

ENGLISH ICE HOCKEY ASSOCIATION COMPANY LIMITED
YOUTH MANAGEMENT MEETING 25TH – 26TH NOVEMBER
2006

Minutes of meeting of EIHA Youth Management Group on 25th – 26th November 2006 at the Marriott Courtyard Hotel, Slough

Present: Bob Wilkinson, Geoff Hemmerman, Rob Laidler (up to Report Midlands, from U10 Registrations on), Liz Moralee (minutes), Neville Moralee, Carol-Ann Watt, Jayne Bowns, Rita Mackriel, Pauline Rost, Angie White, Irene Jones (up to Report Midlands, from Coaching Programme on), Tony Oliver (up to Report Midlands, from Coaching Programme on), Charles Dacres, Steve Taylor, Andy French (up to Report Midlands), Mohammed Ashraff, Ken Taggart (up to Report Midlands, from U10 Registrations on), Val Wilkinson, Alan Moutrey (from Report South a. on).

Apologies: Malcolm Preen, Jacqueline Pye. **AM** sent apologies for the first day.

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

BW thanked everyone for coming. He welcomed **ST** to his first YMG meeting, and said he is providing much needed help in the South West.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

JB had temporarily mislaid these, but will send them out as soon as possible. They were therefore not available for posting on the website.

CHARLES DACRES

a) Chelmsford Ice Hockey Club

There is a lot of friction between the Chelmsford junior and EPIHL clubs, and the EIHA have not been able to avoid becoming involved. Someone from Chelmsford JIHC has contacted Essex County Council about U16s playing up in senior teams. The mother of one of the players in question is very angry at not receiving a response from the EIHA. **CD** said he has replied to her, but could say only that the EIHA are still researching the issue.

b) Young people playing up

Terry Drury of Essex County Council informed the EIHA that children of school age need a work permit for playing EPIHL hockey, as figure skaters do for ice shows. Under the Young People's Act it seems all EIHA senior teams are classed as professional. Whether games are classed as profit-making or not depends on whether adults are taking part. Then when two U16 players applied for licences, Terry Drury turned them down for child protection reasons, without consulting anyone from hockey.

The YMG think it is vital to make the right decisions regarding young players' safety. However there are no firm guidelines about U16s in sport. The IIHF have a minimum age for senior World Championships of 16 on the start date of the competition. This would make it very difficult to defend having U16s playing in senior teams if one was hurt. **CD** is going to speak to other sports governing bodies. The Board are consulting the CCPR. The most likely outcome is that juniors will not be able to play in senior teams until they reach 16. They will also need parental consent for playing up. If U16s are allowed to play in senior teams they will need a work permit. Women might succeed in obtaining work permits, as they play non-checking. The U19 league is not affected, as it is a youth league. **MA** said no changes need to be made for U16 officials, as they are not normally bodychecked, and they are self-employed. (It would be possible to make all the players self-employed, but then the clubs would need detailed contracts with all their players.)

It will be emphasised to senior team coaches that they must assess young players and make very sure they are capable of coping in a senior game before they use them. For the time being, all U16 players who have not been refused licences may play in senior teams, pending the outcome of the risk assessment review.

c) Registration of officials

There was an incident between a manager and an opposition player. It turned out the manager was not registered. (It was not known whether the team had the minimum required coaching staff.) No one had checked the team staff's licences.

The YMG suspect that there are more problems of clubs using unregistered or insufficient team staff since the officials stopped checking licences. However the officials do not want to be asked to check cards, because they think when people have been caught out, not enough action was taken. If they cancelled the game, they had the flak, and were accused of stopping children playing, when the blame should have lain with the club for breaking the rules. However if they let the game go ahead, they were worried about legal repercussions if something went wrong. Clubs are aware that the managers are supposed to check licences, and the rules are made clear at Manager courses. However managers often fail to check as they have so much to do on game day. Also they are prone to turn a blind eye to problems because they want to have the game played. Off-ice game officials sometimes check licences. However while they can see how many people are on the bench, they cannot see faces. Although they are responsible people with authority, they do not always have the confidence to point out such serious problems. The club secretary should also be taking responsibility for seeing that the licences are in order and any problem is marked on the gamesheet.

Even though coaches and managers have two licences, some still turn up without one. Officials quite often have to phone **LM** to check whether a coach is registered. This is not foolproof, because sometimes neither she nor the official knows if the coach is who he says he is. If they are worried about losing or forgetting cards they should buy duplicates.

JB said it is time for "no card no game" to be strictly enforced, as if a game is cancelled the club quickly learn their lesson. **CW** said the game should not go ahead if there are not enough team staff. Teams can borrow them if they are short. However coaches are increasingly reluctant to stand in for others, as they are worried that something will go wrong and they will be blamed.

Clubs need to appreciate that administration is part of what makes hockey run. If someone does not have a licence, they need to sort it out before the day of the game. **VW** set a deadline of Wednesday for doing registrations in time for the weekend, then relented and said if the paperwork arrived even on Friday she would try to deal with it for the weekend. However she was dismayed to find paperwork arriving late in the week and clubs complaining if the players could not play at the weekend. **CD** said EIHA officers should not have to put up with any club causing constant trouble, and chairs of these clubs should simply be told the club will be thrown out if they do not start cooperating. Now there are contact details on the website, it has removed most of the criticism about the EIHA being hard to contact, but there are far more complaints from all quarters. **RM** said officers should only need to deal with one contact per club, and ignore other correspondence. If parents want to complain, they need to put it in writing or it will not be acted on. The Club Secretary course will address some of these issues.

***BW** will send a letter to clubs saying "no card no game" will be strictly applied to both players and team staff. The letter will make clear that it is the responsibility of the people running the teams to make sure everyone is registered and that they have sufficient coaches and managers on the bench, and they will be severely penalised if they do not follow the rules. Managers will be reminded to check the licences of the other team's players and staff. A list is not acceptable instead of cards. Any irregularity must be marked on the gamesheet. The matter will go to the Conference Chair, then if necessary to the section chair.*

d) Establish a protocol/creating guidelines

At the moment there is not much material available on guidelines for game and training day situations. Where there are no clear guidelines it is not always easy to suspend people for

failing to follow policy, although people using obvious bad practice can be suspended as breaching child protection policy or the Code of Conduct for Coaches. **RM** said after a child protection case where procedure was not followed, **CD** promised some guidelines on child protection discipline procedures, but these have not appeared.

The manager course and manual provide some guidelines. **RM**, who recently attended a manager course, and **BW** recommended that everyone who has not been on a manager course should go. It is useful even to experienced managers, and gives a chance to meet new managers and appreciate the time and effort they are sacrificing.

***CD** will research other sports' material. He will write an outline of a child protection handbook and circulate it for input.*

e) Coach and manager suspensions

If someone is suspended they cannot be reinstated until the investigation is complete. This could be a very long time if the police are involved. **CD** believes that if someone reports a concern about a coach to the police, the EIHA should also be concerned. If the case does not reach court, this does not necessarily mean that the EIHA can immediately forget the incident without examining the circumstances. The person might need some retraining. He is finding every situation is different, and so he often asks the CPSU for guidance.

CD is concerned that there is only himself and **TO** making decisions on child protection discipline, as this can lead to accusations of bias. It was pointed out that **CD** has plenty of experience of making similar decisions in the public sector. There are also advantages to the decision-making process being centralised and confined to a small number of people. The main problems come when any of them are unavailable.

f) Sheffield Junior Ice Hockey Club (CRB)

*The letter to Sheffield never arrived, so **CD** will send it again.* He said the problem with the situation is that the EIHA can be held answerable for the actions of Sheffield coaching staff, and so need to be kept informed. Sheffield are unwilling to give up their status as a registered body, because they started carrying out CRB checks before the EIHA did. **RM** said after listening to talks from CRB representatives at work, she thinks everyone needing a check should have it done through the EIHA, otherwise they will not be kept informed if someone offends after the check has been done. A coach had a long suspension as a result of a police investigation that the EIHA would have known nothing about if his check had been done by another body. She has told Sutton that they need to have checks done through the EIHA, although they had been getting checks from the local council.

The recently passed Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act means that everyone involved in teaching or training young people needs a CRB check, otherwise they and the organisation using them are liable to a fine of up to £5k or imprisonment. CRB representatives are being invited to speak at annual meetings. Rec coaches are checked only if they are dealing with U18s. If a junior club want to use a rec coach, they should ask to see his Disclosure or check with **LM**.

*It will be included in procedures that if a Disclosure shows up convictions, the club should inform **CD**.* There is a list of offences which need serious consideration when making a decision on recruitment.

For the next stage of the CPSU Standard for Safeguarding and Protecting Children in Sport, there are requirements for more detailed guidelines on CRB checking. A Disclosure has no time limit, but it is completely valid only at the time it is issued, as the person might have committed an offence straight afterwards. It is up to the organisation requesting checks to decide how often to do them. It is standard for local authorities to have people re-checked after three years. The CRB do not want registered bodies to do checks as often as every year. **LM** has been informing people who ask that re-checks are needed every three years, but this is not on the information sent out to all clubs. ***LM** will write to clubs saying people needing a check must have it done every three years, to take effect from 2007/8.*

Applicants are finding the forms difficult, as there is not enough information on the form itself about how to fill it in. When online checking is better established, this option will be considered. Some people with temporary licences pending Disclosures have now got

Disclosures but not licences. **LM** explained that Disclosures are sent only to the applicant and the countersignatory, so she does not know when it arrives unless one of them lets her know. *It will be included in the registration and child protection paperwork that she should be informed when a Disclosure arrives.* Coaches, managers and off-ice officials need to complete the self declaration only if they do not have a Disclosure.

REPORT NORTH

GH said there is little to report. There are a number of issues over fixtures. The delays in building the Cardiff and Manchester rinks have caused many fixture changes. Cardiff is due to open on 2nd December. Manchester is now scheduled to open in February. Often the ice slots are too short for the games they are intended for. There are more teams every year, and clubs do not realise how difficult it is to fit all the fixtures in. **BW** said 7 p.m. face-offs on Sunday at Nottingham are causing a lot of problems.

REPORT MIDLANDS – R MACKRIEL/J BOWNS

JB reported back from the last Midlands meeting, which was not as well attended as it often is. Sutton suggested that the EIHA should set up a funding body, for assisting new clubs and helping clubs obtain grants. **BW** said clubs trying to find government funding should speak to their Conference Chair. Conference officers should research regional and local funding streams and liaise with the clubs. Also they should find someone to contact the sports development officer at each county council. If the club bring new money in they can Sportsmatch it. However the form for this is very complicated. It would be useful to have a supply of Sportsmatch forms to give out. Milton Keynes have been successful in obtaining funding, so they will be asked for information on how they did it and a copy of the completed form. **BW** warned that obtaining government funding take a lot of work, including writing a business plan and going to many meetings. **MA** however said junior teams might find it simpler, because sports development officers are measured by how much money they give out. ***MA** and **CD** will write a job description for people who can present the EIHA message to councils, which will be circulated to clubs and put in Powerplay.* **RM** said if a new club is being set up, the EIHA should contact them in the early stages and help them learn the ropes. Often existing clubs have even bigger problems with lack of information, when officers leave suddenly and do not pass knowledge on. The manager course manual provides a lot of help with running a club.

Coaches are very concerned about lack of ice time when other games overrun due to zero tolerance calls. If there is time left over at the end of a game, the teams may agree with the referee to carry on playing on a challenge basis. ***MA** will send out a memo on this, copied to the YMG.*

Clubs are asking again if rules can be relaxed over officials for challenge games, especially U10. **GH** has been approving U10 challenges as development games which may be officiated by coaches. Having coaches officiate games is an acceptable option if there are no officials available.

Some clubs would like midweek fixtures. **GH** said for some this would be suitable. If they are only between teams which are close together, there will not be problems over late face-off times. Midweek games would often finish earlier than training would.

Sutton asked if the EIHA insurance is good value. They say they obtained 90% of the EIHA cover for £300 for 30 players. This however does not include dental cover. **TO** will investigate whether changing to the EPIHL's policy would be better. The brokers are instructed every year to find the best quotes they can, and one of the policies was changed this season. All the insurance details are available on the website. First time tryouts are covered as authorised EIHA activity.

While clubs appreciate the reasons for zero tolerance and think it will eventually lead to better hockey, and also realise that there has been little time to adapt, at the moment they are very

concerned. They would like more time to prepare if major changes like this are to be made in future. At most clubs players at all age groups and of all skill levels are dropping out as a result of zero tolerance issues. Development of their third and fourth line players is suffering because they are getting less ice time. Players are also greatly frustrated by refereeing inconsistency, sometimes even between periods of the same game. Referees are refusing to tell players what their penalty was for. There have however been positive comments about some officials. The clubs are requesting that consideration be given to cutting down on penalties at U10 level. It was pointed out that zero tolerance is worldwide policy, so abandoning it is not an option. **MA** thinks inconsistency is no worse than last season, although it still needs work, but **JB** disagrees. Referees may call fewer penalties later on in the game where they consider that the teams have learned their lesson. Teams not using their third and fourth line players is a coaching issue. Some teams are not using them on penalty kills even when they are winning convincingly. **MA** is going to speak at the National Coaching Seminar, and he and **AM** are planning a rules workshop open to all. He is teaching the same rules to inline teams. He is telling referees that they need to answer questions from the captain or assistant captain. However when there are lots of penalties the referee cannot explain them all, or there will not be time to finish the game. The signal should make it clear. The U10 situation can be reviewed if changes would improve the game for the players. **KT** thinks there is nowhere in the world where zero tolerance will work properly in less than six months, and in the UK it will probably take two seasons. It needs time and education, and resources are limited. He said it is usually the same players getting most of the stupid penalties. There are problems when the coach does not understand or the captain becomes annoyed. Zero tolerance helps the skilful players, and at senior level it is the unskilful players who are dropping out. Although a recent Ice Times article says the IIHF expect players to have some leeway (low rather than zero tolerance), it is important for the UK to be strict with the rules, since international referees target GB as a dirty team.

a) Correct number of players at start of game

RM has proposed that teams must have the correct number of players to start the game, since there is no way of knowing whether players supposedly on their way will actually turn up. This would not stop latecomers taking part. **JB** said Sheffield had a game where the opposition turned up with only 9 players, but the game went ahead as the coaches, managers and referee agreed it. In this situation the club should phone **BW** and tell the referee, and mark it on the gamesheet. The game is then a 5 – 0 forfeit. However officials are saying it is not their problem. Usually the game goes ahead and the opposition report it only if they lose. The short-handed team always say the missing players are stuck in traffic (most teams now travel in cars). It is not unusual to be stuck in a jam for over an hour, but if a player does not arrive by the end of the game it probably means they never set off. People phone if they are genuinely on the way. Players who do not turn up should be crossed off the gamesheet. **RM** said it is difficult to make decisions on whether to award a game, as every situation is different. However there are already small bench dispensation arrangements, so it would cause difficulties to change rules mid-season. A decision was postponed until the following day.

The gamesheet will show if there are not enough players. The statistician then needs to pass it to the Conference Chair to deal with it. If there are fewer than 11 players and no dispensation the game will be awarded 5 – 0.

RM said a referee once signed the sheet before the end of the game, because he had to rush off straight afterwards. Clubs should report it to **MA** if this happens. **GH** would like the referee to mark on the gamesheet whenever the game goes to running clock. Running clock should be for exceptional circumstances only. Two clubs habitually have the first period as running clock, although they have the same ice slot every week. The pattern is not always spotted because the opposition is different every time.

b) Game sheets & Stats

RM and Malcolm Preen have proposed that if they do not receive the gamesheet, shots on goal sheet and teamlist, they should record only the scores. **BW** will support them if they decide to do this. She checks the postmark before fining teams for late gamesheets, but many are postmarked later than the correct date. **AF** has a system where a gamesheet faxed to an 0800 number can be emailed to everyone who needs it. However not everyone has easy access to a fax machine. It was thought reasonable for the clubs who continually offend to be fined. There has been confusion over players with the same surname where the first name is not shown. *It was agreed that if the player has not been listed on the gamesheet with both first name and surname, no stats will be recorded.* **AF** asked for face-off times not to be shown on the website, because they are often incorrect. **GH** wants the North ones to stay on. **AF** will speak to Malcolm Preen. Decision on incomplete paperwork was postponed until the next day.

Some thought **RM** and Malcolm Preen should simply transfer whatever is on the gamesheet to the stats, rather than spend ages trying to make sense of inconsistent gamesheets. Malcolm Preen is treated very badly by clubs when he points out mistakes. Even the most experienced off-ice officials make mistakes, but someone from the club should take responsibility for checking the gamesheet before it is sent in. (When there is a mistake on a World Championship gamesheet, the IIHF say whatever is on the gamesheet stands.)

JB asked why the Juniors keep stats, as they seem to serve little purpose and present a skewed view because of inaccuracies. Goalie stats are kept only because clubs want them. Others said stats are needed, particularly by Conference and senior team coaches. Keeping records of goals and assists is an integral part of the game, and so people should be trained to record them properly. **PR** proposed that Conference meetings should include an agenda item on gamesheets. She said it should be explained in detail to the club secretary where the club are making mistakes. However some of the club secretaries are good at the paperwork but are not passing the knowledge on to the off-ice officials. **RM** and **CW** said these problems show the need for organising off-ice official courses as soon as possible. **CW** said at least two people per club should be expected to attend. **BW** suggested that prior to the start of each season, each Conference should run a refresher course on gamesheets. **MA** said it would be difficult to find referees to instruct on these, because of the crowded schedule of referee courses over the summer. Clubs need to be convinced that off-ice officials have a responsible job and should not just be pulled out of the crowd.

*It was agreed to have a fine of £10 for each missing item (gamesheet, shots on goal sheet, teamlist). **RM** will inform the Conference chair, Dave Hill and **NM** of fines. The statisticians will copy the Conference chairs in on gamesheet problems, and they will take it up with the clubs. Conference meetings will have a regular agenda item on gamesheets.*

c) Length of games

Some teams are varying the length of their home games. **RM** proposed that they should specify at the start of the season what length of game they are going to play, and this should remain constant for the season. **CW** has found Basingstoke teams which are supposed to play 3 x 15 mins have sometimes chosen to play 2 x 20 mins. They will play 3 x 15 mins in future.

d) Off-ice officials

RM has found there is demand for off-ice official courses. Roger Bates has not been organising any, because of problems persuading referees to instruct. **MA** will ask **OCM** members to help. **RM** will start making arrangements for courses.

REPORT SOUTH – A WHITE/P ROST, C-A WATT/S TAYLOR

AW reported on the last South meeting, whose minutes have been distributed. Oxford were particularly unhappy about lack of communication. They said the insurance certificate on the site is for last season. This is incorrect, and there was only a cover summary provided, with no certificate.

There was much discontent over fixtures, even though the clubs realised that some problems could not be avoided. The biggest issue was the fixture secretary not keeping clubs up to date. Some clubs said they were not being kept informed. **AW** estimates that Haringey have had to pay an extra £600 in officials' fees, because of ice slots where two games should have been fitted in but there was only one. **ST** said the fixtures were totally different from the slots the clubs provided, and the games do not fit the slots. **PR** said **AF** has asked to have all junior clubs provide fixtures before the annual meeting. This is impossible, because they have to wait for the senior team fixtures. The clubs felt that **AF** no longer has enough time to devote to fixtures, and they would like someone else to do it. **BW** said the South may not appoint their own fixture secretary, but they can ask to have him replaced. However fixture secretary is a very difficult job. Even after having a fixtures meeting there were 100 fixture changes. South West fixtures have been a problem for years, because of lack of ice time and unreliable ice pads, and whoever does them will have the same issues. **AF** returned briefly, and said he is resigning as fixtures secretary as he has had enough hassle. He will email the clubs the up-to-date fixture list. Rearranged fixtures should be faxed, as this is much simpler than trying to abstract the relevant information from email trails or full fixture lists. He is prepared to continue until the end of the season. Tony Lack has volunteered to do the fixtures, but some thought he is having problems finding time even for his current commitments. Everyone should look for volunteers to take over, and inform **BW**.

AW said it is important to continue allowing U10 teams made up of players from more than one club, otherwise some players will be unable to take part. **VW** said she cannot see how this is of benefit. Some consider a team is simply a group of children, regardless of how many clubs they are from. Others think some clubs are not making an effort to recruit U10s, and allowing merged teams has been a major factor in this. While in the past it has been two teams merging, now it is up to four in some cases. There are now many beginner players at higher age groups, which means clubs can get the numbers and income they want without needing to recruit younger players. The perception in the South is that players are being excluded. **VW** said she would never want to stop children playing, and is unwilling to carry on if that is what people think. *It was proposed by **RM** and seconded by **JB** that from 2007/8 onwards, clubs with a small number of U10s should be allowed for one season to merge them with another team. They will not be allowed to do this again if by the end of the season they have not made satisfactory progress with recruitment. This was agreed.*

AM has proposed appointing a national development officer, focusing on U10s. He is looking for Learn To Play coordinators. It was agreed that he should ask Marc Hogg to be LTP coordinator for the South.

It was decided that South East issues should be referred to the South East Chair and Secretary, and South West issues to the South West Chair and Secretary. Minutes will make clear whether an issue was raised by the South East or South West. The issues on the agenda under Report South were all raised by the South West.

a) Division 2 extended to end of May

Swindon have proposed that Div 2 be extended two weeks into May. They are concerned that some clubs might have to drop some of their junior teams, and growth of hockey is being restricted because of lack of time for games. Teams are unhappy about having to play games on what they consider unsuitable dates, e.g. Basingstoke have been trying to change a Christmas Eve fixture because they would rather the players spent the day with their families, but had no reply. There are still many TBA games, and it is unlikely that they will all be fitted in without extending the season. **VW** said it had been decided categorically that the season must end in April. Some junior clubs do not have ice time after that. Rec teams are unhappy about the Junior season extending ever further into the summer and cutting into their ice time. They are starting to buy up ice time during the regular season, and there will be far more of this if they are not assured that the Junior season will end on time.

Clubs are trying to persuade rink managers to be more cooperative over ice time, but most have little success. Some clubs have been unsure whether or not they are allowed to arrange TBA games between themselves. The fixture secretaries are happy for clubs to do this so long as they are kept informed (often they are not). What they do not want is clubs contacting each

other to change existing fixtures. They would like to give clubs more freedom to choose fixture dates, but there is now very little room to manoeuvre.

Some would like to have automatic promotion/relegation, which would ease the problem of fitting in all the Div 2 games. Some teams lose out in promotion/relegation because they do not have ice for playoffs. Also Div 2 teams often do not want to be promoted. They might have a particularly good team one season, but know the next season will be a struggle. There have been proposals in the past that teams use their next season's players for the playoffs, but the clubs were not keen.

b) Insurance for coaches and officials

Coaches' insurance and questions about officials' employment situation were covered earlier. Officials are insured for officiating any EIHA-approved hockey. The insurers have no problem over the age of the officials or their equipment. All officials are required to wear half-visors, which is what the IIHF recommend for officials of all ages.

c) Start of games to go back to 1900 Sunday

Teams which are close together are asking for this. **ST** said Swindon would be able to fit in an extra fixture every weekend if they could face off half an hour later. The council will not shift the slot, even though no one uses the ice afterwards. **PR** said 2 x 20 min games can take up to 1 hr 45 mins, which sometimes means the next game has to be cancelled. Sometimes the problems are caused by officials turning up late. Some officials have been in trouble over this, but often the clubs are reluctant to report it. Officials are unwilling to make decisions without assurance from **MA**. **MA** said face-off time rules are being reviewed for next season. 7 p.m. face-offs on Sunday will be allowed, but there will be a surcharge for face-offs after a specified time.

d) Officials being pulled from games at short notice

MA said officials are also being inconvenienced by clubs changing fixtures. A strict service level agreement would deal with the problems on both sides, but no one wanted this.

e) Young persons being paid for lining/refereeing games

PR asked if paying players of school age for officiating is breaking employment law. **NM** said there has been no court case or official notification that there is any problem, so there should be no need to change a system that is working well. He asked if the people asking the question would like to dispense with U16 officials or expect them to officiate free of charge. The letter from Essex County Council about U16s makes many errors.

f) Child protection – EIHA support group for officials in trouble – Insurance for legal aid & extent of cover

ST said a suspended coach is receiving no support. It was pointed out that the coaches are not employed by the EIHA. **CD** said the Child Protection courses for coaches have proved very helpful. They highlighted that many coaches are unaware of the Code of Conduct although they sign it every year. If they break the Code of Conduct it becomes impossible to defend them. The courses explain that they are on their own if they are charged with a criminal offence. **TO** said providing insurance against criminal charges would be extremely expensive, and few organisations insure their officers for this. The EIHA itself does not have such cover. The NCF (now sports coach UK) insurance package for coaches had other benefits including a legal helpline. Some coaches choose to join scUK independently. Coaches have personal accident cover, and the public liability covers them if there is a claim such as for negligence. Clubs would like their coaches to have a shoulder to lean on. Some suspended coaches consider that **AM** should have listened to their side of the story. **AM** said coaches can call him about problems. However if a case has gone to the police it makes it a difficult situation for everyone, as if an EIHA officer seems to be supporting the coach the parents will be angry, and vice versa. *It was agreed to advise coaches in such situations to go to their Conference Mentor Coach.* The Mentors need to be briefed about how to deal with these situations. All the Mentors are registered as coaches (most of them are with clubs but some are independent).

g) Promotion of sport – button link

ST said the website needs a page for children. It would be fairly simple to create a children's page, and add links to hockey sites aimed at children such as NHL Kids. New material can be added if someone offers to write it. **MA** will discuss it with Malcolm Preen.

Sample leaflets and posters in A4 and A3 format, produced by **RL**, were distributed. The Board have decided to order these for the Conferences.

COACHING PROGRAMME – A MOUTREY

Additional courses are being run to cope with demand. A Coach Level 1 and Level 2 course at Oxford are coming up. There were two Manager courses this month. There are still people wanting to go to one in the North, so there will probably be a course in Newcastle in January or February. New managers with temporary cards are sent permanent ones automatically after they have been on the course. There are now more instructors, but there are still problems with availability. He is concerned that the Coaching Programme are not providing enough courses to cope with demand. He would therefore like the Board to approve increases to instructor fees. He expects that the additional costs would come to only c. £6k per year. It was pointed out that the coach instructors are paid more than the referee instructors. **BW** said he has been surprised how much costs mount up. He thinks coaching is working very well at the moment. The problem with increasing prices is that there is great disparity between how much different players and clubs are able or willing to pay. **AM** said coaching course fees will probably need to go up. **LM** was concerned that this might deter people from taking courses, especially as many coaches have to pay for their own rather than being supported by their club. Most thought the courses very good value.

VW said the lists clubs send her of their coaches and managers do not correspond with the gamesheets, so there seems little point in asking for it. The list showed up which clubs did not have enough coaches and managers to cover all their teams. **LM** would be able to provide information on how many each club has. However it is difficult to determine the actual situation, as some coaches say they are coaching several teams, and others register but do not coach regularly.

As well as the club secretary course, **AM** and **GH** are discussing setting up refresher courses for managers. **BW** said on game day managers are far more important than coaches. **GH** said at manager courses the managers are eager to learn. However there are some around who seem to be deliberately ignoring rules. **BW** said the managers never realise when they start how much work there is. He is finding the same with the managers of GB teams. He is therefore planning for IHUK, in conjunction with the EIHA, to run a course for national team managers. **AM** is finding some of his plans are stalled due to lack of time. He needs an assistant to deal with day-to-day coaching matters. This person needs good understanding of both coaching and managing, and must be well respected by the YMG. He will approach a few people, and the Conferences will advertise round their clubs.

The EIHA, in conjunction with IHUK and SIHL, are running a National Coaching Seminar on 27th – 29th July 2007. Many top British coaches and coaches from abroad with British connections have been invited to speak, and some have already confirmed. **BW** is inviting the BOC to send a representative to introduce it. The seminar will include an U10 event as part of the section on beginner hockey. OCM members will speak on the new rules. There will be sections on all levels of hockey from juniors to GB Seniors, and on small area games, developing coaching staff, developing a successful club, practice planning, special teams, netminding, and high tempo practice. **AM** wants YMG members to be involved, particularly with the section on developing a successful club. He would also like EIHA and IHUK Board members to be available to take questions. **CD** asked if there would be a chance to set up a coaches' support group. **AM** said as with other coaching events, this is a good opportunity for coaches to meet and discuss problems. They can also do this on the website forum.

JB asked if clubs are still expected to have a Level Three head coach, when the next Level Three course is not until 2008. While it is recommended that all clubs have a Level Three

coach, allowances need to be made. There were questions about criteria for fast-track coaching options. As well as GB and professional league players being able to pass Level 1 by passing the written exam and then move straight on to Level 2, players who have played 40 games in EPIHL, ENIHL or WPL do not need to wait a year between Level 1 and Level 2.

ONLINE PLAYER REGISTRATION – M ASHRAFF

MA wants to consult the Conference Chairs about whether online player registration through the website would be useful. The Rec Section are already doing online registrations, and some Women, EPIHL and ENIHL clubs have asked about this. He thinks it might be best to start with the senior teams. There have been some hiccups with the rec system, and some of the Rec Committee do not like it. Some clubs are finding the online rosters hard to understand. Players are listed as registered or not registered, with either the registration date or the date they first appeared on the system.

VW explained how junior registrations are already being done online for renewal applications. She does not think new applications could be done online, as she needs to check birth certificates, and many players need international clearance. Most thought allowing parents to do registrations online would cause too many problems. The club would not be able to add unregistered players to the roster. However a club might try to register a player who has left. Rosters could be displayed either by team or by club. For online payment clubs would need a unique identifier in order to show where payments are coming from (rec clubs are still paying by cheque). **VW** would be interested in having a trial with one club.

UNDER 10 REGISTRATIONS – M ASHRAFF

Everyone is keen to see more emphasis on U10s in any discussion and plans for junior hockey. While some clubs are doing well with U10 numbers, others are doing very badly. **MA** has proposed making U10 registrations free of charge, however this would make too great an impact on the EIHA's finances. **BW** said players are dropping out at the bottom end, because the younger players struggle against older ones, and in good U10 teams they are given little ice time. He is therefore planning to set up an U8 cross-ice challenge league. There are officials who will do U10 games free of charge. Another problem is that one-sided scores are leaving some teams very demoralised. Halting the scoreboard has made little difference to attitudes. **PR** said players are moving to winning teams, even where they will get less ice time.

MA proposed that it be made compulsory from 2007/8 for each club to appoint an U10 development officer. This could be one of the existing club officers; the point is to have someone in the club take responsibility for U10s. They should have an action plan for U10s. It might be helpful to have a relaunch of the Beginners Programme. Clubs which do not have the materials or need help with beginner hockey can contact **AM**. He said however that most clubs do not have the resources to run a successful beginner programme. Rinks are usually in a better position to run beginner hockey. However there are problems where the rink's programme is poor, or the club and rink do not cooperate. Some rinks insist on players having a fixed number of lessons before they join the club, so clubs have to negotiate with the rink coach.

It was suggested that if a club has no U10 team there should be an investigation. **MA** proposed that every club with an EPIHL or ENIHL team should be required to have an U10 team. This would need a Board decision. For senior teams which are separate from the junior club at their rink, this would have to mean working with the junior club rather than setting up an U10 programme in competition with them. Senior teams should be expected to make announcements about the U10s at all their games and in programmes. It would be bad publicity for the senior teams, being part of development leagues, if they did not want to promote U10 hockey. **KT** said it would be unwise to try to force senior teams to comply with new requirements. **MA** however said they should see this as safeguarding their own future.

They should realise that players are unlikely to make the senior team unless they start young. Also they have access to more funding if they are working with juniors. While junior and senior teams sometimes have disparate aims and priorities, working together can bring benefits for both. *It was agreed that U10s should be on the agenda for all Conference meetings.*

CONFERENCE TOURNAMENT

The teams are the same as for 2006. The schedule has games in the order U13 – U15 – ice cut - U11 – U17 – ice cut. The last game on the Saturday now ends at 7.30, and on the Sunday at 7.50. The South East and South West now open the tournament. This could cause problems if South East or South West players are not travelling up the day before (though North and Midlands players are more likely to be travelling on the Saturday). Now everyone has a game on the Monday. **GH** will send out the CDs and manager packs before the end of December. **CW** said the South West will send all the information on time this season.

It was suggested that the tombola should be shared out rather than run by the North. The difficulty is with storing the prizes, and coordination beforehand. *All Conferences will look for volunteers for the tombola.* The Conference shirts would be a good opportunity for advertising. Rhino have copyright on the design, and **GH** will deal with the shirts only if they are staying with Rhino. The new ones will be the same quality as EPIHL shirts. **BW** said for shirt sponsorship a company should pay £3k per year. A lump sum of £9k for a 3-year deal could be Sportsmatched. He has tried to get UK Sport and well-known figures involved. It was agreed to invite any famous or influential people who might be interested.

The rules are the same as for 2006, except regarding 10-min penalties. **GH** has told the OCM that for the Conference Tournament, calling lots of penalties is not constructive. **AM** has also had discussions with them, where he said the referees (though not necessarily the linesmen) need to be experienced. He also said the tournament suffers because the officials are under such heavy scrutiny. For the Friday night meeting every team's coach and manager should be there. This will be included in the rules. The meeting will make clear that all the players must have a reasonable amount of ice time. All players should have the opportunity to be involved in powerplays and penalty kills. It would be useful to monitor the lines, but there are not many people available to do it and it is hard to do properly. It is also important to watch and assess the coaches.

NATIONAL FINALS

There are no changes to the schedule planned for this season. Most however would prefer the event to be shorter, especially because of the amount of organisational problems and parent hassle. The Midlands were very unhappy about some of the South clubs wanting to drop the U10s, and think this would be a setback for U10 hockey. A proposal to drop the U10 semi-finals was unpopular with the U10s. The Midlands would prefer to drop the U19s. The U19s were originally brought in so that the U19 Section would not have the expense of its own finals weekend, and they would also have more spectators. However the U19s have been the highlight of the weekend and brought many people in. Having two finals weekends would be expensive. If the National Finals were finals only, there would be problems fitting in the semi-finals beforehand. Having no promotion/relegation playoffs would not help, as these are usually after the National Finals. Replacing the England-Scotland game with the U19 final would be possible. *It was agreed to leave the format unchanged for this season and consider alternatives for 2007/8.*

Some clubs want a Div 2 finals weekend. Few were keen on this idea. It is unlikely that all the Div 2 clubs would be in favour, given the complaints about too much travelling. The top Div 2 teams already have promotion playoffs.

Some accommodation has been booked at the Premier Travel Inn. **RM** will book the rest. Security arrangements and hand-stamping will be as last season. Arrangements for medals are unchanged.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

MA announced that this will be his final season of involvement in hockey. **NM** said it is unfortunate that someone who has made such a contribution to hockey is stepping down, and he wished to thank him personally for the help he has given to all his household.

2008 is the IIHF's centenary year. They are planning a major event in Paris on 29th February 2008. For 1st March 2008 **BW** is proposing for IHUK, in conjunction with the EIHA and SIHL, to run three big U10 jamborees. He would like one to be at Hull or Sheffield, one at Slough and one in Scotland. He would like 100 players at each. They will all receive medals. He has spoken about it with Tony Lack. There will be a meeting about this in February. *Conference officers were asked to discuss this with their Conferences.*

On 3rd – 4th February **BW** is planning to hold a YMG meeting, followed by a meeting and open forum for junior club chairs, at the English Institute of Sport, Sheffield. Each club will be allowed to send a maximum of two representatives. The meeting is intended to clear up confusion and give clubs a chance to discuss their problems. He would like some OCM members to be there to answer questions about officiating. Clubs will be able to send questions in advance via their Conference chair.

There is an IIHF development camp in Vierumaki.

Sutton are holding a cross-ice tournament on 30th December. It is sponsored by Haribo. Sutton-in-Ashfield is to have a new rink the same size as Grimsby.

Telford Ice Rink is to close. There are plans for a new one to open in two years' time.

AM asked what has happened to the EIHA's free ice allocation at the NIC. As a Sport England-funded venue, the NIC are contracted to provide 500 hours ice free to IHUK and the EIHA. On some occasions when **IJ** has booked ice the teams have not turned up. The NIC are rarely prepared to offer ice at a useful time.

Signed..... Date.....