

**Demons Youth Hockey Association
January 11, 2011 – Board Meeting Minutes
Pirelli Veteran's Skating Arena
Franklin, MA**

Executive Board of Directors ("BOD") Members in Attendance:

Jack Bloomer	President	Present
David Allen	First VP	Absent
Debbie Amorelli	Second VP	Present
Harry Keates	Program Director	Present
Carolyn Kirk	Registrar	Present
Stu Montgomery	Coaching Coordinator	Present
Kevin Schlicke	Treasurer	Present
Mike Murphy	Secretary	Present
Lynn McClusky	Rink Coordinator	Present
Joanne Boccelli	Development Director	Present
Vacant	Publicity Director	--

9 present – quorum

Open Meeting Items

Board Meeting called to order at 7:10 pm

1. December meeting minutes were reviewed and approved, pending minor edits.
2. Board action items were reviewed and updated.
 - a. Cross Ice Informational Session – Date will be moved out until a cross ice decision is made.
 - b. AI OCT10-026 is closed. Mass Hockey book will be updated.
 - c. AI Nov10-038 is closed:
 - i. 1099 are required for all vendors; tax ids will be required.
 - ii. Estimated at ~40 vendors (rinks, trophies, signs, etc.)
 - iii. Cost threshold is > \$600.00
 - iv. Will require a Quickbooks SW upgrade to implement.
 - d. AI DEC10-044 is closed. Debbie has spoken to the yearbook company.
 - e. AI DEC10-055 is closed. Coaches' feedback link has been added to the new website.
3. Items from the Floor
None.

4. Board Member Reports

- a. Board member reports were discussed. The following items were reviewed:
 - i. Program Director Report
 - a. Harry discussed the StopIt! Program for goalies. He still needs to determine if the small rink at NESc is acceptable, or we return to Foxboro.
 - b. Harry is still reviewing summer programs for the Board to recommend. He has had discussions with Dan Gould about his program, and will talk to Ed Ronan. This will be aimed at the younger age groups.
 - ii. Developmental Director Report
 - a. A family with three children in the LTS program inquired about a discount. The board voted unanimously (9 for, 0 against) to discount the third child 50%. This discount is specifically for the LTS program.
 - iii. 2nd VP Report
 - a. Debbie discussed Demonsware sales to date, which have exceeded expectations. Great job Debbie!
 - iv. Coaching Coordinator Report
 - a. Coaching certifications are complete, with the exception of 1 assistant coach. He will not be able to participate in the play downs or coach on the bench.
 - b. Coaching certification rules will be changing next year. They'll be much harder, and much more costly.
 - c. Coaches Appreciation game is planned for Thursday, 1/13, from 7:30-9:30pm at Navin Arena. Approx. 26 skaters, 2 goalies, and 2 student referees have signed up.

5. Developmental Update

- a. Numbers have increased significantly. We currently have 67 children registered for LTS, 14 for LTH, and 10 for mosquitoes.
- b. Developmental program will shift to Navin Arena on Feb 20 (LTS & LTH) due to ice conflicts at NESc. Extra support will be needed. Mike and Stu have offered to assist. A few older players from the program would be welcome as well.

6. Demons Night at a High School Game

- a. The Board has targeted the Ashland / Holliston game on January 29, at 6:30pm, at Franklin rink. Mike will reach out to Coach LeBlanc, and Joanne will reach out to Coach Roman to stop up with some of their HS players, and talk to our Demons players. Pizza & soda will be provided.

7. Tryout Recommendations

- a. A subcommittee made up of parents and coaches met to discuss potential improvements to our annual tryout/placement process. The Subcommittee consisted of Stu Montgomery, Dan Gould, Derek Sullivan, Debbie Amorelli, Tim Estella, Mike Messier, Chris Delaney, John Kirk, Carolyn Kirk, Jim Chuslo, Jack Bloomer. The individual members were either involved in the meeting or updated via email)

- b. Although it was difficult to find time over the holidays, we were able to meet once in person and trade ideas via email. The proposals below are representative of the feedback from that meeting. The following key concepts were agreed to:
- The process is not broken, but there is always room to tweak the process
 - The Fall placement process needs the most work
 - The coaches need more input
 - Recognition of a potential influx of players in 2011

Proposal 1:

Tryout process – skills session: Adjust the process for the first skills session. Rather than have 2 or 3 drills with each pinney number being called out and the children skating once under a lot of pressure, let the children flow naturally through the drills. Have “stations” where evaluators will observe and grade the players more similar to the scrimmages. The tryouts will have a “practice” feel to it. We still need to develop drills which will allow evaluators to see each player in each situation. This will keep the kids moving, reduce the impact of one run through the cones and be less stressful for the players.

Results: At the current time, it is unclear how we would proceed with this full recommendation. There was recognition that calling out the numbers slows the process and we will not do that this year. The goal of the Tryout Coordinator relative to this proposal will be to push for more cycles of the same drills.

Proposal 2:

Team Placement: Team placement still lacks coaches input unless a player is in a close score situation right on the bubble. We propose to open up the flexibility to let coaches have some latitude in determining the teams. The table below summarizes a few of the options. Per discussions, Options 1 and 2 seemed most reasonable although a hybrid of these two was also discussed. The main question is should the coaches have the flexibility to adjust the teams regardless of the score in order to make the right thing happen.

Approach	Pros	Cons
<p>Fill 85 % of the teams via tryout process and leave 15% to coach's discretion. Fill all teams in the spring and announce at once.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teams announced together no child feels like "last one" - Coaches get to <i>round out</i> the teams - This should handle gross misplacements - Forces the bubble conversation (active choice vs passive) - Committee of coaches makes the call – no one person on the hook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Doesn't recognize that kids can improve drastically over the summer -Comes away from "all-in" tryout process – introduces subjectivity -Have not determined the committee yet
<p>Loosen the rules on moving players in the ordinal rank. Set parameters and let the coaches discuss and recommend</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“Feels” more like our current process -Coaches input considered at the bubble -May limit movement in the ranks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Coaches still have limited say (only at the bubble) -Passive approach vs active in discussing players (coach personality could result in different answers for similar situations) -Gross misplacements are not defined -Smaller injustices are not addressed
<p>Hold space on teams for “fall placement”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Allows for players who develop over the summer to be re-slotted -Provides a forum for coach discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -May not be able to name head coaches as many players are on the bubble -Teams don't get named at once – some children will be the 1-b players -May encourage increase focus on hockey in summer for some families

Results: We still struggle to find the mechanics which will allow coaches evaluation to be proactively incorporated into the team placement process. This year, we will define a “gross misplacement” as a player whose score grossly misrepresents the players ability. If any coach wants to identify a “gross Misplacement” they may do so at the coaches meeting. We will not limit the conversation by the relative scores. The Demons BOD will attend the coaches meeting to observe and will vote on “gross Misplacement” Adjustments based on the information shared at the coaches meeting. All coaches (not just head coaches) will be invited to attend the coaches meeting.

Proposal 3:

Fall Placement: The committee recognized that Fall placement is extremely advantageous to the player trying out. The following conditions give an unfair advantage to the placement player:

- 1) They know they are in a tryout. The other players are in a practice (and treat it as any other practice)
- 2) The tryout player is looked at vs. one other player whereas in the Spring tryout you are up against all other players all in tryout –mode
- 3) The fall scores do not necessarily reflect the best player on the team in September
- 4) Coaches on the ice may appear to advantage/lobby for their own child

The committee proposes that Fall placement amendments going forward would have the fall placement player skate with the lowest relevant team at a couple of practices (this could change depending on how we handle grandfathering going forward.) All of the players would be told there are X number of them that will be moved. All the children on the team are eligible to move up and take the slot on the next higher team. A council to be selected by the CC and the affected Head Coaches would decide who to move up. Tryout scores are irrelevant going forward in the Fall placement process.

Results: The fall placement process will be replaced with a fall tryout process. A coach designated by the Coaching director will run a predesigned tryout for the players in the fall. All layers will be informed that a tryout is being conducted and how many players will move up. A counsel of coaches will evaluate and determine the players to be moved. Parents will not be allowed on the ice during the tryout.

Proposal 4:

Grandfathering: There is a lot of support to let this go. It was discussed and amended last year to exclude the Bantams. Given the situation with our potential player influx, Grandfathering could be very restrictive. We recommend waiving Grandfathering (or maybe just for next year if we see a significant influx of children)

Results: For this year, at least, we are suspending “grandfathering”. We do not know the impact of some Mass Hockey decisions and need to be flexible. A child’s current position will be highly considered in bubble situations, but any child at any level could find themselves down a level.

Proposal 5:

Head Coach Selection: We discussed that it is disruptive to have a Head coach take the position and then resign it if their child is moved up. It does not work well for the team being left. We did not come to consensus on how to deal with this. I recommend that we lock head coaches to teams as a condition of assigning them the role. I am not sure how enforceable this would be in practice.

Results: This measure was rejected. We will not require head coaches to commit to any team if their child is moved via Fall Tryouts.

Proposal 6:

Dominant player/Parity Adjustment: The Franklin program has a process to reevaluate a “Dominant Player” – the Demons have no mechanism to do this. We could adopt a similar process perhaps requiring a coach sponsorship. If so, we will need to work with the league to identify that we are moving the dominant player in order to impact the parity decision for the teams. (See Franklin Process Below):

Results: This process is accepted nearly verbatim from the Franklin process – see the policy below:

- **Players who wish to be considered for advancement to a level within their appropriate age group, must first meet the following criteria:**
 - **They must play a minimum of five games at their appropriate level.**
 - **If, after five games, the Team Coach feels that it is justified to advance a player as a "dominant player", the Team Coach and the player's parents, must submit verifiable evidence to the Board of Directors, for approval to be advanced. (A prime example of "verifiable evidence" would be copies of game reports.)**
 - **With Board approval, the player could then be moved to a higher level.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Meeting Adjourned at 9:50pm