



Gives Special Spin to Community Service

By Edward Butterfield

Jose "Cookie" Rojas pumped his fist, raised his stick high and was mobbed by his hockey teammates. His goal was the first of his career - in wheelchair hockey that is. Rojas was one of almost **50 GOALS** participants from Anaheim's Jeffrey Lynne community who crammed into a Buena Park Boys & Girls club gymnasium in mid December to get a "participatory" education about the challenges of life and sports for wheelchair bound people. The visit highlighted "community service" education month for the Disney **GOALS** program and the newest of a series of activities and seminars that will enable **GOALS** kids to help others.

Andy Houghton, an Orange County wheelchair athlete and advocate arranged for the visit and toured each of the **GOALS** afternoon classes during the month. "My ambition in life wasn't to end up in a wheelchair," he said to the youngsters, "but now that I'm here I intend to make the most of my life."

A special part of the evening included a presentation of a "hockey birthday cake" to wheelchair speedster Joe Babakanian. "You kids have a great future and it's an inspiration to us that you're here," Babakanian said in his remarks to the kids.

Various kids took turns in groups of four, jumping into the extra wheelchairs provided and trying their hand at this new form of hockey. **GOALS** athletic activities revolve primarily around hockey sports such as ice and in-line hockey. Sebastian Roman, age 9, exclaimed "this is more fun than skating!"

At the end of the evening Disney **GOALS** Executive Director, Dave Wilk was reflective, "People who can overcome a physical challenge such as we saw tonight are the greatest kinds of winners. We hope that that kind of spirit rubs off on our kids." ❖❖❖

