

Rules Committee Report 2017 Spring Meeting

rev. 1 3/13/17



The Mn Hockey Rules Committee met on Tuesday, February 28, 2017.

We looked at adding a requirement for Controlled Scrimmages that the teams must be of the same Classification and Division. At first this seemed reasonable, but then we got into shared-ice practices such as Squirt A/B or Squirt A/Peewee B. If these teams used some of their time to practice game situations together, would that be a controlled scrimmage? In the end, we decided not to propose anything on this.

Modifications to the Bylaws and Youth Rules are proposed as shown below. Additionally, recommended changes to the Peewee/Bantam AA level-declaration process and Region format (pg 38 in the Handbook) are presented for approval on a simple-majority vote basis (these are not governing documents).

Bylaws Changes

B1. Remove the voting Board position of Juniors Director.

ARTICLE 7 – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

[B1] Adult and Women ~~and Junior~~ Directors: Adults and Women ~~and Juniors~~ shall each have a representative Director on the Board. These Directors shall represent their respective areas, perform such other duties as assigned to them by the President and shall be elected at a caucus of the representatives from the registered teams in each classification.

Youth Rules Changes

R1. To streamline the registration process, the USAH Minnesota District Registrar would like players participating at the "House" level to provide proof of date-of-birth and legal residency.

I. TEAM REGISTRATION

[R1] A. Team Rosters A USAH Roster Form must be completed for each team and submitted along with proof of date of birth, proof of legal residency for non-US citizens and other required documentation (refer to paragraph entitled Credentials hereinafter) to the USAH Registrar or designee for approval. Players on teams categorized as "~~House~~" or "Recreational" are exempt from submitting proof of date of birth or proof of legal residency for non-US citizens. Documentation may be required by the Director, Registrar or local association on an exception basis where citizenship, gender or age is questioned.

R2. At the Winter Meeting, we looked at a proposal to refine our definition of "Residence". The group was OK with what was presented, with the exception that they wanted to strike the language regarding living with closely-related family members, and the reference to where the majority of their personal possessions are located. This proposal is presented now for official Board consideration:

R3. The verbiage regarding schools that normally include students from more than one youth hockey association was placed in para. 3, which is about mandatory waivers. It is proposed to move this provision to the definitions section, along with some modifications to clarify the intent.

IV. PARTICIPATION

2. Definitions

[R2] ~~**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.~~

Residence – The legal dwelling of the player's parent(s) or court-appointed legal guardian(s) having custody of the player as substantiated by sufficient evidence to establish the location of the legal dwelling such as a valid driver's license, lease, property tax bill, utility bills or other persuasive evidence as to where the player lives. A pending relocation is not considered to be the player's residence unless the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have completed the purchase or executed a lease and moved into the new residence. In the case of foreign exchange students, the place the player resides while in the USA shall be considered the player's 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.

[R3] ~~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.~~

Note: A player attending a public school that encompasses the boundaries of more than one youth hockey association has the following options:

- **Participate in his/her Association of Residence**
- **If the player does not live within the boundaries of the associations the school feeds, the player may pick one of the associations as his/her Association of School Attendance on a one-time-choice basis.**

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.

School – the primary educational provider of the student to achieve progress towards a high school diploma, the equivalent of a high school diploma, or any post high school degree. If the provider does not instruct the student at a physical facility, the location of the school shall be the student's primary residence. High school students taking post high school classes shall not be deemed to be attending school at the post high school provider's location.

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.

R4. Clarify para. 5(a) and add provision allowing 9th Graders to change schools without penalty.

IV. PARTICIPATION

5. Changing Schools

- [R4] a. Players who ~~change schools without a related change of residence~~ **do not live in the attendance area of the school they attend** shall elect one of the following:
1. Have full eligibility to compete at any division in their Association of Residence; or
 2. Be eligible at all except the highest division in their ~~new~~ Association of School Attendance for one year beginning with the first day of attendance in the ~~new~~ school, **with full eligibility thereafter.**
- Exception: Players enrolling in 9th Grade for the first time are immediately eligible to compete at any division in their Association of School Attendance.**

R5. The following change would put emphasis towards skill development, increase player retention, keep the game fun and reduce the potential for injuries at the Bantam "C" level.

VII. LEVELS OF PLAY

- A. "Classifications" means Mite, Squirt, Peewee, 10&Under, 12&Under, Junior Gold, etc.
- B. "Divisions" means A, B, C, House, etc.
- C. To encourage development and expansion of hockey within the State and to provide for uniformity of competition, all youth hockey shall be divided into five competitive divisions as herein provided. Each District Director has the responsibility to maintain the integrity of each division within his/her district.
- "A" The highest competitive division, essentially a development program designed to enhance team and individual skills. MH will provide for district, region and state tournament competition at this division. Every association shall have the right to enter teams in the A division.
- "B" The intermediate competitive division, also essentially a development program, but primarily intended to provide a uniform competitive experience for smaller communities and programs that are not able to compete effectively at the A division. Every association that has an A division team shall also have the right to enter teams in the B division.
- [R5] "C" The lowest competitive division, also intended as an entry level for new communities and programs in order to provide a good competitive experience until they are ready to advance to a higher competitive division. There shall be no region or state tournaments at the C level. All associations that have teams in A or B divisions shall also be entitled to enter teams in the C level. **Body Checking is prohibited in all "C" level competition.**
- "House" Similar to "C", but limited to an in-house program (no participation outside of the association).
- "Recreational" Similar to "C", but limited to two activities per week (maximum) within a recreational league or organization (teams do not participate in any way outside of their recreational league or organization). No tournaments are allowed at this level, but a year-end playoff is permitted.

R6. The following clarification is proposed to clarify the Fair Play tie breaking rule.

VIII. PLAYING RULES

5. If two or more teams are tied in final standings, the following process shall be used to determine position in the standings. If the tied teams played an unequal number of games, the formula results stated below must be determined by a percentage of available points in the games played. When the tie involves two teams, the tie breaking formulas shall be used in succession until the tie is broken beginning with 5.a. When the tie involves three or more teams, their position in the standings shall be determined using the same process, except when one formula establishes a position for one or more teams, each team is placed in the applicable position. Once a team(s) is placed, the tie-breaking process shall be restarted at formula 5.a for the remaining tied teams.
- [R6] a. **Total points from** head to head competition among tied teams including Fair Play points.
- b. Most wins in league play.
- c. Fewest losses in league play

R7. The Jr Gold EJ Rule G (pg 27) says that if a player receives his third penalty and continues to play, he is considered an ineligible player and the game is forfeited. The official, scorekeeper, coach and player have joint responsibility to enforce this. However, the Protest Rule (pg 30) says if the official fails to enforce an in-game suspension, the player is not considered an ineligible player. The below rule change is proposed to resolve this conflict.

IX. PROTESTS

No protests relating to the playing of the game are allowed in any MH play. This includes scrimmage games, league games, invitational tournament games and MH tournament games with the following exceptions:

- [R7]
- A. Districts or Leagues may establish a protest policy/process for their district or league games. If such a policy/process is adopted, the district director shall be the final authority - no further appeals are allowed.
 - B. Ineligible player protests will be accepted in MH sanctioned competition. The protesting team must furnish evidence substantiating the ineligibility of the player in question. The protest must be made to the cognizant district director or tournament director who will rule on the player's eligibility and whose decision shall be final. If the player is ruled ineligible, all games in which the ineligible player participated will be forfeited. If the officials fail to assess an in-game suspension to a player who should have received one under USAH or MH rules, the player is not considered an ineligible player, with the exception of a Junior Gold Game Ejection for a player receiving his third penalty in a game.

The protest must be filed within one hour for tournament games and twenty-four hours for league games after the completion of the game in which the alleged violation occurred.

Proposed Changes To Non-Governing Documents

NG1. The change proposed below would allow the District Directors to determine the levels of play for Peewee A/AA and Bantam A/AA teams rather than that authority being controlled by the Competition Committee. Refer to page 38 in the Handbook.

Peewee & Bantam AA Region/State Tournaments

Peewee A and Bantam A teams will be split into "A" and "AA" sub-divisions at the end of the season for the purpose of State Tournaments and associated playdowns. The process to do this will be as follows:

- 1. The AA sub-division started with the 2012-13 season. The default sub-division for teams (A or AA) was determined by the Minnesota State HS League classification of the boys' HS programs that the association served. Associations were allowed to request a change from AA-to-A or A-to-AA sub-divisions.
- 2. Going forward, teams will be assigned to the same sub-division as they were the previous season - the process as indicated below can be used to request a sub-division change. For new teams, the subdivision will be assigned by default as indicated above; ~~submit form~~ subject to a request ~~ed~~ change. Any team that by default qualified to be AA, petitioned down to A, and then won the A state tournament will need to ~~resubmit their form to continue~~ justify continuing to participate at the A level, or upgrade to AA the following season.
- 3. Associations may request to change their sub-division from AA-to-A or A-to-AA ~~using the "Sub-Division Change Form". The form shall be completely and honestly filled out, including rationale as to why their Peewee and/or Bantam teams should change sub-divisions, and must be signed by the Association President. Bantams and Peeweers can be in different sub-divisions (one at A – the other at AA).~~
- 4. Associations can have multiple AA teams, or one AA team and one or more A teams. If an association having an AA team wants to have multiple A teams, the A teams have to be picked equal.
- 5. Any request found to have false information will be cause to have the decision reversed.
- 6. All Sub-Division changes ~~Forms~~ must be received by the cognizant ~~Regional VP and copied to the District Director by a date established by the District but in all cases no later than November 25th.~~
- 7. The ~~MH Competition Committee~~ District Director will make a final determination by ~~December 1st, the start of their league scheduling meeting~~ consulting with the ~~District Directors~~ Associations as needed. ~~The committee will consist of the VP Maroon and VP Gold Coordinators and two District Directors from each of the Maroon and Gold Divisions selected by the VP's.~~
- 8. NOTE: The A and AA sub-divisions are sub-groups of the "A" division – both are considered "A" teams through the regular season. AA and A teams may play in the same district league, using a balanced or unbalanced schedule, or may be split into separate leagues at the District Director's discretion.

NG2. *This proposed change would set aside three Pee wee AA and three Bantam AA Regional Tournament slots to be determined by the Competition Committee. This is intended to provide a better process of sending the best teams on to Regions.*

Pee wee & Bantam AA Region Format

1. The Pee wee and Bantam AA Regions will use double-elimination bracketing and each will advance two teams to State. However, the Regions will be configured differently than the "A" and "B" Regions.
2. The North Region consists of Districts 11, 12, 15 & 16, with pairings as indicated below. If a district has less than (2) teams, the North Directors will determine how to bring in add'l seeds or modify the tournament.
3. The South/East/West Regions consist of Districts 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 & 10. Each of these districts will advance at least one team to regions (assuming they have AA teams). Additional region seeds will be awarded proportional to the number of AA teams in each district to fill out **21 of the 24** teams.
- 4. A Competition Committee will be established, consisting of the VP Maroon and VP Gold Coordinators and two District Directors from each of the Maroon and Gold Divisions selected by the VP's.**
- 5.** When the total number of teams is finalized, the Competition Committee will determine district allocations and seeding based on criteria **above and** below. **Six teams will play-in for the last three seeds. These teams will be determined by the Competition Committee.** Districts will be notified of seeding to the three region tournaments after all district tournaments are concluded. Tournament hosts must block rooms if the location is not in the metro area.
- 6.** For South/East/West Regions:
 - a. The host districts will have their #1 seeds in the tournaments they are hosting.
 - b. The other districts #1 seeds will be placed in a region via a blind draw.
 - c. The remaining teams will be seeded according to the following:
 - Districts will not have their #1 and #2 seeds in the same region.
 - #2 seeds will be placed in a region via a blind draw.
 - A district's #3 seed won't be placed in a region with that district's #1 or #2 seed. If required, adjustments will be made to assignment of #2 and #3 seeds to maintain equal relative strength among the regions.
 - As possible, a District's #4 seed will be placed with their #1, a district's #5 seed will be placed with their #2, and a district's #6 seed will be placed with their #3.
 - d. First round pairings will be set up according to the following:
 - #1 seeds will be placed via a blind draw. If there are two #1 seeds, they will be placed in the 1st and 3rd quarterfinal games. If three #1 seeds, they will be placed in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd quarterfinal games.
 - A district's #1 seed will play the highest numerical seed in the region.
 - A district's #4 / #5 seed will be in the opposite half of the bracket as their #1 seed.
 - The remaining #2 seeds will be placed in quarterfinal games via a blind draw.
 - The #2 seeds will play the highest remaining numerical seeds in the region.

[End of Rules Committee Report]