



To the Parents of Collingwood Minor Hockey

The issue of ice time, or more succinctly, the shortage of ice time for Collingwood Minor Hockey has never been more prevalent than this season. The reason of course is there is only one ice surface in town.

As a board we can assure you that there isn't a team in the organization that hasn't had concerns or questions about their ice time. Even though most are convinced their schedule is the worst, let us assure you no schedule is perfect. We are frustrated as well, and along with requesting more ice from the town we want to engage you in a discussion about finding a solution to the problem.

There are two options. One is do nothing and continue on this frustrating path that prevents the organization from focusing on the goal of letting our kids learn from and enjoy the game of hockey. The do nothing option means we continue driving to Feversham for practice. .

The other option that has come forward in the past few weeks is financially supporting an effort to put a roof on the outdoor rink at Central Park. The cover would allow the surface to be available earlier in the season, and later into the hockey season. It would also allow the town to line the ice properly for hockey. This would create a viable second ice surface for practice time.

The cover is expensive. It is estimated the cost could be as high as 800 thousand dollars to provide the cover and the associated lighting. The final cost would be determined by the type of project, this number is from some drawings done for the town a couple of years ago.

The town does not have this money set aside in the budget in the near future. Without a concerted public effort to raise a reasonable portion of the cost, the project will not happen. A new recreation centre/arena is likely 10-15 years away.

There have been meetings, and discussions with a group of people (some minor hockey parents, some simply concerned citizens) they believe that the climate is right to launch a public fundraising campaign to jump start the project.

As we would be expected to be a major user of this surface for practice time, we need to be involved financially. The idea was discussed at recent board meetings as

we looked for the best ways for Collingwood Minor Hockey to participate in the project.

The goal would be for Collingwood Minor Hockey to make a 50 thousand dollar contribution toward the costs. This of course would not be done as a lump sum but as an annual contribution, over a five year period.

The board is looking at a number of ways to make this contribution and assure the success of the project.

First and foremost we feel it is important to get input from the membership of the Association. We need this to be a project that our council recognizes as something that the parents of our players are solidly behind. Your comments are welcomed by the board.

We have identified two areas where our contribution can come from. We feel that both areas must be utilized to assure the project will be a success and receive support at the council table.

The plan involves using both of these areas to establish a building fund from which we would turn over our annual contribution. How we amass the monies is the tough part.

One source of contributions is a direct levy added to the cost of registration. At the current registration levels that amount would be a maximum of 25 dollars per player. This would be an annual levy for five years or less. The levy would not be assessed until such time as the project has been approved for construction. (ie; the group is aiming for the cover to be in place to start the 2009-2010 season, so the levy wouldn't be assessed until registration 2009.)

We are conscious of the costs associated with Minor Hockey, and are proud that registration fee increases have been minimal over the past five seasons. While 25 dollars may seem steep, please consider that any parent who has made even only two trips to Feversham in any season has easily paid that cost in gas and vehicle related expenses.

The Silver Stick Tournament and the Huronia Tournament have been successful events for Collingwood Minor Hockey. Each contributes several thousand dollars in proceeds each year. We are proposing that a percentage of tournament proceeds each year be dedicated to the new building fund.

The level of the contribution from the tournament proceeds would also be used to reduce the amount of the per player levy. (ie if the tournament contribution totaled 5 thousand a year the per player levy could be cut in half)

To help raise the amount of money contributed to the Building fund from Tournaments, and thus reducing the per player levy, we are going to re establish the tradition of the Christmas season House League Tournament. We had to cancel the March event because of lack of registrations, but feel a tournament at the Christmas Break will quickly become the major draw it was in the past.

Please take the time to review these ideas, and possibly develop a few suggestions of your own. The issue will be on the agenda for discussion purposes at the Annual General Meeting on April 23rd.

We also welcome any suggestions and comments you may have before the meeting. My e-mail is dale@georgian.net I will forward all comments on to the remainder of the board. If you wish to contact them directly their emails are available at www.collingwoodhockey.com

This is our chance to relieve years of frustration surrounding ice time for our kids, and a chance to be a part of a project to benefit the organization for years to come.

Yours in Hockey,

Dale West
President
Collingwood Minor Hockey