

ENGLISH ICE HOCKEY ASSOCIATION LIMITED
YOUTH MANAGEMENT MEETING 8TH – 9TH DECEMBER 2007

Minutes of meeting of EIHA Youth Management Committee on 8th – 9th December 2007 at the Gateway Hotel, Nottingham

Present: Rita MacKriel, Jacqueline Pye, Geoff Hemmerman, Rob Laidler (up to Referee in Chief Report), Charles Dacres (from U15 Skills Challenge Update to Referee in Chief Report), Neville Moralee, Liz Moralee (minutes), Mary Moralee, Tony Lack, Carol-Ann Watt, CJ Boxill, Pauline Rost, Georgina Crebbin, Jayne Bowns (up to South West Conference Report – player strength requirement (U10s) for games, and from Midlands Conference Report on), Bob Wilkinson, Val Wilkinson.

Apologies: Allison Taylor, Andy French, Steve Taylor, Mohammed Ashraff, Paul Haywood. CD sent apologies for the second day.

CHAIRMAN’S WELCOME – R MACKRIEL

RM thanked everyone for coming at such a busy time of year. She said there were some important issues that needed to be sorted out as soon as possible.

MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last YMC meeting on 8 – 9 September 2007 were read and approved.

JUNIOR RULES OF COMPETITION – R MACKRIEL

The rules of competition were distributed, updated as discussed at the last meeting. There could be further changes, since the EIHA Rules & Regulations are being updated. “Director for Junior Hockey” should read “Director for Youth Hockey” and “Secretary for Junior Hockey” should read “Secretary for Youth Hockey”. The 2008/2009 rules of competition will reflect the new player registration system. Some thought rules of competition should not be introduced part way through the season. RM however said there was a need for rules of competition document, as the section previously did not have one. While there will inevitably be changes in subsequent seasons, the current document forms a good basis. This document will be circulated to all via the Conference Chairs/Secretaries.

The YMC approved the Junior Rules of Competition document.

PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT – R MACKRIEL

The Youth Player Code of Conduct had been amended as discussed at the last meeting, and emailed to the YMC. It will be issued to clubs as a guideline, with the recommendation that they insist on all players signing it. Signed copies should be kept at the club, not sent in with registration paperwork. Some clubs already require their players to sign a code of conduct before they register, while others have no code of conduct at all. Clubs will still be able to have their own codes of conduct, to reflect their individual issues.

The YMC approved the Code of Conduct.

UNDER 10 JAMBOREE UPDATE – B WILKINSON

BW and NM had a meeting with Gary Apsley about the jamborees. There is an IHUK meeting on 20th January to work on plans. SIHL do not plan to attend, as they are doing a different type of event. For the meeting they need precise numbers for ordering polo shirts, t-shirts and training shirts, which cost £15 each. If anyone orders too many, they need to return them. They will be given to the players on the day. Everyone taking part will receive a certificate. At the meeting they will establish a date in February by which the names of all players, coaches and helpers need to be submitted for inclusion in the souvenir programme. It will be very important to the players that their names are in. It has not yet been decided whether there will need to be a charge for programmes. There has been a request from the

South, though not from the South East and South West officers, for flags of as many IIHF nations as possible on display. **BW** will attend the jamborees at both Sheffield and Swindon. **RM** apologies for not attending this event as she will be attending a family wedding in Australia.

The Conference Tournament will be themed on the 100-year anniversary, with a special commemorative programme. It should be impressed on players and parents that they will never see another event like this.

U15 SKILLS CHALLENGE UPDATE – B WILKINSON

BW has now collected the toolkits from Mike Cowley. He showed the shooter tutor and measuring ropes, with labels giving measurements on both sides for different tests. There are two per Conference. He suggested the Conference Chairs should look after them. They will be useful to all clubs. He said the testing will need to be done the way he says. Players may do the tests as many times as they want, but it will be difficult to find much ice time before the deadline. There is a website to enter the stats. These will be monitored, and anyone cheating will be found out. Some of the coaches have already registered on the site. There are some glitches on it, for example teams cannot be deleted, and the Verify button has disappeared.

Two boys and two girls from each Conference, plus candidates from Scotland, will be invited to a central testing session on one day, probably at Sheffield. The boys will be selected from U15 Conference teams, and **GH** will decide how to select the girls. **BW** hopes to bring in a coach from Holland as an independent adjudicator. The IIHF will select the goalkeepers. IHUK will pay for one parent per player to accompany the winners to Quebec. Pin badges have been ordered for everyone taking part.

BW would like more publicity for the Skills Challenge. If anyone is filming it, they should send the film to him. The best footage will be sent to the IIHF for their 100-year anniversary cellar.

UNDER 10 UPDATE – V WILKINSON

The meeting about the future of U10 hockey will be on 20th January at the Derbyshire Hotel, Derby. Each Conference should send their Chair and Secretary and two others. The fixture secretaries, **NM**, **LM**, **MM** and Steve Taylor are also invited. It is imperative that everyone attend, as many clubs are asking what is happening about U10s, and while the YMC are making a lot of effort over them, they have been unable to come to decisions. The meeting is likely to last about four hours. All who attend may sit in on the U10 jamboree meeting afterwards.

FIXTURES / GAME SHEETS – G HEMMERMAN / T LACK / R MACKRIEL

RM had emailed statisticians to ask about gamesheet issues they wanted bringing up. Malcolm Preen said if gamesheets are incorrect, the stats will not be shown on the website, but after three correct gamesheets the stats will be reinstated. Correspondence should be from the nominated team official only, to avoid the current deluge of complaints from people with no official position at the club.

Dave Hill said clubs sometimes fail to send gamesheets. If they forfeit the game he might not find out until later. Some teams turn up with too few players, and play the game as a challenge rather than ask for dispensation. **PR** said often the team do not know until they arrive at the game that some players are not going to turn up. **RM** said that dispensation can be obtained as late as on the way to the game. It was pointed out that while the gamesheet is official notification, if the game was played as a challenge the sheet needs to say so. **PR** said Mohammed Ashraff needs to be told in writing that it is up to the league management to decide on the outcome of a game, not the referee. If a team do not have enough players they should phone **RM**, and also send an email, as she needs something in writing even if it does not come until after the game. Procedures for such situations are talked about at Manager courses.

Fax/Email (South)

Dave Hill says even if clubs are sending sheets by fax or email, they still need to send all five items by post. Many gamesheets arrive late. He checks the postmark, and issues a charge only if the sheet was posted later than the day after the game. Some U12 teams are still sending game sheets to **RM**. **GH** said it would be better to have gamesheets faxed, as with the Women's Leagues. Although not everyone currently has access to a fax machine, they are now available very cheaply. **BW** would like to find sponsorship to provide every club with a laptop, and have a system similar to the IIHF Hydra system for entering game data electronically. However Hydra caused a great many problems at World Championships.

TL is having few problems with the South fixtures. Several rinks said they were not having a pantomime, then decided to have one. There are 12 TBA fixtures in the U10s, mainly because of Romford and Slough becoming two separate teams. Some are likely to remain unplayed. There are 116 U10 games in the season. In the other leagues there are 7 fixtures still TBA, 3 of them from Chelmsford. Rinks have events pencilled in for a high proportion of dates, so clubs have no choice but to send in some of these dates. Often the events do not happen, but sometimes they do and the game needs to be rescheduled. There was a discussion about valid reasons for cancelling. Sickness is a valid excuse, as it is easy for an epidemic to travel through a team, and the opposition generally understand. Having no Level 2 coach will not be accepted as an excuse, as teams are allowed to borrow coaches. Home clubs should be prepared to lend coaches. The Isle of Wight ferry being unavailable is similar to a bus breaking down. **TL** tried to schedule the U12 and U14 games on the same day to give Isle of Wight less travel, but this did not work as most of the same players were on both teams. England U13s have scheduled a game against Milton Keynes. **TL** was congratulated on his efforts with the fixtures. Since he took over the amount of correspondence about fixtures has greatly decreased. He and **GH** both appreciated the chance to share ideas about fixtures. **NM** confirmed that clubs usually pay the £50 charges for cancelling a game for a reason not permitted in the rules. The charge goes on the club's account, and the clubs receive the figures and are expected to settle up by the AGM. **GH** thinks there will only be about 8 such charges. **TL** said he is reluctant to charge the clubs as it is penalising the parents.

GH said the North fixtures are running quite smoothly. He has c. 30 TBA fixtures from U16 down. Around Christmas he sends a reminder to clubs about their fixtures which are still TBA. Instead of asking teams if they are going to play on the arranged date, he now gives them the date and expects them to play. He has decided how the TBA fixtures will be awarded if they remain unplayed. Malcolm Preen's site is outstanding: when he posts the fixtures he can tell immediately if there is a clash.

Send only the gamesheet (South)

At North and South meetings which **RM** has attended, there have been discussions about gamesheets. **CW** said many people are upset by Malcolm Preen's emails, and stats not being posted on the website. Along with many others, she no longer does gamesheets because she is afraid of making mistakes and so depriving players of their stats. The South is therefore proposing that for each game, clubs should need to send in only the gamesheet. Most of the problems over stats are because of the shots on goal sheets. Since Malcolm Preen's site is no longer accurate, they would like links to all the club sites in order to see their stats. **VW** considers there have been a lot of problems since bringing back goal judges. **CW** however thinks the problem is the new shots on goal sheets. New parents are continually coming in, and there have been no Off-ice Official courses. The count starting at 0 is still confusing people. **JP** said all goal judges count differently, and even if all of them were experienced there would still be wide discrepancies. The national team coaches realise this.

Most thought it important to keep stats, especially to help coaches with player selection. The huge number of hits on the site every Monday night shows how interested people are in them. **CW** said the stats on the EIHA site are wrong, for example one player with 17 points is shown as having 4. **PR** said it seems wrong that players' points are not shown on the site, but their penalty minutes are. However the penalty minutes might add up when the points do not. **BW** spoke about the very detailed stats system the IIHF are introducing. Nations will need to

comply, or they will not be allowed to take part in World Championships. There are people at the IIHF office who do nothing but trawl websites. **PR** asked if the EIHA would be allowed to pass on details like date of birth of U18 players. Issues like this will be a problem, as other countries are far less aware of child protection than the UK. **BW** spoke about a dispute at the World Championships over a goalkeeper's stats. His average went down from 98% to 94% because one goal was awarded against the wrong goalkeeper on the gamesheet, and the IIHF refused to change it. If there are problems with stats even at that level, there seems little chance of having them completely accurate throughout junior hockey. Malcolm wants to continue receiving shots on goal sheets in order to check for discrepancies, e.g. more goals against than shots. He is speaking to the EPIHL teams about the same issues.

GH said clubs would not receive emails from Malcolm Preen if they learned to do the stats correctly. Instead of learning from their mistakes, team officials send him very abusive emails, which is setting a bad example. The Conference officers said if he lets them know who is sending abuse they will deal with it, as **GH** has done with the Women. Some gamesheets are very poor, and in some cases even the result was wrong. Some thought Malcolm Preen should simply record whatever is on the sheet. If it has an adverse affect on a team's stats they will not make such a mistake again. **NM** pointed out that the stats on the EIHA site are the only neutral ones. If clubs all did their own, they would depend on clubs' individual IT arrangements, and some clubs would be unable or unwilling to do them at all. They would all do it differently, which would be a recipe for endless disputes between clubs. It was agreed that during lunch the Conference officers would decide on a few points for **RL** to speak about with Malcolm Preen the following day.

PR asked why so many people need to sign the gamesheet. They are all supposed to check the sheet and then sign to say it is correct. She asked what should happen if a coach refuses to sign the gamesheet because they are disputing a penalty. **RL** said this situation has already been addressed: it is not up to the coach to decide on the referee's ability, and if a coach refuses to sign the gamesheet the game will be forfeited 5 – 0. **PR** said she could not agree with this.

Ken Taggart and Mohammed Ashraff have been to a meeting about the Martin Sibley insurance case. Martin Sibley's solicitor is looking for an out-of-court settlement. The council are trying to persuade the EIHA's insurers to share the cost. The insurers have warned that if they have to pay court costs, the public liability premium will increase by c. £20k. The EIHA are not in a position to do anything more in this case than give advice. The insurers want all rinks to be assessed for their fitness for hockey. **NM** has said he does not want the EIHA to do this, as they would then be accepting liability by saying the rinks are safe for playing. **GH** however said it might be better for the EIHA to do the risk assessment in the way they want, rather than let someone else do it, which might stop hockey being played at old rinks. A risk assessment might also make the rinks acknowledge some of the issues. With injuries such as that to Martin Sibley, it should be taken into account how few similar injuries there have been in the years that hockey has been played at that rink. At Billingham the layout and netting have always been much the same, and no one could recall any other injuries to goal judges there. The Board have decided that if the insurers have to make a large payout for this case, they will dispense with goal judges (they have considered dispensing with them only in rinks with no plexiglass, but there would then be no point in keeping the goalie stats). The change would not be introduced until next season.

BLACKBURN U12S – R MACKRIEL

Blackburn U12s want to know if they may merge with Flintshire in the same way as U10 teams are allowed to do. After discussing it with **VW**, **RM** told Gary Shaw that it cannot be allowed at this point in the season, especially as both clubs have enough U12 players for a league team. Gary Shaw was very disappointed that she would not give an immediate answer about whether clubs may be allowed to merge U12 teams, and is asking for an answer about whether they may do it next season. At the moment Blackburn are likely to have not enough players to enter either an U10 or U12 team next season.

TL said merged teams work reasonably well in U10s, where everyone has ice time, and in many cases each club contributes whole lines. However in the U12s he thinks it is likely to be only one club's players who have all the ice time. **VW** said if merged teams are allowed at U12 level, they will spread further up the age groups. This will mean clubs will stop looking for players. **PR** said when clubs need to find players they find them. When the Romford/Slough merged team split up Slough did not have enough players for a league team, but now they do. There would be a problem if a club had no U10 team and so played their U10s up in the U12s, and they then joined with another U10 team. Rules on merged teams, which make up more and more of the U10 League, are still under review. The situation for next season will be decided at the U10 meeting. Current merged teams need to show they are recruiting, but there is nothing to prevent other teams merging. If teams drop out of the league they can still play challenges.

It was decided to inform Gary Shaw that Blackburn and Flintshire U12s will not be allowed to merge for 2008/9.

NORTHERN CONFERENCE REPORT – J PYE / G CREBBIN

JP said the North is going well. There are a few concerns with individual clubs which she is trying to address. There are problems with lack of communication from Blackburn. There is a general shortage of ice time. She will speak to the Board about issues concerning Newcastle. Manchester were congratulated on running their club very professionally. She distributed copies of the last North meeting, which will go on the website shortly. The issues brought up there have been addressed. The Conference squads have been cut down.

SOUTH EAST CONFERENCE REPORT – P ROST

The issues in the South East are the same as those put on the agenda by the South West. They have cut down the Conference squads. In the U15s, the England players are working with the U17s for training, while more work is done on the others. The squad will come together later. The coaches want to do the Skills Challenge tests in their own way. Many people have brought to **PR**'s attention the bad state of the Gillingham Ice Bowl, especially the changing rooms and toilets. The water leakage has now been repaired. There have also been complaints about bad behaviour of fans at junior games there.

SOUTH WEST CONFERENCE REPORT – C-A WATT / CJ BOXILL

See attached report. They will start on the Skills Challenge next week. Barry Russell's goalie training is working well.

Joint U10 teams

This was covered earlier.

Player strength requirement (U10s) for games

There have been suggestions that under-strength U10 teams could borrow from the opposing team. Bracknell have offered to lend players from their U8s. These options will be discussed at the U10 meeting.

Player strength requirement when 2 teams in the league

There are a number of teams, especially in Div 2, with c. 25 players, too many for everyone to get ice time but not enough for two teams. The South West therefore proposed a minimum of 14 players for entering one team and 28 for two. The Div 2 teams want the minimum number for entering two teams to be changed to 26 – 28. **GH** said there is not enough ice time for additional teams. The minimum of 32 was intended to make sure clubs had a good number of players before entering an extra team, and slow down the rate of clubs entering extra teams while still allowing as many players as possible the chance of ice time. Some of the clubs wanting the change seem to be planning to run a team of elite players and put little effort into the rest. The aim should be for clubs to have a full squad. They should play 4-line hockey if

they have enough players, but none do. **VW** is unhappy about the tactics of two clubs who claim to have a major development focus. One of them registered two girls who had not played before for their Div 1 team so that they could enter two teams. The minimum number for entering two teams does not necessarily need to be double the minimum number for one team.

There is concern that the standard of youth players is declining. For example, the England U14s decided to drop from AAA to AA, and are still likely to struggle. One solution that has come up in discussions is to have more competitive leagues. League standards should certainly not be diluted, especially when the changes being proposed are mainly for the benefit of coaches who want to make less effort with their teams. There was a discussion on how changes to the league structure might help more players to develop. There is no way of seeing that every club is happy with the situation. It is hard to balance the numbers of Div 1 and Div 2 teams, and there have been numerous problems with promotion and relegation playoffs. **BW** said the competition many years ago of top North and top South teams playing in a league together worked extremely well. However this would probably not work now because of travel issues and cost. **VW** said there should again be only one league plus a challenge league, but most thought new players should play in Div 2, which will therefore always be needed. Having only one league would mean c. 20 teams playing each other, which there is not enough ice time for. It was agreed that clubs should be able to enter two teams in Div 2. However, most clubs with two teams want one of them to be in Div 1. **GH** said it is up to the YMC to decide how many teams in each division. The structure might need to be changed if more teams enter. Currently provisional league structures are sent out to clubs, then often more teams are entered, so sometimes teams have to be moved. Some said it is unfair to move a Div 1 team to Div 2 after they have worked hard to stay out of the relegation places. **GH** proposed that at the end of each season, the league should be divided into two divisions of equal numbers, in accordance with the order the teams finished the previous season, with no promotion/relegation playoffs. New teams should be added to the bottom of the order. A club may have two teams in the same division. **RM** will send this proposal to the Board and ask them to vote on it at their next meeting in February. Clubs will be informed as soon as possible of the proposal to be voted on.

CD said there are few naturally talented players around, and this means a lot of work for the coaches. **PR** said the standard of coaching is a problem. Most thought this is not due to lack of available education but because many coaches think they do not need to bother learning. **JP** found one club would not send coaches to the National Seminar because it was more expensive than a workshop. **BW** has found everyone learns a lot at courses, even those who have been in hockey for years. **PR** said this is the only country where Level 1 coaches do not have to complete a logbook before going on to Level 2. Anyone who is used to doing exams can pass Level 2, but few coaches know how to relate what they have learned to the players. **LM** said the club head coaches should be helping the less experienced ones do this; this is more effective at some clubs than others. **NM** will pass the logbook suggestion on to Steve Taylor. There are already plans for the courses to cover more material. **CW** said good qualifications do not guarantee a good coach; she knows one Level 3 coach that no players want to work with.

Coaching problems in the leagues also occur in the Conference Tournament. **PR** is not convinced that the best players in each Conference get into the Conference teams. The England U13 players in the game against the U14s did not all go to the Conference Tournament. It was pointed out that much of this is because while Conference teams include two year groups, most of the players are drawn from the older year group. **BW** said in the early years all the teams played three lines, with no need for policing. However now everyone manipulates the rules in order to win. At the last tournament, some players had only two shifts per period. Most thought every Conference has three lines of players capable of playing at that level. **CW** said if a coach is not being fair to all the players, this should be pointed out to the Conference chair, who should not select the coach again. **CD** suggested a formal recruitment process for Conference coaches, with an interview to discuss their experience and aims. **PR** thought that was what the mentor coaches were supposed to do. **GH** however said

so few coaches want to coach Conference teams that he is pleased if all the teams are covered. There is still one South East team without a coach. There is also a high turnover of Conference coaches. **BW** had hoped to have coaches move up through the age groups and then make way for others, but found this was not practicable or coaches did not want to do it. He is now finding the same points have to be made every year. He is starting to think the Conference Tournament should be dropped and replaced with an international tournament. He spoke about Finland's pyramid structure. **PR** has found that in Finland people work together to develop as many players as possible, while here what prevails is coaches' egos and a "win at all costs" mentality.

PR said often the same issues are discussed many times and are not resolved. Sometimes changes simply have to be made, such as with coaching. Others said there has been a great deal of change in hockey in the last few years. **BW** reminded the YMC that coaches, often including clubs' head coaches, are volunteers. He has for some time been asking for a scheme to remunerate YMC members and other EIHA volunteers, but the auditors pointed out a number of problems with this. **NM** said with many functions, such as gamesheets, the EIHA set a professional standard and the clubs cannot meet it. There will be a Coach Level 3 course next year. There have been discussions about taking hockey forward by making it a condition of entering leagues that the club head coach must be a Level 3. However the number of Level 3 coaches is limited, and they cannot be forced to stay at a particular club. He asked who would handle the revolt from clubs when they are told head coaches who are not Level 3 need to be replaced. **LM** hears continual excuses for why coaches have not fulfilled requirements, and needs to make choices about whether to give them leeway, at the cost of diluting standards, or have games cancelled. There is still a need for aims even if everyone cannot meet them.

Cancelled games – points not pounds

CW said the South teams did not like the proposals for cumulative fines for cancelled games. **GH** said cancelled games already mean costs for parents, and if the team keep losing points people will start saying it is not worth going to games. It was pointed out that teams commit to play for a whole season. If they are having problems they should let people know, as everyone realises that any team might have to cancel a game due to a situation beyond their control. **NM** said the EIHA do not make large amounts of money out of charges for cancelled games. The charge is intended to be a disincentive for clubs who play home fixtures but habitually try to avoid away games because they do not want to pay the costs. However £50 is much less than a bus bill. **TL** said the cancellation issues have generally been down to bad luck, however Oxford U12s have refused to go to the Isle of Wight three years running. He will monitor the patterns over the season.

5 – 0 league decider?

CW said the issue is over teams losing league places because of forfeited games. Having dispensations for teams travelling with an under-strength team has helped cut down on 5 – 0 games. **RM** said there have not been very many dispensations, and it is not the same teams continually asking. **GH** said many of last season's 5 – 0 awards were when a team refused to travel or could not agree a date. A lot of progress has been made over fixtures since then.

Numbers of teams in leagues

VW distributed registration statistics with a forecast for 2008/9. More than 500 of last season's players have dropped out. The standard is declining in the U18s, mainly because of losing the top year of players, but also because there are a substantial number of beginner players in the league.

COACHING PROGRAMME

Steve Taylor had sent a brief report. There will be a Coach Level 3 course, approved by IHUK, on 16 – 20 July. It is open to coaches of teams at U14 and above who have been

coaching for two or more years at Level 2. Anyone who wants to apply should write to Jill Easson.

The Coaching page on the EIHA website now has the basic Coaching Programme information on. The 2008 course dates are now on the site.

The Coaching Programme would like to start running the IIHF Introduction to Coaching course.

Steve Taylor has been in touch with the NHS about sport-specific first aid courses. **CD** said the current first aid advice is not to touch injured players. He will speak to Steve Taylor about some of these issues. First aid courses tell people not only what to do but when they should do nothing. The course does not provide a qualification, but is simply to enhance knowledge. It is useful to have a question on the teamlist about medical training even though there is no requirement for anyone to have this.

The Coaching Programme were unhappy that Paul Thompson did not consult them before arranging and publicising his coaching clinic, which is a private venture. After some considerable time he sent them information about it. They will decide shortly whether this will count as a workshop for coaches to maintain their status. **NM** reported that Paul Thompson's coaching clinic has now been approved as a workshop. It is not known whether the Coaching Programme will be provided with a list of the coaches who attended, however this can easily be found out as EIHA instructors plan to attend.

LM said there was a Coaching Programme meeting in October, and minutes will be available shortly. They are considering introducing further requirements for Level 1 coaches before moving on to Level 2, including the Introduction to Coaching course and a rules test. Workshop requirements could change, most likely to two workshops in five years, with a wider range of courses to count as workshops.

CHILD PROTECTION - C DACRES

Online course update

The CPSU are bringing up issues about copyright. The course will probably not go live until next year.

Arrangements are being made for having officials CRB checked. The officials will need to pay for the checks. These will be completed by the end of March.

Earlier in the year the police informed the EIHA that a particular individual was not allowed to go into the town or the rink concerned, and if he did so this should be reported to the police. They had a discussion with the EIHA on how to handle the issue. **CD** had to inform all the management committee, who had to act but also keep the matter confidential. The rink then wrote to the individual, which was not what the police intended. The individual then moved to another club, so **CD** informed the club management committee of the circumstances. It is important to make people aware that such issues do occasionally come up. They need to be dealt with in a sensitive manner, and people should consult him if they are not sure how to deal with it. Clubs should be informed that if such an incident happens they should act immediately. Rink management also need to be involved in such cases, but the EIHA cannot control how they react.

RM is going to a seminar next week on the Independent Safeguarding Authority. **CD** went to a session on it earlier this year, but at that time it was still unclear how the process would work. He explained that there will be an independent board, and everyone who registers will need to go through the Vetting and Barring procedure, which will show whether they are barred from working with children. There will be fines for organisations which take on someone who is barred. It will still be the club's decision whether to use the individuals. Convictions against a child or a vulnerable adult are never spent. Otherwise how long convictions take to be spent depends on the length of the sentence. **RM** said teachers now have to declare all manner of offences, such as habitual driving convictions. She thinks it would be useful if several people went on Independent Safeguarding Authority seminars, especially the regional child protection officers, who can pass the information on. **CD** is already recommending that clubs make themselves known to their local safeguarding children

boards, who provide training and advice. **RM** will send website details. (www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/independentsafeguardingauthority or www.isa-gov.org.uk) The CRB are returning forms with errors to **CD** as agreed. There are a large number of forms being sent back, mainly from countersignatories who do not have many forms to deal with and so have not memorised the procedures. It has now been agreed that the regional child protection officers should check forms before they are sent to the CRB. This is being piloted in the South West. The clubs will be informed of the new arrangements.

REFEREE IN CHIEF REPORT

Transparency of disciplinary process (South)

PR said no one knows how the disciplinary process works. Clubs have received the Disciplinary Document. It was explained that Sue Tomalin is head of discipline, and each league has its own discipline secretary (names are listed on the website). If there is a major penalty the referee files a report with the league discipline secretary. The league discipline secretary decides on a panel of three people to send it to for a decision, and passes this back to the club.

The South want to know who are on the panels, as there have been significant time lapses before they received the decision. This is the responsibility of the league discipline secretary. The time limit for a response is the following weekend. If there is no response by then, the player should not play. If there is an issue with any of the discipline secretaries the club should speak to Sue Tomalin. **PR** said there is no issue with any particular person. If the panel cannot make a decision the discipline secretary should inform the club. It is useful for the club to fax the gamesheet, so there is more time to deal with disciplinary issues. All the discipline secretaries check their emails regularly.

U14 lining an U18 game (South)

It had been agreed that **GH** would email Mohammed Ashraff that night about the officiating issues raised, in order to have a reply to discuss the next day. U14 players are unhappy at having an U14 lining an U18 game, as they are not allowed to play up to U18. It was pointed out that the age restrictions were brought in because of physical contact, which the linesmen are not intended to be involved in. **GH** said there is always supposed to be an adult in charge of the officiating team. However sometimes the adult does not turn up. **PR** said if there is a problem at a game where there is no adult official, this is not fair to the participants or the EIHA. Others asked if it would be fairer to cancel the game. The game could be officiated by coaches or captains instead.

PR asked what should happen if the coach thinks the game is getting out of hand. They should decide to halt the game. **GH** however has found that when a coach takes the team off the ice claiming it is for the players' safety, there often appears to be an ulterior motive.

Player's equipment rules (South)

Rules about matching helmets, shorts etc do not apply in youth hockey. The new goalkeeper equipment rules currently apply only to World Championships and professional leagues. It is important for people to know about them if they are likely to play for GB. Eventually the old-style equipment will probably be phased out. Goalkeepers buying new equipment should check that it conforms to the new specifications.

PR reported that Mohammed Ashraff has said there are new in house rules in force, and there appear to be changes in refereeing. No one was aware of any new in house rules for 2007/8. The one penalty point for a 10-min penalty was brought in at the AGM for all leagues. **PR** said far too many match penalties are being given out for relatively minor matters. **GH** said if there is a blow to the head, even a minor skirmish, it will incur a match penalty.

MIDLANDS CONFERENCE REPORT – J BOWNS

All the Conference teams have been training. Martyn Etheridge is very pleased with progress. The goalie coach was thanked for making a great success of the specialist goalie sessions. Midlands clubs are asking questions about what the Conference structure is for and how it works. **PR** said people are asking why they have not been invited to be Conference officers. Much of the information relating to the Conference Tournament appears in the tournament programme. The IHUK development plan has a structure chart for UK hockey. The Conference structure was set up to address various needs, at a time when no equivalent structure existed. The Conference officers are the voice of the clubs in their Conference, and a link between them and the Board. Clubs should go to Conference officers about any issues they have. **RM** will draft a document, with bullet points of what the personnel do, and distribute it to the YMC. This will be included in the Club Secretary course. **BW** said there was a good reaction from players at the School of Excellence when he gave an explanation of what he did. He told them that, contrary to a website posting about the Board staying in five-star hotels and not caring about hockey, he was staying at the same hotel as them and was there to work. The Board and officers need to be concerned about perception, for example, while holding meetings abroad might work out cheaper than holding them in England, they would not dare do it because of how the clubs would react. However there will always be people who only want to knock. Even club officials often have no idea what goes on behind the scenes.

JB said the Midlands have asked about the safety of U15 linesmen in senior games, as they have to break up fights. **NM** said people who are objecting to young officials need to ask themselves if they would rather have none. There are encouraging numbers of U18s taking referee courses, but few adults. **CB** said it would be useful to have an analysis of numbers and ages of officials, to see if it is possible to have all officials allocated only to age groups below their own. **LM** said it would be very difficult. There are c. 207 officials, including about 20 who do only EIHL games. A high proportion of them are U18. **PR** said often there are three officials for an U10 game and one for an ENIHL game. **LM** said the OCM consider youth games as priority. There were suggestions that U10 games could be officiated by coaches, who would be able to instruct at the same time, or by an official and a coach. U10s should be far easier to control than senior teams. **PR** spoke about officials being resented for being able to officiate above their age group when their teammates may not play up. **NM** said it has already been explained many times that the decision about U16s not being able to play up in senior hockey was made as a result of child protection and legal issues, because kind treatment of players on the ice could not be guaranteed, and the Board had no choice in the matter. The original issue was about players, not officials, who are in a totally different situation. He asked if the YMC wanted to tell Mohammed Ashraff that U16 officials should not be able to do senior games. This would make the already extremely difficult job of allocation of officials a great deal more so. It would also be a major blow to talented, hard-working young linesmen, at a time when there is a major need for up-and-coming officials.

PR said she was told U16 officials have separate insurance. This is not the case. **NM** said as with girls playing down, someone asking the wrong question could bring about major problems. **BW** considers one thing which is making hockey deteriorate rapidly is people bringing up “child protection concerns” as a guise for trying to get their own way without caring about the good of the sport. Some officials are still travelling long distances. **CB** said people who would make good officials are not getting games. **PR** has also found some officials are not being allocated, and one regularly travels long distances. **JP** said some Newcastle youth players who registered as officials were given no games. Others were yelled at by a more senior official. When this was brought up with Mohammed Ashraff nothing happened. Then when they wanted to register again they were told they needed an interview. She would like to know how many officials go on courses, how many are allocated games, and what sort of encouragement they are given. **LM** said there are good numbers of people taking Level 1 courses, but many do not register. As with players and team staff, there is a high turnover, but some who drop out later come back. **GH** said they will agree on some points to email to Mohammed Ashraff.

Tony Oliver has said players are allowed to take part in five sessions before they have to register. The club need a record of the player's name, address and date of birth before they go on the ice.

OFF-ICE OFFICIALS COURSES – R MACKRIEL

RM sent all the information to Mohammed Ashraff. The course will be mainly about gamesheets, but will also cover all the other off-ice game official roles. He can provide an official if there are about five people who want to go on a course. She has found some senior teams' off-ice officials are poor at gamesheets, and the EIHL use different ones from the EIHA. Some rinks have no experienced off-ice officials at all. She therefore thinks it would be better to run courses at Conference rather than club level, and this would also be easier to organise. **PR** asked if there could be one course only, and they could say at least two people from each club should go. This has been tried before. It was decided to run one course each in the North, Midlands and South.

At the beginning of the season clubs often do not know which personnel they will have, and once the season has started people cannot attend courses because they have games. However **JB** said people want courses as soon as possible. **RM** will start arranging courses immediately; Conference officers are to provide a venue and date.

SECRETARY COURSE UPDATE – V WILKINSON

There was a meeting two weeks ago to map out the structure. **GH** is now putting the presentations together. The course will be ready to be run in the summer.

CONFERENCE TOURNAMENT – G HEMMERMAN

GH has sent out discs for the Conference chairs to pass on to the managers. The letter should tell them all they need to know. Plans are on schedule. He has sent out a letter asking people to look for sponsorship. This is being given out to the players. A company are putting their logo on the shirts, but the response has largely been disappointing. He is working on more possibilities for sponsorship. The Midlands have a new black-on-black design. He showed the new polo shirts with Conference team logos. One extra cost is paramedics, which will cost £4k instead of £400 for St John's Ambulance. The £8k deficit does not include team subsidies of £4,800, or costs of officials and guests.

The ice at Hull used to be free of charge, but now costs £7k. Problems have now been resolved over invoices from Hull Arena which included security for public sessions. It would be very difficult to move the tournament elsewhere. **BW** has had a meeting with iceSheffield about holding it there. They were prepared to provide ice free of charge, but would charge for other items such as dressing rooms and ice cuts. He has told them their cafe and bar would not be able to cope.

BW thinks they should have increased the entrance fee by £1 per year, as now they would have to put it up by £18 to break even. Many people ask for concessions, and he would like to be able to provide these but knows it cannot be afforded. It is becoming ever harder to find sponsorship. The tombola made a lot of money in former years, but now makes little. It has continued because people still wanted it, but now does not seem worth the large amount of work involved. It was suggested that the programme price should go up to £10, particularly as it is a special edition. It is not too late to change the price. It was decided to carry on with large programmes, even though they are expensive to produce, as they are better than small ones, and good value in comparison with programmes for events such as concerts. However it should not be much bigger than it is at the moment. Programmes will be discussed further with the Conference Tournament Committee. Some thought they should try to raise income from photos. The team photos are used in the next year's programme. The individual ones cost the EIHA nothing. The DVDs were an experiment. **GH** is trying to arrange a pay-per-view webcast. **BW** would like a Conference Tournament website. **CW** said there should be more promotion for the fundraising, e.g. lucky stars could make £5k. It was pointed out that most tournaments have a team entry fee. **CW** asked if it would help to tell the parents the

tournament made a £13k deficit last season and needs more money to keep going. Most thought it would not make much difference, unless it is made clear that the tournament really will disappear.

PR said the costs of the Conference Tournament are becoming too high, and they should look at other ways of achieving the same results. Many people would be extremely sorry to lose such a good experience for players and parents. She suggested going back to having the age groups playing tournaments at different rinks on the same day. This would lose the atmosphere. There would be problems with finding affordable ice. It would cut down on hotel bills, but would probably increase travel expenses. They could use the same programme for all age groups. It was agreed to look into this.

JUNIOR FINALS – R MACKRIEL / J BOWNS

They have had discussions about costs, and whether to charge a fee per team rather than charging spectators. Parents often do not think they should have to pay. **NM** said the agreement with iceSheffield is that the rink receive a percentage of the gate in return for services, so it would be difficult to say there will no longer be a gate. **BW** said teams that make the Junior Finals have worked extremely hard to get there, and it is not like a tournament where teams can simply choose whether or not to enter. **RM** will speak to iceSheffield about having a table by the door to stop anyone getting past, as the Sheffield EPIHL and ENIHL teams do.

RM was congratulated on doing a great job chairing the meeting, and the whole of the YMC on being able to deal with conflicting opinions.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

No date has yet been arranged for the next meeting of the YMC. **RM** hopes to put together a schedule of YMC and Conference meetings for the year.

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