



**CARHA Hockey –
2019/20 Annual Report**

Message from the President

The 2019-20 season was one like no other. Despite having a successful winter season, the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world in March 2020 and as a result had a negative impact financially, interpersonally on the team and on project plans. With hockey shutting down and the likelihood that there would be no revenue coming in to the association, management had to take a hard look at its bottom line.

An extensive review of both anticipated revenue to finish off the second half of the season as well as any lingering expenses was conducted. As management looked ahead, it recognized that summer hockey was likely not going to happen and that the probability that iPlayHockey's core business of spring AAA teams and summer hockey camps/schools were also not going to be allowed to operate under the new COVID-19 protocols.

As such, difficult decisions had to be made swiftly to ensure the association could maintain its operations. Naturally, the protection of the staff was of utmost importance hence, there was a decision made to put on hold any promotional spends. Gifts that the association's members had become accustomed to receiving such as ball caps, toques and league organizer gifts would have to cease for the upcoming season and perhaps beyond.

Prior to the pandemic however, the association was able to execute two successful provincial tournaments in the Pacific Cup and Hometown Classic and although 40% of the affiliated tournaments could not happen due to the shutdown, the association delivered programs to 60% of local tournament hosts across Canada. Furthermore, the two leagues that the association oversees (Thunder Bay and Travellers) were able to complete their operations prior to the stoppage with each reporting their own respective successes.

From a sponsorship standpoint, the association was able to maintain its relationship with Molson Canada (Ontario). Despite the nationwide shutdown in March, the association was still able to demonstrate incremental sales of Molson products via its receipt program promotion initiative. Although the extension of this sponsorship program into 2020-21 will highly depend on the developments with COVID-19 protocols, the association will continue to develop creative ways to support this partnership. The association also maintained its partnership with Keener Jerseys.

COVID-19 had a most notable affect on the planned 2020 CARHA Hockey World Cup, which was scheduled to take place in Richmond, BC from March 29th to April 4th, 2020. With the uncertainty surrounding travel conditions and the risks associated with bringing 3,000 people from around the world together, the association made the decision on March 9th, 2020 to postpone the 2020 CARHA Hockey World Cup. Although difficult, this was a necessary decision as it was becoming clear that the COVID-19 restrictions from travel to gatherings to select businesses being allowed to operate was going to make it impossible for the association to deliver this Event to the level that participating teams have come to expect. By acting quickly, the association was able to secure new dates in April 2021 in Richmond, BC and was able to maintain the majority of the

teams, with 118 staying registered. In addition, the event sponsors demonstrated their support and commitment with their continuance to 2021.

As we completed to the 2019-20 season and similar to other small not for profit organizations, management recognizes that CARHA Hockey will be further challenged by the effects of COVID-19 as we head into 2020-21. It is anticipated that as a result of the public health protocols that will continue to be in place, the association will experience a downturn financially. However, the strategy that was embarked upon over the summer months, which inadvertently positioned the association as a strong leader with its launch of its *Return to Play Recommendations* and *On-Ice Hockey Playing Options*, it is projected that such positioning will hold CARHA Hockey in high regard by municipalities and the hockey community from coast to coast.

Proudly, the association continues to maintain a solid core of its team, with the majority having at least 10 years working with the association. It is our goal to continue to exhibit an inviting and flexible work environment for our staff and there will be a conscious effort to further invest financially to their futures.

Thank you to the Board of Management, the association's internal team, our partners and sponsors, and most importantly to our respected members for their loyalty over the last year.

Michael Peski
President

Mission Statement

We are dedicated to servicing the adult recreational and oldtimers' hockey community in Canada. We strive to develop and deliver hockey resources that assist team, league and tournament organizers across Canada and around the world.

Our pursuit is to continually offer innovative programs, promotions and helpful services to meet the needs of the adult recreational hockey community while promoting and encouraging increased participation in our national sport. We are committed to providing health and fitness awareness and encouraging a safe playing environment for our members.

Membership Program

The association's membership program continues to be the number one revenue generator for CARHA Hockey. This past season saw a number of new groups register as members however, with the COVID-19 shutdown, our bottom line could not show a net growth.

In the face of the pandemic, it was important for management to establish a strategy that perhaps would not result in immediate dividends however, would lay the foundation for future growth for the association. Relationships continued to be our priority and as such, we ensured that the association took a forefront position and established the *Return to Play (RTP)* framework and the *On-Ice Hockey Playing Options* for the adult rec hockey community. Paired with a solid communication plan, the association's RTP landed into the hands of the key decision makers at municipal recreation departments. With these efforts, the association became the number one resource for these individuals who were trying desperately to respond to their stakeholders. Running alongside of the association and public health, these municipalities garnered confidence and assurance to allow hockey back in their communities safely during the pandemic.

The importance of executing the aforementioned strategy was two-fold. Firstly, the ability to position the association as a key resource in a time of uncertainty and secondly, our competitors were not as quick to respond to the needs of this vital market. We believe this strategy has and will further associate integrity, confidence and trust with the CARHA Hockey brand moving forward.

It cannot be emphasized enough how important the diligence of our internal team became during these quiet, shutdown months. The customer service, guidance and fundamental leadership that was demonstrated despite working remotely, will carry forward beyond the days of the pandemic and will firmly place the association positively in the minds of the hockey community, government officials and decision makers across Canada.

Provincial Tournaments

CARHA Hockey operated two provincial events in the 2019-20 season. The Pacific Cup, which was held in Victoria, BC (January 2020) and witnessed 134 participating teams, some coming from states such as Washington, Oregon and Colorado. Despite a power outage on the Saturday morning at one of the venues, the technical team was able to get the tournament back on track and all teams were empathetic to the situation. The Pacific Cup continues to sell out each year and with having the majority of teams travelling to Victoria, the result is strong hotel commissions enabling this event to be profitable.

The Hometown Classic, hosted in Ottawa, ON (November 2019) saw 22 teams participate. This event attracted a number of women's teams (12), which provides a nice reflection of the growth of this demographic across the hockey landscape. Teams travelled in from Brockville, Spencerville and Alliston to participate.

Sponsorship

The association continued to execute a provincial sponsorship with Molson Canada (Ontario), which resulted in both a terrific return on investment for Molson while delivering promotions, contests and swag give-aways to members. Despite the hockey stoppage, this activation still resulted in positive sales for Molson. Unfortunately, due to the shutdown, approximately 40% of the local supported tournaments could not operate and hence, beer purchases were down. As a result, the program saw a decline in sales from the year before however, still maintained significant sales via the promotion and delivered a positive return on their investment.

Keener Jerseys maintained its relationship and the association continued to refer teams and leagues to Keener for their jersey needs. This partnership has been extended to the 2020-21 season. Keener Jerseys is also maintaining its sponsorship support to the CARHA Hockey World Cup.

The Royal Oak continues to partner with the association and is positioned as the Hockey Headquarters in Ottawa and Whitby. As a partner of Molson, the association leverages promotions to help further strengthen these ties.

2020 CARHA Hockey World Cup = 2021 CARHA Hockey World Cup

The CARHA Hockey World Cup is organized every four years in a select Canadian city, and is an event that attracts participants from all across Canada, the United States, Europe, and Asia. Originally, the 2020 edition of the Event was to be hosted in Richmond, BC from March 29th to April 5th, 2020 however, due to COVID-19, on March 9th, the association made the difficult decision to postpone the Event to 2021.

Acting efficiently, the Event was able to negotiate room blocks at the same nine hotels for its dates of April 4-11, 2021. In addition, all venues (Richmond Olympic Oval, Richmond Ice Centre and Minoru Arena) were also secured for those dates.

It is anticipated that the Event will continue to host 145 participating teams from 15 countries.

Tournament Support Program

CARHA Hockey's tournament support program offered two sanctioning options for tournament organizers. The first option was a basic program that offers insurance and tournament organizing materials whereas the second option provides divisional championship prizeing. The 2019-20 season presented organizers with four prize options/price points to choose from including ball caps, t-shirts, long sleeve tees and skate towels. Although CARHA Hockey retained approximately 60% of its supported tournaments while recruiting new events, due to the shutdown, we were unable to see any net growth in the number of events it supported this past season.

League Operations

The league operations segment of the association once again effectively operated the Thunder Bay Adult Hockey League (summer league), which operated with ten teams and also managed the Ottawa Travellers Hockey League, which was home to 81 teams in the winter, a drop from 93 and another 57 teams in the summer, a drop from 66. With more hockey league playing options in the Ottawa area, depending on the existing COVID-19 protocols, it will be important to hit the ground running to with a promotional campaign to recruit new teams for the upcoming season.

The league operation strategy continues to be an important facet of our organization as it accomplishes brand extension for CARHA Hockey, increases the numbers of players in its member database and provides guaranteed membership revenue for the association.

Referee Program

In 2019-20, the association continued to place focus and attention on its referees. As a result, the ongoing engagement with the referees has increased. From the promotion of the national referee registry to enhancing the tiered e-learning modules, officials seem satisfied with the program delivery. Having a dedicated resource to look over the referees has been instrumental. The association will be redeveloping its Referee Online Quiz.

iPlayHockey

iPlayHockey continues to fill a void in the marketplace with the offering of hockey insurance for youth hockey schools, camps and AAA spring/summer teams. It has also demonstrated success as a "no-frills" membership program for adult rec hockey leagues and has become a solid referral for CARHA Hockey for those groups that want insurance but don't necessarily want the extras and are happy with the lesser coverage. This strategy of offering a second option has

allowed the association be more creative when trying to recruit new business that previously may have gone elsewhere.

As a result of hockey ceasing, iPlayHockey experienced a significant drop in its revenue. With the closure happening in March and the majority of iPlayHockey’s business occurring between April and August, the negative net effect was significant. iPlayHockey is expected to rebound once hockey is permitted to be played again.

Social Media and Communications

The association continues to monitor social media trends. Facebook and Instagram each witnessed growth in its following on all accounts. Twitter, where we have minimized our focus as it has become more of a news feed, has seen a slight decrease in followers across the board however, but maintains strong numbers.

Of interest is the association’s Instagram account, which is relatively new. This platform allows us to place more emphasis and focus on interactive video content. This has been an excellent platform for the association’s promotions and in particular, our partner promotions for companies such as Molson and the Royal Oak. In addition, the CARHA Hockey World Cup saw a 35% jump in followers over the season.

Creative internal team videos, drill videos, unique interviews and online polls have all helped the association establish a stronger social media presence. Moving forward, we need to build off this momentum and continue to attract new followers.

Moreover and especially in these unique circumstances with COVID-19, the opportunity to communicate to the masses during these uncertain times across these platforms has been tremendous.

As of August 2020:

CARHA Hockey:	CARHA Hockey World Cup:
Facebook – 5,692	Facebook – 2,465
Twitter – 4,349	Twitter – 3,286
Instagram – 1,811	Instagram – 322
CARHA Hockey Women’s:	IPH:
Facebook – 2,969	Facebook – 2,734
Twitter – 2,611	Twitter – 5,213

OUR THANKS AND APPRECIATION TO THE CARHA HOCKEY TEAM

Michael Peski, President

Lori Lopez, Executive Director

Lucy Peeling, Manager, Special Events and Programs

Laurie Langlois, Manager, Member Services

Shannon Killeen, Manager, Service and Administration

Scott Wilson, Manager, Hockey Operations

Clarinda Sharpe, Coordinator, Member Services

Bria Sullivan, Coordinator, Member Services

James Daly, Coordinator, CARHA Hockey World Cup and Hockey Events

Angelina Fonzo, Customer Service Representative (Maternity Leave)

Angela Nobles, Customer Service Representative

Tyler Broderick, Coordinator, Communications and Digital Media

Shawn Perrier, Manager, Programs and Promotions (iPlayHockey)

Patti Kenny, Bookkeeper

Tom Nightingale, IT and Database

Ross MacLachlan, Website and Database

John Luimes, Designer

Keith Milne, Cartoonist

Robin Billingham, Digital Media Design and Development