

Womens Section meeting 10th June 2007

Committee: GH – Geoff Hemmerman, ST – Sally Taylor, HJ – Hilary Jenkins, KS – Kim Sutton, AW – Anna Walters, JP – Jacqueline Pye, SC – Sylvian Clifford

Minutes

Roll Call & Apologies

Apologies – Sylvian Clifford. GH – advised that Sylvian had an accident recently and we all wish her a speedy recovery.

There were no representatives from Cambridge University or Whitley Squaws and no apologies.

GH welcomed everyone.

Minutes of last Section meeting

Proposed by Coventry

Accepted by Telford

Matters Arising

Matching Uniforms – including helmets, shorts, gloves etc. GH stated that as long as the shirts matched being 80% light for home shirts and 80% dark for away shirts there was no need for gloves and shorts to match.

Womens Reports

There were only two notes one for the Secretary's report – if your club contact changes please notify Sally Taylor ASAP.

Statisticians Report - Malcolm Preen - stated that if you have any queries please contact him.

Ref Report – unfortunately Ash could not be present to present his report as he was unwell. We all wished him a speedy recovery.

Discipline Report GH – there had been a big increase in major penalties this season. In season 2005/06 there had been 5 major penalties. In season 2006/07 there had been 35 major penalties. 2 girls had been suspended for 3 games and one girl suspended for 2 games. Most had been for “Blows to the head” or Abuse of Officials. GH called for Coaches and Managers to calm the players down. GH did comment that he was aware that the low tolerance rules had had an influence on the increase but that the increase by no means was sole reason, players had to greatly improve their discipline.

Coventry raised the point that Referees were not allowing Captains to approach them for clarification of penalties. Can this be addressed, as it would be helpful to the bench to know what the penalty was for or why it had been called.

GH stated that it was fine to dispute the odd call but some teams took liberties and disputed every penalty.

Coventry stated that could we look at improving communication between teams and referees as it would most probably reduce the misconduct penalties.

Slough agreed – This season had been the worst for penalties ever. There was no communication between players and referees at all. Players were given penalties for no reason as referees were yelling at players and being abusive to the players and when the players were asking for clarification they were given misconduct penalties.

GH stated that a more professional attitude between the referees and players and the bench and vice versa was needed. There had been a change in the way referees officiated games from the beginning of the season to the end as it was felt that at the beginning of the season the referees had been too severe in calling penalties. Slough requested that the Referee in Chief review the major penalties with the referees and discuss the situation. GH – stated that not many referees get to officiate at women's games so he would discuss the situation with Ashraff.

Chairmans Report – GH stated that Ken Taggart was pleased with all the Leagues this season.

Structure of the League 2007/08

The current structure stands for the coming season with the following changes:

Swindon stay in Division 1 South

Billingham are promoted to the Premier Division

Nottingham return to Division 1 North

Peterborough asked to move to Division 1 South. GH advised it wasn't possible as this made the Southern League too big. Peterborough were unhappy and GH advised them to discuss it with him further.

Knock Out Cup

GH advised that this would be suspended for one season. It was a great idea but only 1/3 of the games had been played and it may be possible that a team in the final may not have played a game. All were in agreement to suspend for one season.

Sportsmanship Awards

Divison 1 North – Flintshire

Division 1 South – Chelmsford

Premier – Guildford

Future Developments

SOX – School of Excellence for U16 girls. This had been the 2nd SOX at Hull. There had been a marked improvement in the skill levels of the girls attending. This year there had been more girls with higher abilities and the attitude this year had been fantastic. Very focused and hard working.

Under 16 – new rules

The decisions of Essex Council were explained, and that it was actually about Child Safety issues that had brought in the changes. Even though the women had different rules the Council's argued that children (U16 players) safety could not be guaranteed. GH advised with 35 major penalties and 4 U16 players had been involved in fights with adult players we could not contest it further.

The EIHA had decided to implement the following rule changes for the new season. U19 League now became U18. Players must be aged 15 to play in the U18 League. Players must be aged 16 to play in Senior Leagues.

The question was raised about fights in the U16 boys league. GH stated that is peer to peer/child with child.

GH went on to explain about the progression of female players from U10 through to Senior and then onto National players (England and GB). He went on to explain that no other Country develops their U16 girls.

There was a general discussion with a few questions:

Can U16's play once they turn 16 – yes as long as they register before the cut off date.

Some **Senior** teams won't have enough players to register – GH: there are enough female players for every team to register 12 or more.

Can U16 be counted in teams number to register – GH: no as they can't appear on the team list so cannot be counted in the teams numbers until they reach 16.

There were some comments about junior coaches not developing female players. This is down to the individual clubs to address.

What does the future hold?

U16 League for female players. The team would need to register 15 players. The girls would apply for dispensation to register with their home junior club (parent club) and an U16 team. Teams would be made up of several different other teams players. Probably 4/5 teams in the North and South. Each team should put the development of the players first. Once the players reach 16 they can return to their home club and play senior women's hockey, or to other teams if before the cut off date. Structure would be 4 home/away games in their region subject to the number of teams applying. Training would be with their home club, but could train together if ice time permits. The games can be at any rink. GH advised someone has to take responsibility for the team - ensure

players turn up for games and pay refs etc. Billingham and Coventry were concerned that by naming an U16's team after club could lead to players joining that club once they turn 16 and could play seniors. Both GH and JP pointed highlighted reason why the teams should be linked to a club rather than an area. The players have to be registered to a club, there is no provision for them to be registered to an area. Team names could be open to discussion but it is likely that the club running the team would be keen to have their name used. GH also stated that the development of the player was paramount not the wills of a particular club, team or coach.

If the team is associated to a home club then they are open to funding many more on funding opportunities JP to advise. Email GH if you are interested in running an U16 team. GH stated that this is a great opportunity to bring new U16's female players into the sport and we should be careful not to get lost in what individual clubs feel is best for them. GH also stated that while neighboring teams would be encouraged to join together to form the Girls U16's teams, the long term goal is for clubs to be able to form U16's Girls teams in their own right without sharing players from other clubs. GH advised that the minimum number of players on the bench for all leagues is still 11, but teams with major problems should still apply for dispensation, and each case would be judged upon its merits.

Anna Walters will arrange the fixtures for the U16 League.

Discipline will be dealt with by GH (green copy to GH)

Electronic game sheets were discussed. GH advised the board must approve them before we can use them.

Statistics were discussed and GH advised look at the new game sheet documents first.

It was asked if the 28 and 29 September could be kept free from fixtures for the NHL games in London.

GH praised the floor for the way the meeting had been conducted in these difficult times.

The meeting was concluded.