



HOCKEY CANADA – BOARD OF DIRECTORS – Body Checking Brief –



Directives from the Special Hockey Canada Board of Directors Special Meeting:

The Board of Directors of Hockey Canada agreed in principle to having a consistent rule for Body Checking across the country. There was agreement as well that timing is of the essence in dealing with this very important matter and implementation could be for the 2013/14 season.

Action Item:

Hockey Canada is to put together a working group of subject matter experts to formulate recommendations on next steps. This Hockey Canada working group will provide recommendations at the AGM in May 2013 to assist the Board in making a decision at that time.

April 17, 2013

As a result of the Action Item above, Hockey Canada staff put together the following Advisory Group to formulate recommendations on next steps with respect to the appropriate age to introduce body checking in minor hockey.

The Hockey Canada Checking Advisory Group is to provide leadership and direction to the working group and frame the development of a position statement and recommendations on body checking. The working group will in turn outline the necessary resources to support a progressive implementation of checking skills through the Atom, Peewee, and Bantam levels of hockey within Hockey Canada.

Advisory Group:

- ***Terry Ledingham, Hockey Canada Officer***
- ***Dr. Mark Aubry, Sports Medicine Physician – HC Chief Medical Officer***
- ***Dr. Stephen Norris, Sport Physiologist & CS4L LTAD Expert***
- ***Dr. Paul Dennis, Sport Psychologist / Professor, U of Toronto***
- ***Dr. Vern Stenlund, Professor, University of Windsor***
- ***Doug Stacey, Physiotherapist - Sport Therapist***
- ***James Mays, Hockey Canada Referee in Chief***
- ***Yves Archambault, Hockey Quebec Technical Director***

Advisory Group Credentials:

1. **Terry Ledingham** - Hockey Canada Officer at Large assigned, by Chairman Mike Bruni, to oversee the activities of the Advisory Group and offer a valued perspective from the Hockey Canada Officers Group. Terry is a former Branch President of Hockey Alberta and served in the capacity of president of a minor hockey association.
2. **Dr. Mark Aubry** - the Chief Medical Officer for Hockey Canada and the IIHF. He is a Sport medicine Physician with years of experience with the game and specifically safety and injury prevention. Mark has also served in a leadership capacity with the Zurich Symposium Group studying concussions in sport.
3. **Dr. Stephen Norris** - the Vice President of Sport with Winsport and a long time expert in the area of LTAD. Steve served as a sport physiologist to Hockey Canada's National Women's Team program for a number of years. Steve also served as the Chair of Hockey Canada's Research Committee for a couple of years and more recently has served as the consultant to Hockey Canada on the development of the Hockey Canada Long Term Player Development Philosophy.
4. **Dr. Paul Dennis** - a Sport Psychologist and a Professor at both York and U of T. He is also a Hockey Canada consultant to as member of the Exceptional Player Status review group. Paul has a well of experience at the minor hockey, junior and pro levels of the game and once served as the President of the Toronto Marlies Minor Hockey Club.
5. **Dr. Vern Stenlund** - a Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. He has been involved in a great deal of resource development for Hockey Canada and served as the chair of the Athlete Development Committee for a number of years. Vern has also served on the Advisory Group for the Junior 'A' Pilot project and has provide direction and guidance on a number of other Hockey Canada research initiatives. Vern has a good deal of coaching experience at all levels and coaching junior hockey as well as the head coach at the University of Windsor (CIS) for 10 seasons.
6. **Doug Stacey** - a Physiotherapist in London, Ontario and is the full time therapist with the London Knights of the Ontario Hockey League. Doug has a wide variety of experience working with Hockey Canada High Performance programs including the centralized Women's National Team that won Gold at the 2010 Winter Olympics.
7. **James Mays** - the current Hockey Canada Referee in Chief and represents the officiating point of view and will offer the Officiating perspective on resource development, information distribution and training plans required to support officiating development in the area of body checking at the minor hockey level. James also has the MHA perspective at heart, as he currently serves as the Technical Director for the Prince Albert Minor Hockey Association.

8. **Yves Archambault** is the Technical Director with hockey Quebec. Yves was instrumental in the design and delivery of Hockey Quebec's current Checking Education modules for Peewee and Bantam hockey in his Branch. Hockey Quebec is the only Branch within Hockey Canada that does not permit body checking until Bantam double letters.

Role of the Advisory Group

The Hockey Canada Checking Advisory Group provides leadership and direction in outlining a framework to support the development of a position statement on body checking. The group will also outline the recommendation(s) to be addressed by the Hockey Canada Board of Directors at the 2013 AGM.

This group will also provide leadership and direction in developing the necessary resources to support a progressive implementation of checking skills through the Atom, Peewee, and Bantam levels of hockey within Hockey Canada.

Advisory Group Discussion and Key Messaging

Focus needs to be on:

1. *Leadership*
 2. *Player Safety*
 3. *Skill Acquisition/Development – Hockey Canada LTPD Philosophy*
 4. *Recruitment and Retention*
- Elongating the skill acquisition periods puts young players in a position to optimize skill development. When body checking is introduced early, there is a disruption to this very important skill acquisition period.
 - In my years as a minor hockey administrator, I always reinforced the proper technique and teaching progression for teaching body checking for our coaches. But I really had the feeling that once kids got the green light all they want to do is uphold the macho culture and knock other kids down.
 - We need to keep kids in the game longer by insuring they are in safe environment.
 - Changing the body checking rule to first introducing it at the Bantam age may not have an immediate effect but it will as time progresses. You still need to teach the other basic skills to keep the players safe.
 - A move of this nature might assist in retaining the 13-15 year old officials for more seasons. Perhaps officiating a couple seasons at the peewee level with no body checking will be less of a pressure situation for these young officials. Once they have two more years of experience and confidence, they will be more mature and in a better position to referee body checking level in Bantam and higher.

Working Group:

- **Paul Carson**, VP Hockey Development
- **Todd Jackson**, Sr. Manager Risk and Safety
- **Corey McNabb**, Sr. Manager Player and Coach Development
- **Todd Anderson**, Manager Officiating

Next Steps for the Working Group

1. Leading up to the AGM

- Working group to review resource inventory to support the implementation of the checking skills continuum from Atom through to Bantam levels.
- Special webinar presentation for Branch Resource Personnel – Technical Directors
- An inventory of resource materials made available to Branch personnel through Dropbox. Resources to include:
 - Current research articles
 - Position papers
 - Media resources
 - Presentation materials
- Presentation at the 2013 AGM – First Plenary
- Presentation and Q & A sessions with HDC and Minor Council following plenary session
- Addressing Advisory Group recommendation(s)
- Activating on a Communications strategy

2. Post AGM Activities

- Branch Toolkit to include:
 - Practical materials for Coach Resource for Atom, Peewee and Bantam
 - Coaching Instructional Clinic Framework
 - Officiating Instructional Clinic Framework
- Resources and Process to Support Training
- Branch training needs and opportunities