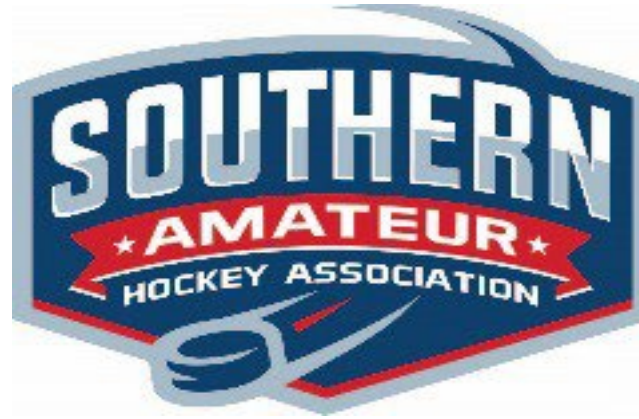




2024-25



Annual Meeting



Welcome To The SAHA Annual Meeting

Saturday, August 2nd

Agenda

8:00	Call To Order & Introductions	
8:05	Roll Call & Seating of Association Member Representatives	Jack Flynn
8:10	Publication of Committee Reports	Jack Flynn
8:15	Secretary's Report	Ward Hillegas
8:25	Player Development	Jack Flynn
8:35	Membership Growth & Grant Update	Kevin Cook
8:45	Coaching/CEP Update	Rick Murray
8:55	Intermediate Net Presentation	Rick Murray
9:10	Registrar's Update	Debbie Polk
9:20	Treasure's Update	Don Stone
9:30	Tier I Update	Kevin Cook
9:40	Insurance Issues	Skip Williams
9:50	SYTHL Update	Russ Beatse
10:00	Girls Hockey Update	Kahlie Singletary
10:10	College & University Hockey Update	Ralph Drensek
10:20	USA Hockey Presentation	Scott Paluch
10:40	1616.org Update	Kevin Cook
10:50	Officiating Update	Paul Dixon

Agenda

	Agenda Items (cont.)	
11:00	DDR-601(e) & Bylaw 10 Update	Rob Link/Ralph Drensek
11:20	Association Round Table	
12:15	LUNCH	
1:00	Breakout Session #1 - Registrar Conference Rm 1	Debbie Polk
1:00	Breakout Session #2 - Hockey Operations Conference Rm 2	Isaac Lee/Rob Link
1:45	Break	
2:00	Breakout Session #3 - SafeSport Conference Rm 1	Paul Dixon
2:45	Nashville Predators Support Program - Conference Rm 2	Jennifer Boniecki & Nashville Predators Speakers
3:15	ADJOURN	ADJOURN

Secretary's Report


Presented By:
Ward Hillegas

Secretary's Report

- ▶ 4 Director's positions expired this year
 - ▶ Ward Hillegas-Arkansas
 - ▶ Paul Dixon-Georgia
 - ▶ Rob Link-Tennessee
 - ▶ Ralph Drensek-Alabama
- ▶ 3 Director's placed their name to run again and were uncontested
- ▶ Ralph decided not to run again. Nominations went out to all the Associations in Alabama for this open position. Tory Tollefson's was nominated and was uncontested.
- ▶ A 5th Director from Alabama, Ryan McCormick resigned his position this year
 - ▶ Since this is a mid-term resignation, Martin Kubaliak will fill his position until Ryan's term is up.
- ▶ All 5 directors were voted in at the SAHA Board meeting on Friday.

Secretary's Report (cont.)

- ▶ Key Personal Spreadsheet
 - ▶ Due To SafeSport Requirements, There Where A Number Of Challenges This Year Getting This Sheet Completed Properly
 - ▶ Quickly Review This Document For Future

<div>Key P</div> 	Notes: All associations are to complete the on. Non-Profits plete the Board ection and for grams must the anagement staff					
ASSOCIATION NAME:						
KEY ROLES	Name	Email	Phone	USA Confirmation #	Background Check	SafeSport Completed
President	Tim Doe	timdoe@gmail.com	(111)-222-3333	012345678XXDOE	X	X
Hockey Director						
Registrar						
SafeSport Coordinator						
BOARD MEMBERS (Non-Profit Programs)						
(Please list board position if it applies: i.e. Team Rep and level, Coach-in-Chief, etc. or just Board Member)						
	Name	Email	Phone	USA Confirmation #	Background Check	SafeSport Completed
President	John Doe	johndoe@gmail.com	(222)-333-4444	123456789XXDOE	X	X
Vice-President	Jane Doe	janedoe@gmail.com	(222)-444-5555	234567890XXDOE	X	X
Secretary						
Treasurer						
Coach-In-Chief	Mark Doe	markdoe@gmail.com	(222)-555-6666	345678912XXDOE	X	X
U8 Team Rep						
U10 Team Rep						
Fundraiser Coordinator						
Board Member at Large	Jill Doe	jilldoe@gmail.com	(222)-666-7777	4567890123XXDOE		
Board Member at Large						
ADMIN/MANAGEMENT STAFF (For Profit Programs)						
(Please list position as well)						
	Name	Email	Phone	USA Confirmation #	Background Check	SafeSport Completed

2025 SAHA Player Development Report



Presented By: Jack Flynn

Player Development Report

- ▶ Where: Ford Ice Center-Bellevue (Nashville)
- ▶ When: April 12th & 13th
- ▶ Who: 2008-2011 Birth Years
- ▶ Evaluators:
 - ▶ Karlis Zirnis: Asst. Coach-RPI (NCAA DI)
 - ▶ Zach Lebowitz: Goalie Coach-Bowdoin University (NCAA DIII)
 - ▶ Alex Gacek: Head Coach-Nichols University (NCAA DIII)
 - ▶ Scott Deur: Head Coach-Odessa Jackalopes (NAHL-Tier II Jr.)
 - ▶ Dave Dimitr: Scout=Odessa Jackalopes (NAHL-Tier II Jr.)

SAHA Player Development (cont.)

➤ Players:

- 2011 Birth Year - 76
- 2010 Birth Year - 81
- 2009 Birth Year - 48
- 2008 Birth Year - 44

- TOTAL 249

➤ Levels:

- AAA (Tier I): 77
- AA (Tier II): 145
- A/B: 28

SAHA Development Camp (cont.)

➤ Max Spots:

Max Spots	2008	2009	2010	2011
Forward	26	26	48	48
Defense	12	16	28	28
Goalie	6	7	11	12

SAHA Player Development (cont.)

Program	Players
Nashville Jr. Predators	74
Music City Marauders	22
Nashville Flyers	19
Atlanta Phoenix	17
Atlanta Fire	16
Smoky Mountain Wild	14
Columbus Cottonmouth	11
Nashville Warriors	10
Alabama Thunder	7
Atlanta Mad Hatters	11
35 teams	48
Total	249

SAHA Player Development (cont.)

- Advanced To District Camp:
 - 2011: 20
 - 2010: 15
 - 2009: 13 (+ 3 Veterans)
 - 2008: 15 (+ 4 Veterans)
- 2011: Advance to 14U District Camp
- 2010-2008: National Camp Tryouts at District Level

SOUTHERN AMATEUR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

Membership Growth

2024- 2025 Season



Presented By: Kevin Cook

2024-2025 SAHA Membership Growth Report

- ▶ The SAHA Membership Growth Committee's primary initiative is to continue a Hockey Development Grant Program that would help the associations within our affiliate to focus on the growth and retention of the 8U players. This age group is crucial to the long-term growth of the game.
- ▶ Membership numbers at the 8U level in SAHA had been on the decline for 3 consecutive season but rebounded nicely in 2021-22 and have continued to recover since that time

Full Report: <https://www.usahockey.com/membershipstats>

2024-25 SAHA Membership Grants Report (cont.)

► The 2025-26 Membership Grants

- These Grant Program will focus on 8U initiatives, intermediate net initiatives, as well as grants that promote diversity, equity and inclusion
- Details of the grant program and applications are available on the SAHA website
- Grant recipients are required to submit written reports and agree to register all participants in their programs with USA Hockey

2024-25 SAHA Membership Grants Report (cont.)

- ▶ USA Hockey Programs Benefits are Members
 - ▶ USA Hockey has many programs your association can leverage to make you more effective at growing the game.
 - ▶ Visit the website below for more details
 - ▶ <https://www.usahockey.com/programservices>

Submitted By Kevin Cook, Membership Growth Committee Chair

SOUTHERN AMATEUR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION 2025-26 DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROCESS



Presented By: Kevin Cook

Development Grants (cont.)

► TIMELINE FOR GRANT PROGRAM

- Oct. 1, 2025 Grant Applications Due
- Nov. 1, 2025 Grant Applications reviewed by Affiliate Grant Committee and recommendations submitted to Affiliate Board.
- Dec. 1, 2025 Notification sent to successful applicants with details about equipment deliveries, etc. Unsuccessful applicants also notified. Grant awards will also be posted on the Affiliate Web page.
- March 1, 2026 Final report along with any receipt and documentation due from grant recipients. Balance of Grant Award paid upon receipt of final report.

Grant Applications can be submitted by email to:

Kevin Cook

membership@sahaonline.org

Development Grants (cont.)

▶ APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

- ▶ Besides Completing the Grant Application Provide a Description of the Program covered by your Grant Application including
 - ▶ Program Overview
 - ▶ Program Goals/Impact
 - ▶ Target Audience
 - ▶ Program Budget
 - ▶ Ice Rink Involvement
 - ▶ Any marketing/promotion plans
 - ▶ Program Implementation including Association members and coaches (including CEP level) responsible for the program and timeline for implementation of program.
 - ▶ Plans to continue growth and retention generated by the program

Development Grants (cont.)

► FINAL REPORT

- No later than March 1st following award of the Grant, the Association is required to submit a written report discussing how the grant award was spent and providing receipts/bills to document the use of the grant award. The final report should cover the success and limitations of the program and discuss how the Association plans to use accomplishments of the program to continue the growth and retention of hockey within their Association. Failure to submit follow-up reports will result in the association being ineligible to receive future grants.

*Goalie Development	8 Grants	Clubs get 2 sets of quick change pads, 1 try goalie for free clinic	Clubs commit to provide coaches to assist with a try goalie for free clinic	Approximate cost of each grant = \$1000	8 Grants = \$8000
Special Needs	8 Grants	You determine the need and the cost. Estimate \$3000	Commit to full report on the effectiveness of the grant	Approximate cost of each grant = \$3000	8 grants = \$24,000
* School visits/floor hockey	4 Grants	Clubs \$500 to purchase sets of floor hockey equipment	Clubs commit to THFF, commit to 3 school visits/year	Approximate cost of each grant = \$500	4 grants = \$2000
SafeSport	10 Grants	Clubs receive \$500 to offset the cost of SafeSport training	Clubs submit receipts for coach/volunteer reimbursements	Cost of each grant = \$500	10 grants = \$5000
*LTPH	10 Grants	Clubs get \$3,6000 (2x6x\$300) to offset cost of ice	Clubs commit to 2x6 week LTPH program	Approximate cost of each grant = \$3,6000	10 grants = \$36,000
*THFF	10 Grants	Club gets \$500 to offset the cost of ice	Clubs commit to providing documentation about the number of players attending & transitioning	Cost of each grant = \$500	10 grants = \$5,000
Growth Excellence	1 Grant	\$5,000	Highest growth rate at U8	Cost of each grant = \$5,000	1 grant = \$5,000
	34 Grants				Total = \$85,000

Development Grants (cont.)

- Grants marked with an * denote DE&I focused grants designed to promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the SAHA affiliate by providing access to the game to groups that have previously not been likely to participate. See separate listing for other DE&I specific grants.

Submitted By Kevin Cook, SAHA Grant Committee Chair

Coaching & CEP Update

Presented By:
Rick Murray

Intermediate Net Update

Presented By:
Rick Murray

Registrar's Report

Presented By:
Debbie Polk

Registrar's Report 2024-25 Season

Southeastern District

- We were #1 in all the districts for total paid players—64,376
- We were #2 in total players, coaches and officials—76,599
- Central District was #1 because they had more coaches.

Registrar's Report (cont.)

► 2024-25 USA Hockey SAHA Member Counts

State	Total	19 +	18U	16U	14U	12U	10U	8U	6U
AL	2,319	1,006	68	119	187	218	224	247	250
AR	364	41	11	27	59	64	63	51	48
GA	2,600	931	192	263	300	299	264	215	136
LA	369	190	15	23	24	40	30	24	23
MS	272	114	7	16	21	26	29	39	20
TN	5,187	2,304	276	367	397	415	563	466	399

Registrar's Report (cont.)

2024-25 Season by State Female Players

State	Total	19+	18U	16U	14U	12U	10U	8U	6U
AL	246	49	8	20	26	24	41	38	40
AR	57	8	1	4	9	7	10	7	11
GA	249	69	18	19	40	33	28	27	15
LA	30	7	1	2	6	6	3	3	2
MS	19	5	0	0	3	3	2	4	2
TN	492	157	35	43	41	43	78	55	40

Registrar's Report (cont.)

▶ Female Players By State	<u>2023-24</u>	<u>2024-25</u>
▶ Alabama -	217	246
▶ Arkansas -	60	57
▶ Georgia -	206	249
▶ Louisiana -	16	30
▶ Mississippi -	17	19
▶ Tennessee -	<u>431</u>	<u>492</u>
▶ TOTALS	947	1,093

Submitted By Debbie Polk, Southeastern District Registrar

Treasurer's Report

Presented By
Don Stone

SAHA Tier I Report

Presented By:
Kevin Cook

2024-2025 SAHA Tier 1 Committee Report

- ▶ The Tier I Committee is responsible for the annual review and approval of applications for Tier I program status
- ▶ The Committee considers the requirements of the SAHA Affiliate Guide as well as the USA Hockey Annual Guide when reviewing applications
- ▶ The Committee must make a timely review and determination on applications in compliance with the deadlines listed in the SAHA Bylaws.
- ▶ Decisions of the Tier I Committee may be appealed to the Affiliate Board of Directors

2024-2025 SAHA Tier 1 Committee Report (cont.)

- The Tier I Committee received two applications for the Tier I status for the 2024-25 season
 - The Nashville Jr. Predators renewal application was approved for the 2025-26 Season.
 - The Jr. Preds will focus on a Nashville centric model for 2025-26 and going forward
 - The Southeast Blades application was approved for the 2025-26 Season for a limited number of teams
- USA Hockey is conducting an extensive review of Tier I hockey, and many changes are expected in the coming years

2024-2025 SAHA Tier 1 Committee Report (cont.)

- Tier I applications are due each year no later than August 1st for the season beginning September 1st of the following year
- Requirements are documented in the Affiliate Guide under Rules for Tier I Category and AAA Division Teams

Submitted by Kevin Cook, SAHA Tier I Committee Chair

Insurance Update

Presented By:
Skip Williams

SYTHL Report

Presented By:
Russ Beatse



SYTHL Report

- Southern Youth Travel Hockey League had a very successful 2024-25 season.
- Between our standard league (SYTHL) and our elite league (SESCL), we had 92 teams participate.
- We had 10 teams qualify for the USA Hockey Nationals and all teams represented SYTHL and SAHA very well.
- We are currently planning the upcoming 2025-26 season now and we have expectations of a great season

SOUTHERN AMATEUR
HOCKEY ASSOCIATION



Girls/Women's Committee Report

2024-2025

Presented By:
Kahlie Singletary

Player Development

- ▶ SAHA had 25 players participate at SE District Player Development Camp
 - ▶ 5 players advancing to National Camp
 - ▶ 2 goalies chosen for the 16/17 National Camp
 - ▶ 8 players selected for Multidistrict Camp
 - ▶ Additional nominations are needed for the 12/13 Camp
- ▶ 2026 Girls District Player Development Camp will be hosted by SAHA in Nashville

Program Highlights

- ▶ Nashville Jr. Predators:
 - ▶ Rostered three AA NTB girls teams (U14-U19) for the 2024-25 season, with strong SAHA representation
 - ▶ U14: 78% SAHA based
 - ▶ U16: 100% SAHA based
 - ▶ U19: 89% SAHA based
 - ▶ All three teams advanced to Nationals in 2025. The U19 team won the SE District Championship, while the U14 & U16 teams were runner-ups.

Program Highlights (cont.)

- ▶ Harpeth Hall (Nashville)
 - ▶ Continues to have the only all-girls team fully organized & supported by a school.
 - ▶ Granted varsity status this year with 25 girls participating in the 2024-25 season
- ▶ Tennessee Wolverines
 - ▶ Engaged 95 players, coaches and volunteers across 3 teams with 60 players participating.
 - ▶ Also hosted 8 "Free Girls" hockey sessions across Tennessee

Program Highlights (cont.)

▶ Nashville Warriors

- ▶ Continued growth in U8-U12 girls playing on AA boys teams as a development path to Jr. Predators
- ▶ A new U6 program will launch for the 2025-26 season

▶ Knoxville Lady Wild

- ▶ Hosting U8 and U10/12 teams with 30 girls participating
- ▶ Competed in 4 all-girls tournaments and holds two girls-only practices per month

Program Highlights (cont.)

▶ Atlanta Jr. Thrashers

- ▶ Fielded a U12/14 team of 14 players in the SGHL
- ▶ Offered weekly practices for U10/14 players, including goalie tryouts to boost participation
- ▶ Hosted the SGHL Championship at Duluth Ice Forum

▶ Huntsville

- ▶ Ran girls-only clinics and 3 on 3 sessions
- ▶ The Little Preds program included 35 girls, with a total of 119 girls (U6-U16) and 18 adult women participating

Nashville Predators Hosted Events

- ▶ Hosted the 4th annual SMASHVILLE Women's Collegiate Hockey Showcase over the Thanksgiving weekend
 - ▶ Featured 32 youth teams across six divisions from 12 states and 11 Ontario programs
- ▶ The 5th annual tournament is scheduled for this November the following teams confirmed to participate
 - ▶ Wisconsin
 - ▶ Mercyhurst
 - ▶ Stonehill

Colleges and University Committee Report

NCAA Hockey
&
Club Hockey

Presented By:
Ralph Drensek

NCAA Hockey

- **Tennessee State University**
 - Moving the launch of its NCAA Division I men's hockey team back by one season to 2026-27
 - TSU will continue to prepare for the 2026-27 season with community engagement, donor initiatives, and program development
- **"Working closely with the NHL and the Predators, we agree that an additional year will provide the program with the time and resources it needs to launch at full strength and with long-term financial success in mind,"**
TSU Interim President Dwayne Tucker said.

Club Hockey

- College Hockey South (CHS) Re-joins The American Collegiate Hockey Association (ACHA)
 - Press release July 10, 2025
- College Hockey South re-joins the ACHA as a full member and will field ACHA 2025-2026 season teams in Men's Division II, Men's Division III, and Women's Division II
 - College Hockey South (CHS) formerly known as the Southeastern Collegiate Hockey Conference (SECHC)
- ACHA Men's Division I in 2025-2026. Defer to Mike Fairbanks as he coaches Bama in ACHA D1
- ACHA Men's Division II in 2025-2026. Florida Atlantic University, Middle Tennessee State University, University of Florida, University of Tampa, University of South Carolina, University of Alabama and University of Tennessee.

Club Hockey (cont.)

- ACHA Men's Division III in the 2025-2026 season. Clemson University, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Florida Atlantic University, Florida Southern College, Kennesaw State University, University of Alabama-Huntsville, University of Central Florida, University of Miami, University of Mississippi, University of South Florida, and University of Tampa.
- ACHA Women's Division II during the 2025-2026. An announcement regarding women's CHS teams playing is expected in the coming weeks.
- For more information you can go to the link below
 - <https://www.achahockey.org/college-hockey-south-re-joins-the-american-collegiate-hockey-association>

**Southern Amateur
Hockey Association**

PROGRAM PROPOSAL

Ladd Foundation

June 9, 2025

XVI

XVI

Description

- ▶ 1616 is a nonprofit, virtual program designed to support coach and player well-being development on and off the ice. The program uses real stories from professional players and is about building competence, confidence, connection and character.
- ▶ Backed by research and real-world results, 1616 gives kids, hockey parents and coaches tools they need to grow and face challenges head-on. Participants will learn how to take on the attitude and mindset of the buffalo, to face life's inevitable storms, with courage and resilience.

Description (cont.)

- ▶ 1616 is a 10-week, self-paced, virtual program experience that runs from October 2025 to March 2026 (teams can select a start date anytime in that window). 1616 is designed for hockey teams with players ages 10 through 13 along with their parents and coaches, but individual families as well as younger or older players can also sign up. Content is delivered virtually and requires just 20 minutes a week to complete at no cost.

Objectives

- ▶ Establish a Southern Amateur Hockey Association (SAHA) 1616 Chair
- ▶ Establish and train a 1616 facilitator at each association
- ▶ Attract new registrations across SAHA's ~30 associations
- ▶ Work with USA Hockey to consider 1616 as a 3rd party continuing education opportunity

STAKEHOLDERS

Jack Flynn
President, SAHA

jpf4flynn@gmail.com

Meredith Wolff
Executive Director, 1616

meredith@laddfoundation.org

Kevin Cook
Membership Growth Chair, SAHA

membership@sahaonline.org

Rick Murray
Coaching Committee Chair, SAHA

murrayr@hendrix.edu

Dave Brocato
MYHA (SAHA)

bayoupucknut@yahoo.com

ROAD MAP—Phase 1 (2025-2026)

- ▶ Establish SAHA-1616 partnership
- ▶ Appoint a SAHA 1616 chair
- ▶ Create 1616 tab on SAHA web site,
- ▶ Have 1616 train two affiliate facilitators,
- ▶ SAHA host virtual 1616 “train the trainer” training and push participation



USA HOCKEY OFFICIATING PROGRAM

...

SAHA Annual Meeting

New LMS System For Officials (like coaches)

- ⬆ Must complete online Membership Registration
- ⬆ Online Modules (time commitment varies by Level (1-4))
- ⬆ Online open book exam (Number of questions varies by level)
- ⬆ 3-hour seminar over Zoom (all USA Instructors following the same curriculum)
- ⬆ Must complete SafeSport training (if at least 17 y.o.)
- ⬆ Must complete and maintain a USA Hockey sanctioned criminal Background Screen if 18(+) years old on June 1, 2025

Instruction Emphasis

- ↑ Standards of Play and consistency
- ↑ Player Safety
- ↑ Communication and De-escalation
- ↑ Zero Tolerance

Rule Change Year (Every 4 Years)

Equipment:

- ↑ Goal Keepers: Requires HECC certified neck laceration protectors for all Youth, Girls and High School goalkeepers. With note allowing BNQ certified NLP's for 2025-26 and 2026-27 seasons.
- ↑ Skaters: Requires HECC certified neck laceration protectors for all Youth, Girls and High School players. With note allowing BNQ certified NLP's for 2025-26 and 2026-27 seasons.
- ↑ Equipment Measurement: Mandates bench minor penalty for team who challenge a mouthpiece and the challenge is not verified.
- ↑ Electronic Devices: Adds cameras and microphones to list of devices prohibited to be worn by a player during games. Any violation results in a misconduct penalty

Rule Change Year (Every 4 Years)

PLAYING RULES:

- ↑ Abuse of Officials and Other Misconduct: Mandates game misconduct penalty to player or coach who uses obscene, profane or abusive language to any person after the game.
- ↑ Delaying the Game: Removes mandatory minor penalty to a goalkeeper who accidentally shoots the puck out of the playing area.
- ↑ Face-off Locations: Clarifies that stoppages caused by the attacking team in the attacking zone shall result in a neutral zone face-off.

Rule Change Year (Every 4 Years)

PLAYING RULES (Continued):

- ↑ Icing the Puck: Allows teams at the Youth 15-Only and above, and Girls 16U and above, to ice the puck while playing shorthanded.
- ↑ Icing the Puck: Requires center-ice face-off location if game officials err in calling icing.
- ↑ Kicking Opponent or Puck: Clarifies play must be immediately stopped and resulting face-off locations for attempted kick-shot.
- ↑ Kneeing: Adds mandatory misconduct to any minor penalty assessed for kneeing an opponent.

Rule Change Year (Every 4 Years)

PLAYING RULES (Continued):

- ↑ Offside: Allows teams at the Youth 15-Only and above, and Girls 16U and above, to play with Delayed/Tag-up Offsides.
- ↑ Offside: Removes automatic whistle for shooting the puck into the attacking end zone “on net” with attacking players still in the end zone.
- ↑ Puck Out of Bounds or Unplayable: Requires a face-off located in the same zone the puck was located in if the puck leaves the playing surface or becomes unplayable.
- ↑ Refusal to Start Play: Adds second warning to team before suspending the game for refusal to start play.

Questions?



Disciplinary Dispute Resolution Report

Presented By:
Rob Link

Disciplinary Dispute Resolution Report

► Season Recap

- There were 19 Match Penalties reported to SAHA in the 2024-25 Season (September 2024-July 1st, 2025)
- 10 of the Match Penalties were of the 601(e) variety
- 10 Match Penalties were assessed to youth players; 9 assessed to adults

Submitted By Rob Link, DDR Committee Chair

Disciplinary Dispute Resolution Report (cont.)

- ▶ Things to Remember Heading into the 2025-26 Season
 - ▶ All 601(e) Match Penalties will be managed by SAHA as mandated by USA Hockey. Supplemental discipline may be levied by the local association AFTER SAHA has made a ruling and it's final
 - ▶ When dealing with all disciplinary matters, following protocol outlined in Bylaw 10 is mandated by USA Hockey

Disciplinary Dispute Resolution Report (cont.)

- ▶ When assessing suspensions, the game the infraction occurs in does not count as the first game of the suspension. EXAMPLES:
 - ▶ The penalty occurred before the players first shift, so he missed the entire game
 - ▶ This does not qualify as a suspension when assessing disciplinary action. Suspensions commence with the next regular scheduled game at the time of the incident.
 - ▶ Associations should refer to the recommended suspensions in the USA Hockey Rule Book
- ▶ If you have questions about Bylaw 10 and how to proceed with a disciplinary matter, please don't hesitate to reach out to Rob Link at ddr@sahaonline.com

Affiliate Presidents Partners Meeting

October 2023



- *Hearings – When required to avoid litigation*
- *Reporting to Center for SafeSport*
- *Reviewing allegations of hateful or discriminatory language or conduct*



Following the Bylaw 10 Process

- The purpose of Bylaw 10 is to comply with our NGB obligations, but also ***to provide a method to resolve disputes that will avoid lawsuits.***
- Courts will defer to the governance and disciplinary decisions of private organizations so long as they follow their rules.
- ***Courts will interfere*** in that process and decide the issues themselves ***when an organization issues discipline or determines a party's rights without following the organization's rules.***



Bylaw 10 Scope

- Bylaw 10 applies...
 - ***When issuing discipline*** to a player, coach, official, team or program.
 - When an affiliate or organization issues a decision that ***affects a party's eligibility to participate*** or ***their membership in an organization***.
 - *Examples include an affiliate denying Tier I status or denying a proposed club membership in the Affiliate, a league denying a club admission into the league, or denying a player waiver to move between clubs.*



Bylaw 10 Hearing Requirements

When dealing with a matter under Bylaw 10, it is important to be familiar with the requirements for such things as:

- Notice required for the hearing
- Reasonably disinterested and impartial hearing panel
- Time to hold the hearing
- Rules for the hearing (e.g., discovery, attorney participation)
- Burden of Proof
- What must be in the decision



Appeals

- Any *person suspended or otherwise disciplined* may appeal that suspension after the hearing or failure to have a hearing.
- The *Appeal Authority is in most cases either* (a) the entire Board of a state association or Board of an Affiliate, or (c) *a designated committee of a state association or Affiliate*.
- For *Disciplinary Actions*, the party may then appeal to the National Appeal Committee.
- For *Administrative Actions*, the final appeal is to the Affiliate, but Arbitration may be available.



Application of these Principles

- Each local league, association and organization and each Affiliate ***must abide by the procedures*** set forth in Bylaw 10 when imposing suspensions or other discipline.
- ***Each local league***, association and organization and each Affiliate ***should have a committee***, or persons that could be named to serve on a committee, to ensure that there are ***at least 3 reasonably disinterested and impartial persons*** to hear each matter.
- ***Each Affiliate*** should be prepared to determine an appeal (either by holding a hearing or through written submissions) ***within 30 days*** of the date the parties have submitted their statements;
- ***Affiliates should consider appointing an appeals committee*** to hear appeals in order to meet the required timelines.



Reporting of SafeSport Matters

- ***Any adult*** that is authorized by USA Hockey, a member of USA Hockey, or any Member Program, to interact with a Minor or amateur athlete at a Facility or at any event sanctioned USA Hockey or a Member Program, ***is considered a mandatory reporter.***
- If an Adult Participant ***reasonably suspects that an incident(s) of Sexual Misconduct has occurred, they must immediately (no later than 24 hours) report*** the incident(s) to the Center and to applicable law enforcement authorities.
- An adult Participant's failure to report as set forth above may subject such person to disciplinary action by the Center and/or USA Hockey.



Sexual Misconduct or Child Abuse

- *Sexual misconduct is broadly defined* and includes sexual or gender related harassment, sending sexualized messages over electronic media, sexual gestures, pornography, an adult exposing private areas, etc.
- *Child abuse* can include any time an adult physically strikes a child or puts them in danger.
- You should ***never attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity*** of Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct allegations as a condition for reporting to appropriate law enforcement authorities or the Center.



Reviewing Allegations of Hateful or Discriminatory Language or Conduct

- Seeing a significant increase in these situations at beginning of the season.
- Can involve discriminatory conduct that involves racism, gender or gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, disability, etc.
- Can involve conduct during a game, among teammates or in electronic or social media.
- ***All must be investigated and handled at Affiliate level*** – not local clubs.
- Must be investigated, and if determined to ***more likely than not to have occurred (50.1%)***, then the appropriate penalty should be assessed.
- Standard penalty guidelines indicate 3-5 game suspension, with a minimum of 3.



Association Round Table