

NBAHA

Membership Meeting Minutes

April 12, 2012

Meeting called to order at: 5:30 p.m.

Board Members Present: Tim Cashill, Cherie Turek, Scott Hannah, Lisa Isaacson

Members Present: Scott Isaacson, Lynn Gryte, Dave Gryte, Scott Byrkit, Ann Meyer, Brad Minor, Barb Miller, Tony Waldo, Dawn Cashill, Paige Lee, Steve Lee, Chris Fairbanks, Jen Fairbanks, Shannon Kratzke, Carl Kratzke, Mike Fabini, Paul Katka, Brett Carlson

High School Hockey Coach – Mike Deschneau
North Branch Activities Director – Brett Carlson

Bantam Level Player Options for Hockey in 2012-2013

Options for these Players:

1. Cambridge Isanti is willing to co-op at the bantam level for the 2012-2013 season. They have 15 bantams next year and would like to see a full co-op at the bantam level. With a co-op, they would like to have an A and B2 bantam level team with these players.
2. Skate the kids together and just skate a North Branch Bantam team. We do not have a goalie at the bantam level in the North Branch Hockey association. We would most likely play at a B2 level.
3. Let the players choose where they would like to skate. The board would work to find them a home with another association and it would then be up to the player and his family to decide if they want to play there or select a different association to play for.
4. Skating these players at the North Branch High School JV level. These players would be essential to the High School hockey program as many of the Varsity players next season will be seniors.

Comments from Mike Deschneau (HS Hockey Coach)

He projects 17 returning players for the High School team next season. Of these 17 players, nine (9) of these players will be seniors. Mike is looking for the bantam level group to build his numbers at the JV level so these players are ready for Varsity the following season. By having these 1st year Bantams (8th graders) play High School hockey would give the HS hockey program enough numbers for the Varsity team and enough to fill a JV team. There have been 9th graders that have played High School hockey over the years based on the numbers.

Benefits of playing High School Hockey is the sheer amount of ice time. They had 65 practices from 1-2 hours each last season. There were 20-26 scheduled games per team. This would also include a summer program with the High School players as well. The cost of the High School Hockey is \$525 for next year with additional busing costs. This is a little bit cheaper than bantam level hockey. He also mentioned the fact that if these players play as a North Branch Bantam team, that they currently have no goalie. Games and practices are on a consistent schedule with no practices on Sunday. He would also address issues with practices on Wednesday evening as this would interfere with church activities. Mike wants what is best for the development of the players. The High School Hockey program is looking at moving to the Mississippi8 conference. This needs to take place to grow the program

Concerns from Parents

- Safety
 - Concern – Kids are coming out of a no checking level from PeeWees and do not know how to check correctly. This is a big concern from these younger players.
 - Response - The level of JV is a B1 to a lower A level hockey. Pine City and Mora had a lot of younger kids playing on JV last season. The players will need additional training on checking whether they play High School or Bantam level hockey.
- Maturity
 - Concern - The maturity level is not the same between an 8th grader versus an 11th or 12th grader. Will there be additional chaperones available for these players?
 - Response - The coach is aware of this and is looking to have an additional staff available for these players. He is not sure how this will be funded or if volunteers will be available at this time.
- Development
 - Concern - There is a concern that the development of the players will not continue moving to High School hockey as there may or may not be the same number of coaches available for this development for the younger skaters.
 - Response - The High School coach feels that the younger players improved much more than the older players as they were pushed to play at this upper level of hockey last season and did see an increase in development over the year.
- Fair Play
 - Concern – That all skaters will get an equal amount of play time for development as they would if they were to play bantam level hockey.
 - Response – A younger player on JV or Varsity will still get the same amount of play time for development in game situations.
- No Cuts
 - Concern - The association member want to make sure that if the High School hockey program takes one of the bantam level players, they take all of them and do not make cuts following try-outs.
 - Response – The High School hockey program can keep as many players as they want. There is no cut off at 40 players. Mike did state that he would take all the bantam players into his program and make the numbers work, no player would be turned away this season based on numbers.

North Branch Hockey Association

The High School needs 25-30 players to have a Varsity and JV team as 24 players is just not enough. The North Branch Hockey Association had a preliminary budget meeting with PeeWee fees coming out around \$1150 with the additional \$50 USA Hockey fee. The Bantam program would then be around \$1250 this season at the association level. The association would not be able to meet the same price that the High School program has with the same number of ice hours.

The association really needs the backing of the High School to help fund the operational costs of the rink by buying ice time at this arena site. If we take 14 kids out of the association how will the association cover this loss? From fundraising, volunteer hours, and registration funds. This is something that is under consideration. The NBAHA board members will figure out the specifics on budgeting, the important thing is to do what is best for these bantam level players.

High School Hockey Program

One parent, at this meeting, had an 8th grader that moved to the High School Hockey program last season. She believes that the JV really is just a bantam level game. It is very different from JV to Varsity. In this conference it would be similar to a bantam level hockey program. The other JV teams that the High School played last year did include a mix and were not all 8th grade players on the team.

The JV and Varsity players practice as one team, that way all players are considered a part of one program with High School hockey. All the players practice together and are treated as one team. The coach will control scrimmages to age level specific groups as well from a development standpoint. All kids were considered High School hockey and there were no separate locker rooms from JV versus Varsity.

High School Hockey Assistant Coaches

Glen Stevens (Assistant Principal at the North Branch High School) has done a lot of coaching and Blake Nelson from Rush City were also on the ice during practices and did head up some of the JV games as well. These two (2) assistants are willing to come back next season, but providing less volunteer time and the High School will look at hiring a 4th assistant coach. The summer program will run from June-July. We would like to see a full coaching staff for a JV team if these 8th graders do move to play High School hockey at the JV level.

Decision on Bantam Level Players

How is the decision being made for the bantam level players following this meeting? Is it put up for vote or made individually. This discussion item will be placed on the NBAHA membership agenda and will be discussed at the next membership meeting on April 30th. The board would like to hear what parents are thinking so we know how to make the best decision as a board. The North Branch Area Hockey Association will have registration open in the next couple of weeks. This will allow the association to have numbers figured out before the season starts this year.

If anyone has other questions for the High School Hockey Coach, Mike Deschneau, please click on the link below. This will take you to the MN Hockey Hub where you will find an email link for Mike.

<http://www.mnhockeyhub.com/page/show/327988?subseason=46241>

Motion to adjourn at 6:35p.m.