

**2015-2015**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**



**Bedford & District Minor  
Hockey Association**

**5/8/2015**

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## President's Message

Dear Members;

It's hard to believe that another year of hockey is in the books!

This season journey was highlighted by memorable performances by BDMHA teams as well as a jam packed weekend for everyone who attended the SEDMHA Tournament. What a great way to finish out our season together.

On behalf of the Bedford and District Minor Hockey Executive we are pleased to present our final report to the 2014/ 2015 Minor Hockey Season. For some, this will truly be their final report as they complete their terms as volunteers within our executive committee. I feel compelled to mention them and write briefly about their contributions.

**Meghan Milloy, Vice President of Recreation:** Meghan's been a strong advocate for our recreational programs. She's been particularly supportive in helping this association develop our Mission, Vision statements as well as improve our existing processes. Through Meghan's leadership our Christmas Recreation Tournament was a huge success, receiving many positive comments from those participating and in attendance.

**Henri Michaud, Vice President of Finance:** Henri has served the association for in excess of four years as the financial comptroller and, most recently as our Vice President of Finance. Henri received the Volunteer of the Year award in 2014 having been recognized for the endless hours he's dedicated to the financial affairs of our association.

**Jamie Stone, Vice President Competitive Hockey:** Jamie will be taking a deserved rest from the BDMHA executive after in excess of 8 years of service. Jamie has served within one of our more demanding roles as the Vice President of Competitive Hockey for the last two years. His most noticeable contribution to our association has been the refinements made relating to enhancing our tryout process and overall transparency.

**Bryan MacLean, Vice President Development:** Bryan will complete his eighth year as a volunteer within BDMHA. Prior to his current role Bryan served two years as the Vice President of Female Hockey. Brian's left a legacy in the form of the associations Core Skill Guidelines, a series of statements which serve to support our volunteers within the management of their teams and our players throughout their hockey journey.

**Phil Gruchy, Risk Management Coordinator:** For the last four years Phil has served our association by ensuring the executive committee is appropriately advised when making any number of decisions through the course of our minor hockey season. Having Phil available to us has helped us make informed decisions in the best interest of this association.

Without the hard work of volunteers like these people minor hockey quite simply could not exist. On behalf of Bedford Minor Hockey I would like to thank Meghan, Henri, Jamie, Bryan and Phil for the tremendous value they've brought to the affairs of our association.

For the second year in a row, the association's senior executive positions have been staffed by volunteers who've transitioned their way through other important roles within our association. Their previous experience, demonstrated levels of commitment and dedication offer me the assurance our association will be led into the future by good people, doing the right things for the right reasons. As such, Bedford & District Minor Hockey is in very good shape and in my opinion has evolved to become a model association within Nova Scotia's Minor Hockey Community.

The future of your minor hockey association lies within the body of the membership. There are many people within this association who have something to offer to organized minor hockey. This coming season is very exciting as we will have many new faces within the executive. Each of whom brings "new" energy and "new" ideas to our association.

For those wishing to become involved, but not sure where to contribute, please send us note, or simply put up your hand at a meeting. As your President for the last two years I can attest to the tremendous personal reward which comes with giving up your time and talents for the betterment of kids in sport. It's truly been an honor and a privilege.

On behalf of the Bedford and District Minor Hockey Association staff and the Board of Directors, thank you for being part of our hockey community. Have a safe and enjoyable off-season.

I look forward to seeing you at the rink in September!

Enjoy the read,

***Chris Bewsher, President***

Bedford and District Minor Hockey Association  
May 2013-May 2015

## Report from VP Initiation/Novice, Abigail Cook

### Initiation

Our new Fundamentals program was very well received this season. As with any new program there were some minor growing pains but with a few tweaks and in partnership with Bedford Skate Club we will be offering the program again next season. I would like to thank head coach Wayne Matheson and Bedford Skate Club for doing an excellent job of leading this new program.

This season we also had two IP1 groups and two IP2 groups who were on the ice 2 times per week. Most of our IP2s were able to participate in the Moosehead intermission games but unfortunately we did not have enough room for our large association. This is out of Bedford's control as we are only allotted so many regular season games. Due to the efforts of the managers Joanne Lenihan and Shauna Boudreau we were able to accommodate 10 extra kids in a Moosehead playoff game.

A highlight for the IP1 groups this season was participating in the Hockey Day in Canada at the Halifax Oval. Thanks to head coaches Eric McIntyre and Carla Alderson for organizing this on ice session.

Both IP2 teams had a set of goalie gear which was rotated to all interested kids. The goalie equipment is provided to help inspire future goaltenders. Having enough kids who want to play in the net is an important part of a successful association, and needs to begin at an early age.

This season the medals were taken out of the budget to allow for other expenses such as goalie equipment and rink dividers. After hearing some feedback medals will be put back into the budget for the IP/FUNDamental players.

### Novice

This season we had 11 novice-age hockey groups. We had 2 advancing teams, 3 Intermediate teams, 2 female intermediate teams and 4 developing teams. All coed teams participate in the HRM Novice Exhibition Series and competed well.

This season in the exhibition series our two novice female teams were not in the most competitive environment. Near the end of the season it was decided to mix the team up and place them in a competitive game environment for a few jamborees. Again I would like to thank the parents for their patience but I believe the end of the season gave the girls a better platform to continue with their development in the game of hockey.

The goal for next season is to have two tiers in the novice girls exhibition series. This was discussed at the meeting of all the associations and was not decided upon. The other associations were not willing to commit until they saw the skill level of their novice girls program. What we did achieve is the freedom to place one of our female team in an

appropriate playing environment to enhance the development of the girls. Potentially we could have an all girls team playing in the boys exhibition series. Next season evaluations will determine how the teams will be split and where is the best growth environment for the team.

The novice goalies met with Jack Haritgan every Tuesday evening for specialized goalie sessions. This was of no cost to the player. We continue to make a commitment to develop our goalies at the novice age. We have approximately 8 sets of gear on loan from our association to novice/IP aged kids to help facilitate the young players interested in goaltending. I would like to thank Jack and the executive for coming together to make this arrangement possible. We plan to continue with the program next season.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Simon Wilkin and Doug MacKinnon and to the many coaches and managers that make our program run. If it wasn't for the volunteers and parents stepping up, there would be no minor hockey.

Simon Wilkin will be taking over as the new VP of Novice/IP. Simon comes to the VP role with many years of experience. He has been the Novice coordinator for the past two years and has two kids who have been through the Novice/IP program. He will be an asset to the program.

I hope everyone has a great summer and we will see you at the rink in September.

***Abigail Cook, VP IP/Novice***

## Report from VP Female, John Weatherbie

This year the Halifax zone teams (Bedford, Halifax, Tasa, Sackville, Chebucto) combined the female players from peewee to midget from each association into regionalized teams. Joint tryouts were held with guidance from Shawn Mackenzie and evaluation support from the Dalhousie Tigers female hockey team and representatives from all associations. The VP's from each association worked together to run the tryout process. The number of female players evaluated was much higher than any individual association has handled in the past and was approximately 250. At the conclusion of tryouts and evaluations, the following teams were formed:

- Three Peewee A teams
- Two Peewee AA teams
- Four Bantam A teams
- Two Bantam AA teams
- Two Midget AA teams
- Three Midget A teams

Bedford hosted the following teams in 2014-2015:

- Atom A
- Peewee A
- Peewee AA
- Bantam A
- Bantam AA
- Midget AA

Overall, the feedback has been positive and collectively across associations there has been far fewer complaints than in previous years. There were a number of lessons learned for next year such as:

- The scheduling of initial conditioning sessions pre-tryout;
- Longer gaps between AA and A sessions;
- Additional, early goalie evaluations;
- Better consolidation and communication of registration lists; and
- Additional volunteer support

Team and player wise, the key challenges this year are:

- Goalies in Atom and Pee wee. At the end of tryouts there was not a Bedford based goalie in Atom. There were only 2 goalies for 5 teams in PeeWee and 5 goalies for 5 teams in Midget.
- Female coaches – in Bedford we have female coaches in Pee wee A, Bantam A, Bantam AA and Midget AA. The majority of these coaches are first year and we need to continue to find and develop strong female hockey minds to step behind the bench.
- Ice time – there is an extreme ice crunch this year which has made it difficult to get two practices in per week and will potentially impact development in future years.
- Reconciliation of ice costs will be challenge this year due to teams using ice contributed by other associations.

In meetings with Female Council we have been advised that there are items coming up for vote at the Hockey Nova Scotia AGM that will continue to evolve the state of female hockey next year. Among the items are for vote ([CLICK HERE](#)) is a motion to formally introduce female hockey zones (9.4.2 Hockey Nova Scotia Female Council).

It is anticipated that the Halifax associations will continue to be regionalized next year and will form a new female zone that will operate within one of the Halifax zone Minor Hockey Associations with female specific policies and branding that will be separate from Bedford Minor (as well as the other Halifax zone associations). It is also anticipated that this will include Atom. A request has been put forward to Female Council by the Halifax zone female VP's to tier the Atom level in order to allow all female players to play at the correct skill level. Female Council has not yet confirmed this request.

We'd like to thank all coaches, managers and players who are participating in the female program this year. I would like to thank Halifax, TASA, Chebucto and Sackville for their support and cooperation in making regionalization happen this year as well as Shawn Mackenzie and the Dalhousie Tigers for their fantastic support for the tryout process.

Sincerely,

***John Weatherbie, VP Female***



## **Report from VP Finance, Henri Michaud**

The 2014/15 budget was based on a total enrollment of 1,090 players but actual enrollment for the year was 1,137 players.

### **Revenues**

Registration revenues were approximately \$30,000 more than budgeted due to the increase in registrations.

Significant increase in tryout revenues over budget by \$20,000 due to all Metro West female players tryout with BDMHA as opposed to in the prior year were female players tryout with their home association before being placed on regional teams.

Additional increase in tryout revenues over budget of \$14,000 is due to two years of spring tryouts occurring in the same fiscal year. The 2014 Spring AAA ID Camp occurred in May 2014 and two-thirds of the 2015 Spring Tryouts occurred in April 2015.

Miscellaneous revenue over budget of \$12,000 due to clearing out \$18,000 from competitive team accounts of which two-thirds was included in revenue and one-third put into the Players Assistance Fund.

### **Expenditures**

Due to large amount of miscellaneous revenue in the year, the Board agreed to purchase rink divider board which increased the equipment expenditures over budget by \$8,000.

There was a significant decrease from budget of \$16,000 in tournament and camp costs which was offset by an increase in tryout costs over budget by \$14,000.

There were no other significant differences in expenditures from budget.

Note: Balance sheet to be presented during the associations AGM

Sincerely,

***Henri Michaud, VP Finance***

## Report from VP Competitive, Jamie Stone

The 2014-15 Season within Competitive Hockey certainly had its changes and challenges. The biggest of these changes had come to us through new rules from Hockey Nova Scotia with the elimination of the Atom AAA division and the mandate to create two Atom AA teams. However as an Association we worked through the new changes and maintained a fair and competitive environment amongst our teams, while presenting other development opportunities for our AAA caliber players within the division.

This 2014-15 season really began in May of 2014 with the introduction of a Pilot Spring ID Camp process for the AAA levels within Atom and Peewee divisions. Similar to what occurs at the Bantam Major level. Identifying those players in the spring that had the best opportunity to make our AAA level teams was intended to ease the tryout process in the fall. Lessons learned during that process helped us institute a more complete Spring Tryout system just recently for the upcoming 2015-16 season. This two session intrasquad tryout process will identify 4 groups of 25 players in each that will carry forward to the fall sessions. It takes a little of the stress and tension away from both parents and players alike, but moreso it reduces the time commitment by volunteers through the month of September. As an example, the two session process in the spring for both Atom and Peewee competitive required a total commitment from volunteers of 314 person-hours. Those hours will more than quadruple during our regular process in September. So as you can see, it takes a lot of time and effort from a lot of people to successfully complete a tryout.

This year Bedford Minor Hockey saw 5 teams in Atom Competitive; 6 teams in Peewee Competitive; 6 teams in Bantam Competitive and 4 team in Midget Competitive. This was the largest number of competitive teams we have ever iced, with the intention of including as many players as are interested in playing competitive hockey. Bedford Minor has a large pool of players that are interested in trying out for competitive teams each year and it is continually growing. A determination on the numbers and levels of competitive teams within each division will be made at the beginning of the new season once it can be determined how many players are available and the caliber of players within those numbers.

At the midget level we iced a second 'A' team for example, which allowed another group of 17 young players an opportunity to play at a contact competitive level. In Bantam we also iced two competitive contact 'A' teams for the same reason. In Peewee we saw an opportunity to create a third PW B team. While for many this decision seemed wrong early in the season, by the mid-point and at the end, all three PW B teams were competitive and challenging for Championship positions. From a player growth perspective we believe the extra competitive teams will strengthen our Association for future years, even if we saw a reduction in the number of successful or championship teams this season.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to thank Bedford Minor Hockey Association for allowing me the opportunity to volunteer and give back to the community. After 8 years as part of the Minor Hockey Executive, I will be stepping down after this year's AGM. I see this as an opportunity for fresh blood, and new ideas to enter the Executive Board moving forward. I have seen a lot of changes and improvements during my time within the Minor Hockey Executive, and I feel it is positioned well with this new group of leaders to take our Association to new levels once again. I hope to stay involved and volunteer in a coaching capacity next season and look forward to chatting with folks at the rink as just another hockey Dad.

***Jamie Stone, VP Competitive***

## **Report from VP Development, Bryan MacLean**

As mentioned in the semi-annual report, with our HDP Shawn and administrator Matt handling the development programs, the focus for this role is moving more towards off-ice issues that affect hockey and team development.

At the start of the season, there were several areas identified to address the issues that divide teams over a season. These include consistent coaching guidelines for all teams, manager/treasurer responsibilities and a place for parents to turn when they are frustrated.

The Core Team Guidelines for coaches under the Development section on the web site provided a basis of discussion for many coaches and parents. The goal of these principles is to promote team play and accountability of players for work ethic, attitude and selfless play. Not all coaches and parents agreed with all principles but most agreed on the goal of the guidelines. Hopefully these guidelines are tweaked this summer for next year and continue to be implemented by coaches. I personally think these guidelines are critical for new and younger non-parent coaches to get a jump start on thinking about the critical issues they will have to address throughout the year before it is too late.

To address team management and fundraising there was a need to clarify the roles and responsibilities of managers and treasurers. The managers handbook was updated to clearly state that managers and treasurers are both very important roles and are both of equal status. The treasurer does not report to the manager. The treasurer reports to the VP finance and manager reports to VP Operations. Fundraising and spending are two contentious issues so it worked well this year to have the treasurer watch the spending while the manager focused on team activities. Moving away from the past with the manager controlling the spending and the team activities towards separating into two clear roles worked well.

There was a need for members to have a way to address their concerns in a manner they would not feel there would be consequences. The role of Parent Concern Coordinator was created to give members access to someone, who is parent alumni without active players, who would hear and understand their issue and follow up with the necessary people to ensure their concern was addressed, anonymously if preferred. Members did use this role to sort out issues and now this role will be in our constitution.

Also a constant focus is coaching support and what we can do to improve coaching. Towards the end of the year, an organization, ProSmart Hockey Learning System, contacted us to look at their hockey development software that provided coaches illustrated session plans and drills consistent with Hockey Canada's long term development model. This software was made available to our coaches and the feedback was all very good. Coming soon is the ability to customize session plans from a list of drills. This will enable our HDP to develop session plans

and skill focus with our coaches and have much better communication and consistency across all teams. For coaches, much less time on drill searching and session plan making and more time for coaching and strategy development.

We tried to set up a Sledge hockey program to educate and let people try playing Sledge hockey but unfortunately things did not work out. Hopefully this program can be attempted this summer or next year.

On a personal note, this concludes eight years of volunteering, half the time as a coach and the other half on the executive. I've met many great kids and parents and have had many great experiences. My biggest take away from these years is the critical need for parents and coaches, to "give the game back to the kids", make the game fun, make the kids love the game and love to come to the rink ...then they will develop.

***Bryan MacLean, VP Development***

## Report from VP Recreation, Meghan Milloy

We established 21 recreation teams within Bedford and District Minor Hockey Association (BDMHA) this season: 6 Atom; 5 Pee Wee; 4 Bantam; 5 Midget; and 1 Minor Junior team. We were extremely fortunate to have experienced and committed Division Coordinators in place for each division, and a full roster of exceptional coaches and team managers. The Coordinators are as follows:

- Atom – Carri Mitchener
- Pee Wee – Chris Davison
- Bantam – Neil Wortman
- Midget – Darrin Quigley

Thank you to each coordinator for working tirelessly to plan, organize and run their respective divisions within BDMHA. Without each of you, the recreational program would not be the success that it is! Thank you Neil, Darrin, Carri and Chris!

All of the teams played in the Metro Minor Hockey League (MMHL). There were 20 teams in the Atom division, 20 teams in the Pee Wee division, 17 teams in the Bantam division, 19 teams in the Midget division, and 9 teams in the Minor Junior division. MMHL offers a tremendous opportunity for the kids to play against other associations across all divisions. I would like to acknowledge David Greenfield who worked tirelessly on our behalf as our MMHL representative. Thanks David!

Similar to recent seasons, we completed a formalized process for balancing the Bedford teams in each division. We held two on ice sessions (for each division) in September/October, where multiple evaluators (coaches/volunteers) rated the players on their skating, puck handling and overall hockey knowledge. We would like to thank Shawn Mackenzie and his staff for coordinating the on-ice evaluation sessions. Thanks Shawn- it was a huge advantage for all the kids and the volunteers to have you involved with the evaluations!

The results of the balancing process were compiled. The players were then separated into groups based on their relative placements. We posted an open letter on our website explaining the process and we held instruction sessions with each division coordinator in advance of the evaluations.

Core Skills Sessions (CSS) were introduced for Atom and Peewee aged recreational teams in 2014, in conjunction with coach lead individual practices. This approach to practices (a mix of CSS and coach-led practices) has been well received based on feedback received (both verbally and through surveys completed by BDMHA).

We hosted the annual B&DMHA Christmas Tournament from December 26-28, 2014. We had a total of 42 teams involved in the tournament at the BMO Centre. The players had a tremendous amount of fun and there was lots of great hockey played over the three days. Congratulations to all Bedford teams who participated, and congrats to the Peewee Bedford Oilers who won the event and brought home the gold medal, and the Atom Bedford Aces who brought home silver!

I would like to thank all of the volunteers who made this tournament a great success. This is a huge undertaking and involves hundreds of hours of volunteer time behind the scene both before and during the Christmas break. They deserve a very special recognition.

Minor hockey could not exist without the full participation of hundreds of coaches, managers, volunteers and parents who put in long hours of commitment to see their kids compete and have fun. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to all of you who have volunteered your time to make this happen within Bedford and District Minor Hockey Association through 2014-2015.

BDMHA had full participation in Championship Weekend across all four divisions. Congratulations to all teams that participated, and a huge thank you for the volunteers from MMHL who hosting the weekend tournament. It was a great weekend! The Bedford Atom Aces won the gold medal in the Atom Basin Division; the Bedford Peewee Oilers won the gold medal in the Peewee Gold Division; the Bedford Bantam Bulldogs won the gold medal in the Bantam Gold Division; and the Bedford Midget Wings and Leafs each won the silver medal in the Midget Green and Gold Divisions respectively.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to my fellow Executive members for their support and encouragement. These people put in significant time on our behalf and they make hockey work for all of us at BDMHA.

All the best.

***Meghan Milloy, VP Recreation***

## Report from Hockey Development Professional, Shawn MacKenzie

### Fundamentals

Starters program made up mostly of 4 year olds that are being introduced to hockey. These sessions were run in conjunction with Can Skate and Skate Canada. The program was well received and delivered desired results. Participants showed enthusiasm for program and weekly improvements. Thanks to Abigail Cook and Becky Ackerman from Can Skate for putting this together.

### IP 1 and IP 2

Both of these are solid programs with good numbers. Coaches do a good job here of dealing with large numbers of players and various skill levels within groups. It can be a rush at times to get everyone out on time for the weekday afternoon slots but it is really a nice age of hockey, at times chaotic but with a refreshing purity.

### Novice

Much growth with players itchy for the games that mid-season brings. At the Novice level it is mostly about fundamental skill with skating being priority. Although skill development is in the forefront, fun factors must also remain high. The leaders of Novice hockey must be careful that programs don't become overly competitive for such a young age. We can't lose sight of the fact that the game belongs to the kids and they need to run their own race at their own pace.

### Atom

Hockey Nova Scotia's late summer decision to have larger associations ice 2 teams at the top level of Atom Rep created some controversy. I would say that the debate will continue as to whether this was a positive decision. Points can be made for both the plus and minus of the decision and for short term challenges vs. long term gains. We anticipate that in the upcoming season Bedford will again be having 2 teams at Atom AA (the top level).

Overall we saw excellent growth at Atom particularly at the A and B levels. Big credit to the Atom coaches for their support of our Core Skills programs and for providing the growth environment of substance and steady improvements.

### Pee-Wee

I would say overall the Pee Wee Rep programs displayed periods of growth and success but also periods of inconsistency. Subpar performances in the "big games" did hurt our teams. If I am honest it appears we played well against a less physical type opponent, displaying superior skill when there was the time and space available. Not being able or willing to adapt in the more "gloves-off" type games looked to be our biggest shortcoming. This was not true of all teams but I feel it was certainly common enough that we need to take notice.



The game of hockey is a game of both skill and will. Our players will need both in order to meet the challenges of Bantam, Midget, High School or Junior programs. There was a time when individual battle level was put at least on par with skill growth as a developmental priority. That may not be the case now as in recent years we are seeing more practice time and a general swing to skills growth as priority. I personally agree that we need to develop a more skilled player but not at a cost of forgetting that the willingness to push back, sacrifice, elevate compete level and basically do what needs to be done in order to succeed is an important element of the Canadian game and the identity of Canadian players.

We may need to treat this “will” as a skill and challenge our players to be prepared to come out of the comfort zones when needed. Making this more of a developmental priority is easier said than done as it takes a strong coach to be able to get players and at times parents to honestly assess shortcomings that can fall under the vague term of character application. It takes an even stronger coach to lead players in the balanced direction of skill and character growth. I am in no way saying that our players and teams lack the internal makeup to succeed in our game but I do feel it needs to be nurtured. The reality of the game at the higher levels and even the strategy of some of our opponents in Atom and PW will be to challenge our teams physically in order to expose flaws.

If we can develop a higher skilled athlete that is unconditionally willing to be there when push comes to shove, then we are being true to our Canadian games future and also true to our Canadian games heritage.

### Bantam Competitive

We were quite young at Bantam Rep this year with teams having line ups of many first year players. This appeared to be a factor in our inability to have early season success at AA and A levels. In the early season we saw a group that looked to be hesitant to meet the challenges of the physicality of Bantam. The observation of our Bantam program is part of the food for thought as to what may need to be prioritized in our PW programs.

Once our teams grew physically and matured (mostly after Xmas) we saw steady improvements and the ability to stay head to head with opponents that would dominate us early season. It was certainly a challenging year for Bantam Rep, but we feel the challenges and more importantly the positive response to these challenges made for better players. I feel we will see a more sure and confident group of second year Bantams this coming season and with time a more Midget ready graduate.

## Major Bantam

The Barons were again a strong team in a very competitive Major Bantam league. Overall, this team exceeded many expectations. The coaches and team manager do an exceptional job of meeting the standards of one of the highest levels of minor hockey. They prepare the players well for the next level and have a strong record of graduating players that continue to impact and climb once they leave our program. Major Bantam is "fun" but also more no nonsense than most programs that fall under minor hockey. We are proud of this team for meeting league performance mandates, strong representation and the proven ability to place prepared graduates to the next level.

## Midget

I really enjoy spending time with and watching the Midgets play. Partly because I have known most of the players since their early years in BDMHA but as much because I see things truly coming together for these guys (Playing with confidence, good team attachment and application of skill). Players that once may have had the challenge of being of smaller size have experienced physical growth and no longer appear to play with holdback.

Many of our Midgets have the goal of playing Major Midget or High School in the future and this helps our programs from a motivational perspective. Coaches at this level need to accept that players may now have things like part time jobs and academic loads that can cause players to miss the odd game or practice. Our Midget program is seen as being the top in the province. We have strong teams and our kids stay in the game at an age when player drop out is a concern. Coaches, managers, and parents deserve much credit here for keeping goals alive and developing productive and rewarding player first environments.

## Female

Enough girls for two teams at Novice and a strong Atom group are seen as a real positive for the growth of female hockey. Pee-Wee, Bantam, and Midget levels were regionalized with tiered levels. Although regionalization creates its own challenges it helps to meet the goal of like skill with and against like skill. As a result, we saw very competitive league play. Conversations are currently taking place as to what is the next step for the progression of female hockey in our province.

## Minor Junior

I refer to this as the "unknown program" and this past season the age was raised to 23 (Now 18 to 23). Players from various minor hockey backgrounds, most who are in university or working full time but still want to play with their friends and wear the organizations colors. A great program for the game of hockey. We have a guy named Tyson Langille that coaches, manages and pretty much runs this one on his own. He is greatly appreciated by players, their families and the association.

## Recreation

Our Recreation teams that played in Metro Minor had varying success. Some were at top of standing some mid pack and some near bottom, and this looked to be the case at Atom through to Midget. Some things that can factor in on performance are a team having more impact players than others or perhaps superior goaltending. It can also be a case of one leadership team simply doing a better job with their group. That said, our association needs to look at Recreation team selection and pre-season balancing. Our goal would be to have balanced teams within each division and we need to be confident that the process in place will get us there. Recreation players at Atom and PW were part of the Core Skills program. Feedback from recreation will determine the future direction of Core Skills for this level.

It is my opinion that we need additional development opportunity at Bantam Recreation. Last season we tried to find a suitable consistent ice slot for this but it wasn't possible. The hope is that once we get next season's ice allotments we will be able to schedule these sessions.

## Development Programs

### Core skills

This past season, Core Skills represented 190 practice hours. The program targeted Atom and Pee-Wee aged players (Recreation & Rep). The focus was on fundamentals such as skating and puck skills. A survey was conducted and feedback will be used in deciding should this program continue and if so at what levels and how can program be improved. A big thank you to the coaches and Core Skills staff.

### Novice weekly power skating

Strong numbers and looked to have good impact. Thank you to Marie Bowness for all her contributions to Bedford Minor and her patient teaching approach.

### Novice Goaltending Sessions

Jack Hartigan (Finngoaltending) ran weekly development sessions for Novice. Attendance was good and feedback from Jack and participants was that there was much growth from group.

We also saw young players look to try goaltending at these sessions and some of these young players have since decided to pursue goaltending.

### Spring 3-on-3 and 4-on-4

This year was a three-week spring offering. The program consisted of 3-vs-3 half ice play and 4-vs-4 full ice. Feedback from players is that they enjoyed this format and that our new dasher boards used to separate playing surfaces were a great addition. Our goal with this program is fun first.

Next season we do see a need to hire staff to monitor dressing rooms. Unfortunate in my opinion, but reality.

### Summer

Summer offerings have been expanded and we will now be doing full day camps. Program information is on BDMHA website under Summer Development.

### Spring Try-Outs

Spring ID sessions at Atom and Pee-Wee were conducted recently. The rationale behind adding a spring element to our selection process and process itself is outlined on the BDMHA web site under try-outs. Our bottom line for try outs is right player in the right place and we will continue to look at ways to improve accuracy and make the try outs as player friendly as possible.

### Conclusion

Those of us in hockey leadership must strive to grow the game and its players while protecting the core values of hockey's truest offerings.

I would like to personally thank our membership for giving me the chance to be a part of this challenge. I can assure you that although our game is not above criticism it still lies deep within the hearts of our players. If we keep things in proper perspective, the game will continue to positively impact young lives by challenging, growing and offering truth.

Enjoy the summer.

***Shawn MacKenzie, Hockey Development Professional***