

Metcalf District Hockey Association (MDHA) President's Report

MDHA had a total registration of 555 players for the 2023-2024 season.

Out of the total number of registrations, we sent the following number of players to higher levels:

AAA - 19

A/AA - 44

Rep B - 90

MDHA hosted 33 teams from U7-U21. This year, we had eight teams playing in seven GHA finals and four teams bringing home a Championship banner.

MDHA also hosted five (U10, U12, U14, U16, U18) of the eight Rep B teams. Russell Minor Hockey Association (RMHA) hosted two (U11, 13). These seven teams fall under the Castor River Canucks umbrella. Leitrim Minor Hockey Association (LMHA) hosted U15, who falls under Leitrim Hawks. The agreements between associations are reviewed every year.

During the 2023/24 season, MDHA trialled the Concussion Awareness Protocols Training (CAPT) software. We used the software with our three Rep B teams that have body contact. As an association, we found that the software was not used by our teams.

MDHA had one serious incident involving a racial slur. This resulted in the suspension of one coach and three players.

In the hopes of developing future coaches, we created the Coach Mentor Program (CMP). Young, high school aged volunteers are paired with experienced coaches to gain experience. Hours were also counted as part of the high school requirements. If volunteers are over the age of 16 years, and have taken the required coaching courses, they can be rostered as part of the official bench staff. This allows them to participate on the bench during games. In our inaugural year, we had 7 participants. Two attained all required coaching qualifications and were officially rostered. Due to their outstanding efforts, two CMP volunteers were nominated by bench staffs and parents. MDHA will be awarding both with the newly created Jr Coach of the Year award. The recipients are Jens Simonsen and Stuart McEwen.

Two Coach of the Year awards are being presented to two well deserving members. Nick Pommerville and Ryan MacGregor. Without amazing people who step up into these roles, associations would struggle. We are truly grateful for their contributions.

Our Volunteer of the Year award is being presented to Bernie and Isaac Visser. Bernie has volunteered in several roles in MDHA over many years. Spending his weekends helping as required during the U18 tournament weekends. Never hesitating to jump in as required! Isaac has played minor hockey in MDHA from U7 to U21 where he continues to play. He has followed in his father's footsteps and never hesitates to lend a helping hand. It is people like Bernie and Isaac who continue to allow MDHA be successful on so many fronts.

MDHA successfully hosted tournaments at the U18 A/B levels and a U7 Funday. The U18 tournaments helps generate funds to give bursaries to eligible graduating players who will be pursuing post secondary education. This year, there are eight recipients:

Jens Simonsen;
Jason Young;
Owen Carter;
Roman Melo;
Hudson Brooking;
Carsen Rathwell;
John Cordeau; and
Nathan Ferguson.

Recognizing the increase in demand for ice, it was noted that MDHA had limited weeknight ice times. Roughly 25% was weeknight vs 75% weekend ice. This sometimes caused a scheduling issue as it was hard to allocate ice to some teams because of planned tournaments.

Larry Robinson Arena will be going through a renovation like the Lois Kemp Arena in Blackburn. Work could start as early as April 2025 and could last 12-18 months. Local stakeholders are pushing to keep the arena open during the renovation, final decisions have yet to be made.

Julianne Oelke-Simonsen
MDHA President
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