

## Vice President of Officials 2019-2020 Annual Report

Good evening APHA and SJAMHA Executives.

I do not need to let you know of how oddly our season ended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This truncated playoff season effected players, coaches, and fans of teams that were still playing. The cancellation of the season also effected those officials who were still working late playoff games: both for the excitement and for development purposes of work high pressure games.

Regardless, this season APSJ continued its strong performance in completing mentorships with all mentorships completed before the March 13<sup>th</sup> season's end. We also continued with addressing harassment, providing information on [apsjmentorships.com](http://apsjmentorships.com), a visible leadership role in #thankthestripes (first weekend of December), and a season kick-off meeting. This spring, I will continue to work on the second part of the "Why Referees Quit" research with a goal of concluding by September 2020. Each of these initiatives will be discussed below.

Again, thank you for your continued support of officials.

Mitchell Jeffrey, VP Officials  
APHA & SJAMHA

### Mentorships

The numerical summary of mentorships is the easiest way to tell the story of our success this season:

- # of Mentorships:
  - First Year: 68 (Last Year = 73)
  - Second Year+: 171 (LY = 162)
  - Timekeepers: 26 (LY = 27)
  - Total = 265 (LY = 262)
- # of referees with at least 2 mentorships: 75 (LY = 79)
- # of referees with more than 4 mentorships: 12 (LY = 8)
- # of mentors who did at least one game: 24 (LY = 20)
- # of New Mentors: 12 (LY = Not Tracked)
- # of Mentors that Work AAA or above: 18 (LY not tracked)
- % of referee mentorships submitted:  $187/239=78\%$  (LY = 96%)

Summary: The APSJ mentorship program continues to provide skill development to all officials while also identifying officials that will develop faster (or slower) and providing them with more mentorships.

The success of this year's program continues to be measured by:

- The large number of officials who receive 2 or more mentorships
- The feedback from Hockey Winnipeg that we develop the largest group of officials that work AAA hockey.
- The willingness of officials that move into AAA hockey to come back and officiate or mentor.

There are two mentorship items that need to improve in 2020-2021:

- Mentorship submissions decreased from 96% to 78%...this needs to increase back towards 100%.
- Mentorships in Novice Half-Ice (See next section)

Billy Keane's Challenge

- Billy<sup>1</sup> always challenges APSJ to have more "high level" officials doing mentorships. In 2019-2020, I implemented the following plan to improve engagement with elite level officials:
  - 2019-2020 is the first season where # mentors who work AAA or higher is tracked. This will give us a better idea of elite officials serving as mentors now and in the future.
  - Develop referees as mentors before they reach AAA to increase the odds that they continue to mentor in APSJ.
  - Develop relationships with high level officials outside of APSJ and offer them opportunities to mentor for us.

#### Novice Half-Ice Mentorships

Half-Ice hockey completed its third season of existence in 2019-2020. The referee development model for the 2017-2018 & 2018-2019 seasons was: "Develop the officials for full-ice hockey and that will back-translate to half-ice hockey." To put it simply, the "back-translate" model was not effective in the half ice game as executive members reported that officials lacked confidence.

In 2019-2020, posters were created that gave 4 tips<sup>2</sup> on how to "officiate half-ice hockey properly" and posted at River Heights, Allard, and Varsity View Sportsplex (the arenas that host half-ice games) as well as [apsjmentorships.com](http://apsjmentorships.com) and [wpgrefs.com](http://wpgrefs.com).

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<sup>1</sup> Billy Keane (from APHA) does an exceptional job of identifying holes in a program and giving feedback. He is instrumental for giving me a non-referee's view of what could improve and what does work.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A for the posters.

At Christmas 2019, mentors audited half-ice games and scored those games using a rubric. The full report was sent to both executives in February 2020. Here is the summary of the results:

- The posters had a positive effect on the 4 topics (Endzone Positioning, Come to the Blue Line, Ensure “Backing-Off”, & “Move Your Feet”) as evidenced by questions 1-4 showing that 58-79% of officials were behaving in a way that was asked of them.
- 58-79% shows a positive effect of the posters in theory, however, 58-79% is not an acceptable level of performance in practice.
- Therefore, the posters are effective, but further intervention is necessary.

The plan to improve performance and officials’ confidence for the half-ice game in 2020-2021:

- Continue to use the posters at VVSP, River Heights, and Allard.
- Each first year official will receive one half-ice mentorship in addition to two full-ice mentorships.
  - The half-ice mentorships will occur during the first 3 weeks of November at the same time as the first-year officials are also completing the full-ice mentorships.
  - There will also be a new reporting system created specifically for half-ice games based on the 4 criteria discussed above.
  - The Half-Ice Mentorship Coordinator will develop a teaching model for Mentors to use what they are teaching in the half-ice game.
  - At Christmas 2020, just as for Christmas 2019, APSJ will again do another audit of half-ice officiating to determine the effectiveness of on-ice mentorships for improving officiating in the half-ice game.

#### Officials’ Meetings

- 1) Beginning of season meeting. This meeting has occurred every year since 2015-2016 when Spencer and Mitchell with the RICs of APHA and SJAMHA. In 2019-2020, the meeting focused on preparing newer officials/parents for the season: using Assignall, dealing with harassment, introducing the administration team, and answering questions.
- 2) Playoff Meeting. The playoff meeting did not happen this year. Instead, Mike and Mitchell increased the information available on [apsjmentorships.com/playoffs](https://apsjmentorships.com/playoffs). There has been no evidence that the officials were less prepared for 2020 playoffs than 2019 playoffs. In 2020-2021, the same approach will be used with continued monitoring of referee performance to determine if a meeting is more effective than an e-learning module.

- 3) End of Season Wind-up. Mike Fedak had started planning this and had a quote from the Manitoba Moose (April 4, \$20, Drink/HotDog/Ticket) when COVID-19 caused the cancellation of the Moose Season.

### Referee Harassment

This was the third year APSJ tracked referee harassment through referee-report and HW Game Reports. This was the first full season of using the new form co-created by Billy Keane and Mitchell during the 2018-2019 season.

This program continues to be important in three ways:

- 1) Statistics: APSJ can better understand referee harassment by using statistics to occurrence
  - a. There was a total of 29 reports during 2019-2020 compared to 17 in 2018-2019 and 49 in 2017-2018.
  - b. There were 13 reports about teams from outside APSJ and 16 reports about APSJ teams. In 2018-2019 there were 11 reports about APSJ teams and 6 about out-of-area teams.
- 2) Creates Conversations: Reporting incidents provides opportunity to have a discussion with the APSJ executives as well as other minor hockey area associations, which creates awareness of individuals with multiple reports and discussion about what needs to come to deal with harassment.
- 3) Provides opportunities to support or educate officials in strategies to deal with harassment.

The Referee Harassment program will grow in one way (#1) for 2020-2021 and potentially grow in a second way (#2):

- 1) Billy Keane and I agree that we need a way to “report” good actions by coaches/spectators. The reporting tool will change to report either harassment or “kudos”. (Definitely will happen)
- 2) Post signs in Arenas and invite parents to report referee harassment on [apsjmentorships.com](http://apsjmentorships.com). The approach would benefit the program by bringing in more data and increase awareness of incidents. However, the risk is the use of the tool to “get back” at a rival.

### #thankthestripes Weekend

In 2018-2019, Cindy Arsenault led the #thankthestripes initiative. This year, with Cindy on a Leave of Absence, Mitchell Jeffrey took responsibility of #thankthestripes that took place on December 6, 7 & 8<sup>th</sup>. There were four main



parts to #thankthestripes: 1) Professionally printed thank-you signs designed by Mitchell, 2) snacks in the referee rooms, 3) referee-info sheets/thank you cards in the general areas, and 4) a strong APSJ social media presence on Instagram & Facebook.

In 2020-2021, #thankthestripes will return again. This coming season, the thank you signs, snacks and social media will be used again. There is also a consideration of create “Selfie-Stops” at several arenas to encourage fans to post “thanks” to social media.

### Jackets

At the beginning of 2019-2020, there were two jackets remaining from those purchased in 2018-2019 which are being given to two mentors (Camillie Forbers & Jacob Cramer) who did the most mentorships and who did not already have a jacket. As stated in the past, jackets serve the following purposes:

- 1) *source of pride*: young officials see those jackets and aspire to become mentors/leaders in the future (these young officials ask “how do I get a jacket?”)
- 2) *conversations at arenas and increased awareness*: mentors report conversations with fans who want to “talk officiating” or ask questions. Mentors also report boisterous fans that stop yelling at officials.
- 3) *Feelings of Authority & Belonging*: Mentors report feeling they have the authority to support the officials because they have a jacket.

For the 2020-2021 season, Mitchell Jeffrey is not recommending the purchase of new jackets. Rather, in spring 2021, he will assess whether there is a sufficient number of mentors that do not have jackets to warrant purchasing more for the 2021-2022 season.

### Why Referees Quit

“Why referees quit” is in its second and final year of research. This spring, Mitchell will be calling officials who refereed in 2018-2019 but not in 2019-2020 and completing a questionnaire. Once this second year of data collection is complete, APSJ will have a better idea of why officials stop officiating. The final report will be provided to APSJ in Fall 2020.

## Summary of Plan for 2020-2021

### Continuing Programs

- 1) Referee & TimeKeeper Mentorships, Harrassment Reporting and Teaching, Research on, Referee Beginning of Season Meeting, End of Season Wind-up and #thankthestripes will continue.

### Starting in 2020-2021

- 2) Half-Ice Novice Mentorship and Development: First year officials will receive on-ice mentorships for a half-ice game.
- 3) "Kudos" system for giving positive feedback to coaches/fans/players about interactions with officials.

### Not returning in 2020-2021

- 4) "Why Referees Quit" data collection will be completed in Spring 2020 and a report to follow in the fall.


### Not Returning in 2020-2021, but perhaps in 2021-2022

- 5) Referee Development Jackets will not be purchased in 2020-2021, but may be needed in 2021-2022

### Administration Personnel Announcement

- 6) Assignors (Lou & Bryce), RICs (Mike), TKIC (Lou), & VPO (Mitchell) are all putting their names to stand for the 2020-2021 season. Cindy Arsenault has not made a decision about her future in hockey for 2020-2021. Mitchell is open to granting her a second year L.O.A., but a decision will be required for the 2021-2022 season.

## Appendix A: Novice Half-Ice Posters



**Officiating Novice Half-Ice: You Need Sense of Urgency**

**Problem:** Minor Hockey Associations in various parts of the province have expressed concern that officials are not putting in enough effort during 1/2-ice games. The main complaint: officials spend most games in one end of the ice and do not move.

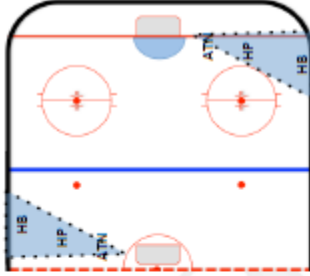
**Reminder:** This is "someone's NHL" and it is not uncommon for an area to have a volunteer VP-Novice or paid employees at Novice games. You never know who is watching at any level...but this is especially true of Novice 1/2-ice.

**Potential Consequences:** There are two possible consequences being discussed by executives. First, only use one official (problem: less games for you and reffing by yourself). Second, paying officials less than 9 year-old hockey (problem: you get paid less).

**Solution:** Your goal in the Novice Half-Ice is to work on three skills with urgency: Endzone positioning, coming to the "blue-line", and creating presence with good signals and management of "backing-off."

→Strategy 1: Endzone Positioning for 1/2-ice.

- Home Base (HB): If the puck is on your side of the ice then you are against the boards
- Half-Piston (HP): Puck is on the other side of the ice then you should be at here.
- At-The-Net (ATN): If the puck is At-The-Net then you should be At-The-Net



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→Strategy 2: Coming back to the "Blue Line": just like the full-ice game

- When the puck is in the center-line end of the ice, one official (R2) is at the blue-line and the other is doing endzone positioning (R1).
- When the puck is in the goal-line end, one official is doing endzone positioning (R2) and the other is at the top of the circles (R1).

→Strategy 3: Using proper procedure for "Backing-Off"

- Recall: Review the 1/2-ice rules about backing-off behind ringette line after goalie-cover, goal, puck-out-of-play, or penalty.
- Referee Procedure:
  - Referee closest to puck when play is stopped will ensure the appropriate team has possession of the puck.
  - Referee who is further from puck will ensure the other team backs-off to ringette line.
  - Once team has backed-off to ringette line, play resumes.
    - Note: If the non-puck team does not back-off to ringette line then blow whistle and restart the back-off process.

→Strategy 4: Showing Presence and Urgency

- Take full strides, but do not dig into the ice...this makes you look professional but adjusts your speed.
- Apply straight arms for signals, blow your whistle loud, use your voice.
- Use Correct Endzone Positioning for good presence (Strategy 1).
- Come down to the blue line/top of circles; this creates good presence on the ice (Strategy 2).
- Use proper procedure of "backing-off" (Strategy 3)

