

## MINUTES

### Women's Division 1 and 2 Breakout Sunday, April 29, 2007

#### I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:11 am.

#### II. Roll Call

##### Division 1

Butch Soltys, University of Rhode Island  
Beth McCann, University of Rhode Island\*  
Chris Cobb, University of Massachusetts\*  
Brenda Schute, St. Cloud State University\*  
Ashley Andrews, St. Cloud State University  
John Burke, Robert Morris College\*  
Vince O'Mara, Lindenwood University\*  
Jeff Cunningham, Ohio State University\*

Cassie Cho, Smith College  
Shane Peters, Smith College\*  
Emily McVey, American University\*  
Brian Benenati, American University  
Adam Winters, University of Michigan\*  
Andrew Linder, Penn State University\*  
Craig Maslona, University at Buffalo\*  
Vicky Maslona, University at Buffalo

##### Division 2

Brian Carl, College of St. Scholastica\*  
Andy Ensign, College of St. Scholastica

Dallas Shearer, South Dakota State  
Heath Isaacson, South Dakota State\*

##### Others

Jim Henry, ACHA Women's VP\*  
Erin Russ, ACHA Women's Commissioner  
Molly Mahoney, Grand Valley State University (New Division 1 team for 2007-08)

\*Voting member

#### III. Reports

##### **Ken Fikis, USA Hockey Representative, stopped in to address the group.**

Ken introduced himself to everyone, and wanted to stress that he is the rep for ALL of the ACHA. Wanted to stress he has no bias toward one division or another and believes that all divisions should have equal voices in the organization.

##### A. Vice President's Report

1<sup>st</sup> year of D2 – successful both in structure and level of play.

Possible reflection of men's structure as we move forward? i.e. D1 is smaller than D2 with stricter rules and more organized, "varsity-style" teams. As an organization we will have to determine how the two divisions will evolve.

Congratulations to our national championship winners, Robert Morris College and the College of St. Scholastica, and to our Coaches of the Year, Brenda Schute and Heath Isaacson.

B. Commissioner's Report

Things ran pretty smoothly operationally this year – even the new D2 procedures, thanks to some organized and on-the-ball teams in D2. Thanks to all for getting paperwork in on time, etc. – it really helps to make the commissioner's job easier.

Now that things like paperwork are changing less and the process is in place, how do we move forward – how can we make things better? Please give us feedback.

Some teams in the west have conducted a short survey of teams to examine where we are. We know each other "informally" but a survey like this will help get real data on how our teams operate. Their survey included issues like practice time, paid vs. volunteer coaches, travel, budgets, etc. I would like to conduct a survey like this for all teams... we will hopefully have a chance to discuss the survey a little more later in the meeting.

Website – there were some kinks in the transition to the new vendor but things are flowing smoother. They will continue to work on those bugs, and hopefully the archives will be reinstated soon as well.

C. National Championship Report

Erin thanked Chris Cobb and U Mass for a fine job, especially dealing with things like the last-minute schedule change. They did a great job and their effort is appreciated.

Would like to see, in future years, more attention paid to some of the little details, that in past years have sometimes gone overlooked. We are at a point now where these details are making the difference in how the tournament is perceived. Things like having scoresheets properly completed are what coaches are complaining about, so it's definitely important to get these details right in the future.

Chris Cobb reported that despite some of the challenges the team faced over the season and right up until the start of the tournament, the tournament went well for the team. He gave kudos to his players for all the hard work they put in to the tournament, as they did most of the work with some help from parents and friends.

D. AWHCA Report

The AWHCA is developing a National Women's Hockey Day – want to get all teams involved. Teams will have clinics, trying to find a sponsor for the event. Might schools with both varsity and ACHA teams be able to hold a joint clinic?

Rule emphasis was discussed at the meeting. Beth gave Erin a summary sheet that will be distributed to all teams with the minutes and posted on the web site. There were four main points, including obtainable passes and a crackdown on diving and other "acting" during play.

## E. League Reports

- a. CCWHA – Adam Winters, Michigan
  - A little worried a few weeks ago – commissioner Mike Fornes resigned, plus team issues – potential of only 3 teams for 2007-08.
  - Now there are 3 new teams – Lindenwood, Grand Valley State, Michigan State Green. Also an interim commissioner team (Adam and Jeff C. from OSU).
  - League tourney - at Findlay and won by OSU, Western Michigan was second
- b. DVCHC – Bryan Benenati, American
  - Incorporates all SE teams except Liberty and Penn State
  - Lots of new player recruits – saw level of play increase dramatically
  - Will start DVCHC D2 – five teams – with lots of new players and young teams: Villanova, West Chester, IUP, SRU, Drexel
  - All-Star game sponsored by Philadelphia Phantoms
  - Washington Capitals allowed each team to play a game at their arena
  - American won their league tournament
  - Vanguard – team for HS players to take a look at college – is part of the league. Allows players to come to campus for games and see what the university is all about. Not trying to recruit kids to DVCHC schools per se, just showing them that there are great opportunities for them with ACHA schools.
- c. ECWHL – Beth McCann, URI
  - 8 teams – lost 2 this year – Norwich to varsity, NCCC to non-ACHA
  - UConn will be a full member this year.
  - URI won championship, Norwich placed 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - 4-team tournament with banquet – announced all-tournament teams there.
- d. NEWCHL – Shane Peters, Smith College
  - This league is VERY new – really still just in the planning stages.
  - Will be a D2 league in the New England area – teams with small schedules, small budgets, keeping things regional.
  - Looking at five teams this year – want to get up to 8 but then keep it there.

## IV. Discussion Items

### A. All-Tournament Awards Committee

What do others do?

- Ask teams to rank their top 6 players in the tournament – feedback from coaches
- It is important – but takes a commitment
- Coaches that don't make the tournament – those that don't make the tourney but are within driving distances
- USA Hockey evaluators in training
- Problems occur when games overlap
- NCAA D3 is having the same problem – they have NCAA pick, even though they invite all teams in region

- Possibly include player reps of teams that don't make tournament
  - Level of response in coaches vote is critical – don't always get a wide response
- B. ACHA Recognition of league rules and regulations
- Looking for ACHA to recognize and help leagues enforce their penalties.
  - Recognize league criteria?
  - As league teams are ACHA teams, this in a way is “automatic”
- C. Security and medical personnel at regular-season games
- Most teams have EMT in rink or CAT on bench (2 in attendance don't)
  - EMT is not very helpful for hockey injuries – only if someone is seriously injured. CAT much more worth the money – they can tape ankles, diagnose injuries on the bench and the ice, etc.
  - Only one has security personnel – only b/c school requires
  - Everyone agrees that fan security is generally not an issue but don't want to overlook it
  - Biggest issue to think of would be parents going off b/c of refs
  - USA Hockey empowers rink mgmt and officials to attend to this
  - Schools may consider posting signs at games in a prominent place – beyond what rink signs rinks have.
  - Trainer issue – American couldn't find a trainer b/c of liability issues.
  - OSU – gives game schedule to athletic dept. and they schedule
  - Possible credit toward training/continuing ed for CAT's or students.
  - Erin will check with USA hockey re: legal issues with trainers and liability – i.e. are they covered if they are on the spreadsheet?
  - Schools will face serious issues if a trainer is NOT present and an issue happens – may want to have a conversation with your sport clubs/administration regarding this fact.
- D. High number of game cancellations this season
- At least 8 game cancellations this season NOT because of weather – some right at the last minute or on the day of the game.
  - Even though we have it written that non-contract communication is applicable, we cannot truly enforce a fine legally. Game contracts are the way to go.
  - If university closes because of weather, teams should not be expected to travel even if physically they could travel.
  - If a team cancels – send documentation to ACHA.
- E. Ranking procedures/Ranking committee operation
- Tools to help ranking committee – PWR not as a vote, just as a tool?
  - Qualification of ranking committee members
  - More communication between ranking committee members
  - Rewarding teams for playing a tough schedule, playing top-5 teams
  - Can statistics be separated, within division and non-division games?
  - Went over current ranking procedure and instructions given to ranking committee
  - Ask rankers to write a short summary with ballots?
  - Standardized schedules would make ranking easier
  - Shot counts would be helpful – not available on website this year

- General feeling was that coaches should have at least one year of ACHA coaching experience so they know the teams a bit

F. Standard season start date

- Some teams not allowed to start until November, while other teams are playing games the last weekend in Sept/1<sup>st</sup> weekend of October.
- May be a good guideline to put in the website or on the checklist
- Let the ranking committee know about scheduling issues

**V. Policies and Procedures Manual Changes**

**Division 1 and 2 Items**

A. Housekeeping errors – general consent items (Erin Russ/ACHA)

No discussion, except clarification of a few points.

Motion to vote: Vince O'Mara, Lindenwood

Second: Bryan Benenati, American

PASSED unanimously

B. Wednesday tournament activities on Official Schedule (Erin Russ/ACHA)

Discussion:

- Team travel and academic issues – teams have midterms or end of quarter
- Banquet within the tourney, not before
- Can coaches meeting be right before first game? (i.e. 2 hours before)

Motion to vote: Beth McCann, URI

Second: Chris Cobb, UMass

Passed: 11-3-0

C. Awards nomination procedure change (Erin Russ/ACHA and Beth McCann/URI)

No discussion.

Motion to vote: Beth McCann, URI

Second: John Burke, Robert Morris College

PASSED unanimously

**Shane Hanlon, ACHA Referee-in-Chief joined the meeting for his annual report/Q&A:**

Issues with rule enforcement changes – working that in is a process, just like the evolution of play that brought the problems was a process. So far things seem to be “settling down” after an influx of calls at the beginning of the season.

If you have problem with/about any officiating issue, or an official you had – Shane will do everything in his power to fix that, but he needs to know about it. Please contact your commissioner and/or Shane himself.

Shane maintains a list of assigners for each team – he keeps in contact with them so please keep your assigner info updated (notify Shane or Erin if it changes). As mentioned at the General Session, Shane wants to try to “condense” the number of assigners per game so that ACHA duties are spread out better. Teams should not be having the same officials all year.

A question was posed to Shane: Refs at nationals – why were they all female? For those who NEVER see female officials, it was “different.” Not bad, but wondering why there is such an emphasis on having female officials at our tournaments. Shane responded that our tournaments are a good forum for encouraging and developing female officials – since it’s a women’s division, it seems natural to include women officials.

How can we get more female officials in our regular season games? If you have ideas please contact Shane.

#### **Division 1 and 2 Items – continued**

- D. Divisional status declaration – date change to September 30 (Beth McCann/URI)

No discussion.

Motion to vote: Vince O’Mara, Lindenwood  
Second: John Burke, Robert Morris College  
PASSED unanimously

#### **BREAK – Ten Minutes**

#### **Division 1 Items**

- A. Eligibility of CIS students (Vince O’Mara/Lindenwood)

Discussion:

- Clarification/questions about what level CIS teams are at.
- Robert Morris played one of their better teams and lost 7-0; John feels they were about equal to an NCAA D1 team.
- If a player thinks they have 5 years and are thinking about transferring, shouldn’t their decision to transfer also include the debate about losing a year of hockey time? Do we have to make it even for them?

Motion to vote: Bryan Benenati, American  
Second: Brenda Schute, St. Cloud State  
FAILED 4-8-0

- B. Eligibility of NCAA Division III students (Bryan Benenati/American)

Withdrawn. – was supposed to be a discussion item.

- C. Overtime clarification (Brenda Schute/SCSU)

No discussion.

Motion to vote: John Burke, Robert Morris College  
Second: Andrew Linder, Penn State  
PASSED unanimously

D. National Championship format (Beth McCann/URI)

Discussion:

- Would again bring up extended time away from school
- Eight teams – in the past depth was a concern but not now.

Motion to vote: John Burke, Robert Morris College  
Second: Brenda Schute, St. Cloud State

Second proposed change:

FAILED 2-10-0

First proposed change:

FAILED 1-11-0

E. National Championship seeding (Beth McCann/URI)

Discussion:

- Many felt that host should still get a bid to “reward” them for hard work
- Regional bids keep the idea of a “national” tournament intact
- There is concern that “deserving” teams are getting left out by “less deserving” teams
- Someone will always be on the other side of the fence – a “deserving” team will almost always just miss the cut. What do we do, have a 40-team tournament?
- National ranking still allows representation from around the nation, but you have to work through the season to get yourself into the top12. Keeps competition level at nationals high.
- Do you really want to beat someone by a large margin at a national tournament? Part of the fun of the tournament is that you know you will be facing tough competition and close games.
- Adjusted wording to include host as an automatic bid and correct an error.

Motion to vote: Brenda Schute, St. Cloud State  
Second: Adam Winters, Michigan  
PASSED 8-4-0

F. Minimum games per season (Beth McCann/URI)

Discussion:

- Some teams cannot start until later – makes getting 2 games before the first ranking tough
- Christmas holiday is the time when the least games are played – not right before nationals. There is usually a flurry of play then, with everyone trying to get games in before the last ranking
- What if your schedule is varied? You might not be able to fit a team into a certain time frame because of rink issues, etc. Also, if you play some teams in the other division, you are still playing ACHA games but not teams in your division.

Broke into two questions, since each was a separate issue.

Motion to vote: Jeff Cunningham, Ohio State  
Second: Andrew Linder, Penn State  
Minimum 12 games against 6 teams  
FAILED 5-7-0  
2 games per ranking period  
FAILED 2-10-0

#### **Division 2 Items**

- A. Shootouts in overtime games

No discussion.

Motion to vote: Brian Carl, CSS  
Second: Heath Isaacson, SDSU  
FAILED 1-2-0

#### **VI. Election of Vice President, Women's Divisions**

Nominated: John Burke, Robert Morris College

Motion to vote: Brian Carl, CSS  
Second: Heath Isaacson, SDSU  
PASSED unanimously

#### **VII. Nationals Bids**

- Heath Isaacson and Dallas Shearer for South Dakota State University
- Jim Lebeau for the Monroe County (New York) Sports Commission and ESL Sports Centre, Rochester, New York
- Bryan Benenati for American University

Withdrawn:

- Jeff Cunningham on behalf of The Chiller, LLC

After the presentations, members had the opportunity to ask questions of the presenters, then they voted by paper ballot.

Rochester, NY (10 votes) was selected as the 2009 Women's Division I and II tournament site. Brookings, SD received 3 votes and Washington, DC received 1 vote.

#### **VII. New Business / Announcements / Other**

1. Erin Russ would like to take a "class picture" and pictures of the Coaches of the Year and coaches of the Championship teams. Please meet in the floor lobby (near the elevators) right after this meeting.

2. Award certificates will be mailed this year – they are complete but went missing after the General Session yesterday. *Note: Subsequent to the meeting, the certificates were located and will be mailed out this week.*
3. The ACHA Women's Division I Showcase will be held November 16-18, 2007, at Brad Boss Arena in Kingston, Rhode Island. The Division 2 Showcase will likely be held in International Falls, Minnesota a few weeks earlier but details are still being worked out. A call for interest will be e-mailed soon.

#### **VIII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 12:23pm.