

USAH Youth Council Report.

- A good portion of the youth council's time and discussion was again spent on recruitment and retention. There were discussions and presentations from other affiliates around the country talking about their success stories that resulted in an increase of players. Even though these were recruitment success stories and there is no evidence the players will want to stay with ice hockey, they were encouraged with the results. There has been an increased awareness of the (2 + 2) program which Minnesota actually did very well in last year. More and more NHL teams are getting involved with the affiliates in which they are based and actually have a designated staff person working with the affiliate regarding recruitment and retention efforts. One story that was told a few times indicated a mere thank you note from the coach to his players was a very effective tool. The idea actually came from Mike Snee and the concept is very note worthy as it shows the coach is concerned whether the individual had fun and were they willing to come back. Short term duration programs seem to be very popular with the affiliates and they feel these types of programs have the best chance of retaining players.
- ADM was discussed at length again as the various departments are starting to integrate the ADM philosophies into their programs. Emphasis on age appropriate materials for coaching and development will incorporate the ADM philosophies. The affiliate coach in chief will have more information on the ADM.
- Another area concerning growing the game and or retention is why players leave the game. In particular the areas of cost, commitment and fun have been identified through surveys. Even though Minnesota by and large does a good job of keeping costs to a minimum, these are area's Minnesota needs to stay focused on and work towards understanding these issues in order to maximize our retention efforts.
- Proposed international youth player development symposium scheduled for November 2010 in Chicago. Minnesota should consider participating in this symposium.
- New York Amateur Hockey has made it mandatory for all 8U programs to be cross ice programs. USAH has re-named the cross ice program to the Red, White and Blue program.
- Next year will be a playing rule change year, any proposals for rule changes need to be submitted by Nov. 2010. More details to come.
- Pee wee checking was another topic of discussion and will be a proposed rule change for 2011/2012 season. Minnesota should be considering the issue and possibly survey our customers to get their feedback. One train of thought is to go more like the girls/women's programs where there is contact but not full out checking. Another thought is to start them checking earlier. The issue really comes down to; What age is most appropriate to teach and start checking?
- Coaching ethic code was reviewed and discussed. The board voted the policy into place and Minnesota will have to determine how to implement.
- Locker room policy was reviewed and discussed as well. The board voted the policy into place and Minnesota will have to determine how to implement.
- USAH was awarded the bid to host an under 17 International tournament in August of 2011. Any affiliate interested in hosting the event should contact Kevin McLaughlin at USAH. Minnesota should consider hosting this event.
- The presentation to the Youth Council regarding reduction of minor penalty minutes was received well and was approved by the Council. Greg Nagan did a great job on the presentation. Some affiliates questioned why we didn't just make the player sit in the box and keep playing (5 on 5), while other affiliates questioned why we were seeking approval because they have been doing it for some time without council approval.
- I listened over the weekend to a lot of success stories when came to recruitment of players in non-traditional markets. I believe Minnesota should take a different approach to recruitment of players in the inner city and believe the process needs to be completely different from our traditional method of recruitment and development of players around the state. I also believe it should be a different group of people who understand the issues of the inner city and are only focused on introducing ice hockey to those non-traditional members. I believe our diversity budgeted money would be better served in focusing on these types of activities, rather than giving money to support certain programs.
- Those teams participating in national championships need to submit their intentions to Carol Carlson and me so I can report to the Fall Youth Council meeting on the weekend of Sept. 24-25th.

Respectfully submitted: Dennis Green, Minnesota District Director, and Youth Council Member.