

RTH Regulatory Review Task Team Report

Approved January 30, 2021



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Existing Recommendation (June 2020) – Slide 27:

- If a Junior League doesn't operate in the 2020-21 season, players registered in that League are free to transfer to any other team in any other League without compensation to their Current Team, and would have the option of either:
 - Remaining with their New Team in the 2021-22 Season; or
 - Returning to their Current Team next season without compensation to the team they played for at the end of the 2020-21 season

Issue/Concern:

- Some Junior Leagues are facing the reality that they may be unable to start or continue their current season but are reluctant to make a final decision to shut down their League if they have no assurances that their rostered players will be returning to their Current Team next season.

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New Recommendation:

- If a League decides not to operate this season, or ceases to operate after starting its season, players in that League are free to look for other playing opportunities in other Leagues for the remainder of this season, provided their current League shuts down by February 25, but must return to their Current Team next season.

Notes:

- If League shuts down after February 25, the players are unable to move to another team this season, as the February 25 Cut Down Date will have passed.
- New Team can negotiate with Current Team for player's rights for next season if both teams agree, but Current Team is under no obligation to agree to release the player beyond the current season.
- Nothing in this recommendation affects the Player's right to transfer to a USA Hockey team next season. Current Team may ask New Team to sign an acknowledgement that compensation payable for a USA transfer next season is payable to the Current Team. Compensation by the US team will be based on last team the player played for.

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Notes (cont'd):

- If the player leaves his Current Team to join a New Team, then decides to transfer to a European Team prior to the IIHF's March 1 transfer deadline, his playing rights on his return to Canada will belong to his Current Team (ordinarily Regulation H.15(a) would give those rights to the last Canadian team he played on before transferring).
- If the player's Current Team decides not to operate next season, he will be a free agent as of the date his Current Team announces that decision.

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Existing Recommendation – Disbanding Teams (slide 26):

- For Teams that cease to operate, but their League continues to operate:
 - Their League may conduct a dispersal draft.
 - Player has the option of:
 - joining the Team that drafts him;
 - joining a new Team in a lower Division or Category without compensation to the drafting team;
or
 - Joining a Team in another League in the same Division and Category, with compensation paid to his drafting team.
 - Applies only to Teams that disband by February 25. If Team disbands after February 25, the Player's season will be over, and he will be a free agent next season.

Issue/Concern:

- A team may not be able to operate this season due to circumstances beyond its control (e.g. US teams playing in Canadian leagues, that cannot participate in that league due to ongoing border restrictions)

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New Recommendation

- If a Team ceases to operate this season due to force majeure (defined as the inability to participate in league play due to government or health regulations, and specifically excludes a failure to operate due to financial concerns), but their League continues to operate, the player's playing rights for the 2021-22 season will remain with their Current Team.
- If the player's Current Team decides not to operate next season, he will be a free agent as of the date his Current Team announces that decision.

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Other Topics Discussed/Confirmed

- Affiliation Deadline - Regulation L.6 (slide 23) will be March 4, regardless of when the League's season started;
- Release Date if Not Rostered – Regulation E.9 (slide 19) – will be January 31, regardless of when the League's season started (does not apply to Canadian Hockey League);
- Non-Sanctioned Hockey – Players seeking to return from a Non-Sanctioned League to join a Hockey Canada team whose season has already begun must go through the reinstatement process described in the Policy if they are looking to join a team that would ordinarily be eligible to compete for a Regional or National Championship.
- “Season” - Regulation A.37 (slide 11) – the May 31 end date will remain in effect, but Members should have the discretion to allow 21 year old players to participate in Spring/Summer programming beyond May 31, for “Showcase” events.
- 21 year old Player – No changes should be made to our age Divisions for next season to accommodate 21 year old players who will likely miss out on the opportunity to play their final year of Junior hockey this season. While we are empathetic to those players who have been affected in this manner by the pandemic, the trickle down effect would necessitate an upheaval of our structure to accommodate this single birth year.

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Canadian Hockey League

- These recommendations have been formulated at a time when the Canadian Hockey League remains uncertain about the start date in two of its Leagues, and a return date in the third League.
- This Task Team's primary focus has always been to create recommendations that will maximize a player's ability to play hockey this season.
- If the OHL and/or WHL delays the start of its season significantly beyond the February 25th Cut Down Date, there is a possibility that some CHL players may continue to play and train beyond February 25 in Junior A leagues, U18 Leagues, or anywhere else they can find ice time.
- The CHL wants players to continue to have the opportunity to play and train elsewhere while waiting for the CHL season to start. Forcing them to follow the February 25th date might not be in the players' best interests, if those players must be released by the team they are currently registered with by February 25th to remain eligible to play in the CHL this season.

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CHL (cont'd)

- The Task Team has asked the CHL to provide a proposal regarding possible variations to the Cut Down Date and Final Registration Date for those players. That proposal will not be ready by the date of the Member Operations meeting.
- Depending on the nature of that proposal, and the start date of their respective seasons, there may be a need to revisit one or more of the Task Team's recommendations dating back to June 2020, to be responsive to the CHL's needs, and to provide opportunities to other players who could fill Junior or U18 roster spots vacated by CHL players who are summoned to return to their CHL Teams, particularly if those other players do not have a similar playing opportunity in their home community.
- Without limiting the foregoing, if a CHL Team or League is unable to operate this season, the rights of CHL players who are permitted to play elsewhere in the 2020-21 season due to their League not operating shall remain subject to the CHL Standard Player Agreement in 2021-22 unless the CHL team grants the player an outright release, releasing him from or terminating that Agreement.