

24 March 2010

Presidents Report 2009

My first year as president has had its challenges. At first glance it would appear that everything was working just fine. It was not till we started working through the various league problems that the scale of what we had here was larger than we first thought.

I was very vocal of previous years about the outstanding debt of the senior league. We were reassured last year by the managing committee that the operating problems were behind them and that things would be different this year. Unfortunately this was not to be the case. There was not one month that went by where we did not have to ask the senior league for their ice payment. The reason for this is now quite obvious and simple. They did not collect the money from the players. Again they have finished the season approximately \$5397 in debt to the CIHA.

The Red Devils financial side also became a problem. The team was reminded on several occasions about debts and the need to pay what owed. Again a simple case of not collecting the money from the players. Had this task been carried out as required the Red Devils would today be in a positive financial position able to look forward with confidence. It was made clear to me at the end of their season that the financial position of the team was in fact so bad the coach had bailed them out to the tune of \$2500.00. If only the money had been collected from the players.

The masters was another league that was extremely slow at forwarding the funds to the CIHA for payment to Alpine. Request after request was made to the point where we had to visit the rink to speak to the players themselves asking about the money. To a man they advised the money had been paid. This problem still exists today.

Responsibility for these debts rests with me. It was me that insisted procedures be put in place to collect the funds. I checked a couple of times and was assured things were ok. This was clearly not the case. I did not follow my own belief which is trust no one. Notwithstanding the position of league organiser is a volunteer position and a thankless one at that. Thank you to all those people brave enough to step up and take on the roll.

It seemed the hockey being played in Canterbury was fragmented amongst the leagues. Nobody knew exactly how many players we had and what age they were. This information is required by the NZIHF and beyond by IIHF and SPARC. The registration process we had always used came into question. Clearly it was time to change the way we did things. However it was too late to change things for 2009 so it was agreed that the change to registration should be introduced for the 2010 year.

The fragmentation appeared not only with registrations but also amongst the leagues. Cooperation within the leagues for ice sharing became difficult with leagues only able to see the small picture. Exceptions to this were Minors and masters letting their ice time for the Red Devils. We had to do something. Ivana has worked tirelessly bringing various people and leagues together with the vision always on the big picture. I am happy to say that finally the ice time booking process and distribution is back where it belongs with the CIHA. It is the CIHA alone that continues as your group of committed individuals to grow the sport allocating ice where it see fit for the good of all ice hockey players in Canterbury.

The focus of the CIHA on representative teams remains strong. We had success last year at various levels. Senior Non Check silver, U13's silver, U16 Gold and Red Devils Gold. I believe this could be regarded as a successful year in National competitions. With the demise of the SNC tournament and the introduction of the National Elite U16 tournament next years Nationals in Gore will involve only Women, U13 and U19. I would like to express my thanks on behalf of the CIHA to all those people involved in managing and coaching the various teams.

The initiative shown by the Minors league to put on a promotional game of hockey was inspirational. Using players from all over the country a great game of hockey was played and some serious funds were raised enabling the Minors to continue there commitment to player growth and education with specialized coaching. We look forward to this years game.

We must remind ourselves that we do only have 400 or so members and that to have leagues and committees, treasurers and secretaries draws a lot of volunteer hours from the usual small group of willing volunteers. I believe we are on the right track to completely unify the CIHA with all leagues and groups. But it will not happen overnight. I am happy to say that all but one league has bought into the new registration system and I look forward to the Minor league being committed to it for the 2011 season.

I would like to finish with an express of thanks and gratitude for the committee that has worked tirelessly for the last year taking Ice Hockey in Canterbury to where it is today. I would like to pay special tribute to the executive starting with Marian who sits through the meetings we have trying to decipher the points raised and remember who said what. A tough job, thank Marian. Also on the thank you list is Alison our trusty treasurer. Without her constant asking, insisting and reminding about ice payments we would be in a very much worse situation than we are today. This is the second year Alison has been treasurer and the second year we have had audited accounts to present at the AGM. Thank you Alison. A huge job done really well. And lastly Ivana. A better vice president I could not wish for. Ivana you take care of the day to day issues, rep team management, ice time allocation and policy. You arrange the annual ice time calendar with Alison and Jeanie. This in itself is a huge job. Thank you for being there and your continued commitment to Canterbury Ice Hockey and congratulations on your nomination as life member of the NZIHF.

Finally thank you to those that had faith in my ability and integrity to fill the role as president. I had for most of the thirty years of my involvement in Canterbury Ice Hockey avoided the politics but it is fair to say I am right in the thick of it now.