

Rules Committee Report 2014 Winter Meeting

rev. 2 12/20/2013



The Mn Hockey Rules Committee met on Tuesday, December 3, 2013.

Bylaw Article 4 defines "Individual Sustaining Members". There was question if we have any such members and if this is needed. There was further discussion about whether we should have a membership category for non-board-member committee chairs and members. USAH has a membership category of "Volunteer" – perhaps this can be used. These issues were not resolved and are deferred for a future meeting.

A proposal to expand the meaning of "school" as it relates to the Participation Rule and further define it as "accredited school" was considered. The Rules Committee elected to take no action on this proposal.

The current commitment rule (Youth Rules II-D) discusses players' commitment to their MH team. Should we also have a rule requiring teams to commit to their District activities? We sometimes have teams committing to other activities during District events. It was determined that the Districts currently have the ability to manage this, and accordingly the Rules Committee elected to take no action.

There was discussion on perhaps removing the Bylaw Article 7 paragraph on Expense Reimbursement and deferring to our Financial Policies for this. The Rules Committee elected to take no action on this for now.

The current hierarchy of traveling teams is AA, A, B, B2, C. A's can play AA's, and B's can play B2's, but A's can't play B's and B2's can't play C's. There was some discussion about relaxing this, but the DD's already have the ability to approve interlevel play where it makes sense (excluding invitational tournaments). The Rules Committee elected to take no action on this.

The committee was asked to consider having a policy on whether on-ice players are to remove their helmets for the National Anthem. This was deferred to USA Hockey and will be reported on later.

Modifications to the Youth Rules and Inter-Affiliate Player Transfer Protocol are proposed, as shown below. Also a new Governing Document, "Social Media Policy" is presented for Board consideration.

Youth Rules Changes

R1. Our Youth Rules address playing on two teams. The present language makes little or no distinction between "city" teams and our normal association teams. The Rules Committee proposes that this be better defined, as indicated below.

II. REGISTRATION

B. No Player shall be registered with two or more MH/USA Hockey teams at the same time regardless of league division or classification, except:

1. Players on ~~city house~~ **in-house** teams may play with both their ~~MH~~ **in-house** team and a ~~city~~ **an association** traveling team.
2. Special Events approved by the MH Board. Such events must be on the Winter Meeting agenda at the latest, according to the Bylaw requirements for putting items on the agenda, and are subject to requirements imposed by MH. Approval of Special Events shall be by 2/3 vote.

C. ~~CITY~~ **IN-HOUSE** LEAGUES - Where a league exists within a ~~city~~, the **an association, a** team representing the ~~city~~ **association** may be formed of players from any of the league teams providing ALL the teams are properly registered as house teams by the proper dates, and the twenty (20) player squad to represent the ~~city~~ **association** in the district ~~and state~~ tournament play is declared by the player registration date of December 31st.

R2. We presently have a rule stating, "Players waived to another association are not allowed to play up." Exceptions have been brought to the Board for approval. The Rules Committee was asked to propose a change allowing the two Association Presidents and District Directors to approve such a play-up scenario.

III. CITIZENSHIP AND AGE REGULATIONS

[R2] D. AGE CLASSIFICATIONS - Teams are to be formed observing the established age classifications. Players on teams shall follow the age range established for the classification. Each association shall have a policy on whether players are allowed to "play up" to the next classification and the conditions which apply. Players waived to another association are not allowed to play up **unless approved by both association presidents and the cognizant District Director(s)**. Two-thirds (2/3) of the players on teams at the Squirt level and above must be within the age classification in which the team is registered. Exception: In cases of low player numbers, players from multiple age groups may be combined on a single team, if necessary, with the approval of the cognizant District Director and the USA Hockey Minnesota District Registrar.

We continue to have situations that are not adequately covered by our Participation Rule. Based on various inputs, the Rules Committee was asked to propose the following:

- R3. Further define Residency so it is based on the residence of the child's parent, legal guardian or custodian as confirmed by a court. All forms of guardian and third-party custody actions under MN Stat. 257B require a court order after the filing of a petition by the requesting party.
- R4. Define discretionary waivers and mandatory waivers.
- R5. Add text indicating that no conditions can be put on a school waiver.
- R6. Further define "completing the grades offered in the school". Remove reference to "system".

IV. PARTICIPATION

2. Definitions

[R3] Residence – the community in which the parent(s), or legal guardian(s)/**custodian(s) as confirmed by a court**, having primary custody live(s) the majority of time when tryouts begin. A pending move is not considered unless the parent or legal guardian has closed on the sale of a new residence. Players moving after tryouts begin can be assigned to teams on a space-available basis.

Association of Residence – the association whose boundaries include the player's residence.

Association of School Attendance – the association whose boundaries include the location of the school the player attends.

Home Association – either the Association of Residence, or the Association of School Attendance to which a player has been properly waived and continues to attend school.

[R4] **Mandatory Waiver – neither the releasing nor the accepting association can decline to approve a school attendance waiver that meets the requirements as described below.**

Discretionary Waiver – an agreement between associations to transfer a player for reasons as agreed to by the affected associations and District Director(s). Any of the approving parties have the authority to reject such a waiver.

[R5] 3. A **mandatory** waiver shall be granted, **without conditions except as described below**, to any player who wishes to participate in the MH association whose boundaries incorporate the school in which the player is enrolled and is attending, as follows:

- a. For schools with multiple campuses, the "main" campus shall prevail unless agreed otherwise by the affected District Director(s).
- b. If a player attends their normally-assigned public school, and that school normally includes students from more than one youth hockey association, the player shall be assigned to their Association of Residence and is not eligible for a school-attendance waiver.

- c. Players waived based on school choice shall be deemed to be members of their Association of School Attendance and shall have full rights and privileges accorded to all members of that association, including voting rights. (Exception – see "Changing Schools" below.)
- d. Players receiving a waiver based on school attendance shall register with their Association of School Attendance for as long as they are qualified students of that school (including the first year). If they stop attending school in that association's area, they revert back to their Association of Residence for participation or waiver.

5. Changing Schools

- a. Players who change schools without a related change of residence shall elect one of the following:
 - 1. Have full eligibility to compete at any division in their Association of Residence; or
 - 2. Have full eligibility to compete at any division in their Association of School Attendance if they completed the grades offered in the school they were previously attending; or
 - 3. Be eligible at all except the highest division in their new Association of School Attendance for one (1) year beginning with the first day of attendance in the new school if they did not complete the grades offered in the school they were previously attending.
 - 4. "Completing the grades offered in the school" is defined as completing the grades offered in Elementary, Middle School or Junior High School **(the transition from elementary school to Middle/Jr. High School, and the transition between Middle/Jr. High School to High School)**. Typically there is a change of building involved, but a building change alone (such as a change between 3rd and 4th grade) does not constitute completing the grades offered in the system.

[R6]

R7. Add a consequence for a coach for using an ineligible player. Right now it just says the team may be excluded from Regions/State.

V. ELIGIBILITY PROVISIONS

- A. Any team found to have an ineligible player that participates in any MH sanctioned on-ice activity will be suspended from MH District, Region and State Tournament play for the current season. This suspension may be reviewed by the cognizant District Director to determine if the severity of the suspension is appropriate and a less severe penalty may be imposed if the facts so dictate. **The head coach of a team that knowingly plays an ineligible player shall, as a minimum, be suspended from coaching for the remainder of the season.**

[R7]

R8. Current rule states: There shall be no interlevel play (games or scrimmages). We no longer use the terminology "scrimmage" so this should be updated

R9. We requested and received an exception to the USAH rule regarding full-ice Mite games. To be in alignment with our approved exception to allow up to 10 full-ice games for Mites, it is proposed to change paragraph F (5) as follows:

VII. LEVELS OF PLAY

- D. Interlevel Play - There shall be no interlevel play (games or ~~scrimmages~~ **exhibition games**) between classifications...

[R8]

- 5. At the Mite (8 and Under) level – games during the first half of the season (before December 31st.) should be played cross- or half-ice. During the second half of the season there shall be no more than 10 full ice games, ~~unless approved~~ **as monitored** by the District Director. The Director's decision is final.

[R9]

Inter-Affiliate Transfer Changes

IT-1. Our current protocol says players have to be registered with Minnesota and USAH but we do not say they have to provide evidence. Also, our intent was to accommodate players who wanted to participate on National Tournament Eligible team. The proposed changes will make this requirement clearer.

Inter-Affiliate Transfer

The Minnesota Hockey Board of Directors will designate one person who will act upon all interstate waiver requests from those who submit them, using the following criteria:

1. This protocol applies to Youth and Girls programs that are conducted during the Minnesota Hockey “regular season”, which extends from the date players are permitted to register for a given year through the end of the Minnesota Hockey Youth/Girls State Tournaments in March, and is intended to be used for season-long transfers. Players in the Adult or Women classifications are excluded from this protocol.
2. Prior to submitting a request for transfer, all players must first register with their resident state. For players coming into Minnesota, an approved waiver from the player’s resident state must be obtained, then submitted to and approved by the Minnesota Hockey designee before the player may be placed on a Minnesota Hockey team roster. **Minnesota players desiring to play outside of Minnesota must provide a copy of their USAH registration confirmation page, verifying they are registered for the current playing season in Minnesota.**
3. Minnesota Hockey will accept approved players from another state who wish to play in Minnesota because the state in which they reside does not offer a program similar to those offered in Minnesota.
4. Minnesota hockey will approve an interstate waiver request from one of its resident players provided that the player will be participating on a **National Tournament Eligible team** program classified as Tier 1 by a USAH Affiliate and Minnesota Hockey does not offer such a program.

[IT-1]

Proposed New Social Media Policy

Mission

To utilize social media platforms in supporting Minnesota Hockey’s mission of promoting the growth of hockey in the state and development of players while providing the best possible experience for all participants by encouraging, developing, advancing and administering the sport.

Purpose

To create a landscape of two-way communication between Minnesota Hockey and its members and/or potential members, while delivering relevant news and program information to those interested in the sport of hockey. Utilizing social media’s tools for expansion, Minnesota Hockey will form a connected community to foster dialogue and interactions among and with consumers, and a platform to spread Minnesota Hockey messages, drive membership and encourage growth of the sport.

Overall Goals

1. Engage and interact with players, fans, parents, administrators, officials and coaches using pertinent topics to drive conversation.
2. Create awareness and loyalty for the Minnesota Hockey brand, the USA Hockey brand and their programs.
3. Develop creative measures to grow social media membership.
4. Support prominent Minnesota Hockey initiatives, notably membership development, the American Development Model, Grant and Scholarship programs and SafeSport among others.
5. Provide greater benefit to Minnesota Hockey’s partners with regard to access to consumers.

Proposal

It is proposed to add the following policy as a Minnesota Hockey Governing Document:

Social Media Policy

The following social media policy focuses on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, but applies to all social media platforms and message boards, including those that have yet to be developed.

Definition

Social media is an instrument of communication that uses technology to transform communication into interactive dialogue.

Maintenance Guidelines

1. Content must represent Minnesota Hockey in a **positive** manner.
2. Content must utilize proper spelling and grammar.
3. Accounts must be monitored on a daily basis (**minimum of three times**), **with any explicit comments/posts removed immediately where applicable**.
4. Account administrators should be active in directing questions and interjecting posts/comments to balance negative sentiment or incorrect information where appropriate; however, Minnesota Hockey staff should always maintain a professional tone and refrain from back-and-forth engagement with consumers.
5. To be most effective, accounts should be active on a weekly basis (suggested minimum of two posts).
6. Posts should engage consumers and create dialogue and/or feedback, such as likes, comments, posts, replies, retweets, mentions and utilization of intended hashtags.
7. A department should establish objectives for each social media platform it utilizes.

Promotion

The Facebook and Twitter logos will be included in all Minnesota Hockey promotional materials, with a link to the main pages - Facebook.com/MinnHockey and Twitter.com/MinnHockey - where applicable. Secondary pages may be promoted, as long as there is also reference and/or links to the main pages.

Personal Use

For Minnesota Hockey employees, representatives and board members, personal use of social media platforms that include discussion of matters pertinent to Minnesota Hockey in any fashion must positively represent the organization and reflect its goals and vision at **all** times. This holds true regardless of whether your name is visible on the account or not.

Matters pertaining to Minnesota Hockey rules, regulations or legal issues should not be commented on without the approval of an appointed member of the Minnesota Hockey Board of Directors.

Violations

Failure to comply with this policy may be treated as a violation of the Board of Directors Code of Conduct.

Comments or posts should never disparage a child at any time. They should also never reflect negatively on a parent, coach or referee currently under Minnesota Hockey membership.

[End of Rules Committee Report]