



GTHL to Propose a Playing Rule Change To Progressively Eliminate Body Checking in “A” Hockey

Toronto (February 10, 2015) - The Greater Toronto Hockey League (GTHL) today announced that the membership of the world's largest minor hockey league will be considering a rule change that would see the progressive elimination of body checking at the %A+ level beginning in the 2015-16 season. A rule change of this nature requires the majority support from the members of the organization.

The GTHL Board of Directors have been considering the concept of removing body checking at %A+ level hockey for some time. A parent survey that was conducted during the 2013-14 season, and the results indicated a majority of respondents supported the removal of body checking at the %A+ level. At the 2014 GTHL Annual General Meeting the Board of Directors proposed an amendment to the regulations that could have resulted in the gradual removal of body checking in %A+ hockey beginning in the 2015-16 season. That motion was amended on the floor at the meeting to have the change commence in the 2014-15 season. That amended motion was subsequently defeated by a slim margin.

One of the concerns that had been expressed about the 2014 Board proposal and further complicated by the amended motion were the %unknowns+. Those %unknowns+ included the impact such a change would have on the ability of GTHL Teams to participate in tournaments that offered body checking, Clubs abilities to host tournaments that offered body checking and whether GTHL Teams that participated at age divisions and categories in which body checking was not permitted could participate in OHF Championships that permitted body checking.

The Ontario Hockey Federation, the governing entity of the GTHL has determined that if the GTHL eliminates body checking in the %A+ division, those teams would not be permitted to participate in body checking tournaments, games, championships and Clubs would not be permitted to host body checking tournaments in age divisions and categories that the GTHL does not permit body checking.

In order for this topic to receive further consideration now that many of the %unknowns+ are now known, the GTHL Board referred the matter to the GTHL Hockey Committee so that this Committee could formulate a recommendation for the GTHL Board and ultimately the GTHL Membership to consider. The GTHL Hockey Committee is a joint Committee made of up of various stakeholders including Club Representatives, Board Members and other interested parties.

In a unanimous decision the Hockey Committee recommended to the Board that a resolution to change the playing rules to gradually eliminate body checking at the %A+ level effective for the 2015-16 season be proposed to the membership and that the membership have the opportunity to vote on the resolution prior to tryouts in April 2015. The GTHL Board of Directors fully supported these recommendations.

The GTHL Board of Directors will be holding a General Members Meeting in early March so that the Membership may consider and vote on this resolution. The results of that vote will be issued immediately after the meeting has adjourned.

The Greater Toronto Hockey League is the largest amateur hockey league in the world. There are over 40,000 participants registered annually with the GTHL.

-30-

For further information please contact:

Scott Oakman, Executive Director
Greater Toronto Hockey League
(416) 636-6845 ext 224
soakman@gthlcanada.com