

Rules Committee Report 2011 Summer Meeting

rev. 2 6/1/11



The Mn Hockey Rules Committee met on Wednesday May 11, 2011.

The Committee reviewed the process used to conduct Minnesota Hockey and USAH Minnesota District meetings. The concern is that many people do not stay for the Minnesota District meeting. Important information is passed along in the Registrar, Referee-In-Chief, Coach-In-Chief and Risk Manager reports that do not reach the intended people. Perhaps those reports can be included as part of the MH meeting.

Hal Tearse asked the Committee to consider reducing the number of coaches allowed on the bench. He said there is some confusion about it – the Handbook says four but some referees think it is three. Hal proposed that we set our rule at three because "having four coaches on the bench is unnecessary and is a nightmare for many teams. We get over-anxious Dads wanting to be in the game – being on the bench is their way to get close to the action. I've had several e-mails about this issue and there was a big to-do about it in Dist 2 last season." The Rules Committee felt it would be confusing to have a different requirement than USAH, especially for visiting out-of-state teams, and decided to do nothing with this request at this time. The District Directors Committee should take a poll on this at the upcoming Summer Meeting.

The Committee discussed whether we should differentiate between active and inactive Directors Emeriti. Under this concept, they would have to attend meetings to retain "active" status. After no involvement for one year they would be notated as "inactive" and would no longer have privileges (with some allowance for extenuating circumstances). We would retain the list of all individuals who have been elected to this position (Handbook, pg 76), but only the active ones would be listed on the Board Members page. Action on this was postponed for now – we would like the Board to discuss this more.

The Committee reviewed two proposals submitted by John Miller to change MH voting procedures. Implementing these proposals would require *major* changes to the Bylaws. The Committee is willing to develop the required changes, but would first like to get input from the District Directors Committee on what they want and what they will support. Action on these two items has been deferred for now.

The Committee reviewed the Ineligible Player Rule (Youth Rules, V, A) and Protests (Youth Rules, IX, B) and whether those requirements apply to players that continue to play after receiving too many penalties. There is relevant (perhaps inapplicable) language in the Playing Rules regarding the 3-penalty rule for Jr. Gold, stating that "enforcing this penalty is the joint responsibility of the referees, the scorekeeper, the coach and the player." There was a situation this year where the officials asked how many penalties a player had and were informed "four." The player actually had five due to a check-from-behind and misconduct which counts as two penalties. The player went on to score the tying and winning goals. The game was forfeited due to the Protest and Ineligible Player provisions. The referees felt terribly about the mistake, and pointed to a Casebook write-up on calling a Game Misconduct if a player receives two major penalties. If the officials fail to call the Game Misconduct and the player scores a goal, the goal stands. The casebook says that the onus of assessing the Game Misconduct is on the officials – a team cannot be denied any goals scored by a player who should not have been in the game. The Rules Committee did not feel comfortable proposing a change to MH rules without further discussion on this.

The Committee was asked whether MH requirements (rules) apply to registered teams participating outside of our regular season. The committee's opinion is that all of the requirements apply – the only exceptions are that we do not follow the participation or one-player-one-team rules during the off-season.

The Committee also discussed future options on printing the Handbook:

- Print things that are needed and do not change yearly. Everything else on-line.
- Print things that are needed frequently even if they change yearly. Everything else on-line.
- Eliminate the Handbook entirely – everything is available on-line and can be printed if needed.
- Continue printing the Handbook pretty much as-is

Thank you to Rich Rakness & Scott Gray for participating in this discussion. No decision has been made.

The Committee proposes modifications to the Bylaws, Youth Rules and Inter-Affiliate Player Transfer Protocol for Board consideration, as follows.

Bylaws Changes

B1. Art. 7 – Vacancies (pg. 22) indicates open positions are to be filled by election at a regular meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose. Special meetings may be held 10-60 days after receipt of request. However, Art. 7 – Elections (pg. 21) states that the President must appoint a Nominating Committee Chairman no less than two months before any scheduled election. Specifying that the required timeframe for the Nominating Committee only applies to "regularly-scheduled" elections resolves this conflict.

ARTICLE 7 – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elections:

- [B1] 1. No less than two months prior to any regularly scheduled MH election, the President shall appoint a Nominating Committee Chairman who shall be a Board member (preferably a Director Emeritus). Individuals interested in being a candidate in an upcoming MH election shall notify the Nominating Committee Chairman. The Nominating Committee Chairman shall record contact information for interested candidates, and the date individuals expressed interest.

B2. At the 2010 Summer Meeting the Board changed Article 15 to specify the voting procedure for USAH District Director elections. During that meeting the Girls' and Boys' HS Directors expressed they should be able to cast votes for HS players that register with USAH. The HS Directors are elected through a HS team process, and none of those teams are registered with USAH. This was brought up again, and was addressed in the Rules Committee's 2011 Annual Meeting Report, which stated that since HS Directors are not elected in accordance with USAH policies they should not cast these votes. Board Member DeMeo questioned if we should even consider this if passing it would violate our USAH Affiliate Agreement. The Chair of the USAH Legal Committee, Peter Lindberg, was consulted on this. It was his opinion that since the HS Directors are not elected, selected or approved by the HS players, they are not eligible to cast votes for the HS players. The Rules Committee recommends this proposal be withdrawn.

ARTICLE 15 - USA HOCKEY MINNESOTA DISTRICT DIRECTORS

1. It is the intent of MH that its current president be a USA Hockey Director and serve as an ambassador for Minnesota Hockey at the national level. Accordingly, MH shall nominate its current president as a candidate for Minnesota District Director.
2. USA Hockey (USAH) Minnesota District Directors shall be elected using the process outlined in the USAH Minnesota District Operating Rules.
3. MH Representatives indicated below shall cast votes in USAH Minnesota District Director elections based on their number of USAH-registered participants. The USAH Minnesota District Registrar will determine the number of votes that each designated representative will cast. In the event of a dispute, a committee consisting of the USA Hockey Minnesota Directors in attendance not standing for re-election shall make a determination.
 - a. District Directors Registered Youth and Girls programs players and coaches in their respective Districts
 - b. Juniors Director Registered Junior program players and coaches
 - c. Adults Director Registered Adult program players and coaches
 - d. Women's Director Registered Women's program players and coaches
 - e. Disabled Hockey Director Registered Disabled Hockey program players and coaches
 - f. Boys' High School Director Registered Boys High School program players and coaches**
 - g. Girls' High School Director Registered Girls High School program players and coaches**The MH President shall cast votes for registered participants not fitting any of the above categories.
4. The MH representatives listed above may designate an alternate person to cast their votes, provided such designation is provided in writing (e-mail is acceptable) to the MH Secretary/Treasurer.

Youth Rules Changes

R1. Although the Mini-Mite division exists, the USAH and Association Registrars prefer to register all Mite teams as Mites (not Mites and Mini-Mites). The CyberSport software for 2011-12 includes the Mini-Mite division which will create some challenges for them. Younger children put on a "Mite" roster will show up with a single asterisk meaning they are too young for the team. This creates a problem with the Minnesota Hockey rule that two-thirds of the players on a roster must be age appropriate. To reconcile this problem, it is proposed that the 2/3 Rule apply only to Squirt teams and above.

III. CITIZENSHIP AND AGE REGULATIONS

- [R1]
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- D. AGE DIVISIONS - Teams are to be formed observing the established age divisions. Players on teams shall follow the age range established for the division. Each association shall have a policy on whether players are allowed to "play up" to the next division and the conditions which apply. Players waived to another association are not allowed to play up. Two-thirds (2/3) of the players on ~~a team~~ **teams at the Squirt level and above** must be within the age division in which the team is registered. Exception: In cases of low player numbers, players from multiple age groups may be combined on a single team, if necessary, with the approval of the cognizant District Director and the USA Hockey Minnesota District Registrar.

R2. It is becoming increasingly difficult for families to keep their schedule clear of vacations and other commitments during the long hockey season. These conflicts tend to increase during our end-of-season tournaments. The District Directors would like to add a provision to allow replacement goalies during Regional and State Tournaments. The "normal" goalie needs only to be "unavailable" (not sick or injured) for the "replacement" goalie to play. Also, the Directors would like to acknowledge the MH Substitute Goalie Form and require it to be used as part of the approval process.

VI. TEAM COMPOSITION

- A. The maximum number of players on a team roster is twenty (20). The maximum number of players from that team who can dress as skaters for a single game is eighteen (18). The maximum number of players that can dress for a single game is twenty.
Exception: In situations where a player(s) would be denied the opportunity to participate, teams may roster over twenty (20) players to a maximum of twenty three (23) with the approval of the cognizant District Director and the USA Hockey Minnesota District Registrar. Such rosters will be approved only at the lowest competitive level the particular association offers. A maximum of eighteen (18) skaters and total of twenty players may dress for each game. Rostered players in excess of the dressed limit are not allowed on the players bench. Further, such rosters must be reduced to a final set of twenty (20) players for District, Region, State and National tournaments if the team is participating at a level in which MH teams compete in the USA Hockey National Tournaments.
- B. All teams shall roster at least one adult coach. A rostered coach must be present at all team events.
- C. It is recommended that each team in the state and regional tournaments dress two goalies. If the team does not have two goalies, a **SPARE** goalie may be chosen from a team in its league or association, and such a "spare goalie" may be chosen from the same or a lower but not higher playing classification.
1. If a "spare" goalie is not available from within a team's league or association, a "spare" goalie may then be chosen from among the teams in its district; or failing the above, from its regional.
 2. Such a "spare" goalie may play ONLY in the case of injury to the regular goalie.
 3. The "spare" goalie shall wear the light or dark jersey of the in-season team on which they are rostered.
 4. The "spare" goalie retains their eligibility with their parent team or organization at their original classification for the balance of the playing season whether or not they actually play in the tournament in question.

5. The "spare" goalie must be properly registered on a MH team for the season in question to be eligible to participate in a regional or state tournament. Proof of registration, such as a copy of their parent team's registration roster will be required during tournament check-in. NOTE: the objective of the rule is to allow a team to obtain a back-up goalkeeper during regional and state MH play. The rule is not intended to permit teams to improve their goaltending through drafting of an additional player.

[R2]

6. Must have approval of the District Director (both Directors if two Districts are involved) using the MH Substitute Goalie Form.

D. If a team carries only one goalie on its regular season roster and that goalie is not available for regional or state tournament play, a REPLACEMENT goalie may be chosen from a team in its league or association, and such a "replacement" goalie may be chosen from the same or a lower but not higher playing classification.

- 1. If a "replacement" goalie is not available from within a team's league or association, a "spare" goalie may then be chosen from among the teams in its district; or failing the above, from its regional.**
- 2. The "replacement" goalie shall wear the light or dark jersey of the in-season team on which they are rostered.**
- 3. The "replacement" goalie retains their eligibility with their parent team or organization at their original classification for the balance of the playing season whether or not they actually play in the tournament in question.**
- 4. The "replacement" goalie must be properly registered on a MH team for the season in question to be eligible to participate in a regional or state tournament. Proof of registration, such as a copy of their parent team's registration roster will be required during tournament check-in. NOTE: the objective of the rule is to allow a team to obtain a back-up goalkeeper during regional and state MH play. The rule is not intended to permit teams to improve their goaltending through drafting of an additional player.**
- 5. Must have approval of the District Director (both Directors if two Districts are involved) using the MH Substitute Goalie Form.**

R3. Minnesota Hockey recognizes the value of proper locker room monitoring supervision when it pertains to the security of our youth. We also recognize that, in our programs today, there are situations that could arise where a coach or coaches need to communicate with an individual in a private setting, such as a locker room. Minnesota Hockey believes it is best to have an unambiguous rule in place to handle these one-on-one meetings. All personal or private issues concerning individual players should be handled by the coach(es) and the parents/guardians jointly.

Such a situation arose earlier this year when a youth player felt scared and intimidated when being alone in a locker room with two adult coaches. The parents of the youth were highly concerned that two coaches would intentionally confine and confront their child in a closed door environment without their consent. This proposal is intended to protect the players and the coaches while maintaining respect for the parent's/guardian's rights to safeguard their child's well being.

The language below would be added as a new Section F in Youth Rules Article XIV. CONDUCT. The proposal as submitted appeared to have a conflict in Paragraph 2. The language allowed the meeting to be "conducted in a manner agreed upon by the parent/guardian", but then stipulated that the meeting "must be conducted on the ice, on the bench, in the locker room with other team members and locker room monitor(s) present, or in a public forum." The Rules Committee added the phrase "unless agreed otherwise by the player's parent or guardian" to clear up this apparent conflict.

XIV. CONDUCT

[R3]

F. MH acknowledges the Locker Room Monitoring policy as established by USA Hockey. It is incumbent upon each team to ensure that monitors are of the same gender as the players and have undergone background screening by MH to serve the team in this capacity.

1. No team shall be allowed to enter a locker room prior to a scheduled event until a proper locker room monitor is present and such monitor shall remain present until the last player leaves the locker room. When coaches are present in the locker room, they may serve as locker room monitors.

2. No coach(es) shall conduct a private OFF-ICE meeting with an individual player. Coach(es) shall not discuss an individual player's private or personal matters with the player without the express permission of the player's parent or guardian. If a parent/guardian agrees to such a discussion, it shall take place in whatever manner agreed upon by the parent/guardian. The only acceptable breach of the foregoing rule would be in an emergency, safety or medical situation. Any coach's meeting(s) with an individual player related to hockey shall be conducted on the ice, on the bench, in the locker room with the other team members and locker room monitor(s) present, or in a public forum, unless agreed otherwise by the player's parent or guardian.

3. Alleged violations of these rules shall cause a mandatory hearing to be held in accordance with Minnesota Hockey Bylaw Article 6. If warranted, suspension penalties may be levied upon the violators up to and including a one-year suspension.

Changes To Inter-Affiliate Player Transfer Protocol

PT1. The Inter-Affiliate Player Transfer Protocol was intended to establish a "standard" which we hoped others would adopt. Unfortunately, a nearby USAH Affiliate chooses not to follow any protocol in registering Minnesota players. It seems unfair to force players from that Affiliate to follow our rigorous process if their Affiliate does not reciprocate with our players. Accordingly, it is proposed to add language waiving the requirement to follow the Protocol when dealing with players from non-compliant Affiliates.

MINNESOTA HOCKEY Inter-Affiliate Player Transfer Protocol

Minnesota Hockey, Inc., a duly registered affiliate of USA Hockey, requires that any player who resides in another state and wishes to play hockey with a team in the Minnesota Hockey program, without changing his/her residence to Minnesota, must first obtain a properly executed waiver from the player's resident state.

Conversely, Minnesota Hockey requires that any Minnesota resident wishing to play hockey in another state, while remaining a resident of Minnesota, must first obtain a properly executed waiver from Minnesota Hockey, Inc.

This protocol is consistent with the terms and conditions of the USA Hockey Affiliate Agreement that grants each affiliate the right of "exclusive jurisdiction" within its geographical boundaries.

The Minnesota Hockey Board of Directors will designate one person who will act upon all interstate waiver requests from those who submit them, using the following criteria:

1. This protocol applies to Youth and Girls programs that are conducted during the Minnesota Hockey "regular season", which extends from the date players are permitted to register for a given year through the end of the Minnesota Hockey Youth/Girls State Tournaments in March. Those players in the Adult or Women classifications are excluded from this protocol.
2. Prior to submitting a request for transfer, all players must first register with their resident state. For players coming into Minnesota, an approved waiver from the player's resident state must be obtained, then submitted to and approved by the Minnesota Hockey designee before the player may be placed on a Minnesota Hockey team roster.
3. Minnesota Hockey will accept approved players from another state who wish to play in Minnesota because the state in which they reside does not offer a program similar to those offered in Minnesota.
4. Minnesota hockey will approve an interstate waiver request from one of its resident players provided that the player will be participating in a program classified as Tier 1 by a USA Hockey Affiliate and Minnesota Hockey does not offer such a program.
5. Transfer of players who live in contiguous border communities, and desire an interstate residency waiver based upon geographical proximity of their residence, will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Approval of such requests will not be unreasonably withheld.

6. **If another USAH Affiliate elects not to follow this Protocol, Minnesota Hockey may accept players from that Affiliate without following this Protocol.**