



Spring Meeting Newsletter April 21 – 29, 2012

Dear WHAM Member,

This year's spring meeting will again take place online. This format was popular last season and allows us to disperse important information to all members without the requirement of an in person meeting; however, the information is still important, so one TEAM MANAGER from each team must do the following by Sunday, April 29, 2012:

1. Send an email to the league administrator at leagueadmin@whamhockey.org.
 - a. In the subject line of the email type: WHAM Spring Meeting 2012 – [division & team], e.g. WHAM Spring Meeting 2012 – C1 Kodiaks.
 - b. In the body of the email acknowledge that:
 - i. You have read and understand the information contained in the newsletter.
 - ii. Your team has reviewed the goalie stats from all 2011-2012 season games and is confirming that they have been entered correctly (see goalie stat section later on in newsletter)
 - iii. If you are representing a team in the B1 or B2 division, please cast your vote for the B Vice-President position (Beth Chaplin only nominated).
 - c. Type your name at the bottom of the email before sending.
2. Make sure you receive a confirmatory email from the league administrator acknowledging receipt of the response.

Teams that do not complete this by April 29th will face a \$50 fine for “non-attendance”.

POTENTIAL CHANGES FOR NEXT SEASON

As announced in the March 2012 newsletter, the Board tasked a subcommittee of WHAM members to look closely at comments and feedback that were received, both directly from the membership and from the survey conducted at the end of last season. This subcommittee was chaired by Beth Chaplin and included members from all divisions in WHAM. They tackled many issues but concentrated their efforts on improvements to things such as league divisions, assessments, and rule changes to promote fair and safe play. All of these suggested changes were based on comments and suggestions by the membership.

Two Town Hall meetings were held at the beginning of April. The first meeting (April 3) was attended by 12 members, the second meeting (April 11) was attended by 14 members. The following issues were discussed.

Assessments

The Board is considering making the following improvement to assessments for new members:

- Having combined A/B/C assessment sessions with consistent, paid and pre-screened assessors;
- Increasing assessment sessions from one to two hours; and
- Videotaping sessions

Sessions will be scheduled to occur in July (1), August (2), September (2), October (1), November (1) and December (1). New players with high school or collegiate hockey experience could still enter the league without assessing following the existing rules in the league handbook. In May, the WHAM website will open online registration for assessments and there



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will be an application posted for those who wish to apply to be assessors for both skaters and goalies. For more information, please email Sandi Wewerka at c3comm@whamhockey.org.

Developmental Division

The Board is considering adding a developmental division that is intended to encourage and prepare players new to the sport of hockey. Players with no or very little previous hockey experience could register directly for the developmental division without having to go through assessments. This division would span the regular season and include a combination of classroom and on-ice skills, including controlled scrimmages. Players in this division would not join teams but rather would attend sessions of purchased ice and classroom times at local arenas. Instructor/coaches and jerseys would be provided and the division would progress towards more and more on-ice scrimmaging. At the end of the season, coaches would assess players and let them know what division they should register for the next season. New players to WHAM and any existing C3 players who feel like they would benefit from such a program would be welcome. If you have more questions about this division, please contact Sandi Wewerka at C3comm@whamhockey.org.

Rule Changes Intended to Encourage Fair and Safe Play

Every year the Board spends countless hours on complaints about unsportsmanlike and unsafe play in the league. The Board must rely upon referees to keep the game under control and call necessary penalties, but it is still every member's responsibility to conduct themselves in a safe manner and with good sportsmanship. Remember, we are playing recreational hockey! Despite reminders to this effect, there still seems to be a small percentage of teams and players who the Board consistently hears complaints about. In an effort to try and further discourage this type of behavior the Board is considering two new rule changes - one targeted at individuals and one targeted at teams.

Proposed Rule Change #1 (related to individuals):

“Any player who, once having played in a minimum of fourteen (14) games, has an average of more than 1.00 of penalty minutes per game played, is ineligible to play in any remaining games for the season, including the championship tournament. If the player continues to play in any games once this penalty average maximum has been reached, the games that she played in will be forfeited and the team will be subject to fines for playing an ineligible player.”

Reading this carefully, it is important to note that the rule would not “kick in” until after the 14th game (about 2/3 of the season), giving the player ample time to adjust their playing style if necessary. Also, in reviewing stats from last season, had this rule been in effect, it would have applied to only 18/1251 members or 1.4% of the league; 96.4% of the league would not have been impacted by such a rule last season. It's anticipated that simply making all players aware of the rule at the beginning of the season would further reduce the number of players impacted by the rule.



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Proposed Rule Change #2 (related to teams):

“For a team to be eligible for postseason play in the league’s championship game, at the end of regular season play, the team’s total number of penalty minutes cannot exceed the limits in the table below:”

The rule would then include a table listing each division, the numbers of games scheduled for the upcoming season and the maximum number of penalty limits allowed for that team based upon the number of games scheduled. The limit would be set by the Board and determined by reviewing the stat range of the entire division for the previous season. Each team, prior to the first game, would know exactly what that limit is and could work to adjust their style of play, if necessary, so that they would be eligible for post season play. It’s anticipated that this rule would impact less than 4% of the teams and again, that by publishing the rule upfront at the beginning of the season, teams that have problems with excessive penalty minutes could adjust their style of play accordingly.

The intent of these two rules is to place more responsibility for safe and sportsmanlike play in the hands of the individuals.

Parity Within Divisions

The number of teams in certain divisions has grown considerably in recent years. One observation has been that in the larger divisions (e.g. B2, C1, C2) there is a greater spread in the abilities of teams at the bottom of the divisions compared to the top. This makes some teams more apprehensive about moving up a division even with consistent demonstrated success. One suggestion has been to divide divisions into upper and lower level brackets (based upon the previous season’s record) so that teams play other teams with greater parity. There has also been interest in renaming WHAM’s divisions so that they are named more consistently with USA Hockey brackets. For example, a WHAM B team is generally playing at a different (lower) level than a national B team. Over the next couple months the Board will be looking at possible ways to divide teams into brackets with more “like” teams.

The Board will be voting on these proposed and other rule changes to the league handbook over the summer. If you would like to submit additional feedback on these please send an email to Beth Chaplin at b_vicepresident@whamhockey.org.

WHAM BOARD OPENINGS

Every year half of the Board positions expire and nominations to fill these positions are sought. This Spring the positions of B Vice-President (currently Beth Chaplin), Treasurer (currently Lori Jorgenson) and President (currently Terry Provo) are up for election. Nominations for these positions have been sought since February and the closing date was Sunday, April 15th. In the end, only one nomination was received and that was for Beth Chaplin as B Vice-President. Therefore, B teams should each cast one vote for this position. Since there were no nominations received for the President and Treasurer positions the Board will decide at their May meeting how to fill these positions. In addition, Alison Hanson has resigned as the A Vice-President, but there are a couple A players who have expressed interest



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in this position. If you are interested in stepping into any of these Board positions, please contact the League Administrator immediately at leagueadmin@whamhockey.org.

GOALIE AND PLAYER STATS

The Board is aware that some player and goalie stats are not accurate. It is the responsibility of each winning team to accurately enter in player and goalie stats. One of the most common errors occurs when entering goalie stats. For each game, the game duration should be entered as 46 minutes (46:00, not 00:46), not 60 minutes. Entering 60 minutes or 46 seconds screws up the goalie's save percentage for comparison purposes. Each team must review your goalie stats for all 2011 – 2012 season games and confirm that they've been entered correctly.

NEXT SEASON REMINDERS

Keep in mind these important reminders for next season:

1. The deadline to declare you team's intent to play in WHAM for the 2012 – 2013 season is Wednesday, **August 15, 2012**.
2. As your team purchases ice over the summer for next season, the goal is going to be to try and keep the number of season games for each division at approximately 24, with half being home games. Plan for at least a few extra ice hours to give flexibility to the scheduling process and add to this number any additional hours your team wishes for practice. Plan to come to the Scheduling Meeting in the Fall with enough ice!
3. If you are forming a new team or your team is going to be getting new jerseys over the summer, remember these two things prior to ordering jerseys:
 - a. You must get the name of your team approved by the Board to avoid duplicate names in the league. The team name must be non-offensive and uniquely different from other teams in the league. Send an email requesting approval of your team name to your division's vice-president.
 - b. All teams must have a set of light (predominately white) and dark jerseys for league play. Jerseys must display a unique number. Names are optional; however, names (if present) and numbers on jerseys must match the Player name and number on the team's roster and the game score sheet.

FEES

Last season, fees for playing in WHAM were as follows:

USA Hockey: \$30; MN Hockey: \$10; WHAM: \$15

These fees have not increased in several years and we wanted to let you know that USA Hockey and WHAM are both considering fee increases for next season in order to balance their budgets for next fiscal year. The WHAM fee would likely be no higher than \$20. Also, referee fees are typically decided by the referee scheduler in June. We'll keep teams posted on all of these fees as soon as they are known.



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WHAM HALL OF FAME

Every two years WHAM elects deserving individuals to the WHAM Hall of Fame. This year the induction will occur at the Fall 2012 meeting. Nominations and voting will occur over the summer and early fall but begin thinking about someone you'd like to nominate and watch for more information in the coming months.

The candidate must be either a current or former WHAM member, or a former Minnesota Girls' & Women's Hockey Association (former league name) or Minnesota Women's Hockey League (former league name) member. Members include players, coaches, managers and volunteer board members. The ideal candidate has been involved in league activities and the development of girls' and women's hockey for a recommended minimum of ten years. The candidate should be a positive role model for all girls and women in the sport and be respectful of the rules governing our association.

- ☞ **Players:** A player who has performed with excellence and promotes the sport as a positive role model.
- ☞ **Coaches:** A coach who has distinguished himself/herself by demonstrating exceptional leadership, character, and athletic achievement during his/her time in the league and contributes to the growth and development of women's hockey.
- ☞ **Manager/Volunteer Board Member:** A manager or volunteer board member who has been a loyal and devoted supporter of girls' and women's hockey.

WHAM WEAR

The Board is interested in increasing league awareness and pride by facilitating an avenue for those who wish to purchase sportswear with the WHAM logo. Do you know a sportswear vendor who would be interested in selling sportswear with the WHAM logo online? We'd like to talk to them! Go to the website and review the WHAM Logo Use and Policy (<http://www.whamhockey.org/page/show/101484-wham-rules-and-forms>), then contact Gina Wright at C_vicepresident@whamhockey.org for further information.

MINNESOTA WHITECAPS UPDATE

WHAM's community of dedicated female hockey players fosters more youth female hockey players than anywhere else in the country. Minnesota now leads the nation with the highest female hockey players graduating from Division 1 and Division 3 universities. However, while youth and women's hockey expand, the professional opportunities are becoming more limited. The Minnesota Whitecaps, part of the Western Women's Hockey League (WWHL) were shut out of the Clarkson Cup in 2012 after winning it in 2010. A cup that was once touted as the Stanley Cup for women now seems to be simply the Canadian Women's Hockey League (CWHL) league cup. It seems the CWHL claims the rights to the Cup. The WWHL is no longer invited to play these teams. The CWHL will allow the Whitecaps to join their league for a price - \$800,000 paid evenly over a four-year time period. The Whitecaps are considering the feasibility of this offer. It would mean moving from the WWHL to the CWHL and might mean restructuring the Whitecaps as we currently know them to be. Should they stick with the WWHL or move to the CWHL? As a nonprofit 50c3 organization the Whitecaps are seeking sponsorships opportunities from any and all individuals and companies located mainly in the United States to raise the capital to enable them to make this decision.



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To explore the feasibility of getting into the CWHL the Whitecaps are approaching the WHAM friends and family for help. All of the Whitecaps players are also members of WHAM. The Whitecaps managers and players are asking WHAM women to help make the gains in professional hockey that they have been making in youth hockey. The Whitecaps players ask WHAM players to come together with brain power and personal and professional connections and help grow the sport everyone in WHAM loves. If you know of any individual or company that has opportunities for sponsorship of any kind please help us find partners with the Whitecaps.

The Whitecaps give back to the youth and to WHAM members with clinics and contribute countless hours training and evaluating our youth and high school players. The value of having professional Whitecaps players as members of WHAM is endless and will reach beyond our expectations. Please assist us as we find funding and other opportunities to keep high level hockey in Minnesota. The Whitecaps can provide a presentation about what Whitecaps hockey can do for young girls the Minnesota women's hockey community. For more information, please contact Kristie Minkoff, Business Manager, Minnesota Whitecaps Hockey Club, cell: 612.710.2329, email: kminkoff@qwestoffice.net. Check out: www.minnesotawhitecaps.com and www.westernwomenshockeyleague.com.

SUMMER SKATING & CLINIC OPPORTUNITIES

Worried about going into hockey withdrawal this summer? Go to: <http://www.whamhockey.org/page/show/157573-more-hockey-opportunities> to check out all the upcoming hockey, clinic and tournament opportunities. You can also post an ad in the classifieds section of the website if you are looking for a team, or your team is looking for players.

THANK YOU!

On behalf of the WHAM Board, I want to thank every member of the league for another wonderful and successful season of hockey. Have a safe and relaxing summer. We are already beginning preparations to make the 2012 - 2013 season the best ever!

Cheers,
Terry Provo
WHAM President