

ENGLISH ICE HOCKEY ASSOCIATION LIMITED
MEETING OF DIRECTORS 2ND – 3RD FEBRUARY 2008

Minutes of meeting of EIHA Board on 2nd – 3rd February 2008 at the Renaissance Hotel, Derby

Present: Ken Taggart, Neville Moralee, David Hurn, Bob Wilkinson, Rob Laidler, Irene Jones, Geoff Hemmerman, Rita MacKriel (YMC Chair), Charles Dacres (National Child Protection & Equity Officer, up to League Updates).

In attendance: Liz Moralee (minutes).

Apologies: Val Wilkinson.

OPENING REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

KT thanked everyone for coming.

PROPOSAL TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE LAST BOARD MEETING
1ST DECEMBER 2007

The minutes of the Board meeting on 1st December were read and approved, proposed **IJ**, seconded **RL**.

MATTERS ARISING

None.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – MR TAGGART

KT said on the whole everything is going reasonably well. There are a few problems in the EPIHL.

FINANCIAL REPORT – MR MORALEE

NM said there has been little unusual in the accounts recently. There were no questions on the end of month reports. There will not be much more income from registrations this season. He has invested some money in a one-year bond which he hopes will earn a reasonable amount of interest. This should still leave enough to pay the rest of the season's outgoings, the main items being rec insurance and England and Conference team expenses. The last financial year is now closed, so he will soon send the paperwork to Bexons. All Directors are welcome to attend the yearly meeting with them to discuss the accounts. **NM** was congratulated on continuing to do a good job with the finances.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

KT explained that the original development plan was written by Simon Cutting, and the most recent one by Bernard Warden. It would be a useful first step to look at this and see how much of it has been achieved. He said the plan should be mainly about strategy rather than specific targets. It was thought best to have the plan going forward no more than five years, although there is unlikely to be any grant aid available until after the 2012 Olympics. After lengthy discussion a revised version was produced and action items assigned. It will be sent out to the sections, with input to go to **IJ** by April.

CHILD PROTECTION – MR HURN

DH distributed the revised child protection section of the development plan. There is still a small number of clubs with no child protection officer; he is dealing with the situation. He will inform **BW** and **RM**, so that they can discuss it with these clubs at youth hockey meetings. The Club Secretary course will include templates for forms such as parental consent and medical details. There are 6,500 DCMS *Safe in Sport* booklets to give out to parents.

CD has asked the **CRB** about how often people should need to be checked, but they said only that it is at the organisation's discretion. He considers the **EIHA** have good systems in place, so might not need to insist on people being checked more than once. **RM** has some information from a seminar on the Independent Safeguarding Authority, who will decide on whether individuals should be allowed to be involved in youth sport. Anyone who employs a person they know to be barred will face six months imprisonment and a heavy fine.

CD spoke about one individual child protection case.

RULES & REGULATIONS

IJ has made the amendments as decided on at the last meeting. She will also insert the new **IIHF** regulations for international transfers. There was a discussion about Retain and Transfer regulations, which are causing problems because it is difficult to decide whether to stop someone playing when they allegedly have debts to their former club. The Rules & Regulations can now be posted on the website.

IHUK UPDATE – MR WILKINSON

IHUK matters were discussed in detail.

LEAGUE UPDATES

RL said in the **EPIHL** Guildford and Bracknell are vying for position at the top of the table. At the December league meeting David Taylor said Bracknell would have no problems completing the season, then the next day he walked away from the club. Bracknell were given three deadlines and missed them all. One of their games at Romford was not played, and has now been awarded to Romford. There might be appeals over this, as the result could affect both the title and the final playoff place (the decision was of course made before the implications for the standings became clear) but the decision had been made without favour and had been based on the situation at the time the game was not played. He considers there was no way the game could have been played, since Bracknell's players had been threatening a players' strike as they had not been paid, and the club had no employers' liability or public liability insurances in place. The Board felt Bracknell lost the points as a result of their own mismanagement (this being no reflection on the new management team which had stood in to rescue the team). The **EPIHL** Cup has only the final still to be played, but the Knockout Cup is still under way. The league is very competitive, with any team able to beat any other on the day.

RL said in the **ENIHL**, Peterborough have already won South A, but the other conferences are still close contests. There will be a two-leg playoff game to decide who makes the Final. The same applies to the Cup.

The Northern League still has three teams in contention for the title. There will be a Finals Weekend again this season.

There are a number of discipline problems in the **ENIHL**. Whitley Bay appealed against a rest-of-season ban on their coach for the team's accumulation of penalty points. They said the club is running two separate teams, one for the League and one for the Cup. Accepting this does not mean changing the rules, as there is no other team run in this way. However there was concern that this type of situation could give clubs the opportunity to work off

suspensions in different leagues. A Blackburn coach did not appeal his ban within seven days and has already sat out two games, but is now taking legal advice. He says he never agreed to be head coach, and the signature on the gamesheet is not his. Bans on the team's nominated head coach for accumulation of penalty points were instituted as a response to major discipline problems in the league, and the LMC hoped this would make coaches take more responsibility for their teams' behaviour. However it now seems the bans are being awarded to other coaches than the ones who have the real control. **RL** and Sue Tomalin do not think these rules are working in the way they were intended, and are trying to come up with something better. There are another five or more coaches whose teams have penalty points in the high 80s. The nominated head coaches have not been at every game. There was a discussion about whether a player/coach suspended from coaching should be allowed to continue playing. While it seemed reasonable for a player suspended for indiscipline on the ice to be suspended from coaching as well, since they are setting a poor example, some thought suspending a person from coaching should not necessarily entail suspending them from playing. The disciplinary document says a suspended coach may not come within 30m of the team bench.

GH said the U16 Girls League is going very well. Oxford have had problems due to poor management by the individual in charge. There will be a final between the North and South winners at the Trophy Weekend. It was agreed the Chairman's Cup which was presented only once will be used for this competition, and both teams will receive shields for winning their Conference. All the teams currently competing in the league are likely to enter again next season, and Peterborough are also considering entering a team.

The Senior and U16 England North v South games are being played over two legs. At the second leg the Senior England team will be chosen and selections will be made for the School of Excellence. Both the Senior and U16 England teams have been invited to a tournament in Canada in October, in the school holidays. **GH** would like both teams to go to this, in addition to the Prague trip. The Prague tournament now includes some U16 teams. If there is no subsidy the trip to Canada will cost the players £1k each. The parents need to pay for the School of Excellence as well. The total costs for the year would be likely to add up to £2.5k, which the parents would probably not be able to cope with. **GH** said the Prague trip is very good for the players. It is difficult to compare the two tournaments as they have never been to the Canadian one. Both have teams from several nations. The players could stay at St Clare's College for £126 per day. On tournament days the organisers provide food, and buses are provided. It was decided to send both teams to both tournaments, with each receiving £6k subsidy, the same as other England teams.

RM reported back from the meeting on the future of U10s hockey. The decisions made were

- Gary Apsley is taking responsibility for providing guidance on some of these issues, particularly recruitment.
- New U10 players will be able to register up to 30th April.
- The league will remain 3-line.
- When a team gets ahead by 8 clear goals, the game will continue but the scoreboard will be turned off and no more goals added to the gamesheet. After this point teams have the option of swapping players, including goalkeepers.
- Games will be played according to "Jonker's rules".
- The league structure will remain the same. However to maximise participation, if a team do not have 16 players they may still enter the league. Until they have enough players their games will be played as challenges, and they may borrow players (however some teams are very reluctant to borrow players).

GH has been working with Peter Johnson on the new rules. He used the old ones as a template, and will issue the new ones showing new passages in red and indicating where passages have been deleted. Shifts are 1 min 15 sec. The new rules include a table showing shift change times. There should be very few stoppages, so teams may decide at the start of

the season whether they will play 2 x 32 or 3 x 21 mins. If the rink has no gates they can put the benches on the ice with a barrier. He and Peter Johnson are arranging seminars on the new rules. If possible there will be a game to demonstrate it. The rules will be reviewed annually.

The 8 clear goals rule might mean it is difficult to separate teams in the standings. If at the end of the season two teams in the top three are tied on points, they will play a one-off playoff game. The home team is the first to provide ice time. If the game is tied at the end of normal time there will be a sudden victory penalty shootout.

Teams should ensure that at least one of their coaches has skates with them, so they can officiate if there are no officials available. U10 games are often allocated new officials, and many at the U10 meeting thought U10 games too important for this. **KT** said if an U10 game has two officials one should be a new one. It was pointed out that officials need to be trained somehow, many mature officials have dropped out, and even ENIHL games often have a one-man system as there is such an acute shortage.

It was felt that **RM**, with help from **GH**, did an excellent job running the U10 meeting. **DH** has now presented these ideas to the South teams, and there was no negative feedback. The Board think these changes will mean a lot of improvement in U10 hockey.

The Board thought that while structure of the youth leagues is a matter for the YMC, in the case of major changes such as those currently being proposed the Board should vote on it in order to give backup. **GH** explained that the proposal is for the teams to be put in order depending on where they finished the previous season, and the list split down the middle to determine the divisions. The new system is to start from 2008/9 with the order taken from the 2007/8 league placings. The Board were concerned about the likely outcry from teams which are likely to be in the playoffs. **GH** said when the line is drawn to begin with, the team immediately below it will change places with the team immediately above. The teams two places above and two places below the line will play off, and if the team two places below win they will move up a place. The final line cannot be drawn until they know how many teams there will be. Clubs will know in advance how many slots there will be available in Div 1. The Board decided all the youth leagues should be balanced out prior to next season. The AGM will include a presentation on this. There will be a more detailed explanation at the next YMC meeting. **RM** said she wants to be sure that all clubs have been consulted before a decision is made. Opinions were divided about whether teams should be allowed to turn down promotion, and if so under what circumstances. If teams have a choice they are likely to leave it late to decide. Clubs need to decide early on how many teams they will enter, so Val Wilkinson knows which team to register them for (at the AGM teams are already giving her registration forms). Unfortunately clubs cannot always know if they will have enough players to enter a league, as players sometimes transfer before the team has even played a game.

The Board approved the purchase of a new cup for the U18s Final.

It was agreed at the YMC meeting to run off-ice official courses at Conference level. There will probably be one course per Conference. **RM** asked the Board how much the course fee should be. It was agreed to charge a maximum of £20 (the fee for the most recent courses).

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

BW will bring a projector to all Board meetings in future, which will make presentations such as **RM**'s on the U10s easier to understand.

There was a discussion about recent problems between the Coventry and Bradford junior clubs. Bradford have made a formal complaint about events connected with the Bradford v Coventry U16 game. **IJ** will write to the Coventry chair to say the club are alleged to have brought the game into disrepute by delaying a game, taking photographs without permission, and complaining to the local authority without bringing the matter to the EIHA's attention, and asking for a response within seven days.

GH proposed that the EIHA name Rhino as their official shirt manufacturer and give them a link on the website. He said they are already the automatic choice for most of the EIHA's teams, and give them good deals. This would not mean EIHA officers could not buy shirts

from anyone else. Others wanted to know whether Rhino give the EIHA better deals than anyone else. RM has found their costs are spiralling, with Conference shirts now costing £50 (the NHL pay only \$75 for their shirts). Some EIHA officers have found them difficult to deal with. Most thought it is most important to get the best deals. **DH** said it is important to have consistent quality, and a proper contract with all suppliers. **GH** said he has no problem if people want to look for shirts elsewhere, but if they do they will have to deal with it themselves. Only one other manufacturer has been in touch offering to supply shirts, and when he asked for a sample they did not send one. It was agreed that he should speak to Rhino about the possibility of being the official (but not sole) supplier, and ask what they would be able to do in return.

Andy Gordon emailed RM, Jayne Bowns and Mohammed Ashraff about lighting problems at Solihull. The rink has replaced floodlights with lighting around the outside, which is much cheaper but less effective. Subsequent comments from Mohammed Ashraff led the Solihull club to think the EIHA wanted the rink closed down. The lighting at Solihull is not very good but still better than at some other rinks. **KT** said although referees are understandably worried about being taken to court over rink safety issues, especially since the Martin Sibley insurance case, he has told them they are not to have anything to do with risk assessments or the condition of rinks. He will speak to Mohammed Ashraff.

The next Board meeting will be on the day before the start of the Conference Tournament. RM, Steve Taylor, Kate Cady, Mohammed Ashraff, Tony Boynton, Simon Hopkins and Sue Tomalin will be invited for the section on the development plan. Rooms need to be booked as soon as possible. **IJ** will contact all these people over the next two weeks and ask them to confirm attendance.

RL and **NM** have signed the forms for BingoLotto. However it is unlikely that hockey will receive any money from it for a long time. There is a photo shoot on 26th February with about 80 sports, where hockey will be represented by a Streatham youth player. The party in London on 29th February is for only 20 sports, not including hockey. BingoLotto want good quality footage of a youth team. **RL** is liaising with a production company. They will probably film Chelmsford, their nearest club.

The Sports Club of the Year competition takes place this month. **RL** will send a form to anyone who wants to nominate a club.

BW had a meeting with Emmanuel Blanchard of SportsAid. He tried to persuade him to make more grants available for hockey than the current 30. He was then very disappointed that only 14 forms were returned (all 6 from the U13s, 4 from the U15s and 4 from the Women). The players had at least three weeks to do it. He said he has done his best to help players obtain funding, and those who did not return their forms deprived others of the chance to apply.

It was agreed that **DH** should go to a seminar on relations with law enforcement.

The meeting ended at 11.10 a.m.

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