



DIRECTOR, HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS REPORT FOR MINNESOTA HOCKEY MTG. 4/25/21

High School Season Re-cap

While the MSHSL was shortened by one week and seven games this past winter, most teams were able to complete their "full" season as defined this year by the high school league. There were a few cancellations because of Covid exposures but due to the protocols put in place by schools, the league, arenas, etc., there seemed to be few major interruptions to the overall high school hockey schedule. The other major change to the schedule this year was having the state tournament happen the same time as the high school boys and the elimination of all consolation round games. Also, since there was no consolation round games, the MSHSL did not have an evaluation staff to do the "All-Tournament Team" selection as in all past state tournaments. The Herb Brooks Award was still presented but the entire evaluation process was done virtually with interviews completed via Zoom or conference calls.

State Champions – Class A – Proctor/Hermantown
Class AA – Edina HS

Herb Brooks Award Winners - Class A – Geno Hendrickson, Warroad HS
Class AA – Rory Guilday, Minnetonka HS

State Head Coaches of the Year – Class A – Claire Goldsmith/Bob Kuehl, Mound Westonka HS
Class AA – Molly Arola, Alexandria HS

State Assistant Coaches of the Year – Class A – Robert Sherry, Henry Sibley/St Paul
Class AA – Paul Grafstrom, Roseau HS

Brano Stankovsky Award Recipient – Cheryl Mechelke, MN Hockey Program Director

Ms. Hockey Award Winner – Peyton Hemp, Andover HS
Senior Goalie of the Year – Brynn DuLac, Minnetonka HS

State Team Academic Champions – Class A – Proctor Hermantown
Class AA – Lakeville South HS

Scholarship Recipients – Charlie Stryker – Terah Skillings, Mahtomedi HS
Exec Council – Mandy Morin, Apple Valley HS
Premier Prep League – Grace Peterson, Mound Westonka HS

Sportsmanship Awards – Class A – Hibbing/Chisholm HS
Class AA – Lakeville South HS

Senior Classic All-Star Series

The Senior Classic was held April 9-11 at the Coon Rapids Ice Center in Coon Rapids. This was the 23rd year of the event. This year's tournament was moved due to scheduling conflicts with other events at the Blaine Super Rink, however the Coon Rapids Ice Center was a fantastic host for the event and we are hoping to be able schedule the Senior Classic there again in 2022. All section teams were full with a total of 136 players participating from all over the state. The champions this year were from Section 7 (their 2nd consecutive championship) in a well-played game against the all-stars from Section 2. Both teams were undefeated and untied heading into the championship game. All game score sheets and results can be found on the MGHCA website under the Programs/Senior Classic tab.

Premier Prep League 2021

Preparations for the Premier Prep League have been begun and details of tryouts will be posted to the website as soon as ice times are verified by the league staff. We anticipate a large number of players to participate again in the league once again this coming fall. We are hoping the league itself will not be interrupted by Covid protocols, etc. this coming fall. The league will however follow all USA Hockey, MN Hockey, State of Minnesota and MDH protocols that may be in place at that time. Right now we are planning on eight 19U Tier 2 teams and six 16U Tier 2 teams with possible games to be played against Shattuck St Mary's, North Dakota and Wisconsin teams. We believe it is our responsibility to help our surrounding hockey districts to help grow the game which will only make our MN Hockey district and girls high school hockey stronger throughout Minnesota. Robert Sherry and Claire Goldsmith will lead this year's Premier Prep League.

USA Hockey National Tournament Bound Teams

As I write this report, one of the Premier Prep League teams (PPL Forest) is on their way to Omaha, NE for the National HS Tournament. At the end of April, the PPL Black 19U and the PPL White 19U teams along with the Orange 16U and Vegas 16U teams will participate in the USA Tier 2 National Tournament in Denver, CO. The players are excited about the opportunity to play in a national tournament and to represent Minnesota district at this event. Updates will be posted to the MGHCA website along with reports on Twitter and other social media websites.

Fall Clinic 2021

The MGHCA is also in the process of planning a fall clinic to be held October 8-9, 2021 at the Super Rink in Blaine. This clinic will be offered FREE for registered members of the coaches' association. The two day clinic will include presentations from respected college and pro hockey coaches, instructors and others with information to prepare our high school coaches for the rigors of leading high school programs. We are able to provide this free clinic through the generosity of the MN Wild Foundation and their contribution to our coaches' association this past fall. Currently the maximum number of attendees as set forth by the Super Rink (based on the square footage of the room) is 150 people. We are hoping that this restriction will be lifted by the time the clinic takes place. We will also be holding an awards banquet honoring the next class of Hall of Fame inductees, our Bruno Stankovsky award recipient, and our state head and assistant coaches of the year. As soon as more details become available, we will add that information to the website and send out through the MGHCA newsletter.

Final Thoughts

Each season presents new challenges and opportunities for all of our organizations. This past year was difficult not only because of the protocols and restrictions due to the pandemic, but also due to problems/issues that continue to plague not just girls hockey, but all high school sports. Girls high school hockey is looking at losing up to four teams/programs next season. Attrition among head coaches, players moving from one program to another, recruiting by influencers outside the coaching staff, and strong programs getting stronger while weaker programs continue to struggle through lost players, and cooperative agreements continue to be obstacles that require many different leadership organizations to help resolve or alleviate the problems. Have a great spring and we look forward to your comments and suggestions for an improved hockey landscape for everyone.

Submitted by Tim Morris, Executive Director, MGHCA.