



To Our KTMHA Membership and the King Township Community,

Recently, a wave of change has occurred within the York Simcoe Minor Hockey League (YSMHL) that will impact all member Associations for the 2023/24 season and beyond. Below are some highlights and important information for the upcoming season.

Effective for the 2023/24 season:

- Bradford and Innisfil have fully amalgamated their rep programs to become a “AA” centre which will be called *South Simcoe Minor Hockey*. The centre will fulfill their base category “AA” teams first and, where possible, they will enter an additional team at “A” and/or “BB”. Their Local League programs will continue in their current format.
- East Gwillimbury (EG) and Georgina have also amalgamated their rep programs to create a “AA” program which will be called *Upper York Admirals*. Unlike Bradford and Innisfil, they have entered into a pilot program that will be reevaluated at the end of the pilot term. The centre will fulfill their base category “AA” teams first and, where possible, enter an additional team at “A” and/or “BB”. Their Local League programs also continue as before.

With four of our neighbouring Associations moving from A to AA this season, it leaves the King Rebellion Association fully surrounded by “AA” centres. As such, these new and existing “AA” centres can leverage our base of skilled players to help fill their rosters via the NRP process which, in turn, could very well impact the viability of our KTMH rep programs. These changes may also impact the quality of the competitive rep hockey experience for players left at the single “A” level – with only two “A” level centres remaining in YSMHL.

Over the last two weeks, our KTMH executive team has been working closely together to weigh the potential challenges and opportunities associated with these changes and the impact they will have on our King Rebellion program. Although not an easy decision, this weekend we reviewed various options available, and we aligned on the need to apply to the OMHA to reclassify our own centre from “A” to “AA”. The OMHA quickly presented our request to their Board this past Sunday and approved our request to reclassify the King Rebellion Rep program to “AA” effective the 2023/24 season.

The change to our Association’s base category will be a pilot program that will be in place for two years with a formal review after that time.

The KTMHA Board felt this was the right decision for our members and the continued success of our Association. A number of our teams have already demonstrated the ability to compete at this level when our talented local players remain and where we devote the necessary resources to build competitive teams. We are excited about bringing an elevated hockey program to King Township. Like the other “AA” centres, our mandate will be to field “AA” teams first at all levels and depending on the skill level and remaining player population we will look to also run “A” and/or “BB” (formally MD) programs as required.

This change to AA will impact the availability of player movement rights to other centres, and the Board is in the process of discussing the necessary changes to our program, including Rules of Operation, team budgets and how we provide the best development program possible to best position our teams to be competitive in this new environment.

We will be hosting a Town Hall in the coming weeks to answer any questions and provide more insight into these decisions. We would also like to thank the KTMHA executive team for all their work, options, and dedication to make our program viable and impactful for our athletes.

In the meantime, we have included some FAQ's below to help understand impacts and next steps, particularly in relation to what current and returning players can expect in our upcoming AA Tryouts!

Pucks deep!

Randy and Angelo

FAQ's

My hockey athlete has an NRP and is playing with a different "AA" association within the OMHA for the 2022/23 season? They will finish up the year with their current team and starting next year will have the opportunity to try out for our "AA" program within KTMH. There will be no "grandfathering" clause, and all players must report back to KTMHA.

What happens to our KTMHA "A" program?

As we are now seen as an "AA" centre, the requirement is for us to field a "AA" team first. Depending on the number of athletes and calibre of play we will also look to run a "A" and/or "BB" (formally MD) program(s) as required.

Will we change our name?

No, unlike the new centres who created new franchises, our rep program will remain the King Rebellion through our partnership with NKMH and SMH

I've heard "AA" requires a higher hockey skill set?

Yes, "AA" is as a level up from "A" and we are excited about this new opportunity to showcase the skills of our athletes. Current successes of several of our teams have shown hometown hockey can work at the "AA" level.

I feel we don't have the skill level to field a "AA" team at KTMH?

We truly believe we have the talent within the Township of King to field "AA" teams at all levels. That said, we will look at each division to make an assessment during tryouts. With the permission of YSMHL, we can apply for an exception in the rare case we feel we aren't competitive in a particular age group, but there is no guarantee that such exemption will be granted. We will also use this re-classification to "AA" to double down and re-invest in our development spend for our Local League programs (more news to come shortly about this investment).

Are we stuck at "AA" classification forever?

No - we have entered a 2-year commitment with the OMHA and will reassess this change for the 2026/27 season.

Should we be excited or worried about this change to "AA"?

This is an exciting time for our athletes to give them an opportunity to play at a higher level. We believe we have the talent, the commitment from parents, coaches, and our executive team to be successful.

If my son played "A" last year, does he automatically move to "AA"?

We will continue to follow our tryout process and every athlete will be given equal opportunity to try out for their appropriate age group.

When will "AA" tryouts take place?

Tryout will take place as per the OMHA and OHF guidelines and in line with all "AA" centre tryouts. Tryouts begin the week following AAA zone tryouts.

Does this mean we can accept NRP's from other centres?

Yes! We always could accept NRP's from smaller centres who are not classified as a "AA" centre. We can now accept from "A" and below - previously "BB" and below.

Are any centres able to take NRP's?

Yes, the NRP process will remain in place, but the recent mergers and base category changes means that effective the 2023/24 there are very limited centres to draw NRP's from.

Does this mean KTMHA will no longer offer NRP's

That is correct. As our base category is now "AA", and NRP's can no longer be provided. PTS forms will still be provided for AAA.

What the heck are NRP's and PTS' anyway?

- **NRP's** are NON-RESIDENT PASSPORTS issued by MHAs to allow non-resident players tryout at another MHA at a category above their home centre (e.g.) A to AA, BB to A or AA etc. Lateral movements are not allowed (e.g.) A to A or AA to AA
- **PTS forms** are PERMISSION TO SKATE forms to allow any player from any level to tryout to their AAA zone. PTS form are only for the assigned AAA zone. Release waivers are issued by the zone after an unsuccessful tryout.

Will KTMHA be adjusting its team budgets and providing additional development resources to help build competitive teams at the AA level?

Yes! Board sub-committees will soon begin work on amending our Rules of Operation, including regulations and limits on team budgets to ensure that our new AA teams have the appropriate development funding needed to build a competitive program. The Association will also be reviewing options for comprehensive development program to help support individual teams and players.