

## DECEMBER 2017

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we prepare for the upcoming Christmas and New Year's parties and festivities, and before we dive back in to the second half of the season, I wanted to take just a few moments to wish all of you a safe and joyous holiday, and a bright and prosperous 2018.

We have much to be thankful for and I trust all of us will be able to squeeze in some holiday cheer between tournament travel and games.

It has been an exciting and action filled first half of the season and there are a few updates and reminders we wanted to share with you.

### PARTICIPATION GROWTH

We are continuing to see exceptional growth in our player numbers and are already closing in on almost 14,000 participants. The tremendous work being done in the trenches by our rink partners, many of whom are supported by the Dallas Stars Extreme Team, simply can't be overstated.

In several markets we are seeing successful outreach into the school districts and we are anticipating a very aggressive push to take floor hockey throughout the state. It is true if we can get sticks into the hands early, the conversion to ice will come naturally.

More to come on this but thanks to all for working so passionately to expand our player pool.

### MEMBER AGREEMENTS

As you are all aware, TAHA Member Agreements renew annually unless there is a non-renewal decision made by TAHA or an organization is decertified. From time to time

### In This Issue...

- Important update on Member Agreements
- Information about the Tier I Application Process and timing
- Introducing New HS Section President – Keith Andresen
- Introducing New SafeSport Coordinator – John McManaman
- Review of Mite Policy
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there are modifications made to the terms of the Member Agreement that reflect changes in our policies or those of USA Hockey.

In 2018 the Board has added a category of membership for those organizations that are governed by TAHA but do NOT operate teams. This “Allied” membership status will apply to official’s organizations and to buildings that sell ice but do not offer teams or leagues.

There were just a couple of additional tweaks but enough to warrant a full reissue of Member Agreements for 2018. In early January, ALL members, in order to maintain their sanction status for 2018, **will be required** to re-sign a Member Agreement. This will all be done electronically via the TAHA web site.

So stay tuned for additional details. In the meantime, if there have been changes to your organization’s leadership it is imperative you notify Rick Hall ([rickidhall@yahoo.com](mailto:rickidhall@yahoo.com)) with updates before time to sign your new Agreement.

## **TIER I APPLICATION PROCESS**

Early next year TAHA will entertain applications for Tier I status for the two-year period beginning with the 2018/19 season. We currently have sanctioned one organization at 14U and 15U and two organizations at 16U and 18U. The Tier I Committee is evaluating the number of organizations that should be sanctioned at each age group. The eventual number of teams will be determined by a number of factors, including the anticipated player pool at each age group.

Details about the application process and the number of teams we expect to sanction will be released just after the first of the year.

Applications will be submitted online and each organization participating in the process will be required to make a presentation to the Tier I Committee in February. There is no cost to apply.

## **NEW HS SECTION PRESIDENT – KEITH ANDRESEN**

As many of you know, we did not have candidates nominated for this important position during the June election period. As I advised at the Annual Meeting, TAHA solicited nominations throughout the month of June and early July and conducted interviews with several candidates.

Although we had several qualified candidates we are happy report that Keith Andresen has rejoined the TAHA Board as the President of the High School Section. Keith has

held several positions with TAHA over the years, but he is particularly well suited to oversee and reenergize the HS Section.

As part of the growth initiative Keith has already announced plans to reintroduce a Silver Level State Championship that we hope will bring non-Dallas programs back into postseason play.

See the TAHA web site for additional details.

### **NEW SAFESPORT COORDINATOR – JOHN MCMANAMAN**

Another critical position that we had to fill after the June Annual Meeting was that of Affiliate SafeSport Coordinator. Again, we had some very capable candidates but one in particular came to us with unique experience and an investigative background.

We are pleased to announce that John McManaman (Allen Events Center) assumed this role back in September and has hit the ground running. If you have an issue or need guidance on handling a SafeSport item, you may email John directly from the TAHA web site.

### **MITE POLICY – IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

TAHA was a leader within USA Hockey in establishing cross/half ice hockey and adopting the ADM as the standard for 8U player development. When we moved responsibility for Mites to our rink partners, we placed greater emphasis on skill development and puck touches, as well as creating a fun and challenging learning environment. And we did so while removing the intense recruiting and competition swirl often associated with “travel hockey”.

The results have been very positive and the growth over the last five years at the 8U age group is an indicator that our structure and priorities are indeed appropriate.

Nevertheless, we are beginning to see attempts to “push the envelope” on what is acceptable at 8U regarding clinics, team formation and “travel”. Here are a couple of reminders from the TAHA Guidebook:

1. Rink based programs with travel teams shall NOT field 8U Mite teams who travel beyond local metro area rinks to play games. Local rinks may include rinks in neighboring communities with limited options for play.
2. Teams for rink-based Mite ADM programs must be formed through a draft process. For large, rink-based ADM programs (4 or more drafted teams), tier play (Gold, Silver) will be allowed for like-skill players.

3. Fall/Winter (Aug-Mar) camps/clinics for 8U players may only be run by rink-based Mite ADM programs.
4. Spring/Summer (Apr-Jul) camps/clinics for 8U Mite players (next season's Mites) must be ADM compliant. Such camps may allow 8U Mite players to play with non-8U players, but only if **ALL** play is ADM compliant.

We recognize that some small market rinks must visit neighboring towns in order to get games. These games should be limited and be conducted as a jamboree style event. They should NOT mimic invitational tournaments. **And at NO time, should any TAHA Mite team be formed as an "elite" team and travel outside of the Affiliate.**

We are currently formulating guidelines on jamboree events to include the number of events, distance to be traveled and roster requirements.

For more information about what is permitted, please consult the TAHA web site. (see [Mite Policy](#))

## **HOUSE/REC TEAMS - TRAVEL**

As many of you will recall, three years ago TAHA established policy on the formation of House/Rec teams and type of out of Affiliate travel that would be permitted. All that information can be reviewed in the TAHA Guidebook which is available on our web site. But here are a couple of important reminders on travel for House/Rec teams:

- All teams submitting a House/Rec roster will be permitted to attend USA Hockey sanctioned tournaments and compete in skill divisions at or below the Tier II level.
- House/Rec teams wishing to attend tournaments during the regular season (August to April) must submit the certified roster to the House Section President in advance for review and approval.
- House/Rec rosters may also be used by summer teams formed and operating after the end of the prior season (next day after USAH Youth Nationals concludes) and beginning of next season (defined as August 1<sup>st</sup>).

## IMPORTANT DATES

Here are some important dates to keep in mind for the next few months of the season:

- Adult State Tournament – January 12-14, 2018 (NYTEX)
- Tier I State Tournament – February 10-11, 2018 (Farmers Branch)
- Tier II State Tournament – February 23-25, 2018 (Farmers Branch)
- HS State Tournament – February 2-4, 2018 (Various)
- Try Hockey for Free – March 3, 2018 (Various)

## AND FINALLY...

It has been an exciting year in so many respects, and yet some in our family faced some rather extraordinary adversity. Hurricane Harvey showed us just how powerful and non-discerning mother nature can be, and provided us with very valuable reminders about priorities and perspective. As always, whenever our hockey community has been challenged, we saw repeated instances of courage, perseverance and generosity.

We encourage you to take a moment this holiday season to remember those who serve everyday, here and abroad, to make our freedoms possible. Please keep members of law enforcement and firefighters top of mind as they remain on the front lines here at home.

On behalf of the entire TAHA Board, we wish for each of you a safe and healthy holiday.

Best,



Reggie Hall

President

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*We are working hard to get you a YES answer!*