

WRRL President's Report

This marks the end of the third and final year of my term as WRRL President. With a full-time job, a part-time but, a lot of the time, a full-time job of farming after my brother passed, coaching my daughter's A team and the fact that Kitchener has been President for at least 5 years, it's time to pass the gavel.

My main objective at the beginning of each year was to make improvements from previous years. For the most part I believe WRRL held its own this year.

One thing that I hope is recognized as a success is the level of understanding among Western Region on just what WRRL is. I know that when I became the Regional Rep for Kitchener Ringette Association 5 years ago I had no idea about the difference among WRRR, WORL and WRRL. Nobody told me how difficult it was to even find the meeting room let alone what I was supposed to do when I got here.

Another success over the past couple years has been the level of attendance at WRRL meetings. It's important to hear things first hand and just as important, have a voice and opinion in our path forward. No one can argue that we had some good debates this past year and hopefully some good came out of those discussions.

I believe we all have a common objective to grow this sport but for most associations it continues to be a struggle to simply maintain membership. I applaud those organizations which are being successful and it's my lasting hope that the membership will strive to help each other across associations because we need all associations to succeed in order for this sport to survive. My opinion is that any minor sport requires a thriving house league program to maintain a quality representative program. I believe that this is not the general rule within Western Region currently. Seeing Tara, Woolwich and now St. Clements cease during my tenure of coming to WRRL meetings, is not a trend I hope continues.

At our AGM on April 5:

- i) League championship banners were distributed to 12 Regional teams (East and West, U9 to U19).
- ii) Some revisions, most typographical, were made to the WRRL Rules and Bylaws. The main new rule deals with fining teams the cost of officials and 50% of ice rental costs if they cancel a game less than 72 hours from game time for non-weather reasons.
- iii) A lengthy discussion centered on the increasing amount of travel required for league games. The decreasing number of teams in the Eastern Conference is not helping to resolve this issue. It was decided that communication with parents and coaches prior to the season is a key component in easing teams' frustration later in the season. Ice schedules for the entire year will be provided where possible in order to ease scheduling crunches later in the season. More effort will be given by ice schedulers and coaching staff to arrange double headers and 2 games in 2 centers in proximity.
- iv) A new executive was voted in. Unfortunately we had to resort to pulling a name from the hat to fill the President position. This Association (Hanover) unfortunately will only be fielding one team in 2016/2017. A plea has gone out to Associations with more than 3 teams involved in Regional play to take on this leadership role

Finally, I would like to thank everyone in front of and behind the scenes in Western Region that help bring this great sport of ringette to our youth. We need more adults (young and mature) to participate at all aspects, from bench staff personnel to tournament helpers to referees to executive position holders both locally and regionally in order to spread out the work load and keep everyone energized.

I particularly want to thank the members of the executive over the past 3 years. This has become a better oiled machine than it was a few years ago and I believe that's testament to your effort, patience, understanding and love for the sport. And last but not least I would like to thank Nancy Nicolson-Houghtling our Games and Tournament representative. She is the steering wheel of this better oiled machine called WRRL, helping the entire Western Region to stay on the road/ice.

**Respectfully submitted,
Brian Woolley - WRRL Past-President**