

## Compiled 2023 Fall Forum notes from Oct 28<sup>th</sup> – 2 tables combined notes

### 1. Championship format:

- a. 11 and 13 seeding and tiering seemed to work fairly well. Felt the Tier #3 playoffs should go the same time as the Tier #2. Parents not keen on Sept ball.
- b. No complaints re: 6/7 or 8/9 series, mainly because they knew this was to happen...not sprung on them. Also, felt if 1 game decided series, refund the championship fee and if went 3, then give ½ back to losing team.
- c. Level 2 teams that advanced did very well when pitted against the Tier 1 team playoffs.
- d. No complaints about certain players playing less in the “games that counted” versus the games that “did not count”.
- e. Important that all games, counters or non-counters, be played, and not just the counted games if time running short at season end.

### 2. BBPEI REPS

- a. The number \$500 was thrown around, and suggested even that not enough for a job nobody wants!
- b. Too hard to get people early. Maybe have the associations try to get people early...might help them prepare to know what to expect and what to do.
- c. Maybe try to use a group of 2 or 3 to do job and spread long whole weekend up some.
- d. Suggested to advertise on website early to try to get people identified.
- e. BPEI and PEIBUA partner to train and build reps who can do both support tourney and the umpires on field.

### 3. Host sites:

- a. Got too late for Tier #3 people to be identified. Actually was held too late for people to even want to play at this level...see #1 idea of playing Tier #3 same time as Tier #2.
- b. Felt rotation of hosts would be okay for AAA, but for others important to have their own team in...if not in, parents would not want to be involved at all. Fely might work for "A" but likely hard and not good idea for lower than that for sure. PILOT AT AAA FOR FIRST YEAR???
- c. The fee to \$400 helped especially for associations that had to pay for field use and maintenance. Others were able to pay a stipend to get some helpers.
- d. A suggestion was: If a team starts in Tier #2 and commits to host Tier #2, then they get a bye into Tier #2 regardless of final standing.

**3. Championship Dates:**

- a. Keep tiered divisions out of Sept as much as possible.
- b. Thought: Could play during the week work and perhaps help with field availability and lights availability.
- c. If played through the week, use the weekend to have the SF and Final games
- d. If through the week, then easier to schedule with "league" like arrangement of games – easier to officiate
- e. Thought: maybe have 2 or even 3 divisions have their SF and final games held on the same day at the same site.
  - a. le 11A, 11AA and 11AAA, could be 11U Championship Site
    - i. Likely need minimum 2 fields
    - ii. Maybe lights
    - iii. 3 games per division,
      - 1. A, 2 fields, 9am
      - 2. AA, 2 fields, 11:30
      - 3. AAA, 2 fields, 2:00
      - 4. A final at 4:30 and even A and AA both at 4:30
      - 5. AAA 7 ish
    - iv. Might be easy to promote extensively, good haul for the host site and centralize need for officials and maybe reduce their travel

#### **4. 9U**

- a. Replace jamborees as now and leave it to the associations to organize. Teams could plan this as early as the pre-league meeting. Treat like an exhibition tourney, charge a fee to attend and handle everything from there..treats, trophies, etc as per wishes.**
- b. Some associations might limit to some pizza and just a couple games and done. Others felt that trophies etc was important at this age level.**
- c. Thought: Create a 9U Strategy Plan to deal with format, awards, treats, timing of event, #games, etc**
- d. Need to have some event that is suitable and available for all teams...not just larger assns. Which may have 6-8 teams right off the bat. Need to be sure smaller assns. Also have an event to either host or attend.**
- e. Suggested: Let a team host a jamboree and advertise for a certain number of teams. Could fit into discussion re: Strategy Plan.**
- f. There was talk about tiering at this level but most felt this not a good idea. These “better” children could be moved up to the 11U category somewhere appropriate. Done in most assns. anyhow already.**
- g. Evaluations – major/minor categories. Keep the 9U kids in 9U. Structure the league play differently. Form working group to implement.**

#### **5. League Play:**

- a. Expressed that it was hard for 11A teams to find Aps. Suggested maybe ease the rule for 11A, so a child could play up to 6 games , not just 3. This division only.**
- b. Suggested that 11A settle to play just 5 innings, no 6<sup>th</sup> inning score as many as you can. Many games did not reach that extent anyway.**
- c. I am adding here, forget at the time, that an assn not register 11AA Minor, without registering regular “AA”.**
- d. Make sure that if you start the last inning, must finish...so be careful as approach the time limit. Not fair for 1 team to have a turn and not the second team.**

- e. Was talk about allowing kids to continue stealing home, 11AA Minor was in favor of having them needed to be hit in, Darrel had a better handle on what-ifs
- f. Can we create a “house league” 22U league? For players who just want to continue? Currently if you aren’t “good” you get no playing time and it is not fun – is there an appetite to expand on this league?

## 6. Girls registration:

Important that girls know exactly what options are available to them at registration:

- a. Play girls only
- b. Play co-ed with boys also
- c. Would it work to register as “SURGE” where they know would be part of this program....Would this assist in assns. that send girls to softball and boys to baseball.
- d. What is best way to run SURGE:
  - i. By association under SURGE name?
  - ii. By BBPEI as a SURGE club?
- e. Use of RAMP to determine registration in association by postal codes...? Can we do this?
- f. Grassroots coaches do not have clear understanding of how the AP system works – more education or direction needed – they do not read the policy and if they do they don’t understand it.
- g. all leagues to get teams chosen sooner because often coaches are found only after kids have not made one level of team. Usually “A” is last and coaches late being selected and often miss the league meeting where AP is discussed (and everything else they need to know!)
- h. Suggestion: with APs, consider not having them need to be affiliated with just 1 team...coming from 9U anyhow, not hurting if they could play with different teams....this also for 11A only!

## 7. UMPIRES:

- a. Could “community school” be a place to train adults as umpires and spread it out over a few weeks as compared to a long day or weekend
- b. Push parents to train and “certify” as umpires so they could fill in when one official may be missing...at least get games played
  - i. LIABILITY: parents (like coaches) must be registered to be insured, so if they are a coach already – no worries, but if NOT a coach or umpire – they need coverage to be on field. AND CRC!
- c. There was far too much delay getting the young grassroots umpires paid this season
- d. Suggestion: BPEI pre-pay the PEIBUA \$10K, as an advance toward our post-season expenses for championships and provide a source from which umpires could be paid early in year.
- e. Associations should pre-pay for umpires so the BUA is not fronting this money – can be sent out sooner this way if they are not awaiting payment from associations.
- f. Risks of paying officials at the field:
- g. It can present too many “ill-feelings” by those who see this done as a home-field advantage.
- h. How to track- was it paid, was it not, much better coming from a controller?.
- i. School Sport tried this approach and did not go well – and caused issues if officials were newer or coaches were not “happy” with them
- j. Seemed to be agreement for a “fee increase” and that all levels in an age category get same pay
  - a. Often AAA games done 1.5h whereas, A games 2.5 or more!
- k. Suggested the umpires be “geared up” better... clothing, protective gear – association front the gear and umpires “work off the cost” of keeping them at the end of season
- l. Need coaches to attend pre-season meetings, so they understand rules as well as appropriate conduct, etc
- m. End of Season Interview/survey - Have PEIBUA **survey** now all officials to determine their intent to officiate next year. For those saying did not plan to continue, could find out why, encourage them to try another time, use reasons as things to pursue in prep for next year, etc.

- n. Seemed fewer ejections from “aggressive” situations and perhaps most were on “ball/strike” calls.
- o. Was suggested that umpires need to be consistent with how they call games/treat coaches from one level to another...ie an ump treat AAA coaches differently than a “AA” coach...maybe same play viewed differently level to level, coach to coach.
- p. Payment at games with monthly invoicing for mileages/per diems
- q. Community School program and further alternatives to clinics during the winter months
- r. Free registration for players/coaches who umpire a set number of games
- s. Access to equipment needed for officials – to feel professional and look the part. Most can’t afford to buy all the proper attire and equipment up front.
- t. -BPEI representation at Grass Roots games to ensure Non-Confrontation Policy is being adhered to – can we combine with the umpire mentorship program?

## 8. **Non Confrontation**

- a. Policy was well received for it being in its first year
- b. Payment of Umpires was inconsistent and took longer than usual
- c. Possible inclusion of Non-Confrontation Policy to NCCP Coaching
- d. Clinics (further education needed for coaches)

## 9. **Coaches:**

- Shawn Schaefer camp in April was very successful – would like more coaching development opportunities
- Cutting more slack for Ass’t Coaches to obtain minimum certification – when they are with a fully cert HC
- Need More professionally run camps for teaching opportunities (coach mentorship and instruction)
- More online presence for some NCCP requirements
- Initiation minimum for Asst. Coaches provided they are with a HC who is fully certified
- Need more grassroots work with coaches to learn to give feedback and correction (9u/11UA)– summer clinics and instructors able to do more of this?

## 10. **Zone Dominance**

- What is the specific breakdown of player associations per "AAA" Team? ex. how many from Stratford -vs- how many from Eastern
- Should a decision to create an Eastern zone independent from Stratford be made based off of Performance or Population study
- Games including Eastern teams at all levels are not competitive
- Each zone be encouraged to field two AAA teams if numbers permit - what is the number?

### **11. Fall Ball**

- Allow for flexibility in scheduling games that best fits team/umpire availability (Sat or Sun)
- Hockey tryouts often interfere when scheduled on weekends – allow mid-week games?
- Umpires usually lose interest after BPEI Provincial season is over - lower expectation of 2 officials and schedule one umpire from behind the mound for games- this also keeps costs to a minimum
- Advertise as a developmental/or even intro opportunity - no must win games – everyone plays equally

### **12. Parent Code of Conduct**

- Possibility of Marshalls or Reps at each game to enforce conduct unbecoming
- Cannot be left to umpires to deal with parent or coach conflict or parent/coach conflict
- Incident reports accessible to the public to use
- locals often are hesitant in dealing with people from their community – too many points of contact to risk the confrontation (school, hockey, neighbors, church)