

A Message from Paul Gorman, VP Rep AA-BB

The 2022-23 Season - A Year in Review

Minor sports in Canada returned to normalcy for players, coaches and parents as we moved forward with strong athletic programming and said goodbye to masks and arena shutdowns. While membership numbers have dwindled for all Ontario hockey associations since Covid, the ORHC has begun to initiate grassroots marketing into the Oakville community to re-invigorate numbers and passion for the game of hockey .

The Hockey Canada Pathways designed for younger players at all levels continues to be implemented and analyzed based on the heavy practice focus and to encourage development and put less emphasis on what the scoreboard says. For our U7, U8 and U9 athletes, the try outs continue to be in the fall, after Labour day which remains a challenge for large, strong associations like Oakville to keep players from leaving to more game focused leagues.

We continue to hire great rep coaches and offer very competitive hockey at all levels and ages from AA-BB. We had many OMHA Champions and Finalists again in the 2022/23 season and that is attributed to coaching capabilities and player development. I would like to personally thank all of my coaches and all of the off ice and on ice volunteers that make this association one of the best in Canada. I challenge all parents, grandparents and friends of the ORHC to take the coaching clinics and become a minor hockey coach, assistant coach, manager or trainer. The experience and the memories created by team sports is extremely rewarding and we are looking for new personalities all the time.

Part of my mandate as VP of Rep AA-BB was to introduce non parent coaches into a system that is typically OMHA qualified fathers who have a child or two on the team they coach. Non Parent coaches bring a different set of qualities to the organization and can be versatile in age groups and levels that they coach. Since the inception of the program and with mentorship for our younger coaches, we have introduced 10 non parents to the ORHC coaching program and we hope to grow this number, especially at the AA Red level. So far, the younger coaches are doing a great job developing their capabilities and style and I will continue to assist and promote these great additions to our association.

We also have to give praise and heartfelt thanks as well to the Gift of Giving volunteers who work tirelessly all winter to make huge food donations to the less fortunate. Watching each team compete in the Food Drive is a great philanthropical undertaking and its so important for our young boys and girls to understand the importance of making a difference in their community.

While many other hockey associations continue to shrink and struggle financially, the Oakville Rangers Hockey Association has grown to 53 representative teams and we continue to win OMHA Championships and develop players at a blinding clip. With outlaw leagues popping up, who don't follow Hockey Canada rules and player movement that challenges our competitive player stream, we are proud of the fact that Oakville is well known for producing world class hockey players that are highly coveted by other coaches.

With all of the challenges associated with minor hockey, the passion and the fundamentals remain strong as Canada's favourite sport. The ORHC will continue to provide its rep players high level coaching, skill development and highly competitive environments to challenge all individuals.

On behalf of the Executive and the Oakville Rangers Organization, I look forward to serving you in my capacity in the upcoming hockey season.

**Best Regards,
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