



Michigan Amateur Hockey Association

Presidents Report – Summer 2021

Sixteen months ago, the world came to a screeching halt. Due to the pandemic, we were forced to cancel the majority of our 2020 State Playoff Tournaments, and our Player Development Tryouts and Camps. USA Hockey also cancelled all National Tournaments and the Summer Player Development Camps. Spring and Summer hockey teams, leagues and tournaments were almost non-existent in most areas of the state. The pandemic took its toll on hockey for sure.

MAHA Task Force groups were formed early in the pandemic to look at what we could do as an organization to get hockey restarted under the restrictions that were being placed on us. It was an ever-changing target, but the group of over 70 volunteers continued to meet and plan for our return.

In addition to planning, we used that time to lobby to get the rinks reopened and hockey restarted. Once we were allowed to reopen, we had to adjust to practicing and playing with facial coverings, something we never expected. Association Leadership, Coaches, Players and Officials had to make, in many cases, weekly adjustments to quarantine players and teams, adopt testing requirements, and manage many other mandates and restrictions that frequently changed as the pandemic continued across the state.

Through it all, we came together to ensure that we provided for the utmost safety for all the participants, parents, and spectator of our games. We all persevered and did the best we could amid various stops and starts to the season. In the end, we were able to complete most of the season, hold all our State Playoffs and complete our Player Development Tryouts to select players for our National Player Development Camps.

On a National Level, all the National Tournaments were held. We were able to work with the Michigan DHHS to successfully hold the Tier I 16U Tournament in Grand Rapids. Five Michigan teams were crowned National Champions: Youth Tier I 15 Only, Youth Tier II 16U, Girls Tier I 16U, Girls Tier II 14U and the Sr Women's 21+ Open.

THANK YOU for your dedication to hockey! It was your efforts as volunteers that made this all possible. You wrote letters to legislators, you adapted to restrictions and mandates, you made sure participants stayed safe, and you tried to provide as normal of a season as we possibly could for our participants.

I look forward to getting back to hockey next season. We have a lot of rebuilding and recovering that needs to take place to bring our game back and take it to new heights. We will be focused on growth and retention efforts next season and will be actively supporting our associations as they bounce back from a difficult year. With the dedication I have seen this season from all our volunteers, I know we will bounce back stronger than ever next season.

Thank you again for everything you do for our Association to make this the greatest sport in Michigan.

Have a great Summer and we will see you back in the rinks in September.

Regards,

George Atkinson

President

