

2016-17 Tournament Director Report

The 2016-17 Hockey Season saw a continued change in philosophy in respect to tournaments in Medicine Hat. Goals for tournaments this year were to:

- Be fun for the kids
- To allow more teams in from different leagues to attend which minimized local teams having to play one another
- Use the tournament as a fundraiser for MHMHA so that local teams could receive up to \$1000 for an out-of-town tournament. This would lower their team costs during the season.
- Create extra funds for Medicine Hat Minor Hockey as a whole (goal was to reach \$100000 in profit for all tournaments combined)
- Expand to more tournaments from last year
- Have the best prize tables of any tournament in Alberta
- Have items (ie. Scarves & Medals) that are better than any other tournament in the province
- Give set schedules for the first 3 games in order for visiting teams to coordinate their own team building events during the tournament.
- Create the greatest economic impact on our entire city of any organization that exists in Medicine Hat
- Create an environment where volunteers are empowered to do the best job possible
- Help create more “Leaders through the enjoyment of hockey”

Size & Dates

The final breakdown of our tournaments were as follows:

Nov. 4-6, 2016 – Pee Wee AA – 9 teams (1 local & 8 out-of-town) *Was supposed to be 10 teams*

Nov. 25-27, 2016 – Bantam AA – 10 teams (1 local & 9 out-of-town)

Dec. 16-18, 2016 – CAHL 1 – 7 teams (1 local & 6 out-of-town) *Was supposed to be 8 teams*

Dec. 16-18, 2016 – CAHL 3 – 8 teams (1 local & 7 out-of-town)

Jan. 13-15, 2017 – Pee Wee City – 24 teams (6 local & 18 out-of-town)

Jan. 20-22, 2017 – Bantam City – 16 teams (5 local & 11 out-of-town)

Jan. 20-22, 2017 – Midget City – 16 teams (2 local & 4 out-of-town) *Was supposed to be 8 teams*

Jan. 27-29, 2017 – Atom B – 24 teams (8 local & 16 out-of-town)

Feb. 17-19, 2017 – Atom A – 24 teams (6 local & 18 out-of-town)

Mar. 3-5, 2017 – Novice 7 – 16 teams (7 local & 9 out-of-town)

Mar. 17-19, 2017 – Novice 8 – 22 teams (6 local Novice 8, 2 local Novice 7 & 16 out-of-town)

Was supposed to be 24 teams so we allowed a tier 5 division where 2 local teams were allowed to enter for \$200 each

Coordination started in April 2016 with the city to ensure that the dates & times were secured. Efforts were made to get as many tournaments on school PD days to minimize the amount of school missed by our athletes. Presetting the schedule made this possible. We also tried to get all tournaments at the Kinplex which was our only 2 rink facility. This request to the city was only granted with the prize table tournaments which were 5 of the 11 tournaments. The larger tournaments benefited the city by using ice times during the day on Friday that aren't usually booked. Another advantage was that there was no underutilized ice during this time.

Tournament Communication, Webpage & Email

We used a web based entry form for our tournaments this year. Having successful past tournaments has proven to be a double edge sword. The amount of teams wanting in has increased significantly from previous years. Due to the added volume of entries, I received help from Terrence Schultz and Ashley Christianson in keeping up with the emails this season and Kenzie Liefso with meetings. This proved to be vital in keeping in contact with the numerous entries and accepted teams. I estimate that over 500 out-of-town teams either applied or inquired about out tournaments this year. 120 visiting teams eventually came (not including the 15 from Hockey Hounds led Bantam AAA tournament). I also kept a spreadsheet of all possible entries for each tournament. This seemed to work well to make sure that we didn't miss anyone. Next year, I would suggest the tournament director should organize the teams but I think the individual league directors should perhaps pick the teams. We also tried to keep more communication between each tournament. Groups shared printing templates (from MinuteMan Press), ideas, volunteers scheduling templates, etc. This seemed to help each tournament improve from the last one. I also instituted a tournament deadline of Nov. 30th this year which in retrospect was a bit too late. I suggest using Oct. 25th as the date to start picking teams for tournaments after Christmas.

Sponsorship

Teams went out and secured numerous sponsorships for their own tournaments this year. Most of this was in the form of discount coupons for the tournament while some of it came in the form prize table items and some cash. Sponsorship money for our 4 rep tournaments stayed with the rep teams. With the other 7 tournaments, all sponsorship went to Minor Hockey. I feel that because tournament sponsorship didn't go to help each individual tournament, there was less incentive for teams to go out and get sponsorship. Therefore sponsorship was down from last year.

Personalized Scarves

Having more out-of-town teams allows us to purchase individualized items for each player. This year, I changed it up from shirts to scarves. These scarves had each player's individualized last name and number. This was one of the biggest undertakings as approximately 1800 scarves were ordered for the Pee Wee City League and below. I went away from shirts because of all of the extra work that I had to do to get appropriate sizes. The branding that the scarves did for our organization and tournaments seemed to be very good. A lot of positive feedback for the tournaments came as a result of the scarves. The biggest issue came with coordinating the name and numbers of each and every player. With help from the volunteers and Sports Connection this went fairly well. It would be nice to have someone else instead of myself in charge of getting rosters to make this process easier on me. I think that having rosters submitted online could also make it better. I also welcome any ideas from the members as to what to purchase for next year. Any left over scarves (about 800) will be purchased as player of the game awards for one of the levels next year.

Accommodation Association

The hotel association was a major sponsor when it came to tournaments. Their logo was on each of the scarves and medals. They gave \$21924 to our tournaments this year which is a 21% decrease from the year before despite a 27% increase in the visiting teams this year. This was a bit disappointing as we expected around \$35 000 due to the economic impact our tournaments have had on our hotels. Next year, we hope to work with the Hotels to improve this relationship.

Medals

This proved to be another positive for tournaments this year. Medals were pre-ordered for every tournament this year except for the rep teams. There was a great response to our custom made medals as in previous years. Medals also had name plates on the back which allowed us to not waste any as any unused medals were passed on to the next group. Because of the excellent design on this year's medals, I would suggest staying with this design for next year.

Volunteers

To run a successful tournament, volunteers were needed at various levels. In the end, approximately over 5000 volunteer hours were needed to run 11 successful tournaments. This does not include my time or the office time used by Sandi. I strongly feel that the system of giving the majority of the fundraising proceeds back to the teams contributed greatly to getting volunteers to commit. There were more missed shifts this year when compared to last year partially because there were no real consequences due to a missed shift. One way to combat that is to **not give out the \$1000 to each team until after their tournament has taken place.**

Finances

Tournament bank accounts were continued this year to keep better financial order. As this was the 2nd year in doing so, there were still some growing pains in maintaining these accounts. As everything was accounted for in detail, it does make for better accounting but this needs to be weighed against the work involved.

Minor Hockey continued a 70/30 split with each of the rep teams tournaments which meant that 70% of profits for these tournaments would go to each team and 30% to all of Minor Hockey. For the other 7 tournaments, all of the money went to Minor Hockey and in turn Minor Hockey gave up to \$1000 to any Minor Hockey teams that registered for an out of town tournament. I'm okay with this continuing in the future but did feel that each tournament (except for the Pee Wee City) made less money than last year if you factor in the increased registration fee. In total, the 11 tournaments generated **\$100 889** this year. This represents a 639% increase from the estimated \$15 800 generated 4 years ago. \$20 296 went back directly to the rep teams to assist in their team expenses & lower the cost to play hockey. \$80 593 went back to Minor Hockey to help fund programs, pay expenses or pay out the out-of-town tournament fee. Due to the cost of ice increasing by 30% next year, I would expect tournament profits to drop by about 20%. If there is also no Arena, I would expect tournament profits to decrease by about 75%.

Economic Impact

This, to me, is one of the most significant spinoffs of our tournaments. From 3 years ago, the trial 24 team tournament generated \$367 000 in economic activity in Medicine Hat according to the Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance. It also produced about \$565 000 in economic activity in Alberta. That was based upon bringing 17 visiting teams from abroad plus 7 local teams. This year we had 120 visiting teams plus 46 local teams participating. If you extrapolate the numbers from 2014, this means that our tournaments supported \$2 590 587 of economic activity for Medicine Hat & \$3 988 234 of economic activity for Alberta. I feel that this is something for all volunteers in our organization to be extremely proud of. If the Arena is lost next year, I would expect the city to lose about \$2 000 000 from what was generated this year.

What If we Lose the Arena?

If we lose the Arena, many of our tournaments will have to be cancelled. This is because we won't have enough ice to run our tournaments & scaling them back causes our association to lose money.

Back before we built the Canalta Centre, there was not enough ice for all of the tournaments that we have today. Therefore, this is exactly what it will be like again but worse. With more members in our association than there was 5 years ago the math won't work. If there is chance to save the Arena, I urge all members to let their city officials know what a detriment this will be to our organization and community as a whole.

Final Notes

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to make our tournaments a success this year. Also, much was learned to improve upon them next year. It was an honour to serve as your tournament coordinator this year. Depending on personal circumstances and depending what changes are made for next year, I may or may not stay on as tournament coordinator next year. If not, I wish my successor the best of luck in the future.