

The

REF-O-GRAM

February 2009

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Ontario Ringette Association's Officiating Newsletter

OFFICIATING DEVELOPMENT CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This time of year, I often wonder what to write. Looking at old ROG's, the trend is to say "keep working hard" as "this is the most important time of year." The Chair usually indicates that "Provincials" are fast approaching and that "every game has meaning." Well, those things still apply, but this time I've decided to talk about us, Ontario's officials.

My officiating career began in 1983, and over the past twenty-six seasons ringette has provided me with the opportunity to travel the country from coast to coast. By participating in tournaments, Canadian Ringette Championships (CRC's) and the Canada Winter Games, I have had the opportunity to officiate in eight provinces and one territory, where I had the pleasure of working with, and watching, some of the best officials the sport has ever seen. People like Doug MacQuarrie, Brad Minor and Steve Blacklock, all special officials who, at one point, were considered the best of the best. Where did they come from? Ontario.

The development of officials has always been one of our province's strengths. We have consistently provided between 40 and 50% of the officials to the CRC's and the majority of officials to the Canada Winter Games. Every year, there seems to be another official from Ontario being selected to officiate at the CRC's. Just looking at the last decade, the list is formidable; Kevin Lee (2001), Natalie Fortin (2002), Brad Dillabaugh (2004), Janyce Gunn (2005), Rob Drury (2006), Danielle Lalonde (2007) and last year, Tania Pettitt and Mario Periard. This year will probably be no different.

My first taste of development goes back to the late 1980's when Jane Larkworthy, Rick Castellan and Al Fletcher did their best to teach me the finer points of officiating. Whether it was officiating at tournaments, Prelims, Regionals, Provincials or Team Ontario camps, the one thing I remember was how good the evaluators were. Over the years, we have been blessed with the best evaluators in the country. People like Rick Thomson, Al Fletcher, Derek Burger, Laura Knowles and Chris Bradt all provided feedback that helped develop the best officials in our province and the country. I often wonder why we call these people "evaluators" when they really should be called teachers or coaches.

Today, we have over fifty dedicated evaluators, twenty knowledgeable instructors and the best programs available to help officials grow. Every year, our fifty plus evaluators perform 400 to 500 evaluations province wide. This past fall, our twenty instructors performed over thirty clinics, reaching

out to over 700 officials. Two people participated in the National Scouting program, nine officials are participating in the Provincial Officiating Development (POD) program and we used the Outreach Program to send two instructors/evaluators to the Atikokan tournament where they worked with the officials over the weekend.

Our POD program has been a success since its inception in 2005. This program, which is an extension of the former Mentoring program, has seen many of its graduates move to Level 3 and/or officiate at Provincials. It has provided many of the participants a "jump start" to their career and has given the Officiating Committee a better means of identifying those who have the potential skills to excel down the road. This program, like the National Scouting and Outreach programs, is specific to Ontario.

Where do we go from here? Even though we continue to churn out high quality officials at the upper levels, we can always do better. We cannot get complacent or stagnant in what we do and how we do it. Last summer, I participated in two officiating camps that were held in Ottawa during the U19 Team Canada tryouts. These two camps permitted us to try some new things. We used video to help assess the officials and breakdown the games. We had classroom sessions, wrote the Level 4 exam, partook in the fitness testing and used the games to "coach" the officials instead of evaluating them. These camps were a complete success. We hope to take the basics around what we did and create similar camps at lower levels during tryouts for the Regional teams next year and Team Ontario further down the road. We could use these camps to help develop level 2 and level 3 officials.

The next few years will be interesting. With Ringette Canada's LTAD plan, the focus at younger age groups will be on developing skills instead of playing games. There is no doubt that this will change how we develop officials, not just here in Ontario, but also around the country. To respond to this, Ringette Canada has formed a Long Term Officiating Development (LTOD) committee to look into how development is currently done and how it should be done in the future. I am sure that this committee will be looking at us, for the things we do, as a starting point. There's no better place to look than the province with the best officials, Ontario.

Brent Bunting
Chairman Officiating Development Committee
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CENTRAL REGION

After 15+ years of submitting articles for the ROG, it's difficult to come up with a unique composition. The ROG report is a constant reminder of the upcoming events and important details that we as officials need to know. It sometimes feels a little redundant, but it's important to get the facts out to everyone.

How are the "new rules" working out for you? Are you still having difficulty applying them or are they starting to feel natural? If you're still struggling, you're not alone; there are many of us who are over-analyzing them.

Just a reminder to our evaluators, please continue with your assignments. It's very important that we make every effort to better our officials.

Also, to the officials, don't be afraid to ask for an evaluation. The feedback you'll receive can benefit your on ice performance if put to good use.

The Regional and Provincial Championships are just around the corner. Good luck and congratulations to those of you selected for Provincials. Selection for Regionals will begin in February.

Good luck with the remainder of your season. I hope you are able to obtain your goals or are at least one step closer. It takes years of hard work and dedication to make good officials. Take your time and enjoy the experience. Don't try and rush your way through it.

Karen Meek
Central Region Officiating Coordinator
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SOUTHERN REGION

Another year is almost through. Hopefully we've learned a lot, had some fun and made some new friends. This fall, one of those friends of many people in the Southern Region retired from Ringette. It's sad news for me to tell you that Rick Thompson is no longer active. He helped many people become great referees through his feedback and teachings and entertained even more in the referees room with his wit and personality. He will be sadly missed.

I hope everyone is getting feedback and evaluations. Remember that your local referee and chief can give you an evaluation if you are Level 1. If you are looking for a Level 2 or higher evaluation, then can get a hold of your local RIC to bring someone in. The best way to improve is by being evaluated and reffing games.

Regionals are going to be held in Mississauga this season from April 3-5. Please let your RIC know if you're interested.

I hope to see you all around the rinks.

Jeff Evans
Southern Region Officiating Coordinator
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WESTERN REGION

Well, the holidays are over, we are already half way through the season and the busy 2nd half is off to a roaring start!

First, congratulations and welcome to Western's 54 new officials. Hopefully you have all had the opportunity to do a few games by now. Remember to ask your Referee in Chief to sit down and evaluate you some time in the next 2 months.

This time of year is the busy tournament time and if you are interested in attending any please submit your names early. Western has Stratford, Waterloo, Guelph, Seaforth, Woolwich, Kitchener and St Thomas coming up in the next 2 months. These are the building blocks for exposure, evaluations and upgrades. You will not move up thru the system if you do not travel outside of your home association, so please try to attend one before Regionals.

Regionals will be held the weekend of March 27 – 29 in the Stratford, St Mary's and Mitchell Arenas. Online Registration for Regionals will be posted on the western website www.wrra.ca by February 15th 2009. If you have never participated before, please do not hesitate to register – last year we used over 70 officials during the weekend! Please go online and sign up to be a part of one of the largest tournaments in Ontario!

If you ever have questions, need help or would like to set up an evaluation, please feel free to call or email whenever.

Enjoy the rest of the season.

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The End of an Era – Rick Thomson Retires from Ringette by Brent Bunting

This past fall, I received a phone call from one of my long time and dearest friends, indicating that he had decided to retire from ringette. For those of you who came to know Rick Thomson, I'm sure you will agree that he is a special person.

Rick's officiating career began in 1981 when his daughter Joanne first started playing ringette in St. Catharines. His ability and hardwork enabled him to be selected to his first Provincial Championships in Etobicoke in 1984, in only his fourth season. Rick continued to impress and in 1991, at the age of forty-two, he was selected to officiate at the Canadian Ringette Championships in Hull, Quebec. During the nineties, Rick was selected to officiate at five CRC's, including my first in 1993 where he was partnered with me on my very first game.

But what made Rick Thomson so special was the fact that he was not just an official, he was so much more. He is probably better known for his tireless dedication in developing officials as an evaluator and an instructor than what he accomplished on the ice. His ability to see things as an evaluator and explain them in detail made him one of the best "teachers" around. He was a mentor to all of us

Rick's accomplishments as a Provincial Evaluator and a Master Instructor were second to none. He taught so many of us about philosophy and about sifting through the game to pick out the right calls. He was a major proponent of the "advantage" philosophy even before it became mainstream in the early nineties. Anyone who has taken the Level 4 clinic in the last ten years will tell you that he had a profound effect on their career.

Rick was also involved on the administration side. He was always part of the Officiating Chair's "think tank" going back to the days of Jane Larkworthy right up to the start of this season. Rick was Director of officials for numerous tournaments and the Ontario Winter Games and spent time as the local RIC in St. Catherines. During the nineties, Rick spent time as Ontario's representative on Ringette Canada's Officiating Committee where he was instrumental in the development of new rules at the national level.

Over the past three seasons, Rick was given the task of overseeing the development of officials as the Manager of the POD program. His role was to work with newer, less experienced officials, and ensure they were given every opportunity to officiate in tournament games that they would not normally be scheduled for, based on their carded rank. This task was no easy one during the first season as there were over thirty officials to coordinate with tournament RIC's and evaluators. Though there were some problems with the program at first, Rick was able to handle the issues as only he

could. The program has now been streamlined and improved based on the recommendation he made.

In addition to officiating, evaluating, instructing and administrating, some may forget that Rick was also a coach. His coaching career spans as far back as 1983, and over that time he coached all divisions from Tween A to Open A, including a few years in the Deb AA division (for those of you who remember Deb). His highlight was winning Bronze at the Provincials in North Bay.

During the summer of 1992, Rick decided to host a combined slowpitch and ringette tournament for referees in St. Catharines. The event was so successful that the event became known as the annual "Thomson Super Challenge" where he was able to field four teams of officials, including one from Quebec. This successful event ran for four years and was an incredible team building initiative.

For those of you who have officiated at the Provincial A Championships, Rick's name is synonymous with greatness. In 1990, he donated a plaque to be awarded every year to the official that best demonstrated the "supreme sacrifice." This award, known as the Thomson Cup, is annually given to the official (or last year officials) that has the greatest or most spectacular "fall" during the event. Rick was well known for his "falls" during his career.

I have known Rick for the better part of twenty years. His fun loving nature was and is second to none. He has this uncanny ability to make everyone feel welcome, even when giving out a critical evaluation.

Rick, I will forever remember the nights with you and the gang. You will be sadly missed around the rink. Have fun in retirement and enjoy the golf.



A Guide to Determining Rank - by Derek Burger

Background

I have been a Ringette official for 22 years. I have officiating at ten Provincial Championships, two Ontario Winter Games, five Canadian Ringette Championships and have been recently selected to the Officiating Crew for the 2007 Canada Winter Games. I have been an NOCP instructor for ten years, an evaluator for eleven years and have been a local Referee-in-Chief, a Regional Officiating Coordinator, the Officiating Chair for the Ontario Ringette Association and am now a member of the Ringette Canada Officiating Development Committee.

This guide is based on my own experiences in all of these roles and is what I use to help me in my evaluations. It is not an official guide in any manner and is not supported by the ORA or Ringette Canada. If you use it and it is helpful you can thank me. If it doesn't work you can blame me as well!

Introduction

As this states in the title, it is a GUIDE, not a set of rules or a hard and true set of facts for determining a rank to be assigned to an official.

This GUIDE only stands to assist with ranking which is often the most difficult portion of any evaluation. Use it as a template to help you on your journey towards helping other officials by assigning ranks appropriate to their performance on a given game. Ask yourself some of these questions as you ask the overall question to yourself "What rank do I assign this person?"

These guidelines may also help you explain to an official why they did or why they did not attain a level that they were aspiring to. Many evaluations, which go awry, do so because the official leaves without a clear appreciation of WHY they didn't get the rank they were looking for. Explore some of these guidelines with them if you think it will paint a clear picture to help the official move forward and help them leave with a positive mind-set with thoughts to improvement.

What Makes a Level II Not a Level I Anymore?

- 1) Are they calling 50% of the substantial penalty infractions that occur in a fair challenge game? (A game that is clearly not "over their head" from the outset).
- 2) Are they showing that they understand the major violations, including the crease, the blue line and the free play line even if they don't call every one that occurs?

- 3) Are they no longer struggling with basic mechanics such as ring placement and static positioning?
- 4) Are they making signals to indicate what their calls are?
- 5) Are they displaying some degree of effort and desire as an official instead of looking just bored and unhappy to be there?
- 6) Are they moving towards the accepted transitional positioning promoted in the NOCP (not necessarily there yet, but getting there).

What Makes a Level III Not a Level II Anymore?

- 1) Are they calling 75-85% of the substantial penalty infractions in a fair challenge game?
- 2) Are they starting to display knowledge of the philosophical rule application and are they displaying a willingness to openly discuss such concepts post-game?
- 3) Violation calls on the whole are no longer an issue.
- 4) No basic mechanical issues.
- 5) Is teamwork and smooth interaction with their partner being displayed?
- 6) Is signaling now part of their overall on-ice communication and is it clear, concise and professional?
- 7) No issues of effort and desire.
- 8) Transitional positioning is almost always at NOCP standards with errors occurring in games that really test their skating or in games that are difficult to skate with through transition.
- 9) Are they displaying leadership qualities in games where they are the perceived "senior official" on the ice? Are they starting to function reasonably well with officials they perceive as the "senior official"?

What Makes a Level IV Not a Level III Anymore?

- 1) Are they calling all substantial penalty infractions in a fair test game with calls being missed only due to point of view or transitional issues? Are they able to discuss, post game, their reasons for calls or non-calls in an intelligent and articulate manner? Can they provide reasonable explanations for their point of view on specific calls or non-calls?
- 2) Is philosophical rule application part of their game and is this displayed in their reasons for calls and non-calls during discussion?
- 3) Rule application is done in a manner that displays complete rule knowledge and an informed understanding of all aspects of the Ringette Canada Rule Book?

- 4) Is their performance professional in all aspects, from attitude to composure to signaling to interaction with their partners to interaction with coaches and players?
- 5) Are they clearly able to take the leadership role with younger officials and the peer role with other Level IV officials?
- 6) Is their effort and desire consistent across all games they are assigned without wavering due to caliber or age category?

- 7) Positioning is always at NOCP standards in a fair test game.

Derek Burger wrote this article in 2006 based on his experiences as an evaluator and from information gathered while teaching evaluator clinics. Though it is not an official document it is used as an instructional tool for evaluators here in Ontario and gives a good basis to understanding what evaluators are looking for.

Ontario's Kevin Lee Officiates First World Club Championship Final

This past fall, Mississauga native Kevin Lee, continued his impressive run as one of the top officials in the country with a strong week of officiating during the inaugural World Club Championships held in Sault Ste. Marie.

The weeklong event saw the top four teams from the NRL face off against the top two teams from the Finnish Elite League in a round robin format. Based on his strong performance throughout the week, Kevin was selected to officiate the championship game, which pitted the Cambridge Turbos against LuKi-82, Luvia. Kevin's selection for the championship game capped off a strong season that also saw him officiate the NRL championship final at the CRC's last spring.

Congratulations go out to Kevin for representing Ontario at the highest level.

Successful Evaluator Clinic Held in London

Last November, a successful weekend long evaluator clinic was held during the London tournament at the Western Fair Recreation complex. This clinic, facilitated by master instructors Laura Knowles and Brent Bunting, saw ten current officials go through several "freeze-thaw" sessions along the way to successfully completing the NOCP program. The days were long and cold and the training room a "little" small. Congratulations go out to our new Community Evaluators: Doug Cope, Chad Weatherall, Miranda Sheppard, Andre Labelle, Brian Sime, Kent Missons, Evan Sharp, Denise Pelletier, Lana Philips, Paul McBride.

Upcoming Events

Provincial AA Championships – March 5-8, London
Provincial A Championships – March 19-22, Gloucester
Eastern Canadian Tween Championships – April 2-5, Guelph
Canadian Ringette Championships – April 6-11, P.E.I
Adult Challenge Cup – April 9-11, Hamilton

Overtime Games

It's the last day of the tournament and you have been chosen to do a final game. At the end of regulation time, the game is tied. Now what do you do?

First, you should call the captains of both teams to the timekeeper's bench, inside the referees' crease. Explain to them that you are going to flip a coin. The Home team calls it in the air. The winner of the toss gets the free pass to start overtime and the loser gets the choice of ends. The time clock should be set to the same time used in regulation play (15 or 20 minutes) and any penalties not expired at the end on the 2nd period must be served. If there is no winner at the end of an overtime period, the teams switch ends. There is no need for another coin toss. In addition, be aware that both teams get an additional time-out to be used during each overtime period.

It's important that our officials are consistent with these procedures.

Ringette Canada Forms LTOD Committee

This past summer, Ringette Canada created its first Long Term Officiating Development committee to look into how we can better our current practices in developing officials. Former Director of Officials for Quebec, Jeff Ethier, chairs this new seven-member committee and along with Ontario's own Pat Turcotte hopes to revamp the system for developing our officials.

If you have ideas that you think would make the NOCP program better, please forward them to Pat at patt@mountaincable.net.

ORA Office has new Home

Please be aware that the ORA office has moved to its new location at:

3 Concorde Gate, #207
Toronto, ON M3C 3N7 (416)-426-7204

Rule Clarifications from RC

Control by the Goaltender

D.3.b – a goalkeeper, while not preventing the ring from entering the net, propels the ring with the stick, or bats or kicks the ring.

Clarification - Batting or kicking the ring by the goaltender or AGK will not be considered control if it is in the act of making a save.

Delay of Game

13.5.e A Minor penalty is committed if while the ring is in an end zone, a skater of the team not in control of the ring, in excess of the maximum number permitted in that restricted area, enters the restricted area and any skater of that team becomes involved in the play in the restricted area while there are too many skaters in that area.

Question - If 4 players from the attacking team rush into the corner after a loose ring then if any of the 4 are involved in the play it will be Delay of Game.

Answer – Yes, this could be a delay of game penalty... sound judgment needs to be used to determine when it would be a penalty and when it would only be a violation.

Use the same logic that was applied to defending teams under the old rules. I.E. if, in the old rules you would have assessed a delay of game penalty to the defending team given where the 4 players are, then it should be a delay of game penalty to the team (attacking or defending) in the new rules.

Mechanics – single and two blue line violations

- 1) If the violation is unintentional
 - a. A player contacts the ring

The violation can be dropped when the non-offending team contacts or controls the ring.
- 2) If the violation is intentional
 - a. Goaltender or AGK throws the ring over the blue line
 - b. AGK passes the ring with their stick over the blue line
 - c. Ineligible player stick checks an opponent

The violation is counted in full (or until the ring leaves the zone)
- 3) Each contact or stick check by an ineligible player results in an additional violation and the 5 second count restarts
- 4) When a team is ineligible to play the ring, the pre-mature stick check applies to ALL players on the team. If any of them stick the opponent trying to play the ring then it will result in a violation and the 5 second count is restarted.
- 5) The decision to drop or count in full the 5 seconds is dependent upon the last violation that occurred
 - a. If A1 passes the ring over the blue line and then contacts the ring, a 5 second violation begins. If A1 contacts the ring again, the 5 seconds restarts and can be dropped when Team B contacts or controls the ring
 - b. If A1 passes the ring over the blue line and then contacts the ring, a 5 second violation begins. A few seconds later, A1 stick checks the opponent trying to get the ring, the 5 second count restarts and is counted in full (or until the ring leaves the zone).
 - c. If A1 passes the ring over the blue line and then stick checks the opponent, a 5 second violation begins. If A1 then contacts the ring, the 5 second count is restarted and will end when the non-offending team contacts or controls the ring.