

Youth Council Helmet Policy Enforcement Sub-Committee
Revisions as of September 12, 2006

At the USA Hockey Annual Meeting in June 2006 the Board of Directors passed the following policy:

All ice hockey coaches and instructors of registered USA Hockey youth/high school, disabled, girls'/women's 19 & under and below programs must properly wear an approved ice hockey helmet during all on-ice sessions, including practices, controlled scrimmages and coach and referee clinics (seminars). This is on page 134 of the 2006-2007 USA Hockey Annual Guide.

Dave Klasnick, Chair of the Youth Council, appointed a sub-committee to make recommendations on a **generic** enforcement policy. Members of the committee were Mark McGinn, Roger Mauritho and Al Bloomer. Also contributing were Jim Cooney, Mark Tabrum, Dan Brennan and Dr. Alan Ashare. Thanks to the New England, Minnesota and Michigan Districts for sharing their current policies.

The responsibility for the enforcement of USA Hockey policies falls to the Affiliate. The Affiliate may delegate its authority to a local association/league. In the case of the coach/instructor helmet requirement, we recommend that the Association ACE Coordinator/Coaching Director instruct all coaches/instructors on the policy - explaining the origin and purpose of the policy. We believe this education should include, but not be limited to, information on injuries, fatalities, impact on players witnessing these events, impact on the families of coaches and historical perspective on the development of the policy. We do not see the ACE Coordinator/Coaching Director as the enforcer of the policy, but simply the communicator and educator of the policy. During the Youth Council meeting on September 12th it was reported that several associations do not currently have ACE Coordinators. It was further reported that while coaches in many parts of the country are in compliance, there is still a significant amount of resistance in other parts of the country.

Following the Youth Council conference call, we offer the following revised recommendation:

1. **First offense** – a verbal reminder of the policy and the penalty for non-compliance.
2. **Second offense** – a written warning of the policy and sanctions that could occur if the policy is not followed.
3. **Third offense** – two game suspension. At the option of the local suspending authority, the offending coach may be allowed to practice with team during this suspension as long as he/she wears a helmet.
4. **Fourth offense** – As per bylaw 10. (C) Annual Guide. Notification on Helmet Policy violation pending a hearing by the affiliate or suspending authority – disciplinary hearing must be held within 7 days of notification of the violation. Suspension should not be for less than 30 days.

The Affiliate may sanction the local association/league for not properly enforcing USA Hockey and Affiliate policies.

September 12, 2006
Bloomer
McGinn
Mauritho