



## MIDAM DISABLED SECTION NEWSLETTER

Winter/Spring 2016

**Hockey season is in full swing!**

**As a member of USAH and being in MidAm's District, did you know ...**

- ★ ROGER SHARRER GROW HOCKEY AWARD applications will be available on the MidAm website soon?
- ★ NO FEES are required to attend any of the Annual Disabled Hockey Workshops?
- ★ Anyone can attend the Annual Disabled Hockey Workshops as many times as they choose?
- ★ TRY HOCKEY FOR FREE kits, with one hour of ice donated are available?
- ★ The date for the ANNUAL (separate) MidAm Special and Sled Hockey meetings where EACH PROGRAM HAS A VOICE TO CONTRIBUTE TO GROWTH/RETENTION OF HOCKEY ACROSS THE DISTRICT will be announced soon?
- ★ Disability Awareness Handbook is available on line (USAH.com)?
- ★ NEW, UPDATED Special Hockey and Sled Hockey COACHING MODULES are now available?
- ★ Coaching education classes (level 1 - 5) are offered all over the country each summer and fall?
- ★ MidAm District Annual Meeting (held each June in Columbus, Ohio) is where all members have a voice, may asked questions and vote for your Board of Director positions?
- ★ FREE Registrar training is available in your district?
- ★ FREE MidAm District Road Shows can be requested to come to your community?
- ★ FREE TEMPLATES for brochures, fliers and other documents are available for free so no one has to reinvent the wheel
- ★ Bi-Annual Disabled Section Newsletters to keep all members up to date (like this one)
- ★ MidAm Disabled Section Representative whose role is to help with growth and retention of disabled hockey programs – can be contacted by phone, email, or text?

*If you, your players and or their families would like to learn more about these benefits and support through USAH and MidAm, contact Renee Loftspring at [midamhockey@zoomtown.com](mailto:midamhockey@zoomtown.com) who will come to your hometown and speak to your program members.*

### FYI...for everyone

- An updated list of MidAm Disabled Hockey Programs (Special and Sled Hockey) can be found on the MidAm Hockey website: <http://www.midamhockey.com/>

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- ☑ Inaugural discipline meetings, one each for MidAm's Special and Sled Hockey were held July 25-26 at the Chiller North Ice Rink in Columbus, Ohio.
  - Special Hockey players were on the ice for over an hour while parents met with both Susie Miller, USAH Special Hockey Chair, and Renee Loftspring, Disabled Section Rep. for MidAm, regarding the role of USA Hockey, MidAm Hockey and the Disabled Section Rep, growth and retention of Special Hockey in the region, the addition of a Special Hockey Summer Camp, and a Special Hockey Jamboree being implemented within the next 2 seasons.
  - Midam Sled coaches and managers met to discuss the tremendous growth in the region in all skill levels, how each of the sled programs can assist one another to continue the current growth and retention, and proposed a framework for an adult intermediate or B league due to growth of this population around the region.

Both meetings were successful in establishing improved communication between the parents and their representatives within the National and District Disabled Section. *Stay tuned for dates for next year's annual meetings for both Sled and Special Hockey, to be held in the Summer, 2016.*

- ☑ Important National dates and events
  - **WELCOME BACK TO HOCKEY WEEK/WEEKEND** is September 14-20, 2015. Find out what your community is doing and join in!
  - **HOCKEY WEEKEND ACROSS AMERICA** is February 20-22, 2016
    - February 20: WEAR YOUR JERSEY DAY
    - February 21: TRY HOCKEY DAY – BRING A FRIEND TO THE RINK
    - February 22: CELEBRATE LOCAL HOCKEY HEROS
  - **SAVE THE DATE: April 7-10, 2016 National Disabled Festival** – adaptive ice hockey teams, from all over the country come together to play hockey, make friends and have a blast!
  - **After January 15, 2016**, check the MidAm and USAH websites for details regarding (a) nominations for *USAH Disabled Athlete of the Year*; (b) *Roger Sharrer Grow Hockey Awards* (ALL MidAm ice hockey programs are eligible)
  - **MIDAM ANNUAL MEETING** is for ANYONE associated with a USAH youth/adult able bodied program or disabled hockey program. This includes officials, coaches, rink managers, and team managers. It is typically the third Saturday of June each year. The format includes an interactive morning session focusing on an important topic (such as SafeSport, registration, growth and retention) followed by lunch (provided by the district, on site) and an afternoon session dedicated to section reports (including Disabled Section) voting, discussion and new business. Date to be announced in January, 2016

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- ☑ Annual opportunities for programs and players

### **ROGER SHARRER GROW HOCKEY AWARDS - Every disabled program should apply!**

The purpose of the Roger Sharrer "Grow Hockey" Award is to provide assistance to local hockey associations to grow ice hockey participation within their area. This program is for both able-bodied and disabled hockey programs. The annual application is typically posted after February 1 each year on the MidAm website <http://www.midamhockey.com> . *We encourage ALL sled and special hockey programs to apply for items they need to help grow participation, such as jerseys, protective gear, rink dividers, unique player equipment. Most anything you need to grow participation and help with retention, except ice cost, will be considered by the Awards Committee*

**NOMINATIONS FOR DISABLED ATHLETE OF THE YEAR** will begin to be accepted in 2016. An email will go out to the districts when the application period opens.

USA Hockey's Annual Congress is a yearly gathering of USA Hockey volunteer leaders, including members of the organization's board of directions, councils, committees and sections. Each year, the most outstanding contributors and players are recognized. One of the awards is Disabled Athlete of the Year. The individual is flown to the Congress in June and honored at the awards banquet. Created in 2005, this annual award recognizes the outstanding perseverance and dedication by a disabled hockey player through demonstrating the ability to overcome obstacles in the pursuit of excellence both on and off the ice. MidAm encourages its coaches, managers and teams to nominate a player from their program (Special hockey, Sled Hockey, USA Warrior Hockey) who meet the defined criteria. Criteria and the application can be found at: <http://www.usahockey.com/daoy> (please wait until USAH makes an announcement that nominations are open as the application format or questions may vary).

## **REMINDERS & UPDATES**

### **LOCKER ROOM - reminder**

- ⊛ It is the responsibility of each program to assign someone to monitor locker rooms home and away
- ⊛ At least TWO adults are to be in the locker room when players are in there, monitoring behavior, dressing and parents helping players
- ⊛ **No one** should ever be alone in the locker room, at any time (includes coaches, parents, players and siblings)
- ⊛ **ONLY** Parents and volunteers who have been successfully screened through MidAm can assist a player dress, toilet or have direct hands-on contact unless it is their own child

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## **SCREENING** - update

- ★ All coaching staff and volunteers, over 18 yrs. old **and** out of high school, with routine access to children under 18 or to any players with a disability, must be successfully screened through MidAm. This includes team managers, locker room supervisors, and administrators
- ★ MidAm Screening website: <https://www.midamhockeyscreen.com/login.php>
- ★ Screenings are on a 2-year cycle (applies to new screenings and the expiration of 3-year screens)
- ★ Once all coach and volunteer screening approvals are received, the registrar will approve the team roster.
  
- ★ **PA residents** will have an additional requirement due to HR 153
  - Act 153 of 2014 is part of a two-year effort by the state to improve Pennsylvania's child protection laws.  
The required background checks include:
    1. Pennsylvania State Police Criminal History Record Information;
    2. Child Abuse History to determine if the person is named as a perpetrator of an indicated or founded child abuse report; and
    3. Federal Criminal History Background Check (with submission of fingerprints).

*FBI checks will not be required for volunteers if they have been a resident of the Commonwealth for the prior 10 years*

**More information to follow from MidAm District**

**GREAT NEWS!** The cost of screening will be reduced when the new vendor takes over.

Meanwhile, be sure your screening period covers you for the upcoming season.

It is still on a 2-year cycle.

## **SAFESPORT** - update:

- ☑ All persons over 18 **and** out of high school, who have direct contact with any youth or disabled players of any age, on- or off-the ice (in relation to their role in a USAH sanctioned program) should complete SafeSport. It is free and online: <http://www.usahockey.com/safesporttraining>

One of the most exciting aspects of the USA Hockey SafeSport Program is the online training/education that is available to help our members become aware of the information necessary to help prevent abuse from occurring in our sport.

We are pleased to announce that all USA Hockey registered coaches, officials, employees and volunteers are entitled to take the training at no cost. The training was produced by the United States Olympic Committee. The training is comprised of short video segments that take approximately 90 minutes to complete, however, not all training needs to be completed in one session. We believe you will find the training very valuable and informative, and strongly encourage you to access the training.

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The SafeSport Training is valid for 2 seasons. Thus if you took the training for 2013-14, you will not need to take the training again until the 2015-16 season (at which time a shorter “refresher” course will be available).

- ☑ **NEVER** accept inappropriate email or text messages. *Example:* You hear about an inappropriate photo going around the team on player phones. You tell the person with the photo to send it to you so you can take it to the president of the association and demand action be taken by the persons who first circulated it. GUESS WHAT? YOU are now a SUSPECT as well because you had the photo on your phone. It’s your word only stating you were not involved...don’t get into this situation.

**USAH pre-season checklist:**

	Coach	Asst. Coaches	Manager	Players	Under 18 volunteer	Over 18 volunteer	Pusher
USAH reg. (annual)	✓* fee	✓* fee	✓ FREE	✓ * fee – returning player; NO FEE – first season player	✓ FREE	✓ FREE	✓FREE
SafeSport (2 yrs)	✓*	✓*	✓* if has any direct contact with players			✓*if has any direct contact with players	✓*
MidAm Screening (2 yrs)	✓*	✓*	✓* if has any direct contact with players			✓* if has any direct contact with players	✓*
Minimum: CEP Level	✓*	✓ recommended for 2015-16; may be required 2016-17					

**Direct contact** included any of the following scenarios: in a locker room with a least one player present; helps players dress/undress, get in/out of sled or on/off the ice through hands-on assistance; on bus / in car with players because of a sport related event; helps player on-ice

\* = Required for a team’s roster to be approved by the district registrar

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## USAH Registration

- ★ **RETURNING PLAYERS/COACHES** must register/pay fee ONLINE at:  
[https://www.usahockeyregistration.com/login\\_input.action](https://www.usahockeyregistration.com/login_input.action)
- ★ **FIRST SEASON PLAYERS** register through their program's registrar because there is *no fee the first season*. Please contact your team's registrar.
- ★ Per Registrar: PLEASE register each program (team) SEPARATELY from one another, not as a single organization if there is more than one team under the same 501c3. If you do not have your own program association number, contact the MidAm registrar: Keith Kenitzer at: [keith.kenitzer@gmail.com](mailto:keith.kenitzer@gmail.com)  
Registering teams individually permits USAH to identify growth and retention around the country. This can mean more funds for growing districts!
- ★ **COACHING:** All programs must have a head coach with at least his/her CEP Level 1. This upcoming 2015-16 season, it is highly recommended all assistant coaches also complete at least their CEP Level 1. In the near future, it is possible it may become mandatory. Coaching is critical in the growth and development of a hockey team, thus the more prepared and skilled the coaches are, the greater the benefit to the players.

## USA HOCKEY DISABLED FESTIVAL 2016: Detroit, MI April 7-10, 2016

The Disabled Hockey Festival takes place in a different part of the country each year. This year, the Festival will take place at Fraser Hockeyland Ice Rink, 34400 Utica Road, Fraser, MI. 48026. **The mission of the Festival is to provide a fun and exciting weekend of hockey in a grand manner as well as promote and grow disabled hockey throughout the country for Special Hockey, Sled Hockey, USA Warrior Hockey, Standing Amputee Hockey, and Deaf/Hard of Hearing Hockey.**

A notice will be sent out to all USAH registered programs regarding entry fee, hotels, restaurants, and the general schedule in the next few weeks. **MIDAM IS HOPING EVERY SLED AND SPECIAL HOCKEY PROGRAM ATTENDS THE FESTIVAL – ITS NOT EVERYDAY THE FESTIVAL IS ' IN OUR BACKYARD '**

For additional information about the 2016 festival, revisit this webpage beginning Mid-September:  
<http://www.usahockey.com/disabledhockey?id=903981-disabled-hockey-festival>

For additional information regarding assistance with the National Disabled Festival entry fee, contact Renee Loftspring at [Midamhockey@zoomtown.com](mailto:Midamhockey@zoomtown.com)

## APPLY TO HOST A NATIONAL DISABLED FESTIVAL IN YOUR COMMUNITY in 2017 or 2018

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The USA Disabled Hockey Festival, the largest disabled hockey event of its kind in the United States brings together all the disciplines: Special Hockey, Sled Hockey, Standing/Amputee and Deaf/Hard of Hearing Hockey, under one roof. Players travel from all over the United States to reunite with friends and play hockey! If you would like more information regarding hosting opportunities, visit this website:

<http://www.usahockey.com/disabledhockey?id=903981-disabled-hockey-festival>

**WHITE PAPER:** In 2014, the Disabled Section published a 'white paper' to express the mission and goals of Disabled Hockey within USA Hockey. All four disciplines, Special, Sled, USA Warrior, Standing Amputee and Deaf/Hard of Hearing approved this statement June, 2014 at the Annual Congress in Colorado. *The white paper is a guide for new and existing USA Hockey Disabled Hockey programs, parents, players, administration and coaching staff.* Please take a moment to read it. The paper is attached to the end of this newsletter.

## **Sled Hockey**

### Classifications & Eligibility for Youth Sled Division

The youth division (Novice, Junior) is a **non-checking division (physical contact is permitted)**

- Youth players are defined as players 17 years of age and under as of December 31 of the current playing season.
- If a player is 18 years old as of December 31st of the current season, they can play on a youth team if they have NEVER played on any adult team in a USA Hockey sanctioned game.
- If the player is 18 years old as of December 31 of the current season and has never played on an adult team in a USA Hockey sanctioned game, they do not need a waiver to participate in the youth division.
- Players that older than 17 years of age as of December 31 of the current playing season and have participated in any USA Hockey sanctioned adult sled game and players older than 18 years of age as of December 31 of the current playing season, may be allowed to play in the youth division if a waiver request is submitted and approved by the Waiver Committee (made up of USAH district representatives). Hosts for sanctioned USAH adult games will need to be sure teams are aware of this process and apply for player waivers in advance of registration for a tournament before November of the current season.
- *The purpose of this waiver is solely to allow players with more severe disabilities to play in the youth division where it is less physical.*
- *Waiver requests should be submitted by November 15th of the current playing season. Waiver requests must be submitted and approved prior to any USAH sanctioned competition beginning.*
- A team manager, coach, or player must submit a comprehensive description why the requesting player is requesting the waiver for the entire season, along with a video of the player on ice demonstrating their skills. *Approved/disapproved waivers are active for the entire playing season for all USAH sanctioned games or tournaments*

### Rosters

- USA Disabled Hockey will not waive the 100-mile rule for sled players, including USA Warrior Sled

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teams for the NHL Classic or the National Festival if there is a team to play on that is closer to where they are living. Youth players need to be rostered and play with the sled team closest to them. The requirement is determined by the distance in miles from the player's primary residence to the sled team's main practice facility.

- Youth Players cannot be dual rostered on two youth teams. However, players are permitted to be dual rostered on a youth team and adult team.
- Team rosters need to be set by November 30th of the current playing season.
- *The Disabled Section committee will review requests to change locations on a case-by-case basis*

#### National Disabled Festival:

- (1) Players need to be identified with the program closest to them (100-mile rule)
- (2) Players cannot be dual rostered
- (3) Deviations from this roster must be pre-approved by an assigned committee (within Disabled Section)
- (4) If a player's rostered team is NOT attending the Festival, each player may submit a waiver to join another team. *The chair of the Disabled Section must approve combined teams before they can register for the Festival*
- (5) The Women's National team is considered an adult team. National female players, 17 years or younger, as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the current season, are allowed to play in their local youth division. If the player is 18 years of age as of December 31<sup>st</sup> of the current season, and they have played on the National team, they are not allowed to play on their youth team in sanctioned games and tournaments.

Send questions, comments to:

[Midamsledhockey@zoomtown.com](mailto:Midamsledhockey@zoomtown.com)

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