear what the Big Bad Bruins of old would make of it all, but Delaware North Cos. is broadening its horizons in a search for new revenue. As it bounces back from last year's disastrous lockout, Bruins ownership is reaching out beyond traditional sponsors to Web firms, life science companies, and hospitals.

But speed dating is a first for the Bruins, acknowledged Delaware North Executive Vice President Charlie Jacobs.

The pre-game dating package, sponsored by Cupid.com, costs \$129 and includes a dozen "six-minute 'PreDates,'" a seat in a luxury suite, light appetizers and a drink. The big night is scheduled for March 26, when the Bruins take on Atlanta.

"I think of it as an innocent connection. People come in, share a game, share interests, and hopefully find a good match," Jacobs said.

"I have never heard about it in pro sports."

So far, the Bruins appear to have a good match with their new business strategy.

Attendance at games is averaging 16,600 a game, the best in more than 10 years. And companies with eyes on sponsorship deals have followed in the fans' footsteps.

The franchise is on track to see a double digit increase in next season's sponsorship dollars.







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