



GTHL LAUNCHES LEAGUE-WIDE SURVEY ON BODY CHECKING *Players, Parents, Clubs and Officials to Provide Input on Body Checking In “A” Hockey*

Toronto (January 31, 2014) óThe Greater Toronto Hockey League (GTHL) Board of Directors and its Rules Committee today launched a league-wide survey seeking feedback on a potential rule change affecting body checking in “A” level hockey. This survey continues the League's commitment to consultation with its stakeholders on important issues facing the game.

The survey asks for respondents' views on whether body checking should be removed from “A” level hockey one year at a time, eventually eliminating it from all “A” level hockey in the GTHL.

The survey will be available until March 15 and can be accessed from the GTHL website at www.GTHLCanada.com or at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GTHLBodycheckingsurvey2014>.

In recent years the GTHL has implemented various initiatives relating to player safety. These initiatives included a “Team Official Education Program” prepared and presented by Dr. Paul Dennis, one of Canada's most respected Sports Psychologists. In addition, penalties for dangerous play including infractions for Checking from Behind, Head Contact, and Fighting were increased. The GTHL also implemented escalating suspensions for infractions related to aggressive play as well as issuing automatic indefinite suspensions for any participant guilty of engaging in verbal taunts, insults or intimidation based on discriminatory grounds (race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, language). In 2013, GTHL members passed a motion to further explore the option of progressively eliminating body checking in “A” level hockey beginning in the League for the 2014-15 season.

“The GTHL has always been a leader in minor hockey. This includes policies and education on concussion prevention and treatment, the development of Canada's first-ever Aggressive Play Policy and the first-ever Head Injury Policy in hockey. The GTHL has been at the forefront in the on-going public discussion in relation to player safety and other issues affecting our sport and League. This survey allows us to seek feedback from our stakeholders to ensure our rules are aligned with the values of the participants in the game,” said GTHL Executive Director Scott Oakman.

GTHL President John Gardner added “the GTHL is proud to continue its leadership role in minor hockey in Canada. These past initiatives have helped us work towards our goal and we will continue to take other necessary measures to improve the environment in which our participants experience this great game.”

About The GTHL

The Greater Toronto Hockey League is the largest amateur hockey league in the world, with over 40,000 participants. In its competitive divisions alone, the GTHL conducts more than 10,000 games each season. The GTHL celebrated its 100th Anniversary during the 2011-12 season and is a proud member of the Ontario Hockey Federation, Hockey Development Centre of Ontario and Hockey Canada.

For further information please contact:

Scott Oakman, Executive Director

Greater Toronto Hockey League

(416) 636-6845 ext 224

soakman@GTHLCanada.com