

The fledgling World Hockey Association has no agreement, as yet, with the CAHA or its branches. Like the NHL, it must depend upon the amateur pool for its talent. But unlike the NHL it must pay only a player -- not an Association. This may mean that the WHA will obtain its rookie players at a lower cost. But it may also mean greater difficulty obtaining players, with the NHL and CAHA under contract to cooperate with each other -- and, no doubt, to hold off the WHA.

Many observers suspect (indeed, some fervently hope) that the emergence of the WHA may, through the development of a new kind of competition, serve to break the hold that the NHL has on amateur hockey in this country. Others, however, believe that the traditions of hockey are such that, if the WHA thrives, it will only be a matter of time before it, too, becomes a part of the "closed system" which is hockey -- with Junior leagues owing their existence to their willingness to serve as training grounds for the majors!

THE CANADIAN AMATEUR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION. The CAHA, which is composed of 11 branch members and directed by an executive elected by its members, is generally recognized as the governing authority in amateur hockey in Canada.

In general, the aim of the CAHA is to promote hockey throughout Canada and to coordinate its activities on a national scale. More specifically, the objects of the Association are stated as follows:

- "(a) ... to foster and encourage the sport of amateur hockey throughout Canada.*
- (b) To promote and encourage the formation of Provincial and Inter-Collegiate Amateur Hockey Associations as local governing bodies.*
- (c) To establish and maintain a uniform test of amateur standing and uniform playing rules for amateur hockey.*
- (d) To affiliate with and co-operate with other national or international amateur hockey organizations.*
- (e) To conduct inter-branch and international contests of amateur hockey."*

(Constitution, Article 3., 1973 CAHA Handbook, p. 9)

The Association is governed by a Board of Directors. Its specific functions are carried out by committees: a Registration Committee, a Rules Committee and a Negotiating Committee. The various levels of hockey are represented by councils: a Senior and Intermediate Council, a Junior Hockey Council, and a Minor Hockey Council.

The rules of hockey established by the CAHA are used, sometimes with minor adaptations, by all branch associations throughout Canada.

Similarly, the Constitution and the By-Laws of the Association, are adopted, as directed by the CAHA, by all branches.

THE ALBERTA AMATEUR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION. The AAHA is the Alberta branch of the CAHA. Its objectives are similar:

- "(a) to promote and encourage the formation of amateur hockey clubs and leagues,*
- (b) to establish and maintain a uniform test of amateur standing and uniform playing rules for amateur hockey,*
- (c) to conduct provincial contests of amateur hockey,*
- (d) to solicit or raise money for the aforesaid objects,*
- (e) to do all such things as are necessary to the attainment of such objectives."*

The composition of the Board of Directors is similar to that of the CAHA -- with representation from the five zones of the province and the four levels of hockey.

The AAHA is essentially: (1) a policy body -- inasmuch as it establishes the general guidelines for the organization of hockey throughout the province; (2) a financing body -- inasmuch as it receives and distributes monies on behalf of local associations and leagues; (3) a judicial body -- inasmuch as it rules upon disputes, protests, and appeals involving players and teams; and (4) a disciplinary body -- inasmuch as it administers punishments, in the form of suspensions or expulsions, to players who violate Association rules and regulations.

LOCAL HOCKEY ASSOCIATIONS. There is an Edmonton Metropolitan Hockey Association, a Calgary Minor Hockey Association, and a Lethbridge Minor Hockey Association. Red Deer has a Minor Hockey Committee which is advisory to the City Recreation Department which, in turn, operates the minor hockey program. There is a Peace River Hockey League and a Central Alberta Hockey League. All of these and others, each of which is conceived and organized in terms of local conditions and needs, are what is referred to here as Local Hockey Associations.

The Edmonton Metropolitan Hockey Association is one example of a local association. The purpose of the EMHA is "to establish, maintain, conduct, govern, and promote a hockey program for the boys of Edmonton and surrounding district."

In order to eliminate the competition among teams for players, the EMHA has divided its territory into zones and assigned these to member organizations -- with the stipulation that these organizations be entitled to register only players who are resident in their own zones -- except in special cases in which permission may be granted by the Registration Committee.

In order to give form to its dual purpose of developing hockey skill and encouraging the enjoyment of the sport, the EMHA has provided for a classification of its players into AA programs and BB programs. The purpose of the former is to provide high-level competition for talented hockey players; the purpose of the latter is to encourage participation and cater to boys' enjoyment of the game.

In each zone, the AA teams have been assigned to the Athletic Clubs; the BB teams have been assigned to the Community Leagues.

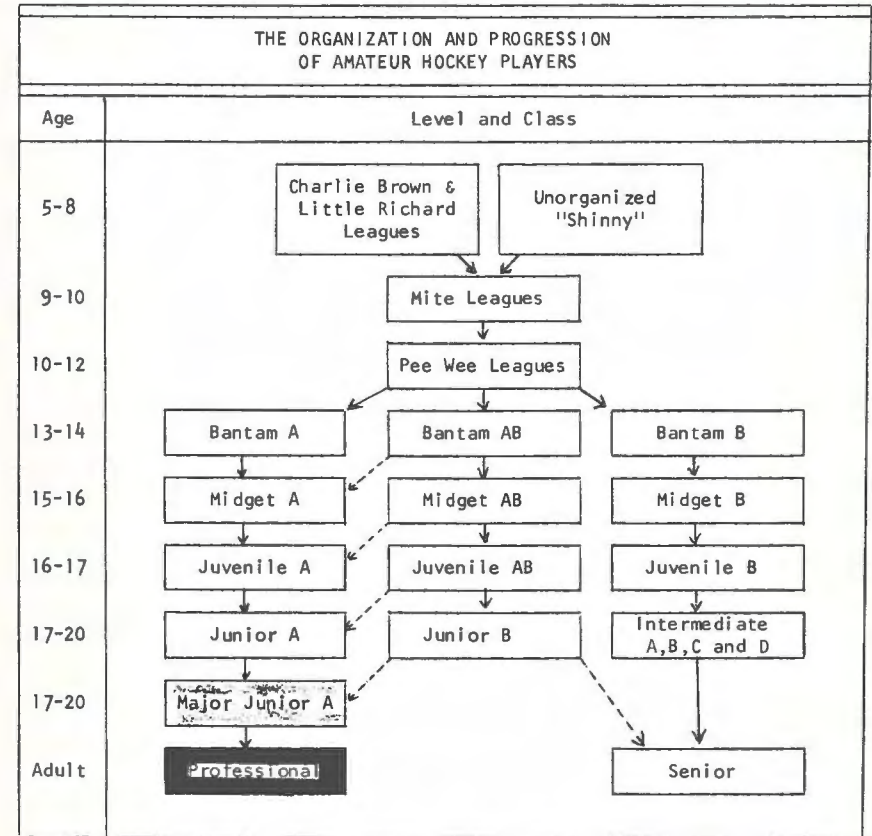
In general, the system appears to have worked well*. There have been complaints that the AA players -- the aspiring professionals -- have been

* See The Edmonton Parks and Recreation, Investigation of the Edmonton Metropolitan Hockey Association (City of Edmonton, 1972)

given preferential treatment in terms of ice time and so on. But the scope of opportunities provided by the scheme are recognized as superior.

CLASSIFICATION OF PLAYERS

Though the Alberta Amateur Hockey Association does not recognize or support leagues for boys under nine years of age, parental and community actions have resulted in organizations that program hockey players from the age of five through to adulthood.



It should be noted from the foregoing chart that players are differentiated according to ability when they reach the Bantam level at age 13. (In Russia, there is no attempt to organize hockey in any way for youngsters under the age of 12; it is thought better to allow them to explore in their own ways up to that point.)

Throughout the player's Bantam, Midget, and Juvenile career, age 13 to 17, he tends to show or not to show promise as a professional. (Shading, on the chart, is intended to show movement toward professional status. These, the grey to black areas, are roughly the categories which we have included, to greater and lesser extents, in our so-called pre-professional categories.)

Though there appears to be a real effort to provide opportunities for both recreational and skill-development levels of hockey in the above system, rates of participation indicate that as competition for professionalism increases, opportunities for involvement decrease correspondingly.

Number of Registered Players (AAHA) (1972-73)	
Pee Wee	10,990
Bantam	5,800
Midget	4,000
Juvenile	1,227
Junior B	461
Junior A	110
Intermediate	2,655
Senior	0
TOTAL:	25,213*

*There is an equal or larger number of non-registered players.

HOCKEY AND EDUCATION

Traditionally, hockey and education have not been closely associated in this country. Indeed, most educators (with notable exceptions, of course) have tended to believe that hockey careers and educational careers could not be pursued together.*

As long as the two were in conflict, in competition for boys' commitments, this belief tended to be supported by the facts. Good scholars did not play hockey. And good hockey players were not scholars.

So the schools avoided hockey and concentrated, instead, on basketball. School officials regarded hockey as a strictly "down-town" activity -- an activity that not only failed to contribute to boys' development, but in some respects, countered the schools' "wholesome influence".

Not surprisingly, this attitude -- this expectation that hockey players would not do well academically -- became something of a self-fulfilling prophesy. Hockey players did not do as well in school as their non-hockey playing colleagues, as the following study shows:*

Measure of Attainment	Players	Non-Players
Graduate Honors Roll	5.9%	10.7%
Grade 13 by 5th year	32.5%	46.4%

* It is also a fact, of course, that the prohibitive costs of hockey and the lack of leadership contributed significantly to the separation of hockey and education in this country.

* *Report on Amateur Hockey in Canada by the Study Committee on Hockey of the National Advisory Council of Fitness and Amateur Sport, Department of National Health and Welfare, Ottawa, 1967. (Appendix C)*

There are signs that this traditional antagonism between the hockey establishment and the education establishment may be beginning to dissipate -- at least at the college and university levels, if not at the elementary and high school levels. Most universities now promote hockey as a major athletic activity. Indeed, university leagues have recently been regarded as significant potential sources of professional talent.

THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

Government, at all levels, have traditionally tended to adopt a "hands-off" policy with respect to hockey -- the thought being that the sport, essentially a people's activity, is more likely to flourish under volunteer sponsorship and wide-spread participation than it is under government control. This policy is, no doubt, a reasonable one. For it is difficult to imagine anything good resulting from imposing a government bureaucracy on our national sport!

However, because amateur hockey has lacked the kind of broad economic base that a government could provide, it has felt the need to turn to the professional league for support. And as a result, it has had to sacrifice some of its stated goals and become largely a training ground for professionals.

In recent years, Canada has shown signs that she may be declining as a world power in hockey. But the more recent signs are that things may change.

In 1969, the then Federal Minister of Health and Welfare, John Monroe, appointed a Task Force on Sports. As a direct outcome of that Task Force's work, Hockey Canada was created "*to manage and finance the National Hockey Teams of Canada*". It is anticipated that Hockey Canada may make other

significant inputs through: research, support of minor hockey, training for coaches and officials, and support of international competitions.

The Alberta Government, through its Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation, provides modest support to amateur hockey, both financial and advisory, largely to the rural and sparsely-settled areas of the Province.

Municipal governments, through their Parks and Recreation Departments, make major efforts to support hockey -- largely through the provision of facilities. The actual management and control of hockey, however, is left largely to the local affiliates of the AHA.

So, in summary, it might be said that government has played virtually no role in the governance of hockey and, except for local governments, only a minor role in its support.

More importantly from the point of view of this inquiry, governments have played no role in the supervision of hockey -- except to the extent that the courts have been called upon, from time to time, to hear cases brought before them by individuals seeking redress from sanctions imposed upon them by hockey associations or officials.

CONTROL MECHANISMS

Any organization must have rules or regulations or guidelines to set standards for the behavior of its members. Hockey is no exception. In hockey, guidelines are needed, among other things:

- i. to guide the progress of the game itself;
- ii. to monitor team strength and achieve a reasonable balance in competition;
- iii. to classify participants and allocate them to appropriate levels of play; and
- iv. to establish acceptable levels of conduct.