

The

REF-O-GRAM

January 2008

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Ontario Ringette Association's Officiating Newsletter

OFFICIATING DEVELOPMENT CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Well, we're half way through the season and already into a new year. I'm sure everyone found the past four months on the ice to be extremely challenging. We started the 2007-2008 season thinking that the new rules would be fairly easy to apply and understand as they included such easy things as permitting the goalie to be pulled at any time of the game and pegging the nets in the Tween division. It wasn't until the middle of October when the *Rule Change Mechanics* package came out that we truly started to understand the scope of how just one of the twenty-one rule changes that were implemented in September would have a major impact in the way we call the game.

The rule change of stopping the play from possession to control during violations and penalties has truly made things interesting. There are things that we, as officials, have trained our selves to do on the ice without thinking, things that are just subconsciously done and are almost automatic reflexes. When the ring is touched on both sides of the blue line by the same player our whistle automatically goes to our mouth and we stop the play. Now we have to retrain ourselves to wait and see who gains control of the ring before stopping the play. Who would have ever thought that we would let the goalie throw the ring all the way down the ice without blowing the whistle? Again, we were trained to immediately stop the play when the ring went over the blue line. I saw a goalie from Waterloo throw the ring down the ice, where it hit the other team's defender standing on the centre ice side of her own blue line and it went into her own zone. She was the last player back and by the time she realized it she was forced to illegally check the Waterloo player early, before she ended up with a breakaway. Six months ago, this play would never have happened due to two things: 1) play would have been stopped when the goalie threw the ring over her blue line and 2) the illegal check would have been a penalty with an immediate whistle for interference (now it's just a delayed violation). How's that for changing the way this game is played.

I'm sure many of you are wondering why the new rules were implemented this season, when technically, next season is the rule change year. Why would we use the new rules when there was no clinic material, no rule book and no case book? Well, all rule changes are approved at the Ringette Canada AGM the summer one year before the actual rule change season, which gives the Officiating Committee a year to update the clinic material, rule book and case book. The past few rule change years brought about small changes (with the exception of the shot clock), which were typically used during the season before the rule change year as "experimental" rules. It was felt that this rule change cycle would bring about the same similar minor changes and therefore the rules could be put into place immediately, instead of waiting the year. This decision was made by the Ringette Canada Board of Directors in the summer of 2006. Unfortunately, the ramifications of the change from possession to control slipped under the cracks and I have to admit, I fully thought the change would be an easy one and voted in favour of it as a member of Ontario's Rule Change Committee. Sometimes things are not always as intuitive as they appear.

So, where do we go from here? Well, the Ringette Canada Officiating Committee is currently putting together the changes to the case book which should be released some time early this winter. Credit has to be given to Iris Todd and her Officiating Committee at Ringette Canada, along with Laura Knowles and Steve Blacklock for the hours of work they have put into revising the rules and updating the case book. Please check either the officiating section of the ORA or the Ringette Canada websites periodically over the next couple of months to ensure you receive the updated case book information as soon as it is available.

If you have questions about the new rules, you can submit your question to the "Ask a Ref" section of the Ringette Canada website at www.ringette.ca or you can email me directly and I can forward it on to the Ringette Canada Officiating Committee for clarification. When in doubt, make sure you ask.

Keep working hard and having fun. I will see you around the rink.



Brent Bunting
Chairman Officiating Development Committee
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SOUTHERN REGION

Well the first half of the season has drawn to a close and the 2nd half is underway. I hope that we've all become familiar with the new rules even though we may not agree with them. If you have any questions about them, please ask your RIC or myself and we'll do our best to get you an answer quickly.

It's the busy season for tournaments and I hope that you get out to one. This is where you get your evaluations and meet friends or new referees that you haven't seen for a while. I hope to see some new faces out and about this year.

Regionals this year will be held in Hamilton. If you're interested in attending please let your RIC or I know. If you haven't attended one in the past and would like to go, please make sure that you get an evaluation this season. Invitations will be going out shortly so time is of the essence. If you don't have the contact information for an evaluator, let me or your RIC know and we'll arrange for someone to come in. I hope to have an evaluator at every tournament for some or part of the event. Make sure you let them know you're interested.

That's it from me, so have fun, stay up right and keep up the good work.

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CENTRAL REGION

Happy New Year! It's hard to believe that we're into the second half of the season. The second half is always so incredibly busy. There are tournaments every weekend, Regionals, Prelims, Provincials, Ontario Winter Games and the Canadian Ringette Championships.

This year the Regionals are being hosted by Pickering. Invitations to officiate at the Regionals will start in mid February.

By now, most of the officials in Central Region should have received a letter from one of our 7 Evaluators. It is our intention this year to get out and see each and every one of you at least once. Hopefully, this will generate some upgrades and we'll get some new faces out there on the ice.

Hope everyone is having as much fun with the new rules as I am. Enjoy the remainder of the season and keep up the hard work.

Karen Meek
Central Region Officiating Coordinator
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KEVIN LEE NAMED TO RINGETTE CANADA'S OFFICIATING COMMITTEE

This past November, Mississauga resident, Kevin Lee was selected to be Ontario's representative on Ringette Canada's Officiating Committee.

Kevin, a Level 4 official, has officiated in each of the past six Canadian Ringette Championships and is currently officiating in the NRL. Kevin has been active in the community as an evaluator and is currently involved in his greatest challenge to date, coaching his daughters Bunny Major team.

Kevin has been involved with the new rules and is part of the committee helping to develop and revise the Rule Book and Case Book for 2008/2009. For those of you who know Kevin, I'm sure you will agree that his selection will be a benefit to our province.

Climbing the Ladder

By Stephanie Renda

My greatest aspiration when it came to officiating the game of ringette was to earn the privilege to attend the Provincial A Championships. Thanks to the POD program and a lot of hard work on my part, two years later I have attained my goal and last year surpassed it when I attended the Provincial AA Championships. In my mind, what makes my accomplishments all that more special is that I am from Thunder Bay.

Thunder Bay is located just over 1400 kilometers from downtown Toronto. It is a part of the Northwest Region. This is where I was first exposed to officiating. While many provincial caliber teams have come from Thunder Bay, very few officials have ever made the leap. The reason for this is twofold. The first is that there simply are not enough games at a high enough caliber of play to gain enough experience and the second is that there is a lack of feedback regarding on ice performance.

This is where the POD program comes into play. The POD program is geared towards improving the on-ice performance of those officials with the desire and talent to do just that. For an official from the Northwest Region it afforded me the opportunity to get into tournaments that I normally would never have received entry. How many referee-in-chief's do you know who would accept an official sight unseen to referee in an A caliber tournament when the most the official had ever reffed was B/C caliber games? The POD program facilitated my entry into these tournaments.

Once I had received entry into these tournaments it was now up to me to either sink or swim, which I chose to do on any given game where I was often watched by a provincial caliber evaluator or more experienced officials. While the formal evaluations helped my game, the opportunity to interact with more experienced officials was invaluable. What you learn by simply sitting in the ref room after a game should never be underestimated and is one of the greatest advantages in attending tournaments.

As officials looking to progress through the system, it often appears to be a daunting process. The POD program makes it easier but you still have to put in the effort. If you want to better your game, talk to your RIC about being evaluated, try and get into tournaments across the province, show both the determination and desire to improve your game. Make some realistic goals for yourself and work towards achieving them. If you're coming from a more remote community realize that it is possible to make the transition from house league to provincial caliber games but know that you will have to put in the extra time and effort. Having done just that I can safely say that it was worth it.

My Experience in the Provincial Officiating Development Program (POD)

By Heather Veilleux

In September of 2005 I was invited to participate in the initial POD program in Ontario. This was a very exciting opportunity for me as I was working hard to get my Level 3 and hoped to eventually be invited to the Ontario Ringette Provincials.

At the beginning of the season I received a list of tournaments to attend where there would be several evaluators present specifically for those in the Program. By going to many of these tournaments – specifically the out-of-region ones – I reffed with many level 3 & 4 referees who I had never met before and where I made many new contacts. I received a lot of feedback and evaluations from numerous evaluators at multiple games during each tournament. While very intense, being watched so much helped me work on not only the major things I needed to change & improve but also all the little details that sometimes get overlooked. It also helped me to become more consistent from game-to-game and helped me get over any 'jitters' about being evaluated so that I could show how I *really* am as a referee.

All of the attention, critique and positive feedback really pushed me to work hard all season to improve and by the end I achieved my Level 3 and was invited for the first time to the A Provincials.

Without this Program, I believe that it would have taken much longer and would have been much more difficult to attain my goals. The POD program was an excellent means for me to be seen throughout Ontario and to develop as a Ringette Official.

The Provincial Officiating Development Program (POD) is a program that was developed by Derek Burger and the Officiating Development Committee in 2005 that provides guidance and feedback to those officials who have shown both the ability to perform and the willingness to learn. The goal is to help prepare newer officials and show them exactly what is required for them to make it to Provincials. Those that are part of the program must attend selected tournaments and be capable of accepting the criticism that comes with numerous eyes watching them. Both Stephanie and Heather were part of this program and were successful in using the feedback and opportunities that were given to them in succeeding with their goals.

How to Become a Better Official

Adapted from "How to be a better official" by Fred Horgan,

I often am asked by officials who are starting out or who are trying to move up in the officiating levels, "How do I become a better ref?" There are many answers, some specific to the individual and some not. Here is a list of 10 things that just about every referee can do to become better. The good referees do most of them already.

1. **Look the part:** A good official is aware of how they look. They want to look good out on the ice, but not be flashy. Take pride in how you look on the ice, think of how others will look at you and what they'll see.
2. **Arrive on time:** A good referee always shows up prepared. The teams have enough to worry about that having referees shouldn't be one of them. Even more important is that arriving on time doesn't mean showing up 10 minutes before the game. You need to allow time to get dressed, mentally prepared, stretch, talk with your partner, importantly be aware of any arena issues (lines missing, clock location, shot clocks, etc.). Nothing looks worse than a referee walking in while the zamboni is on the ice, or hitting the ice as the warm up is over. This also makes your partner worried as to whether they're doing the game alone or not.
3. **A good referee is never alone:** Realize that all good referees have help. There aren't two teams on the ice as many believe, but 3. You, your partner and the minor officials all must work together to make for a great game. Talk with your partner and minor officials, find out any issue they may be having (especially with the minor officials). Figure out how you're going to solve any issues before the game. You must also be aware that your minor officials have a large impact on how the game goes off (clock starting, score sheet filled out right, etc.) Make sure they're as comfortable as possible before you start. After a game welcome any constructive, friendly, private criticism which might help you in the future.
4. **Keep conversations short:** Don't get caught up talking to players and coaches for long periods of time, especially while the play is stopped. These talks can cause more problems than they might solve. Be polite, courteous and brief.
5. **Don't be the center of attention:** A good referee is one that remains inconspicuous. Exaggerated signals, being overly loud with the voice or body language, extended whistles. Instead, be clear, serious and confident; whistles should be sharp and brief with signals being crisp but not officious. Play stoppages should be kept brief, with the players not having to wait for the referees to be set to go.
6. **Not every decision will be a stoppage:** Know that for every whistle you blow, there are likely 5 calls that you didn't make. Not every call requires a whistle. Most of the time you'll judge that an infraction didn't occur despite what players, coaches, parents, or fans might think. In that case, the lack of a call is the communication to everyone and such calls don't need justification; head shacking and the use of unapproved signals don't belong on the ice.
7. **Don't be a slave to the rulebook:** A good referee realizes that there is a lot of grey in the game on the ice. That advantage and disadvantage are important to the game. Remember that phrases like 'flow of the game' and 'game management' are just as important as any written rule.
8. **Be professional:** Don't go goof around on the ice. At the same time frequent long conversations with your partner can suggest that you aren't confident. While the game is being played, follow the proper mechanics to dictate where you should be and what you should be doing.
9. **Be courteous and controlled:** Manage your temper; don't lose patience with the participants. At the same time, be in control without being arrogant. Know you're in charge, but use the important "please" and "thank you". When someone does a favour by passing the ring, or placing it for you, there's nothing wrong with being courteous in response.
10. **You're not perfect:** Finally, know that you'll make mistakes. As these mistakes happen you shouldn't hesitate or be uncomfortable admitting them. When you can correct the error, correct it. When you can't, you must continue the game. The objective is to be the best referee that you can. A game where you don't make any mistakes is a day that you should stop refereeing.

Being a referee is often a thankless role that's under appreciated. It's impossible to do a game that everyone will be happy with, so forget 'everyone' and let your judgment guide you through the game. Be neat, courteous, confident and professional, and you'll be a success. That's what it's all about.

Nutrition and Stretching to Improve On-ice Performance.

By: Tania Pettitt-Tracey B.Sc. Health and Nutrition, Certified Rehabilitative Trainer and Corrective Exercise Specialist

Ringette is a hard game. Both physically and mentally it demands everything. So how do you keep yourself strong for that long tournament? For 2 – 20 minute periods? For that extra game when someone doesn't show up? How do you make sure you have as much energy for the finals as you did for the round robin? Here are a few tips from the professionals – we treat food as fuel and stretching as preventative maintenance – if you can follow these few suggestions, you could be reffing at the top of your game for years to come!

Don't eat too much, and don't eat that greasy arena food! Even though you are hungry, the last thing you want to do in this situation is eat a large meal. If you have more than an hour or two between games, a large snack can be eaten, but ensure that at least an hour is left after eating until the next game starts to give time for digestion. The snack should be high in carbohydrates, since they are your primary fuel source. Simple sugars can provide a quick burst of energy 15 to 30 minutes before a game, but little of what is eaten in the hour prior to a game will impact muscle power or energy levels. Fat is also to be avoided, as it changes how your body uses energy, slowing it down. Some great choices include cereal/granola bars, dried and fresh fruit, trail mix, mixed vegetables, yogurt or ½ a bagel with jam, honey, or peanut butter. Any of these will replenish your muscle's glycogen stores and get you energized without leaving you feeling full and heavy.

What you do after the game is also important. Flexibility, or lack of it, can dramatically affect performance. If muscles are not stretched they shorten and tighten, increasing your risk of injury by up to 40%. Stretches should be done as soon after the workout as possible. The three main areas which need to be addressed for skaters are the groin, hip flexors, and calves. Try these stretches after your game to help prevent possible injuries.

Hip Flexors – Lunge forward with one knee on the floor until the front foot of the other foot is placed before the front knee. Push the hips forward and hold the stretch. This stretch can be intensified by raising the arm on the same side and leaning back slightly.

Inner Thigh (Groin) (side lunge) – Stand with your feet apart and turn your toes in. Lunge towards one side until the knee is above the foot. Keep your heels on the floor and hold. Do not bounce during this stretch.

Hips and Lower Back – Sit on the floor and place the foot of one leg over the other leg. Turn your upper body to the side of the flexed leg. Put the same side arm behind you for support. The other arm touches the bent knee. With the elbow, lightly push the knee across the straight leg and hold.

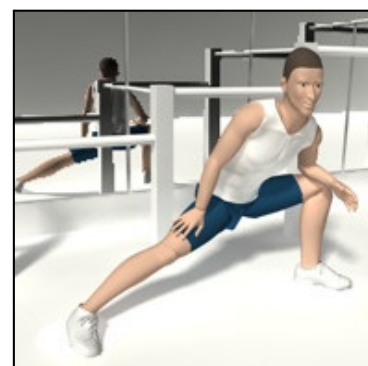
Calves – Stand in front of a pillar or a wall with both knees slightly flexed. Position the forefoot on the pillar and the heel on the floor. Slowly bring the far leg in the straight position while leaning forward. Keep the stretched leg flexed.

Standing Hamstrings – Stand in front of a fixed bar or bench and place your heel on it. Straighten the leg and hold.

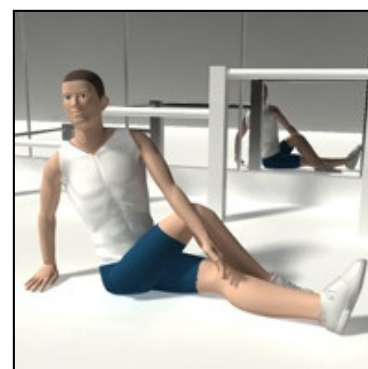
Quadriceps – While standing on one foot and wrap a towel around the ankle of the other leg. Grasp both ends of the towel and pull the foot up. Do not move the knee to the side. Grasp a fixed object for better balance.



Hip Flexor



Inner Thigh – Side Lunge



Hips and Lower Back



Calves



Standing Hamstrings



Quadriceps

Provincial's Selection Process

Have you ever wondered how one gets asked to officiate at the Provincial Ringette Championships? How does one get selected to work the Ontario Winter Games or the Eastern Canadian Tween Championships? Well, there is an actual selection process in place.

In late November, the ORA office will create the preliminary eligibility list from those officials who have registered by the November 15th deadline. Only registered Level 3 and Level 4 officials are added to the preliminary list. This list is then distributed to all six Regional Coordinators for their review where they can verify that the Level 3 and Level 4 officials residing in their regions have not been mistakenly omitted. At that time, the coordinators have the ability to add any official that they feel deserves the opportunity to be on the selection list, regardless of their carded rank.

Once each coordinator returns their regional additions to the preliminary list, the Officiating Chair will create the final list containing all the eligible officials. This final list is then forwarded to the selection committee, which is made up of the six Regional Coordinators, the Officiating Chair and all Provincial Evaluators. Each member of the selection committee will then rank the officials based on their own opinion of the official's abilities. If the selection committee member has not seen an official on the ice for two or more seasons, they cannot assign a rank and will indicate that they have "no informed opinion." A rank of "no informed opinion" will provide the official with the second lowest rank. Obviously, this shows how important it is to get out and officiate in tournaments outside your region. If the selection committee members do not see you, they cannot rank you.

Once the members return their rankings to the Officiating Chair, the numbers are then compiled and the officials are ranked in

order from first to last. This information is then forwarded to the Vice President Technical for confirmation. Once the rankings are confirmed, the Officiating Chair will contact the selected officials.

The officials who rank from one to ten must be asked to both the Provincial A and AA Championships and those officials who finish between eleven and twenty must be asked to the Provincial A's.

The ranking list will also be used to select those officials who are eligible for the Ontario Winter Games and Ontario's representative at the Eastern Canadian Ringette Championships.

So if your goal is to eventually officiate at one of the Provincial Championships, you need to ensure that you are active not just inside your region, but all around the province.

Level 4 Clinic Held in Toronto

The Level 4 clinic was held this past November in Toronto. Rick Thomson and Derek Burger did a spectacular job teaching the immense amount of material in three short days. This unique clinic provided all participants with a detailed breakdown of every page of the Rules Case Book along with the explanation and justification pertaining to each case.

Congratulations go out to the following participants who had to survive spending three days locked in a room with Derek: *Paul Mcbride, Jillian Wannamaker, Cam Mahy, Emily Mountjoy, Shannon Carey, Alex Hanes, Michelle Bainbridge, Stephanie Renda, Kerri Mahy, Pat Turcotte, Wayne Spencer, Jessica Lalonde, Christine Aubry, Heather Veilleux, Valerie Cheam, Darcy Hodgson, Kent Missons.*

Registration Cards

Each of you should have received your new ORA Registration Card with this Ref-O-Gram. Please check that your rank on the card is correct. If it is not, please contact your Regional Coordinator so that we may look into the mistake. Also, always keep your evaluations, as sometimes things do get lost at our end and it may be your only record of the job you did.

Official of the Year Awards

Do you know someone who has consistently proven himself or herself on and off the ice? Someone who has put in that extra time required to become a better official? If so, maybe it's time for that person to be recognized. Every year ORA and each of the regions reward those officials who have dedicated themselves off the ice, as volunteers and have proven themselves at a high level on the ice. To be eligible, the official must currently be ranked a minimum 3B for the Provincial award and 2C for the Regional award. If you think you know someone who is deserving of either award, contact your local association representatives and have them submit the application forms.



New Shot Clock Mechanics

Effective immediately, the shot clock mechanics have been updated slightly. Ringette Canada has changed the procedure for what to do when the shot clock expires.

When the shot clock expires in an end zone, the official closest to the net will now be the only official to blow the whistle and stop play. In addition, only the net official will make either the direction or goalie ring signals. The official at the free play line should only stop play if the net official does not. This information will be presented during next seasons rule change clinics.

Upcoming Events

Provincial "AA" Championships, Whitby – Feb 28 – Mar 2.
 Ontario Winter Games, Collingwood – Mar 6-9
 Provincial "A" Championships, Oshawa – Mar 20 – 23
 Canadian Ringette Championships, St.Albert AB – Mar 31 – April 5
 Eastern Canadian Tween Championships, Longueuil QC – April 4-6
 Adult Challenge Cup, Hamilton – April 11-13



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