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Sent: Wednesday, April 2, 2025 9:04 PM
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Subject: End of season highlights + Select Camp evaluator request
Attachments: Michigan_Residency_Policy_Revise_Jan-2025.pdf; Financial_Dispute_Policy_1-20-17_(1).pdf; Interstate_Release_Form_271792929.1_-fillable.pdf; USA_Hockey_Tier_I_Tryout_Rule_Summary.pdf; USAH Non Sanctioned Play Policy.pdf

Dear Association Leaders,

During this lull of spring, I wanted to reach out to recap some issues from last year and prepare everyone for next season. We will cover some of these again during the season kickoff meeting, but there are others that should be addressed prior to rostering. These are in no particular order, and bear with me as I try to cover everything (it seems like I end up having to overexplain for the sake of avoiding the inevitable “but you didn’t say (insert minor specific obvious violation…)”)

MAHA Selection Camps: Joe Jones had requested that I send a request to associations seeking additional evaluators for the MAHA Selection Camp in Dearborn next week Thursday through Sunday. This is open to board members and also coaches. If you are interested, please reach out to him at joejones969799@gmail.com .

Distribution List: If you are leaving your board role, please share information on the incoming president so that I can update my list and be sure that those who need to know are getting this information. This can happen at any time depending on when your elections are.

STATE CHAMPS!: Congratulations to the 12U Little Caesars AAA girls, 14U Little Caesars AAA girls, 19U Little Caesars AAA girls, 14U Tier 2 Honeybaked gold girls, 14U Tier 3 Livonia Knights girls, 16U Birmingham Rangers white, 2010 Plymouth Flyers, 2013 Hartland black, 2014 Hartland black, 2015 Hartland black, 18U Little Caesars AAA, 16U Little Caesars AAA, 15U Little Caesars AAA, 14U Little

Caesars AAA, 130 Little Caesars AAA, 2012 Little Caesars AAA, 2013 Little Caesars AAA, and 2014 Little Caesars AAA teams for representing the district and winning state championships!

Tryout/tampering: Around this time of year we always get complaints about tampering or tryout violations. Anyone who has been around for some time knows that MAHA has tightened the language regarding this to prevent defenses of evaluating players ahead of tryouts. The old activity of “the other coach said it was okay” went out years ago and is also no longer a defense. I will attach some of the Tier 1 rules for familiarity as we there are now permissible activities for Tier 1 coaches to contact players later in the season (Tier 1 folks: contact does not mean that they can come and skate with that team ahead of tryouts, Tier 2 folks: this is permissible as written, so no need to complain). This document also contains wording that prohibits players caught engaging in activities before tryout dates from joining those teams for 18 months. This penalty could be at play in hearings at all levels. In short, be respectful of your current team as complaints often come from those on their way out.

Financial Dispute Policy: While no updates, I will attach the MAHA Financial Dispute Policy this in short prevents deadbeat families from jumping from one association to another without paying.

USA Hockey bylaw 10: This one seems to flare up last year with MAHA telling associations that they need to have hearings according to USA Hockey bylaw 10 before issuing and discipline or removing coaches/participants. I still don't have a clear answer to share and hopefully will by the season.

Rosters: Roster, roster, and more rosters....do I really need to tell people that they should make sure that they have a valid roster BEFORE playing and to double check to make sure that all players and coaches are listed on the roster? This is hockey 101 and the best advice that I can share is to not take anyone's word and wait until you have a certified roster in hand. Speaking of rosters, remember that the registrars that create the rosters for you are USA Hockey and not MAHA. That said, while they assist us with tracking things like out of district or out of state players, they hold no obligation to make sure that you are following all MAHA rules. That role falls onto the district council and is the main focus of credentialling. This goes for any other MAHA specific rules as well.

Check online to see when your age group can begin rostering and begin playing. For teams who are allowed to start August 1st, please note that your spring roster expires when you begin the new season.

Service of Game Misconducts/Matches: Players or coaches who receive game misconducts are required to sit the next scheduled game. In contrast Match Penalties require the player or coach to be suspended from ALL team activities until A) they receive and accept a standardized discipline offer (clarify if the acceptance allows them to return to practice if it is several games long), B) They have a hearing and are found not responsible for the violation, or C) They have a hearing and serve the suspension that is issued. These hearings are held by a statewide discipline committee and are way more efficient than when we used to hold District hearings once a month.

Reviewing of Scoresheets: Along the lines of Game Misconducts and Match Penalties, coaches should review the scoresheets after each game to make sure they are correct. These errors should be addressed at that time, not at credentialling. I will be working with GameSheet during the offseason to ask if they can add some safeguards to scorekeepers to verify they are marking a GM/Match and a pop-up to alert officials of a penalty requiring an incident report before signing. Also...make sure that all teams do their best to get copies of physical scoresheets and games are uploaded before leaving the rink.

Out-of-District players: As of now there are still the same district rules as always, though there has been discussion of various pilot programs to look into complaints. Remember that closest to the rink is black and white, based on Google maps, and based on rink locations with associations (not specific level or aged teams). There are no district restrictions for Tier 3 or 16U-18U Tier 2 teams, so no need to submit any request.

Out-of-State players: The Michigan residency policy was renewed in the MAHA Winter Meetings and I have attached a copy. One important part of this policy is that all Tier 2 and Tier 3 out of state players must submit an interstate waiver (I'll attach a copy of one also). This form is to be completed, sent to the originating affiliate, and then they will forward this to me. This is part of eligibility and we had a few teams scramble because they were not aware of this (see note above about rosters and USA Hockey rules vs MAHA rules).

Non-Sanctioned play: Last summer, there was a large number of emails and suspensions handed out from MAHA due to teams playing in non-sanctioned tournaments. This year, I have seen a warning of an AAU team out of the Ann Arbor area that is trying to schedule games against area teams. I will attach the policy for playing non-sanctioned games. Beyond the rules, we hear a ton of complaints from teams signing up for these non-sanctioned tournaments.

Locker Room Policy: As a heads up, I have heard that with the increase in SafeSport complaints there may be some tightening of locker room monitoring. I know nobody wants to be in the room, but the outside the door within earshot of trouble may not be enough.

Split Season: Both 16U and 18U teams will have their State Tournament in October.

I know this is a lot, but it will save everyone a lot of headaches down the road. Please be sure to share with your teams as they will be expected to know this information. Yes, we hear from the teams that all say they didn't know anything about any of these topics.

Thanks for all you do,

John

John Popma
MAHA D4 Chair