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The Official Report

Newsletter of the Missouri Ice Hockey Officials Association

FEBRUARY 2011

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Jim Galligan, Director of Communications
jgalligan@mihoa.org

Andy Hudson, Editor
ahudson@mihoa.org

President's Update

by Mark Pecoraro, MIHOA President

It is hard to believe it, but we are nearing the completion of another fall/winter season and are now looking forward to the exciting challenge of working league playoffs and end of season tournaments. In preparation for the playoffs, the Vice Presidents will have pertinent information to share with you at the next membership meeting on Thursday, February 3. If you couldn't attend the last meeting, you missed a very informative gathering with great participation by all. Just a reminder that the agenda is posted a few days before the meeting and, if you miss a meeting, the minutes from that meeting will be posted on the scheduling website.

Don't forget that nominations are being solicited by the nominating committee. If you are interested in becoming more involved with the association, please make sure that you meet all the requirements to be considered for this year's election at

the annual meeting in April.

I have heard from many of you that you would like a single document that gives a quick snap shot of differences between league rules and other requirements. A one stop cheat sheet would be a great, but the fear has always been that you will rely on the cheat sheet and not brush up on all of the rules by reading the respective rules books in their entirety. Since this will be a rule change year, I would like to wait until the fall season and we can consider putting together a document that give you quick reference points between leagues at all levels. This will be quite an assignment, so please let me know if you are willing to help out with this task.

At the last membership meeting, Central District Referee-in-Chief

Bob Cunningham, mentioned a few of the possible rule changes for next season. One of the possible changes is the approval of using the two referee/two linesmen officiating system, which you see used in the NHL today. If you watch those games you would have noticed that the officials do a great deal of backwards skating. Recognizing that this is an area of needed improvement for most officials, Stan Elrod has taken on the initiative to organize a power skating clinic with a certified instructor at a local rink. Please keep an eye out for the date and time since space will be limited.

In the upcoming month, you will have more eyes on you than at any other time during the season due to the importance of every game. Now is your time to shine. Work hard and be prepared, and most of all have fun!



Member Spotlight

Andy Bethmann

Age 23; USA Hockey official for 10 years; 5 years in pro hockey.

Andy was born and raised on a farm in St. Peters and still calls the place home. Dad-John (farmer), Mom-Jeanne (teacher), Twin-Danny, Sister-Jamie (freshman at MO State).

Hockey experience:

Grew up playing youth hockey at St. Peters; played Varsity hockey for 4 years at Fort Zumwalt South; 1 year at Lindenwood; 3 years at Missouri State College Club.



Education:

Senior at Missouri State University (Physical Education major).

How did you start officiating?

My mom actually had Tom Woolf's son in her class when I was younger and he mentioned officiating to her, and like any loving mother she made Danny and me go to a seminar at Kirkwood....and USA hockey has been putting food on my plate for the last 10 years.

Being a ref offers many different "experiences," both positive and negative, what are some of your highlights?

Well, I've worked in front of crowds anywhere from 10,000 to 10 people and the travel has been an experience all its own. But, in 2006-2007 I worked the Single-A Pro Finals alongside Scott Bokal in Jacksonville, FL and the Junior B National Championship Game in Grand Rapids, MI.

What hobbies, do you enjoy?

I'm a big sports guy, it's my passion and my future career...but I love baseball. My hobby during the summer is baseball, I'm one of those guys who watches all 162. I like to visit MLB stadiums and I want to visit them all. I'm up to 9, and the last two summers I've visited San Diego, LA, and Anaheim...just for baseball.

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What are your personal goals, MIHOA goals and Development program goals for this season?

My personal goals are to continue to develop as an official and open myself to more opportunities as an official. I've been fortunate to experience a lot for MIHOA, but one thing I haven't done is work the High School state finals at Scottrade, so that's something I'd like to mark my calendar for eventually. My development program goals for the season are to work the USHL playoffs and be selected for the Junior "A" National tournament.

Comments on the brother/brother combo, working games together and watching each other during games:

Well we started together when we were 14 and he took some time off to work at Total Hockey. Then he saw the cool opportunities I was getting through officiating and my bank account so he got back into reffing before we left for Missouri State and he has been carving a nice path for himself. It's difficult to explain what it's like to ref with your identical twin whom you shared a womb with, but basically think of it as reffing a game with yourself and being on the same page with your partner the whole game. It's just like when we used to play on the same line, we talk before, during and after a game and there's nothing better than to know exactly what will be called and how every situation will be handled and to know your partner has your back. The best is when somebody asks us if we're related during a game and we just tell them we're distant cousins and we see each other so often at a family reunion.

Give us an example of your travel schedule.

Well, I have a 3x5 U.S. map on my wall that I've marked after road trips for the last six years and that helps me remember where exactly I've been because it all seems to mesh together. But it's not uncommon for me to work in Iowa or Nebraska almost every weekend throughout the season. Just an example of a recent trip I had over winter break, I started a six day road trip in Green Bay and ended it in Tulsa.

What do you see in your future in officiating?

It's hard to say, I'm only 23 so it's hard to say what is next and what opportunities will come. I've been reffing AA pro hockey for five years, so I'd like to make

the jump to the AHL when I graduate. But, I love St. Louis and MIHOA so hopefully in the future I'll be scheduling for MIHOA and giving back to the place where I got started.

What do your parents think of this adventure?

I'll never forget when I was sitting at the computer when I was a senior in high school and I said "looks like I'm headed to Des Moines in a few weeks" and all they said was "why?" But, they've been very supportive over the years and I think they enjoy seeing what I'll do next. They get a little worried during deer season and I get some late night phone calls from Mom that consists of "Are you tired, what state are you in?"...Pops, has a nice stock of oil waiting for me at the house because he's nice enough to change it for me it seems like every three weeks.

Advise for new officials:

Skate hard...you never know who is watching. Don't get discouraged if you make a bad call or make a mistake, we've all done it and it's part of the human element. Read the rulebook...it can save you when you need it. Just remember you represent all of us in the striped shirts and it's important to treat everyone with respect even if they don't deserve it.

Advice for all officials:

Earn your paycheck...there's not a month that goes by when I can't believe I get paid for this. We have the best part-time job in the world; we get paid to ref the best sport on Earth. Know the rulebook, skate hard, respect the game, and don't take yourself too seriously...and for God's sake smile once in awhile and have some fun!

What else should we know about you?

David Backes is the man and everybody should know it. The best day of my life will be when the Blues win the Stanley Cup. Happy Gilmore is my favorite movie. I strongly dislike Miller products, the Cubs, and people that yell "INTERFERENCE!"

Interesting story

There's been a lot, and some I'll take to the grave. But, I'll never forget when Scott Bokal and I flew down to Jacksonville for the Single-A finals. The Jacksonville team's lease was up at their arena because the owners didn't think they were going to make the playoffs and the ice had been taken out. So the finals were in a local ice rink, we walked in and there were about 3,000 folding chairs set-up and camera men trying to find anywhere to set-up their cameras so they could broadcast the game. It was surreal, it was a little odd seeing palm trees all around the rink in late March too.

Who has been an influence along the way?

There have been so many good people along the way I feel like I could fill the page. But, Tom Woolf and Scott Bokal have been there for me on and off the ice for a long time. If I ever needed anything or to talk



about something those two were there. Tom helped me get into officiating and groomed me through the MIHOA ranks as a young official. Scott Bokal helped me bring my officiating to the next level and we have shared numerous road trips over the years together. I can't thank them enough...I just hope I can give back to young officials like they did for me.

How do you help to encourage new officials Young and Older?

I've helped run on-ice sessions for MIHOA during their seminars. Also, this year I ran the Springfield, MO seminar with Don Arias and my brother and that was a lot of fun. I also took over scheduling youth and men's hockey down in Springfield this year, and it has given me a lot of opportunity to give feedback and work with aspiring officials. Also, anytime I ref a hockey game and a player thinks they know a rule or how the game should be officiated, I always remind them to attend a seminar in August.

Scholastic Division Update

by Jason Giovando, Scholastic Division VP

It seems that we have approached the most exciting time of the year, playoff time, quicker than ever. I really hope everyone is looking forward to officiating some very good hockey over the next four to six weeks. As many of you have noticed, schedules came out this past week and there were very few games scheduled at the high school level. Games at the junior varsity level and below for both Mississippi Valley and Mid-States were the only games to be assigned for February when schedules went out for confirmation. Since then, many of you have inquired how assignments will be handled in regards to varsity playoffs. Scheduling of these games will be done in a very similar fashion to the way our organization has assigned these games for the past several seasons.

It is very important to keep your monthly availability updated throughout February. Playoffs for both Mid-States and Mississippi Valley will be assigned based on each official's on and off ice performance this season, and

based on your availability. I cannot stress this enough. If you did not click the option of working one afternoon or evening, it is certain you will not be assigned game(s) for that night. Playoff assignments will show up at least 24 hours prior to game time. If you have been assigned a playoff game and absolutely cannot work that game, please notify me immediately so we can find a replacement.



With that being said, I want to remind everyone that the players and coaches involved in these playoff games have put an immense amount of time and effort into each of their respective seasons. Playoff time can be very emotional for all parties involved and there are always plenty of eyes on the offi-

cial during this time. Be respectful of this fact. If a coach has a question during your game, communicate with him (if he is being civil). We owe it to these teams to put our best effort on

the ice this month. Last, I would like to ask that we all dress in either business casual or in a MIHOA warm up for playoff games. Please no jeans. I would like to see all of us to looking the part not only during the game, but

before and after as well.

As always if anyone has any questions about playoffs or assignments, feel free to contact me anytime. Have fun this month!

Local Supervisor Update

Playoff time is here and we need to be prepared. Let's be on time for our assignments, review and be aware of league specific playoff rules, and be proactive in dealing with interactions on the ice. DO NOT slip into the "it's playoffs, let them play mode." Stay clam, cool and collected before, during and after the game.

A few specific things to brush up on are the proper application of the zero tolerance policy. This can be found starting on page XX of the preface of the USA Hockey rulebook. Make sure to submit complete and accurate game and incident reports, including the proper rule refer-



ence that supports the narrative given about the incident. Remember to leave the editorial out of your reports. Reports should be turned in as quickly as possible as some of these teams will be playing games the very next day.

Please take time to review the penalty shot procedures. Many of the different levels of playoff games will go to a shoot out and we must follow the procedural mechanics properly. Explain the penalty shot procedure to the players in groups to speed up the process.

Take some time to dress appropriately.

One last thing to mention is that if you are a spectator in the stands watching a game, remember that you are (at other times) that person on the ice. If you have any concerns, it is not appropriate to communicate your thoughts and feelings from the stands or to confront the officials after the game to discuss your opinions. If there are concerns, the proper channels are to communicate to an officer or director of the organization. We have had several instances of this happening this year and this is totally unacceptable conduct.

With a little bit of refreshing and re-emphasis on our responsibilities, we can continue the hard work that we have displayed so far this season.

Youth Division Update

by Don Arias, Youth Division VP



Playoffs begin shortly, please remember to skate hard and call penalties. A Missouri Hockey rules official will be available at each end of season youth division playoff game. A couple of reminders as we do move forward in the playoffs; please remember to maintain the Standard of Play initiative. Also the Missouri Youth Division Board

placed an emphasis on the following specific penalties for the 2010-2011 season: Zero Tolerance with coaches and players; Checking From Behind; and, Head Contact. Once again, please make sure that when working AAA, Central States, and End of Season Playoff games that your off-ice dress is appropriate. Business

casual attire is required and MIHOA warm-up suits are also acceptable. Our next membership meeting is planned for February 3. Please try to attend if possible. Please feel free to contact me with any rule or scheduling questions that you might have at vp youth@mihoa.org.

Registration Underway for McKenna Golf Classic

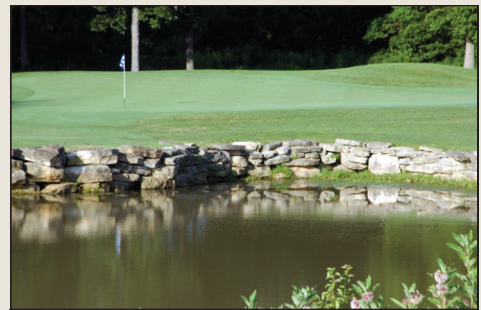
Registrations are currently being accepted for the 4th Annual Bill McKenna Memorial Golf Classic. You may register with credit card online at www.MIHOA.org. Or, download the entry form and register by mail.

The fourth annual tournament is scheduled for Saturday, May 14, 2011, at The Falls Golf Club in O'Fallon, Missouri (1:30 p.m. shotgun start). The registration fee is \$90 per player if you sign up before April 14. After this date, the entry fee goes up to \$100 per player. Based on the success of the past three years, we are expecting another sell out. So, please sign up now to secure your spot.

MIHOA Member "Play for Free" Promotion

Back for its second year, the Play for Free Promotion is an opportunity for MIHOA members to play in the McKenna Golf Classic for FREE! MIHOA members who bring in hole sponsors for the golf tournament will be eligible for a 50% discount, free entry, a free twosome or a free foursome! Details will be sent to all MIHOA members via e-mail soon. Stay tuned!

All proceeds from the event benefit the BMMSF, enabling the foundation to provide college scholarships to your fellow officials and/or the children of MIHOA members. So, dust off the clubs and join us for a fun day of golf in support of the BMMSF!



The 4th Annual McKenna Memorial Golf Classic returns to The Falls Golf Club in O'Fallon, Missouri



2011 Nominations for MIHOA Offices

On February 1, the MIHOA Nominating Committee will begin accepting nominations for the offices of President, VP-Youth, and Secretary and for four director positions (three terms that expire on May 1 and one for the remaining term of a vacant position). The qualifications for the offices are listed below. To nominate a member for office or to nominate yourself, submit your nominations via e-mail to the members of the nominating committee: Dave Sivcovich (dave@sivcovich.com); Jerry Burt (linesref@aol.com); Jeff Purkey (jpurkey@mihoa.org).

Nominations must be sent to all

three individuals. Nominations will close at midnight on February 28. Members nominated for office will be given an opportunity to speak at the March membership meeting. If you have any questions, please contact a member of the nominating committee.

Qualifications for Office

Secretary: 21 years of age; senior active member for current and past three years; must have attended three membership meetings during the current year; cannot have been suspended by MIHOA or USAH during the current year or prior year; must be a member in good standing

with USAH.

VP- Youth: Same as Secretary; and, must be a completed level 3 or 4 official in the current and previous three years.

President: Same as VP-Youth.

Director: 21 years of age; senior active member for previous year; must have attended three membership meeting during the current year; cannot have been suspended by MIHOA or USAH during the current year or prior year; must be a member in good standing with USAH.