

10/9/26- Co-op Meeting

7:30pm- 8:40pm

Present: Whitney, Justin, Mitch, Kevin, John, Jake, Jeremy

Meeting Minutes

1. NDAHA Recommendation: Bantam Tryout Appeals

The board reconvened virtually to reconsider the NDAHA recommendation to allow two petitioned Peewee players to try out at the Bantam level. The board also considered whether evaluations, if permitted, should be conducted by the Bantam A head coach or an appointed hockey director/team selection committee.

Board members discussed the merits and concerns associated with allowing the appeals, including roster numbers, player development, competitive balance, evaluation impartiality, and the impact on all four teams within the program.

Key considerations included:

- **Roster numbers:** Current numbers are 21 Peewee players and 27 Bantam players. Roster capacity was identified as a primary factor in determining whether additional players should be permitted to petition up.
- **Evaluation impartiality:** concerns raised about whether the Bantam A head coach could provide an unbiased evaluation, citing reported conversations with both petitioning families regarding player movement, team selections, and desired rosters, as well as communications with the NDAHA president and Jamestown president regarding the coach's position on the evaluation process.
- **Player development:** Both petitioning players identified leadership and maturity as strengths. The board acknowledged the value of these qualities at the Peewee level but discussed whether they would provide the same benefit on a Bantam A roster.
- **Player development recommendations:** The player development director's recommendations were reviewed. Coach Stillwell reiterated that, considering skill development and safety at a more physical level of play, remaining a top-line player at the appropriate age level may provide greater development opportunities, including power play, penalty kill, and increased ice time, than filling a lower-line role at the next level.
- **Fairness across teams:** Members questioned whether roster decisions should be driven primarily by Bantam coaching preferences without equal consideration of Peewee roster

needs. The board also discussed the potential impact on second-year Bantam players competing for roster positions and valuable preparation time for high school hockey, compared with younger players who have additional years to develop at Bantam.

- **Selection consistency:** Members discussed the implications of allowing all petitions and leaving final decisions entirely to the coaching staff. John noted that having top-line players at each level does not automatically justify moving those players up annually; players can continue developing and contributing at their appropriate age level.

The board emphasized that the decision was not a reflection of either player's character, dedication, or worthiness of an opportunity. Both players were recognized as committed athletes. The board's responsibility is to make administrative decisions that support the overall program and all four teams.

Following approximately 45 minutes of discussion, John called for a revote.

Revote results:

- **Player 2:** 3 yes, 3 no; tie-breaking vote: no.
- **Player 3:** 3 yes, 3 no; tie-breaking vote: no.

Decision: Both appeals to try out at the Bantam level were denied.

Following the revote, Jeremy W. left the meeting and did not participate in subsequent discussions regarding injured-player tryouts or requests to roster siblings together for transportation purposes.

2. Tryout and Evaluation Process for Injured Players

The board reviewed parent inquiries regarding players unable to participate in tryouts due to injury.

The board unanimously agreed that injured players may be evaluated for roster placement upon their return to play. All coaches at the applicable level may participate in the evaluation, and players may attend both A- and B-team practices as needed to support placement decisions.

- Coaches must submit final roster recommendations by **December 10** to allow the registrar sufficient time to finalize state-level rosters.
- The board does not support temporarily placing players on an A team and subsequently moving them down when an injured player returns.
- Coaches may hold open roster positions when they believe a returning player has the potential to qualify for the A team.

3. Requests to Place Siblings on the Same Team

The board reviewed a parent request to roster siblings on the same team due to transportation and family hardship.

The board acknowledged the additional travel and logistical challenges families may face but determined that roster placement must be based on player skill and the appropriate competitive level.

Making exceptions based on individual family circumstances could establish an inconsistent precedent and lead to additional requests unrelated to player development or team needs.

Decision: Coaches retain discretion to place players on the teams best suited to their skill level and development needs. Requests based on transportation or family circumstances will not override these criteria.

4. Follow-Up

Whitney will contact the individual parents by email to communicate the board's decisions.

Next meeting: TBD