



ANNUAL REPORT
2022

Greater Toronto Hockey League

Annual Report
June 2022



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June 2022

Submitted By:

Scott Oakman, Executive Director & Chief Operating Officer



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Land Acknowledgement

The Greater Toronto Hockey League acknowledges the land we work and play on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.

We acknowledge this land and people because the first step to reconciliation is recognizing the existence of Indigenous people. A shared understanding of how our collective past brought us to where we are today will help us walk together into a better future.



Year in Review Highlights

After a season away, the Greater Toronto Hockey League dropped the puck on its return to hockey on November 1, 2021, igniting the new and highly anticipated 2021-22 season with the theme of “unity.” Despite a multitude of challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and corresponding policies, the League completed the campaign, awarding all regular season and playoff champions for the first time since 2019, while hosting a number of events for its membership successfully.

The 2021-22 GTHL Competitive (‘A,’ ‘AA,’ and ‘AAA’) season featured a total of 6826 regular season games, followed by 649 games in the Scotiabank Playoffs. The numbers outlined represent a campaign that signified a return to hockey after a season lost to the COVID-19 pandemic. The season began on November 1, 2021 and despite a pause in play (December 18, 2021 to February 3, 2022) due to COVID-19 restrictions, the final playoff games were played on May 15, 2022, successfully completing the GTHL campaign.

Off the ice, the 2021-22 season marked a number of milestones for the GTHL in its work leading to make the game more inclusive, including the beginning of the League’s new Strategic Plan and the completion and publication of the Independent Committee Roadmap for Change.





Community Partnerships & Culture Change

GTHL welcomed progress with Board of Directors election and announcement of Transition Game Advisory Committee: July 2021

The GTHL held its Annual General Meeting virtually on July 15, 2021, concluding with the election of the Board of Directors. The elections, with welcomed progress, welcomed Prema Thiele, Cyril Bollers, and Darren Lowe, as well as the Transition Game Advisory Committee.



Seaside Hockey welcomed as new Member: July 2021

The GTHL proudly announced the acceptance of Seaside Hockey as a new League Member in July 2021. Seaside Hockey, based out of north Scarborough, operated an Under-7 and under program to begin in the 2021-22 season.

Seaside Hockey is an example of the community partnerships necessary in order for the GTHL to have an impact on growing the game of hockey in the GTA, as the program aligns with the League's Strategic Plan.

Seaside Hockey is committed to making hockey available to more Canadians, providing opportunities for racialized players to participate in the sport with confidence and ability through online educational programs and mentorship relationships from all levels of sport. Seaside Hockey, through quality instruction, professional coaching, life skills and leading-edge hockey-based mentorship programs, uses hockey to offer minority youth space to develop, learn, be challenged, and to support their growth into confident individuals.

At the time of approval, Seaside Hockey was the first minor hockey association run by members of the Black Hockey Community, with 95 per cent representation from diverse backgrounds within the Executive Board and among the founders.

Strategic Plan: August 2021

In August 2022, the GTHL announced the launch of its Strategic Plan beginning in the 2021-22 season through to the 2023-24 campaign.



The Strategic Plan, adopted by the GTHL Board of Directors in May 2021, faces the League's challenges head on with four key pillars. The pillars include:

- **The Game:** Make hockey child centric in the GTHL
- **The Community:** Engage the community to provide a re-imagined game that reflects the traditions and cultures of the GTA
- **The Organizations:** The organization reflects its community, and the community reflects the organization
- **Stewardship:** How we will retain and advance the athlete, family, and volunteer

The pillars, founded on progressive values of Diversity, Community, and Inclusion, Fun, Innovation and Excellence, and Developing as a Person, were developed through a specific commitment to:

- You feel welcome when you walk into a GTHL rink.
- You smile when you walk into the dressing room.
- You grow every time you put on your skates.
- You learn what you do off the ice is as important as what you do on the ice.

GTHL, Hockey Equality announce five-year partnership: March 2022

On March 9, the GTHL and Hockey Equality announced a five-year partnership agreement that will further promote the shared values of working to remove barriers and foster life-long learning through the game of hockey.

Hockey Equality, a charity formed in 2021 and founded by GTHL and NHL alumnus Anthony Stewart, aims to make hockey more inclusive and accessible for all while simultaneously supporting programs that eliminate discrimination in hockey. Working to create sustainable programming designed to support BIPOC, female, LGBTQ2S+, and equity deserving youth is the ultimate goal for Stewart and his team.

In addition to offering their own programs, Hockey Equality brings together a network of existing programs working within their respective communities to provide resources to a larger population of players while maintaining the integrity of a successful outreach model.

The partnership will support the GTHL's ongoing implementation of its Strategic Plan, which focuses specifically on improving culture, diversity, and inclusion throughout the League and hockey in the Greater Toronto Area.

The partnership involves collaboration on nine objectives, including:

- Mentorship
- Education and Prevention
- Counselling and Intervention
- Hockey Equality acting as advisors to the GTHL and its organizations
- The inclusion of Hockey Equality's Accountability Project
- Leadership Development (Coach and On-Ice Officials)
- Player Development
- Grassroots
- Sharing of facilities



GTHL releases policy prohibiting the use of discriminatory team names, logos: March 2022

As the importance of serving as a leading ally in minor hockey and youth sport, the GTHL publicly outlined the policy, originally adopted in 2016, of the prohibition of all team names and logos that may be deemed discriminatory in nature. This policy was amended in November of 2021 and applies, but is not limited to, names and logos that:

- Have been deemed discriminatory based on race, ethnicity, national origin, or other grounds which are protected under applicable human rights legislation, or,
- are considered by the GTHL Board, on reasonable grounds, to be inappropriate.

When originally developing this policy in 2016, the GTHL consulted with the Union of Ontario Indians, Indigenous Sports and Wellness Ontario, and Chief Stacey Laforme of the Mississaugas of the Credit in regards to Indigenous-themed names and/or logos specifically. As a result, the League adopted recommendations made by such First Nations leaders and council to include, with respect to Indigenous themed names and/or logos. The 2016 policy essentially prohibited the use of these names and logos unless the Team/Club had consent from the governing or representative body of the particular Indigenous group which is so referenced or depicted. There was an exception for Teams/Clubs that were under license from the professional hockey club or any other hockey club, on the basis that that Club was using the respective name and/or logo with consent of the respective Indigenous community.

In November of 2021, the GTHL Board of Directors amended that policy. The policy now prohibits the use of any Indigenous themed names and/or logos. Clubs and Teams have until June 1, 2022 to come into compliance with the amendment.



Roadmap for Change: Independent Committee Report and Recommendations



On March 29, the GTHL released the Roadmap for Change: The Independent Committee's review of racism and discrimination in the GTHL, in its entirety.

BACKGROUND

The GTHL has been proactively adapting a major shift with Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion matters, spending two years coordinating and executing the "Transition Game" Summit in November 2019 with the purpose of reimagining the culture of minor hockey. The Transition Game gave way to a number of significant efforts throughout the GTHL, including the acknowledgement of the need for an independent and systemic review of the League.

After co-chairs Anastasia Bucsis and Michael Smith were appointed by the GTHL Board of Directors in the summer of 2020, the Committee was formed in December 2020 as a result of an extensive recruitment and interview process by the co-chairs. Bucsis and Smith selected Leigh Felesky, Dr. Nicole Forrester, Andrew Kidd, Justice Harry S. Laforme, and Karl Subban to serve as the Committee Members.



CO-CHAIR:
MICHAEL SMITH



CO-CHAIR:
ANASTASOA BUCSIS



JUSTICE HARRY S.
LAFORME



LEIGH FELESKY



DR. NICOLE
FORRESTER



ANDREW KIDD



KARL SUBBAN

Work for the Committee began in January 2021 with the purpose of examining policies, protocols, and practices of the GTHL as they relate to racism and discrimination within the organization. The Committee also examined the GTHL's complaint policy and procedure, the League's educational materials and training, and how the GTHL can further create a safe environment or structure where people can raise concerns. Additionally, the Committee reviewed the history of the GTHL and the leadership structure as it relates to diversity.



Using a number of processes including surveys, a town hall, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews, the Committee isolated the GTHL's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in relation to the League's ongoing work of progressing towards a more inclusive and safer environment for all.

HIGH-LEVEL FINDINGS

The Committee found that racism and discrimination do exist in the GTHL and that there is a need to put greater efforts into promoting a culture of acceptance and inclusivity. Simultaneously, participants did perceive that the GTHL is fulfilling its mission of promoting and governing organized minor hockey for youth, and recognized the League's role in governing hockey rules and regulations, community engagement, training, education, promoting a culture of EDI, and investing and growing the game in the Greater Toronto Area.

The GTHL, overall, was perceived to create a welcoming culture that takes issues of racism and discrimination seriously with education and training programs in place.

The Committee determined that the GTHL is well-positioned to address the issues identified and provided 44 recommendations to support the League in making direct change as it relates to racism and discrimination.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND/OR PROGRESS

The GTHL has continued its efforts to improve EDI simultaneously while the Independent Committee worked on the Roadmap for Change report and recommendations. The League, striving independently to be a leader in youth sport and minor hockey, has accomplished several new initiatives in the past 24 months, with many others in progress.

The GTHL had begun executing its new Strategic Plan, which aligns with several of the Independent Committee's recommendations. Some of the progress already made or currently in process includes, but is not limited to:

Recommendation: Review incident reports where racial slurs are alleged to have been used but not heard.

- The GTHL has implemented a formal investigative process by a third-party to investigate all accusations of discrimination, including ones that occur in-game and go undetected by an on-ice official.

Recommendation: Eliminate ethnic or stereotypical mascots or imagery from teams and clubs.

- The GTHL Board amended its policy on the use of names and logos in November of 2021. The policy now completely prohibits the use of any Indigenous Names and Logos effective June 1, 2022.



Recommendation: Create and implement a BIPOC Coaching Mentorship program; and, Recruit, train, and provide opportunities for women in the GTHL.

- The GTHL has engaged in partnerships that will provide an opportunity to create and implement a BIPOC Coaching Mentorship program. The League also assisted the MLSE Foundation and Scotiabank in launching the Hockey Coach Education Program which provided equitable opportunities for Black, Indigenous, and other racialized youth across Ontario to obtain hockey coaching certifications and connected them to coaching positions in their community.
- The GTHL has also offered free Coach 1 and Coach 2 Clinics to females the past two seasons, which is just one example of many more programs the League hopes to create so that there are leaders at all levels of organizations.

Recommendation: Create and implement a strong communications plan to support EDI messaging throughout the league; and, partner and strategize with external organizations that are currently working with historically marginalized communities in finding financial solutions that will facilitate their participation in hockey.

- The GTHL's 2021-2022 Communication Strategy was built proactively around engaging a number of different cultures and inclusion initiatives. The strategy has included but is not limited to: World Girls' Ice Hockey Weekend celebration, Diwali, Hannukah, Black History Month, International Women's Day, with Asian Heritage Month (May) and Indigenous History Month and Pride Month (June) to come.
- The GTHL, in partnership with Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities, announced funding of \$480,000 for the 2021-2022 season, while also adding Hockey Equality as a League partner.

Recommendation: Mandate that the list of nominees includes BIPOC individuals; and, Mandate that the list of nominees includes individuals who identify as female.

- Going back to the GTHL's Annual General Meeting in July 2021, the GTHL Nomination Committee has taken a more active and intentional approach to recruit diverse candidates for election to the GTHL Board of Directors, including **Cyril Bollers**, **Darren Lowe**, and **Prema Thiele**. The League will also engage the Hockey Equality partnership to further act as advisors to the Nomination Committee.

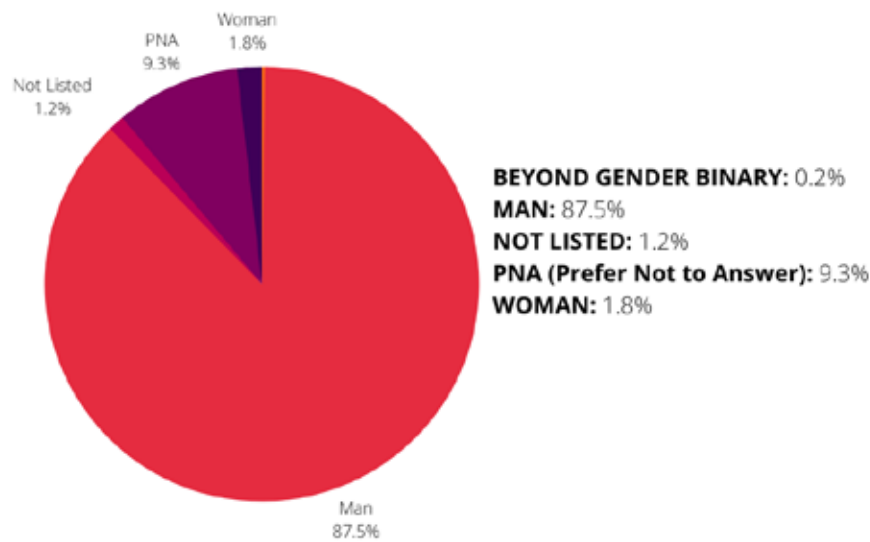
The GTHL held a Media Availability to discuss the Independent Committee's report in detail.



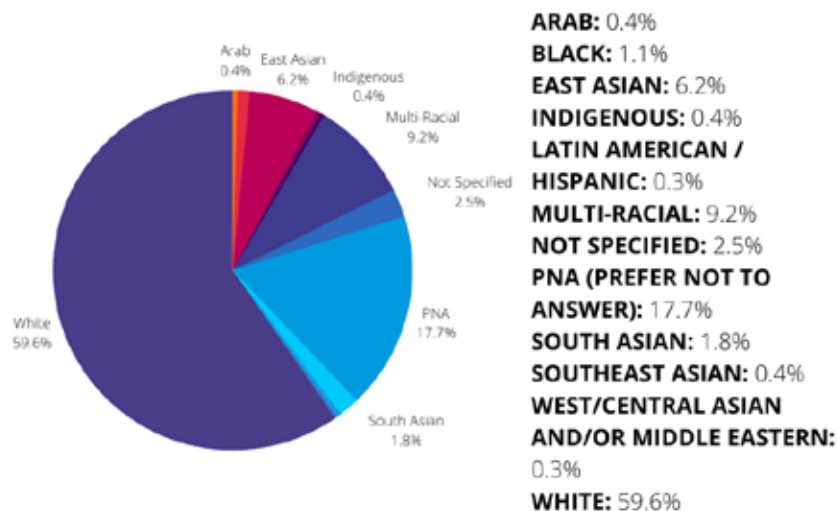
GTHL 2021-22 Demographic Survey

As part of the GTHL’s commitment to serving the GTA community, it is important for the League to annually evaluate the community’s demographics to better understand its greater needs. Beginning with registration for the 2021-22 season, the GTHL began collecting demographic information on a voluntary basis for participants in competitive level hockey. In 2022-23, the GTHL will be collecting this data from all participants.

Gender (Total Count)

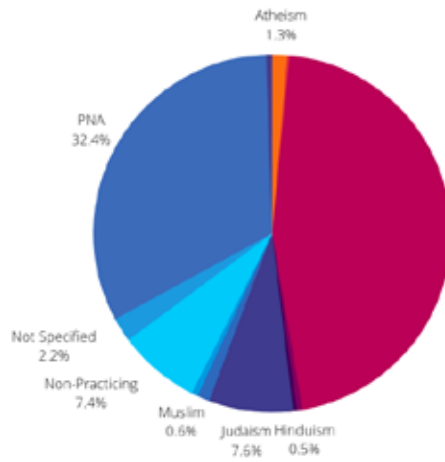


Race (Total Count)





Religion (Total Count)



- ATHEISM:** 1.2%
- BUDDHISM:** 0.2%
- CHRISTIANITY:** 40.7%
- HINDUISM:** 0.4%
- HUMANISM:** 0.0%
- ISLAM:** 0.3%
- JUDAISM:** 6.8%
- MULTIPLE RELIGIONS:** 1.0%
- MUSLIM:** 0.5%
- NON-PRACTICING:** 6.6%
- NON-RELIGIOUS:** 11.0%
- NOT SPECIFIED:** 1.9%
- PNA (PREFER NOT TO ANSWER):** 28.8%
- SIKHISM:** 0.5%

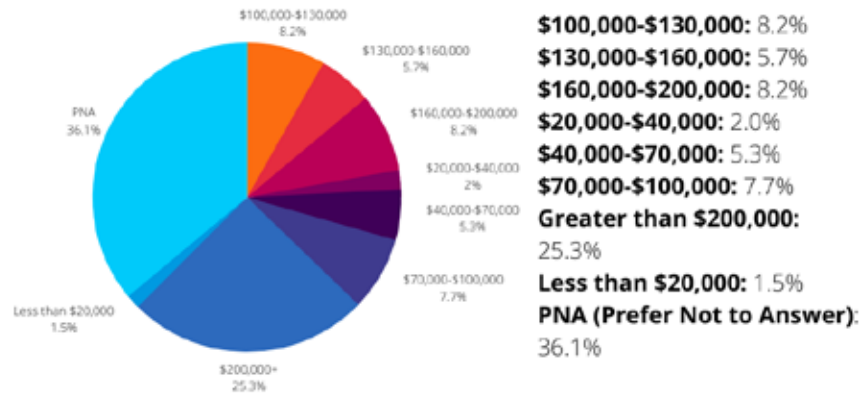
Language (High Level)



- ENGLISH + OTHER LANGUAGE(S):** 5.9%
- ENGLISH ONLY:** 89.2%
- MULTIPLE OTHER LANGUAGES:** 0.2%
- NON-ENGLISH LANGUAGE:** 3.6%
- NOT LISTED:** 0.7%



Income (Total Count)





Events

GTHL Legacy Classic – August 2021

After being cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the GTHL hosted the 10th annual Legacy Classic on August 24, 2021. The event welcomed over 110 golfers at Station Creek Golf Course, raising \$28,797.67 in support of the GTHL Legacy Fund.

2021-22 Puck Drop Ceremony – November 2021

On November 1, the GTHL hosted a puck drop ceremony to signify the start of the 2021-22 season and the return to hockey following a year away due to COVID-19. The night introduced “unity” as the GTHL’s theme for the season. The Under-16 ‘AAA’ Markham Majors, Mississauga Senators, Toronto Titans, and Vaughan Kings were present, representing the four municipalities that make up the GTHL. Other special guests in attendance included:

- Teresa Sitlani, McKenzie Health Hospital’s Patient Care Manager and Registered Nurse
- Seaside Hockey co-founder, Kirk Brooks, with Seaside hockey players, 10-year-old Aaron Neethan and six-year-old Anjalica Neethan
- GTHL Third Vice-President, Kathie Wood
- President of the Little Native Hockey League, Marian Jacko
- Deputy Mayor of Vaughan and Regional Councilor Mario Ferri
- Deputy Mayor of Toronto Michael Thompson
- Mayor of Markham Frank Scarpitti
- Mayor of Mississauga Bonnie Crombie and Mississauga’s Commissioner of Corporate Services Shari Lichterman

Thunder Bay Weekend – November 2021

On Friday, November 12, the GTHL welcomed the Thunder Bay Kings Under-15 AAA, U16 AAA, and U18 AAA teams to the League for their first set of GTHL League games. GTHL Staff welcomed the teams at Scotiabank Pond by greeting the players as they exited the bus, providing GTHL hats, key chains, and Hockey Hall of Fame tickets. Players participated in a mini-media session prior to their games, conducting interviews about their upcoming season and posing for pictures. The GTHL was excited to welcome the teams, beginning the partnership with the Thunder Bay Kings for the 2021-22 season.

Platinum Cup powered by the Toronto Maple Leafs and the GTHL – November 2021

The Platinum Cup took place on November 26-28, 2021 at the Ford Performance Centre. The tournament was rebranded for the 2021-22 season as PlayStation did not participate due to internal policies relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the support of the Toronto Maple Leafs, the event was once again successful in welcoming a total of 22 teams (six at the ‘AAA’ level and eight each at the ‘AA’ and ‘A’ levels). Teams received GTHL and Maple Leafs branded items including Toronto Marlies tickets. The winners of each division were excited to receive team signed Toronto Maple Leafs sticks.



12th Annual GTHL Top Prospects Game powered by Under Armour – March 2022

Originally the event was scheduled for January 13, however, it was postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions. For the fifth straight year, Under Armour supported the event as the title sponsor.

The event showcased 40 of the top Under-16 'AAA' prospects from around the GTHL as the League's most diverse benches encompassing Wendel Clark, Angela James, Wayne Primeau made up Team Clark-James-Primeau, facing off against Ted Nolan, Anthony Stewart, and Darcy Tucker of Team Nolan-Stewart-Tucker.

The game ended with a 4-2 final in favour of Team Clark-James-Primeau. Gabriel Frasca (Team Clark-James-Primeau) and Jacob Battaglia (Team Nolan-Stewart-Tucker) were the game's most valuable players.

Under-18 All-Star Festival – March 2022

The U18 'AAA' All-Star Game took place on Friday, March 4, with the U18 'AA' and U18 'A' games played the following day on Saturday, March 5 at Scotiabank Pond. With the support of Gatorade, the U18 All-Star Games featured 126 players from across the League.

- Final Scores:
 - U18 'AAA': Team Blue 5 vs. Team Red 2
 - U18 'AA': Team Blue 2 vs. Team Red 9
 - U18 'A': Team Blue 10 vs. Team Red 6

OHL Cup powered by Under Armour – March - April 2022

The OHL Cup powered by Under Armour was held from March 30 through to April 2 at Scotiabank Pond, with the finals hosted at the Mattamy Athletic Centre in Toronto on April 4. The tournament featured 20 teams from across the province and one from the United States. Prior to the start of the tournament, wild card play-in games took place on March 29 at Scotiabank Pond.

The OHL Cup final, with an assumed-to-be record crowd, consisted of the GTHL's Mississauga Senators and the Toronto Jr. Canadiens, with the Senators coming out on top as tournament champions with a 6-2 score. The Senators' Michael Misa was named the tournament's most valuable player.



Pro Hockey Life Cup – April - May, 2022

The GTHL celebrated all regular season champions with an adjusted Pro Hockey Life Cup for the 2021-22 campaign. As COVID-19 restrictions put the season on pause and, as a result, condensed several items, the GTHL ensured the Pro Hockey Life Cup took place this year by using several days to celebrate the season champions. Under-13 to U21 teams were congratulated on their success in the regular season with trophies, and individual and team photos on April 19-21, while the U10 to U12 age groups were celebrated on May 17. Pro Hockey Life provided coupons to all participants.

2022 GTHL Awards Night – June 2022

The 2022 GTHL Awards Night will take place on Friday, June 17 at the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto. The following awards and scholarships will be presented:

- Len Barrett U18 House League Scholarship Award: **Gabriel Vera**
- Cooper Humanitarian Award: **Carol Mallet**
- John R. Gardner Special Recognition Award: **Owen Loubier**
- Rob Silc Memorial Community Coaching Award: **Frank Sheffield**
- George F. Dufton U18 AAA Scholarship Award: **Keagan Jones**
- Herb Ebisuzaki Coaching Award: **Jamie Grossman**
- Gord Hughes U16 AAA Scholarship Award: **Carter George**
- Roy Pejcinovski Memorial Goaltending Character Award: **Kayden Visram**
- J. Norman Sharp U18 AA Scholarship Award: **Evan Graham**
- Frank D. Smith U18 A Scholarship Award: **Evan O'Hara**
- Gus Gordon Memorial Officials Award: **Ian Steele**
- George Chamandy Memorial Trophy: *To be announced*

GTHL Legacy Classic –Tuesday, July 12 at Cardinal Golf Club

UPCOMING EVENTS:

GTHL Annual General Meeting –Tuesday, July 19

CANCELLED EVENTS:

U12/U13 'AAA' Classic: The tournament was cancelled for the 2021-22 season due to lack of registrations. The GTHL is already in planning stages to ensure this event is able to take place again in the 2022-23 season.



Development

OFFICIATING DEVELOPMENT:

Hockey Canada Officiating Program

The GTHL certified 547 officials in total this past season. All sessions were held in a virtual setting. Each official was also required to complete the Hockey University Planning a Safe Return to Hockey module as a prerequisite.

- Level One: **147**
- Level Two: **213**
- Level Three: **122**
- Level Four: **51**
- Level Five: **3**
- Level Six: **1**

The GTHL mandated that every official attending a recertification clinic had to participate in one of the League's Officiating Standards courses. The GTHL hosts standard courses every year to touch on areas of concern that were previously identified by the Hockey Operations Department with the use of video footage from games. Additionally, the GTHL educated officials on the new Hockey Canada Maltreatment Playing Rule 11.4. A total of eleven live virtual sessions were held prior to the start of the season, engaging officials with the new playing rule while providing the opportunity for questions.

Winter Development Series

New for the 2021-22 season, the GTHL introduced a Winter Development Series where 252 officials took part in one of the three Rules Emphasis and Supplemental Development sessions. In addition to the Rules Emphasis, the League also provided further guidance on the Maltreatment Playing Rule and what corresponding protocols are to follow. At least 66 officials participated in one of the two fitness sessions offered during the series.

COACHING DEVELOPMENT:

Professional Development

Movember: Breaking the Ice – January 2022

- Participants: **20**

The GTHL and Movember teamed up to bring coaches mental health training to better understand, recognize, and manage issues among their athletes. The training was presented via Zoom with various conversation points, team exercises, breakout rooms, and group discussions. Coaches received three professional development points for attending the session.



EDI Coach Initiatives

Women Only Coach Level 1 – November 2, 2021

- Participants: 9

Women Only Coach Level 2 – November 4, 2021

- Participants: 12

MLSE Coach Education Program – January & February 2022

- Participants: 15

To change the face of hockey, the MLSE Foundation, Scotiabank, and the GTHL are committed to providing opportunities for underrepresented youth to be involved in the game at the coaching level. The aim is to improve representation in leadership positions to inspire a diverse generation of youth to engage in hockey. The program also provides pathways and connections for youth coaches to increase employment opportunities and facilitate community involvement through sport. The GTHL continues to work with the MLSE Foundation in connecting youth coaches to further education opportunities.

RIS – Activity Leader	Participants: 820
RIS – Parent Program	Participants: 1179
HTO Trainer Level 1	Participants: 530
HTO Trainer Level 1 Refresher	Participants: 120
Hockey University Online Coach 1 / Coach 2	Participants: 259
Coach Level 1	Participants: 32
Coach Level 2	Participants: 49
Development 1	Participants: 252
Coaches Evaluated and Certified	25
Hockey University Online Body Checking	Participants 204
Hockey University – Planning a Safe Return to Hockey	Participants: 4060
Organization Safety Rep Training	Participants: 89
<p><i>The GTHL provided mandatory safety training for the Organization Safety Rep. The training sessions were available online and provided extensive background and information on the Game Plan's safety requirements.</i></p>	



Concussion Education and Hockey Canada's Maltreatment Playing Rule

The GTHL held 10 sessions in a virtual and interactive setting specific to the League's Return to Play Protocol, Concussion Education and Hockey Canada's new Maltreatment Policy and Protocols.

The sessions were held with the goal of ensuring participants are exposed to the safest possible environment. Staff from Holland Bloorview Children's Rehab Hospital presented the Concussion Education while GTHL Senior Officiating Instructors introduced the new Playing Rule on Maltreatment.

In total, there were 2,152 participants in attendance.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT:

Under-11 Pathway Skates – September 2021

The 2021-22 season saw the GTHL provide U11 pathway prep skates in accordance with the Hockey Canada's Player Pathway. These pre-tryout development opportunities were free and open to players at the U10 and U11 age groups of all levels in our membership over a three-week period. The skates proved to be successful with over 1100 participants in 74 sessions. In a parent survey, the majority agreed that the skates were fun, provided connections to others, and were an important pre-tryout activity.





Player Registration

The 2021-22 season saw the return to hockey following a year away due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

	“A”, “AA” & “AAA”	MHL	House League	Total
2021-2022	8998	4269	13,483	26,750
2020-2021	0	0	0	0
2019-2020	8861	4509	18335	31705
2018-2019	8890	4530	19254	32674
2017-2018	8720	4659	18197	31576
2016-2017	8684	4892	18854	32430
2015-2016	8694	5415	19296	33405
2014-2015	8774	5705	19279	33758
2013-2014	9373	5939	18290	33602





Hockey Operations

Arena Staff – Rink Attendants and Timekeepers

The GTHL used 36 Rink Attendants this season to manage League arenas for competitive ('A,' 'AA,' and 'AAA') games. The League had a total of 88 timekeepers who received coaching from 12 supervisors.

The GTHL hosted two entry level timekeeper sessions, training 18 new staff. The League also held three refresher courses, training 40 returning timekeepers.

Officiating

1. League Staff: **194** (a decrease of 67 officials)
2. Tournament Staff: **152**

The GTHL experienced a significant decrease in the number of officials on staff during the 2021-22 season. There were various reasons as to why officials did not return to the League this season, with the most notable surrounding safety concerns relating to the state of the COVID-19 pandemic. This resulted in the League operating with a two-official system for all regular season games, while using a hybrid model for the postseason to provide a three and four-official system at the appropriate age groups.

League Coverage

The Series Chair program where representatives are assigned to age groups and Convenors which are assigned to arenas was once again an important tool for the GTHL to get feedback from our operations and these representatives were also asked to monitor games with a 'heated' rivalry.

Report on Discrimination Penalties

Report on Discrimination Penalties As of May 1, 2022	Competitive Games Total: 6907 House League/Select Games Total (Approx.): 35,000						Total
	Race/ Religion	Age	Sexual Orientation/ Gender	Marital or Family status	Genetic Characteristics	Disability	
Gross Misconducts assessed with the language penalized based on race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender	6	0	48	0	2	4	60
Complaints filed that were reported in-game but not heard by the official with the language based on race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, gender	24	0	27	0	0	1	52
Complaints filed with the League from non-game situations (e.g. Spectators, etc.)	1	0	0	0	0	0	1



Corporate Partnerships and Marketing

The 2021-22 season was another challenging one in the area of sponsorships. Despite this, the GTHL sponsors have remained supportive of league programming. Three partnerships expired at the end of the season. Both Scotiabank and Pro Hockey Life have committed to multi-year renewals. Unfortunately, Under Armour has chosen not to renew its existing partnership with the GTHL. The League continues to work with Hockey Canada to develop a program of sponsorship and marketing synergy which could lead to additional partnerships. The program will ultimately focus on Hockey Canada working with the GTHL to find viable marketing opportunities and value-added propositions at the league level for existing Hockey Canada partners.

UNDER ARMOUR

Under Armour exercised the option to end their partnership with the GTHL. The League is in the initial stages of discussions with multiple potential partners to replace Under Armour. Key properties which were under the Under Armour partnership include the GTHL Top Prospects Game and the OHL Cup.

SCOTIABANK

The GTHL is currently in negotiations to sign a new multi-year agreement with Scotiabank. The partnership will have different elements – some of which will fall under the equity, diversity, and inclusion umbrella. Scotiabank will continue to sponsor all competitive teams ('A,' 'AA,' and 'AAA') through the patch program.

TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS

The GTHL and the Toronto Maple Leafs extended their current agreement which centres around the two parties hosting the Platinum Cup tournament. The tournament is open to Under-11 'A,' 'AA,' and 'AAA' teams from across Ontario and Quebec.

PRO HOCKEY LIFE

The GTHL and Pro Hockey Life have reached a verbal agreement to renew the existing partnership for a minimum of three years. Details of the new deal will be released in the coming months. The focal point of the deal will continue to be the Pro Hockey Life Cup awarded to all GTHL regular season champions.

GATORADE

The League and Gatorade are entering year two of a four-year agreement which gives Gatorade category exclusivity as "The Official Sports Drink of the GTHL." The agreement focuses on promotion of the Gatorade brand within the 13+ age groups and provide support in both capital and value in kind to various league properties and events.

NEW SPONSORS

The GTHL is exploring potential new sponsorships with a number of corporate partners including Bauer and Tim Hortons. The former will impact any potential discussions surrounding renewal with TRUE Hockey.

CATCH THE ACE

The launch of the GTHL Catch the Ace lottery was met with limited success due to numerous factors. The winner of the 2021-22 GTHL Catch the Ace jackpot was announced on April 21, 2022, winning over \$500. The League is in discussions with lottery supplier Ascend to relaunch in the fall of 2022. The new lottery will potentially pivot to a 50/50 format and include live sales as well as online.



Communications

The GTHL took advantage of the digital-centric era fostered heavily by the COVID-19 pandemic, growing all platforms significantly over the course of the 2021-22 season. The campaign featured newly launched initiatives such as the GTHL Breakout Podcast, Reel Recaps, significant organic growth on TikTok and LinkedIn, all while utilizing modern technology such as video conferencing (i.e.: Zoom) to complete interviews and more.

The GTHL is especially proud, however, of the level of engagement maintained and additionally developed this season with its membership, parents, players, alumni, and the larger audience of the League. Moreover, the GTHL went into the 2021-22 season with an extensive communications plan that focused on a wide range of diversity and inclusion efforts, ensuring platforms highlighted a number of holidays, recognition months, alumni engagement initiatives, and more.

Website (June 1, 2021 – May 31, 2022)

- 5,998,665 + page views (an increase of 5,101,940 from 2020-21)
- 718,616 users (an increase of 464,408 from 2020-21)
 - 76.9% of users were new users in 2021-22



Breakout Magazine

- 1 issue (December 7, 2021)
- Delivered to an audience of over 18,000
- 1,032 reads
- Average time spent on publication – 5:01

Breakout Express Email Newsletter

- 8 issues (October 2021 – May 2022)
- Average open rate of 55.75%
- Delivered to over 17,000 subscribers per issue



Development Newsletter

- 12 issues (June 2021 – May 2022)
- Delivered to over 2,000 subscribers (an increase of over 300 from 2020-21)
- Average open rate of 57.33%
- December 2021-May 2022 issues had over 60% open rate, increasing steadily from previous months

GTHL Social Media

- **Twitter:** 12K followers (an increase of over 1,000 followers from 2020-21)
- **Facebook:** 3,312 likes (an increase of 214 from 2020-21) and 3,850 followers
- **Instagram:** 19.1K+ followers (an increase of over 4.1K followers from 2020-21)
 - New for the 2021-22 season, the GTHL introduced “REEL RECAPS” on Instagram. Following League events, a total of 17 reels were posted as a form of recap, garnering an average of 24,966 views. Example: 2021-22 season opening puck drop
- **TikTok:** 14.7K+ followers (an increase of over 12.9K followers from 2020-21) and 250.5K+ likes (an increase of over 236,500 likes from 2020-21)
 - This included nine videos with over 100K views, and one surpassing the 780.5K view mark.
- The GTHL spent the 2021-22 season elevating its presence on **LinkedIn**, seeing an increase of 819 followers (875%) organically from June 2021 through to June 2022.
 - Total followers: 1,728
- The GTHL introduced a **Twitch** channel in March 2022. Twitch allowed the League to modernize its OHL Cup Selection Show, and as a result, had over 600 viewers. The channel itself, through one event, has 209 followers.

GTHL Breakout Podcast

On November 30, 2021, the GTHL launched its Breakout Podcast with the goal of sharing the many stories, specific to off-ice and human interest, of the league and game.

To date, the League has released 12 episodes with more in the planning and recording stages. Guests ranged from Michael Bunting, Akil Thomas, Gerry Dee, and Willie O’Ree. Gerry Dee’s episode, in which he speaks openly about his experiences and thoughts on competitive minor league hockey today, has been the podcast’s most successful with 31 complete plays on Anchor.FM and 300 views on [YouTube](#).

With the release of each episode, two teasers are posted across all social platforms throughout the week which consistently maintain strong social numbers, specifically when it comes to video views on Instagram.

The podcast is available on the following platforms:

- [Anchor.fm/gthl](#)
- [Spotify](#)
- [Youtube](#)



SOCIAL CAMPAIGNS & NOTABLES

World Mental Health Day – October 10, 2021

The GTHL engaged alumni such as Jason Spezza, Michael Bunting, Akil Thomas, Sean Durzi, and Tyler Toffoli to deliver an important message about mental health awareness on World Mental Health Day.

World Girls’ Ice Hockey Weekend – October 15-17, 2021

For the 10th annual World Girls’ Ice Hockey Weekend, the GTHL celebrated the girls in the league, asking participants to submit videos sharing why they love playing hockey. The request was met with an incredible response, posting four montages of a variety of videos from girls throughout the league over the weekend.

#TogetherWeSkate Video – 2021-22 Puck Drop – November 1, 2021

Following 20 months away from the game, the GTHL launched the 2021-22 season theme of “unity” paired with the #TogetherWeSkate hashtag as part of a video ahead of the first puck drop of the season.

The 2021-22 opening puck drop also generated a number of engagements on social media from the guests of honours such as the Mayor of Mississauga, the Mayor of Markham, the Deputy Mayor of Toronto, clubs, and participants.

Thunder Bay Kings Welcome Weekend – November 12, 2021

As part of welcoming the Thunder Bay Kings to the GTHL, the League engaged Thunder Bay alumni such as Trevor Letowski and Matt Murray on social media, as well as included the players in a mini-Media Day consisting of pictures and select interviews prior to their games.





Platinum Cup Tournament Weekend – November 26-28, 2021

The GTHL used social media as a significant element of the League's Platinum Cup Tournament, engaging players for pictures and fun participation in TikToks, including what resulted in the most viewed video of the season.

#HockeyAtHome Skill of the Week – November 26-28, 2021

During the 2021-22 season pause due to COVID-19 restrictions, the GTHL posted skills of the week to provide participants with motivation and encouragement to stay active at home where possible. The Skill of the Week also expanded into officiating.

#MeetTheProspects powered by Under Armour – January-March 2022

Ahead of the 2022 GTHL Top Prospects Game, the League developed the #MeetTheProspects powered by Under Armour campaign to introduce and engage its top prospects. The videos included short introductions from every player and were posted in the weeks leading up to the game.

The #MeetTheProspects campaign also included graphics for each player featuring This or That questions and more, serving as additional promotion for the players and the event in the week leading up to the game.

Hockey Day in Canada: Scarborough – January 29, 2022

With a number of clubs participating in Hockey Day in Canada, Scarborough edition, the GTHL spent the day capturing the day through photos and video, resulting in a number of popular posts following the successful event.

National Girls & Women in Sports Day – February 2, 2022

The GTHL celebrated girls and women in sports on National Girls & Women in Sports Day, featuring players, coaches, volunteers, staff, and more.

Black History Month – February 2, 2022

The GTHL worked to make the connection between alumni and current players the significant focus for this year's Black History Month efforts, launching the GTHL's PastXPresent initiative. The initiative featured GTHL alumni meeting current players such as Darnell Nurse and Wayne Simmonds, giving the League's current players the opportunity to ask questions and have a discussion with relatable role models.

The campaign experienced great success, with Sportsnet West featuring Darnell Nurse's PastXPresent on their broadcast.

The GTHL also engaged the Breakout Podcast to feature influential and important guests such as Shandor Alphonso, the NHL's second official of colour. Other guests in February included: Anthony Stewart and Willie O'Ree.

Other efforts included highlighting GTHL Board Members Darren Lowe and Cyril Bollers and their contributions to our game.



GTHL Top Prospects Game – February 28 - March 1, 2021

The GTHL Top Prospects practice night and game garnered an incredible amount of engagement on social media, including over 5,500 impressions from a Tweet from practice night alone. The event included photos, participation from celebrity coaches such as Wayne Primeau, and a shoutout on Sportsnet featuring the League’s celebrity coaches post (over 11,000 impressions on Twitter).



The event also saw top prospect Gabriel Frasca win the Player of the Game honours on the same day that older brother Jordan Frasca signed an entry-level deal contract with the Pittsburgh Penguins. Posts celebrating this fact experienced great results, including over 17,000 impressions on Twitter and 159.9K views on TikTok.

Additionally, during the event’s practice night, the GTHL presented a 60-minute seminar to all players, discussing social media, personal branding, and community involvement, with Under Armour speaking on corporate partnerships. Within the presentation, players were encouraged to participate in the event using social media. Following the event, players shared their experience across all platforms.

GTHL Under-18 All-Stars – March 4-5, 2022

Ahead of the League’s U18 All-Star Festival, the GTHL highlighted all ‘AAA,’ ‘AA,’ and ‘A’ players in a graduate-style post complete with graphics. All material was shared on social media leading up to the games. The GTHL also provided live updates during the U18 games with pictures and video clips.





International Women's Day – March 8, 2022

Following previous successful campaigns at engaging its female membership, the GTHL celebrated its girls on International Women's Day, asking players to submit videos sharing what they love about being a hockey player and who their role model is. The initiative was once again met with a tremendous response, sharing a number of clips across five videos for the day.

The campaign also encouraged GTHL clubs to participate, with response from the Mississauga Senators and the Mississauga Terriers.

I Play in the G powered by Scotiabank – March - May 2022

Unable to host the GTHL's I Play in the G Festival in person this season, the League pivoted turning the event into a virtual giveaway. The giveaway encouraged participants to share what they loved about playing in the G using the #IPlayInTheG hashtag. The giveaway has highlighted four winners to date.

OHL Cup powered by Under Armour – March 29-April 4, 2022

The GTHL's social platforms were widely interacted with throughout the 2022 OHL Cup, including over 11,000 impressions on the first post serving as a pump-up for the tournament. With the support of the Ontario Hockey League, the GTHL provided game recaps, video highlights, updates, photos, and a number of TikToks engaging players of the tournament.

One of the most interactive pieces of content was of a U10 Markham Major reading the starting line up to the U16 Majors ahead of their semi-final match-up. The video was posted across all platforms with great views, including over 10,300 on Instagram.

For the OHL Cup Final, the GTHL posted pregame interviews, photos, and provided period updates with real-time photos. The most engaged with post was the championship photo posted almost immediately following the end of the game, receiving over 26,000 impressions on Twitter. The League also capitalized on a TikTok trend with the champions, receiving over 196K views.





U18 Hockey Canada Central Region Championship – April 2022

The GTHL ensured appropriate coverage of the U18 championship that saw the Reps Hockey Club earn a spot in the 2022 Telus Cup. The most engaged with post was the congratulatory tweet, receiving over 34,400 impressions on Twitter.

Competitive and House League Champions – April - May 2022

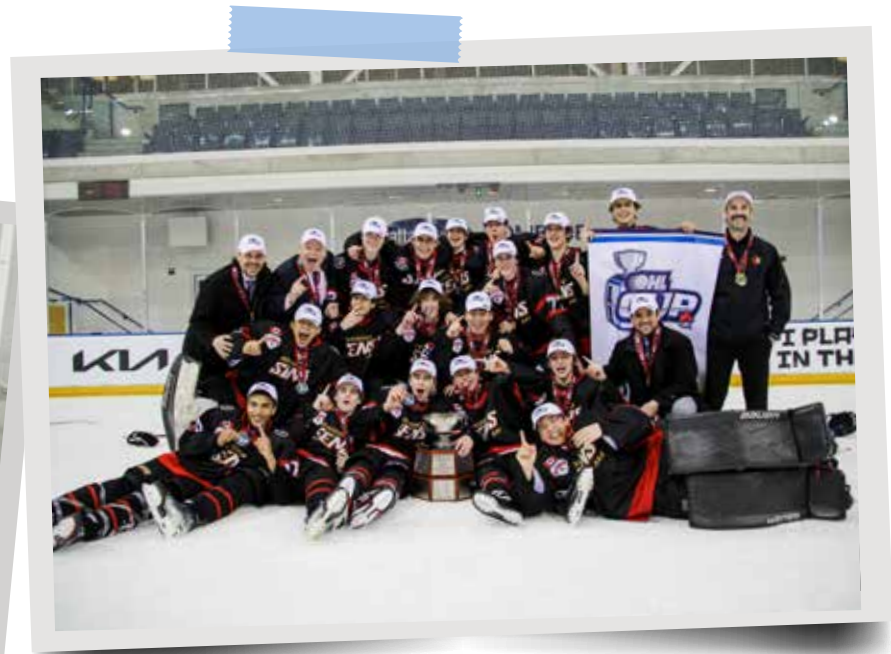
The GTHL collaborated with members, including House League, to allow for championship recognitions across the league.

Pro Hockey Life Cup – April 19-21, 2022 & May 17, 2022

In addition to presenting the regular season champions with their trophies, the GTHL and Pro Hockey Life welcomed teams for individual player photos, team photos, and position-specific photos. The U10-U13 age groups celebrated with a selfie corner making for great photos that performed well on all social platforms, specifically Instagram.

Asian Heritage Month – May 2022

To celebrate Asian Heritage Month, the GTHL shared a few stories via a submission form through the month of May. Expecting more of a response, the League would like to improve on its efforts throughout Asian Heritage Month for the 2022-23 season.





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