

# **BMHA 2024/25 Year End U15 Director Report**

April 21, 2025

## **Team Reports**

### **U15A Barons team year end report:**

Submitted by Candace Dustan

In this inaugural season of the Tri-City League, the Barons U15A team played 16 league games in the A division with 3 other teams – Meadow Lake, Prince Albert Tornados and Prince Albert Hurricanes, finishing with a 6-9-1 record. We were also invited to exhibition games with provincial teams in Lashburn, Kindersley, and Edam, played an exhibition game vs Turtleford and a home and home with Delisle, totaling another 6 exhibition games. Having relationships with these surrounding area teams was beneficial to be able to play outside of our league with good competition and easy travel. Our provincial run resulted in a round 1 win against Delisle and defeat in round 2 against Warman, who went on to win the provincial championship.

The Tri-City league was well organized, and the experience will only improve as the league expands and adapts. Communication was adept with all documents located on the website, which was updated often (and impressively fast) and was quite user friendly. One suggestion would be to meet with team managers and coaches after every season, to round table what went well and what could be improved. We did run into some issues with communication and dealing with some of the other minor hockey associations. My advice would be to ensure team managers are proactive in checking the Tri-City website and Facebook page and keeping important Hockey Saskatchewan tabs and the Tri-City constitution readily accessible. Previously, the A teams didn't have a league to play in, and that came with its own challenges, so this was a most welcome change. There were some necessary adjustments made to the costs covered by BMHA (provincial and playoff games) now that the A teams have a league to play in and those should be made clear at the outset of the season.

Dealing with other Minor Hockey organizations in the Tri-City league has made it clear that we are fortunate to have exceptional office staff and volunteers in the BMHA organization. We came to the scheduling meeting with excellent game ice time options, managed changes efficiently, and were able to communicate with ease. The U15 Director was very helpful and attentive in navigating this new league, dealing with suspensions and communicating information. Following the league format and corresponding via managers will likely improve with the other organizations as the league moves forward with continued learning. Kudos to those in our BMHA organization that make the difference!

An important item of note with team formats is that the team coach should have the ability to select the number of players they deem as capable of playing on the team. In a repeat of previous years, the coach had to take a certain number of players (to make registration numbers work), regardless of their ability to play on the team. This resulted in one player quitting the year early on as the pace and demand was too high and a couple others who struggled to play at the A hockey level, resulting in a less than enjoyable experience. It would likely have been more beneficial, this season, for those players to play on the B team and be used as affiliate players to the A team. There were some problems with attendance on the U15B team and that may have been avoided with some extra players. It is difficult to coach (especially during game situations) when time is spent managing uneven lines and extra players.

Suspensions were not an issue for our team numbers, and we used our affiliate players when we needed to.

All in all, 2024-25 was a great season, with a lot of fun and improvement. We were grateful to have a league to play in and would like to thank those involved in getting this long due league off the ground. We look forward to continued success in future years.

### **U15B Barons team year end report:**

Submitted by Erika Schneider, Manager U15B Barons

Our regular season was a little bit of a struggle. We had started off decently well with a few wins but as the year progressed we struggled on getting wins, mostly due to lack of attendance or commitment and lack of 2nd years on the team. Our regular season ended with us in last place with a 5-10-1 record. Our league playoffs ended in the first round against the 3rd seeded team.

We attended 3 out of town tournaments (Clavet, Waldheim and Prince Albert) where we struggled with wins due to lack of attendance also. Unfortunately we never progressed past first round in any of the tournaments.

Our home tournament was a good success and had some great feedback from the teams that that attended - it was run and very good even being split with the A team and the 2 rinks it was an excellent tournament.

With it being the first year with the league there were definitely issues. The biggest one was being travel. We all felt we actually travelled more than we had in previous years. Maybe being the distances because it was PA and Meadow Lake only. The other struggle was the big break between games when we did play.....2 games in one day stretched out (lots of times with nothing to do in between was a bit much). Had the games been almost back to back it would have been better, and many parents agreed with this. Also when travelling away we were forced to play 2 different teams in the same day - so the second game a FRESH opposing team would come in and play our tired team (especially with a big break) so we would lose every time. When opposing teams would come to NB and play us in the same day it was the same team so it was at least fair for both teams in the second game. With few teams in the league it was definitely a little redundant with playing the same teams.

With the league looking for more teams next year hopefully this will help. Most parents also expressed if there are only 2 teams in one age group they should be split evenly and put into the same division. Also they didn't want to travel as much with league (especially to PA) as was scheduled.

### **Director Summary**

This season was the first year the U15A team had a league to play in so that made scheduling easier as it is tough to book exhibition games at the U15 level and older.

We brought in independent evaluators again this year for the players wanting to try out for the U15A team and coordinated this with the U18A team. I feel like it was a success as they had no idea who the kids were and were only given jersey colours and numbers. They choose the best team based on positions.

The lack of coaches at the U15 level was a huge challenge this year as everyone I asked was not willing. After a lot of begging and pleading, thankfully someone finally stepped up to coach the U15 B team so the kids could have a season. But it wasn't an easy start to the year with the lack of coaches.

We ran into a situation where we had too many goalies for the 2 teams in U15 so we were able to give one player a release to play in Turtleford this season as they had no goalie. Usually we do not have enough goalies so this was a different kind of situation to try to work out so all the goalies had a place to play and could play as much as possible.

We had 2 very successful U15 tournaments in December. One was U15A with 6 teams and the other was a U15B tournament with 6 teams. We had many teams wanting to come and it filled up fast. I was able to coordinate the draws and game times and rinks and still give some ice time back to BMHA to use for other age divisions so there was no dead ice.

As everyone knows with body contact hockey, there are a lot of suspensions and injuries and U15 this year had its fair share.

This was my second year as BMHA U15 director so I felt it ran smoother after my learnings from the first season. I also enjoyed being U15 Director when my son was in a different age division. I try to bring transparency and fairness for all the players and coaches and parents. I was willing to answer any questions that arose. I knew I was never going to please everyone but I did try to make it the best year for all U15 players and coaches and supported the teams as best I could. As always, I have learned a lot this last year which will help guide the decisions for next year.

Jennifer Burnett

BMHA – U15 Director