

Games and Tournament Report - 11/20/03

The 2004 Western Region Championship and Invitational Year-End Tournament. Planning is underway and G&T is working to make this year's event match the successes that have been experienced in previous years. This year we are experiencing significant challenges. As most of you are aware Regionals'04 is returning to London for the first time in many years. I have heard over the past few weeks that by having the Regionals later and in London we have had a significant impact on some association budgets. The fact is that Ontario Ringette in moving the Provincial "A" Championship to March 25 - 28, 2004 took our historic weekend Western was forced to move. We took the only weekend open and the only ice available. Currently we have reserved the four pads at the Western Fair facility, two pads at the Argyle Facility and 2 pads at Carling. The fewer the facilities the less travelling for the teams, officials, volunteers and fans, the more flexibility in scheduling of games, workers and officials and less requirement volunteer assignments to fill. One point to be made.

Unfortunately, with a major event such as this tournament, changes are not without pain. In this case, London the city has different policies dealing with attracting events of this nature. Over the last three years, the City of Waterloo has hosted the event and in recognition of the value we bring to the city has subsidized the ice costs by up to 40%. Prior to this Kitchener was our host for many years and provided not only subsidized ice costs but also printed the program and in some years (including 2002) sponsored the Bunny Medals. All of these supports were managed and put in place by the recreation departments with whom we secured the ice. In London the individuals who manage this process are not empowered to offer an incentive whatsoever. To compound this the ice costs, while not finalized, will be higher. The effect of this on the success of the event currently stands at an increased cost of \$17,000.

Several parallel efforts are currently in the works to offset this increased cost in an attempt to insure that registration costs do not increase significantly. There are other ways to work within the London Political system to obtain financial support. We are learning these approaches and will be doing our best to provide the information they need to realize the value our tournament will bring to London. This year we intend to use the printed program as a much larger opportunity to solicit sponsors through advertisement sales and co-sponsorship. As you can imagine this will take time and effort and anyone who has ideas or can help in this area should contact G&T gandt@wrra.ca or anyone on the region executive.

Most important at this time is Western Regions negotiations with a firm called "All Sport Accommodations". This firm will be responsible for booking all hotel rooms for the Regionals for all terms in attendance. Among all of the benefits they provide they also guarantee not only full service and full satisfaction but also full assurance that, for the hotels they offer, the rates will be the lowest available. Working together we have agreed that they will work with each team to provide them accommodation options to meet their individual needs and budget. We have asked them to provide all properties within a geographically central location to not only the on ice facilities but more importantly to shopping, entertainment and restaurants suited to the Ringette community. I would ask all associations to hold off making travel arrangements until after they have a chance to meet with ASA and learn what they have to offer. For our part ASA and Western Region are working out a sponsorship arrangement which will help offset the increased costs for this year's event. "All Sport Accommodations" will also include arrangements where by the terms will be available to all Western Region association if they chose to have this firm manage their tournament accommodations and they would sincerely love to also manage your associations out bound travel to other events. Now is the time to provide to [Western Region G&T](#) any suggestions or needs to help improve this year's event. Already we have on the list the need to expand the invitation side of the Novice level to provide smaller seeded groupings leading to more medal opportunities for these future Ringette stars. A suggestion has been made to allow for a full round robin Major Bunny group in addition to the Bunny exhibition series and we would appreciate feedback on this issue.

Prelims, we have not been as lucky resolving. The move to March 25-28 for the Provincial A's left our prelim ice in Chatham not only conflicting with the Guelph tournament but also establishing our winners almost two months before the event. This was deemed unacceptable and Chatham has returned the Ice to the City before they were stuck with the cost. Currently we are seeking 60 hours of ice over 4 days on the weekend of Feb 20-23 2004 as this is the only available weekend that does not clash with a Western Region event even then it does clash with the Ajax tournament. As a preferred alternative we have approached Kitchener with a request to schedule our prelims as part of their tournament on the weekend of Feb. 12-15, 2004 and are waiting on a confirmation of their acceptance. Note: Although we have asked for 60 hours that is based upon the facts as of the first of the season. The Intent to Proceed forms, which must be submitted by January 1, 2004, will define the actual need and it is anticipated to be less than 60 hours.

Tournament Pre and post requirements to G&T. We have completed the first weekend of tournaments within Western Region. G&T attend a portion of each tournament and was involved with each tournament leading up to the event in varying degrees. Pre tournament packages were received from only two of the hosts and while they did not meet the exact timings they were within acceptable limits this year. One of the hosts did use email etc. to provide critical information for review and while the system does not allow this currently it did help and we will work to try to expand this as a method. One of the most important submissions is any special tournament rule that is different from Ringette Canada and Ontario Ringette. If these are not submitted for approval then you place the tournament itself in jeopardy. Please insure that the sanctioning rules are followed. Note they are available, under tournament, on the Ontario Ringette Web Page. G&T will be recommending fines to the Western Executive for those associations who do not make honest attempts at following proper procedure.