



NAHC WORKING GROUP CHAIR REPORT

It is with great pride and pleasure to report on the 2018 National Aboriginal Hockey Championships held in the traditional territories of Membertou First Nation.

Congratulations to Team Manitoba Females for their second consecutive Gold Medal in a well-played Championships.

On the male side, Team British Columbia won Gold as they came back from a three-goal deficit in the third period scoring the tying goal with 0.1 seconds remaining and completed the comeback a minute and half into the overtime over Saskatchewan.

The Membertou First Nation, Chief Terry Paul and his committee including Co-Chair Gerard McPhee along with Jennifer Deleskie, Krista and the rest of their team of volunteers are commended for their incredible professional hosting and support to the Aboriginal Sport Circle and the NAHC Working Group. The 2018 NAHC certainly once again raised the bar for Hosting and provided an amazing snapshot for Whitehorse in 2019 and future hosts.

2018 NAHC TIMELINE

SUMMER 2017

- Introductions to the new ASC Executive Director Heather Kaulbach and call out for members of the new NAHC Working Group (formerly ASC Hockey Committee). Kelsey Dayler also joined the ASC as Events Coordinator.

NAHC Working Group

Jeff Spencer, Chair

Mel Whitesell (Longtime serving ASCHC)

Doug Hogan

Jason Peters

Ken Thomas

SUMMER-FALL 2017

- NAHC Working Group Frame of Reference including Activities and Responsibilities
- 2018 NAHC Technical Package revamped and updated

OCTOBER 2017

- 2018 NAHC Technical Package finalized and approved at the Aboriginal Sport Circle summit in Whitehorse Yukon

JANUARY 2018

- 2018 NAHC Registrations complete: Twenty teams register (10 regions with male and female team). On top of perennial entries from North (Yukon/NWT/Nunavut), British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Eastern Door & North (representing geographic region of Quebec) and Atlantic (Nova Scotia/PEI/NFLD & Labrador); New Brunswick returned to the Championships for 2018 and Ontario registered a North and South team.

WINTER-SPRING 2018

- The NAHC Working Group worked with the ASC ED and Events Coordinator daily with the NAHC WG focused on the Technical aspects of the Championships and the ASC the logistics and hosting.
- There were various exemption requests and clearly post event, the nature of exemptions and elements of the NAHC Technical Package will be reviewed, edited, added to, clarified or removed.

ONSITE MEMBERTOU

- The NAHC Working Group Chair worked closely with Host Co-Chair Gerard McPhee as the responsible for the Competitions and all aspects related thereto.
- The week saw amazing hockey and talent once again from our future leaders and current stars.
- One great fact throughout the week was the lack of suspensions and sanctioning. Clearly the regions, teams Staff and Athletes come to the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships to compete at the highest level in a prestigious elite Hockey Championships.

NAHC AREAS OF CONCERN

- Leading up to and during the NAHC there were areas of concern raised:
 - **Online Registration**
 - A new process for Online registration was completed for the 2018 NAHC. Concern of parental signatures on various forms and athlete code of conduct signed were concerns.
 - **Onsite Accreditation**
 - Since teams had registered online, they arrived and with their signed off rosters were given their accreditations.
 - Concern over identifications and status were raised at the initial 2018 NAHC Official Meeting.
 - NAHC Chair conducted FULL identification check and review with each team prior to sign off.
 - **NAHC Schedule and Format**
 - With the ten teams per category and four days of round-robin play, only the top four teams advanced to Semi-Finals.
 - **Team New Brunswick and Ontario South**
 - Leading up to and during the event there were many questions concerning the New Brunswick and Ontario entries, questioning the allowance for entry.
 - The Technical Package clearly allows for their entries
 - There was direct questioning and inferences made on three athlete eligibilities and coaching status (confirmed prior to the event from Ontario) for Team Ontario South females:
 - Prior to the event there were guardianship letters corresponded. NAHC WG Chair communicated for legality of the letters and received the legal opinion that they were valid.
 - Note that ASWCO as PTASB signed off the entries, advised of no exemptions and signed the rosters.
 - Onsite the letters were again questioned and during the identification check and signoff day, NAHC WG Chair reviewed the documentation. In addition, all other NAHC WG members reviewed said documentation and with the exception of one WG member all agreed that the documents satisfied the 2018 NAHC Technical Package.

NAHC SURVEY

- Post 2018 NAHC there was an online survey conducted to look at ways to improve on the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships and look forward to seeing its suggestions.

CLOSING REMARKS

Although I feel that the 2018 NAHC was one of the most successful events in the History of the Championship, I am also disappointed that there was a regional internal issue that seemed to intertwine with the event with negative inferences to my role as NAHC WG Chair and the Working Group. It led to conflicts, question of decisions, differences of opinion and departure of a longtime friend and hockey committee member.

From a personal standpoint, I have worked hard and dedicated all these years to ensuring that the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships is regarded in the utmost respect and have conducted myself with the highest standards.

As the NAHC Working Group Chair, I have always made decisions with integrity and based on interpretation of the rules. I feel that the issues within a Province / Territory need to be resolved within that region and it is not our place to be engaged but note that our decisions are based on the annually approved NAHC Technical Package.

Continued annual review, updating, upgrading and approvals to the Technical Package each year will allow this event to continue its growth and prosperity

Thank you to all the members of the PTASBs, NAHC Team Staff, Chaperones and Volunteers for all their hard work and dedication this year and the past 17, making the National Aboriginal Hockey Championships the one week each year that I look forward to more than any other.

Meegwetch,

Jeff Spencer, Chair
NAHC Working Group
Aboriginal Sport Circle