

2020 Hamilton Junior B Bengals Annual Report

As most others the Jr B Bengals entered March 2020 full of optimism for the upcoming season.

Pre-season runs had started, attendance was good, the team was looking fast and athletic.

Then we received the notice to shut it down, hopefully temporarily. The OJBLL Council met remotely many times and kept altering the schedule with multiple start dates and formats. At the end of the day we were one of the last leagues to cancel our season when it became apparent that we could not fashion a workable schedule.

Some items of note from the 2020 season

Floor Time

We still have 6 hours of floor time that we had paid for that are being transferred to the 2021 season. We have been in discussions with the ILA and they are holding the floor time as a carryover.

Pre-season

We were paid and booked in a pre-season tournament. This payment will also transfer over to the next season.

Equipment

Equipment and uniforms had been ordered for the 2020 season. Luckily production was able to be halted and moved to 2021 on the soft goods. Helmets had been ordered and shipped before the shutdown so they are ready for the 2021 season.

Sponsorship

Two sponsorships were paid for the 2020 season. These will be carried forward to the 2021 season. We had two other commitments that were not paid for in 2020 and we are hopeful these businesses will be in a position to join us for 2021.

Flipgive

The club enrolled in Flipgive as a fundraiser and have raised a little over \$300 to date. This avenue needs to be pushed harder as it is a relatively easy way to fundraise. We have not used the funds yet but will in 2021.

Fees

The club was up to date with their fee payments to both the OLA and the Jr B Council at the time of shutdown. OLA registration has been transferred from 2020 and credited towards 2021. Jr B Council fees were reduced significantly for 2020.

U22

One of the major considerations to come out of discussions is a Jr B Council OLA Amendment to raise the junior eligibility age to 22 from 21. There have been a number of developments that have occurred since this motion was first voted on and submitted to the OLA.

The Jr A league has decided to go to the U22 eligibility with or without the OLA's blessing. This was not what the Jr B Council had been told prior to the motion being made.

At the time of the discussions, talks had taken place with people in New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia, all these junior leagues were looking at the same changes. After this occurred the CLA announced that they would not entertain this until the LTAD made their report which is now due in May 2021. B.C. has decided to not do anything until after the LTAD committee reports next year. If Ontario were to be the only province to move this way any 22 year old that was playing would be ineligible for either the Minto or Founders Cup tournaments. Another point that has been raised is that hockey and football are 20 and under for junior, that there is a possibility the LTAD and the CLA decide to move in this direction.

In light of the moving pieces the Bengals along with a number of other Jr B teams will not be supporting this motion at the AGM. The Senior leagues are opposed, the Jr C league is opposed. The Jr A league and some Jr B teams are in favour. The request was this be a junior to major vote only but with the potential impact on intermediate lacrosse the OLA may not allow it.

2021 Season

We are cautiously optimistic that we will have a 2021 season.

The club needs to prepare for a regular full season. We are definitely looking to add more people to our management group to take on some tasks as we grow the program. We are a very lean group and need to grow to keep pace with our competition.

Sponsorship and fundraising are two areas that we need to significantly improve to sustain our growth as a club.

If anyone would like further information on positions with the club and/or sponsorship opportunities, please contact bengal.hamla@gmail.com for further information.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Gallant

Director of Junior Operations