

2017-18 Bantam City Director Report

The 2017-18 Bantam City Hockey Season overall seemed to be fairly successful despite having to overcome some obstacles that seemed unique for this year. At the beginning my goals for the Banam City League this year were to:

- Be fun for the kids
- Continue to develop kids through practices, games and good coaching so that they can enjoy the game in the years regardless of what level they play
- Provide good mentorship from a group of coaches who understood the impact that good leadership has in helping shape these young men & women into good adults
- Create good team enviroments so that our children become “Leaders through the enjoyment of hockey”
- Try to schedule it so that players would not have to miss too many other sporting activities so often
- Make the teams as even as possible

The League

- We had 4 teams (Ice, Tigers, Knights & Whalers) each consisting of consisting of 11 or 12 skaters & 1 goalie each.
- In total, there were 49 players who played (29 1st year players & 19 2nd Year Players & 1 overage player)
- We had 48 boys and 1 girl
- Ice Times this year were generally as such:
 - o Mondays (1 or 2 ice times)
 - o Tuesdays (1 or 2 ice time)
 - o Thursdays (1 ice time)
 - o Sunday evening (2 ice times)
- Our ice scheduler tried to keep no set practices or games on Fridays or Saturdays to allow more kids to play school sports which worked well
- Almost all ice times were shared with another team
- I instituted full ice practices shared by 2 teams together about 2 times throughout the season but gave full ice single team practices up to 8 times. The breakdown of ice was as follows:

Totals	Ice	Tigers	Knights	Whalers
Games (1h 15min)	17	17	17	19
Games (2h 15 min)	4	4	4	2
Preseason Games	4	4	4	4
Home Tournament Games	4	4	4	4
Practice (Half-Ice)	23	24	25	24
Practice (Full-Ice)	8	7	6	7
Practice (Full-Ice Shared)	2	2	2	2
Totals	62	62	62	62

Total Games	29	29	29	29
Practices	33	33	33	33

Coaching & Managers

A big thank you to all coaches and managers who put in a tremendous amount of time in making our league successful. Having a group of people who were so committed to the kids made this year very enjoyable for myself and I thank them all for their volunteer time. Having coached at just about every level of rep and city hockey, I believe that this level can be one of the most difficult. There seems to be very few other divisions where the skill level and commitment levels of the players & parents is very widespread. Some of it because of other commitments/sports as well as other reasons. There were also a few discipline issues this year that were handled by our Code & Conduct director (Chris Wyrstok) and I thank him for that. We will await the feedback from the surveys to see how our parents felt that our coaches did. I strongly suggest that earlier levels do a better job of training more coaches so that we don't run out of people willing to do come Bantam.

Creating Even Divisional Play

This year, we tried to use a collective team approach to creating even teams (ie. No draft). I've discovered that drafts are simply about one coach trying to outwit another coach which unfortunately happens in that scenario. There were a total of 8 preseason games (over 2 weekends) that were used to even out the skill level as best as possible. Some preliminary teams were made up on weekend one and then modified on weekend two. All of the coaches met in a room for 2 long meetings as we also tried to sort out who was coaching. Trying to make everyone be honest about players is not always the easiest, however, if all of the coaches didn't agree, we wouldn't let a player play on a certain team. However after our teams were chosen, the loss of a large number of kids to Redcliff after we had drafted our teams created an unevenness to our teams to start the season. But by having a good practice to game ratio early in the season, this did even out the teams as the season went on because kids develop their skills approximately 11 times more in practices vs games (<http://howtohockey.com/hockey-practice-vs-hockey-game/> . Although we had one team winning no league games for the first 14 games of their season, this team ended up playing in the 1 vs 2 final. To me, this was a testament to letting the kids develop early in the season through practice in order to achieve even divisional play by the end of the season.

Surveys

Will be sent our by Minor Hockey in the upcoming weeks

Practice To Game Ratio

I have come under scrutiny over the years as a director because many members feel that there are too many practices when compared to games. I will do my best to address this. Attached is the end of the above chart (which shows what members received for their entry fee) plus adding games that teams played in tournaments (that parents paid extra for).

Totals	Ice	Tigers	Knights	Whalers
Total Games	29	29	29	29

Practices	33	33	33	33
Other Tourney Games	8	5	8	8
Total Games Per Team	37	34	41	37

Therefore MHMHA provided for our Bantam City League Players:

1.14 to 1 Practice to Game Ratio

When you include that teams went away to at least 1 tournament, players averaged a:

0.89 to 1 Practice to Game Ratio

Hockey Canada suggests to keep a practice to game ratio of more than a 1:1 ratio which we tried to do. I felt that this was important for a variety of reasons:

1. Teams Evened Out: This is described above. Having a team go 0 wins in 14 games was bad enough. The practices helped improve individual skill and team skill which made the teams more even by the end.
2. Rivalries Could Become Too Intense: With only 4 teams, playing the same team multiple times (up to 10 times this season) did induce some rougher play & some suspensions throughout the season. Playing the same team 15 times, I feel would make this worse.
3. Bantam Aged Players Are Only 13 -14 years Old: Hockey is late development sport according to Hockey Canada. I believe that if many of these kids are to play “Hockey For Life”, they need to improve. The only way to truly achieve this is with small area games that happen in practices.
4. Other Sports That 13 -14 year olds play have at least a 2:1 Practice To Game Ratio: On this same front it’s hard to understand why many think that hockey should be so different when our goal is to improve and have fun.
5. Look at Our Competitiveness on a Province Wide Scale: Our players improved drastically when compared to other teams in the province. At the beginning of the season, our teams competed with other Tier 6 teams and some lower Tier 5 teams. At the end of the season, 3 of our teams played year end tournaments and the results were as follows:
 - a. Knights: played in a tier 4 tournament in Edmonton and went 2-1-1 and lost in the gold medal final. They even tied a team that was in the same league as our 2nd CAHL Team (Tier 4)
 - b. Ice: played in a tier 4 tournament in Calgary and went undefeated while winning the final 3-0
 - c. Whalers: played in a tier 6 tournament and won the gold medal. They handily beat all teams with the closest game being 6-1

My point is that our system allowed for the best improvement in the province when it came to City Leagues. Even to the point where we were competing travel teams.

Problems Encountered This Year

- The loss of players to Redcliff meant that 3 teams were left with 11 skaters. This meant that any injuries would often leave teams short. Some teams played with 8-9 skaters and this was not enough. Unfortunately, Pee Wee City often played at the same time as us which didn't allow the easiest affiliation
- Our less players didn't allow for the best affiliation amongst our own teams but we worked together to try and make it work. In the end one team, the Whalers, could not get any Pee Wee affiliates to come up for any of their tournaments due to scheduling conflicts. All other teams used affiliates for at least one of their tournaments.
- Our lack of coaches meant that we had to do our best to schedule around coaches' work schedules in order to have enough coaches during practices and games. It worked out well in the end with some

Changes That I feel would benefit City League

- Allow team to team affiliation (instead of player) with Pee Wee City League. This became too onerous of task to get all of the signatures by every person needed.
- Get Novice, Atom & PeeWee Levels to develop more coaches so that we have enough at City League as we need 4-5 coaches per team
- I made mistakes by not giving teams enough games in January and more in February. I should have swapped this around a bit as people got upset when they saw the January schedule.
- Get CAHL teams to affiliate players who tried out for CAHL and not just players who improved their team.
- Having more clarity with the affiliation process. Having this outlined in a directors/coaches/managers manual would be ideal.

Final Notes

Thank you to everyone who stepped up to help in any capacity this year. It's not easy putting in your time to try and better our kids. I want to also thank all of our coaches, managers, tournament volunteers, as well as other MHMHA volunteers and administration who put a lot of work into trying to give our kids a good hockey season. I look forward to as many people's feedback as possible so that next year can be improved further. I hope that everyone has a good summer.