



## President's Report – 2025-26 Season

As we entered the 2025–2026 season, our summer planning focused on two key priorities that I believed were critical to the continued growth and sustainability of our association.

The first was a commitment to increasing transparency within our competitive tryout process — ensuring families, players, and coaches had a clearer understanding of expectations, evaluations, and outcomes.

The second was a renewed focus on being more intentional and proactive with fundraising. With the continued rise in costs — including ice rental, Hockey Eastern Ontario (HEO), and Hockey Canada player fees — it was important that we identify meaningful opportunities to generate revenue and help offset these pressures for our families. This included initiatives such as hosting HEO Coach Clinics and planning Leitrim-hosted tournaments.

This season we saw incredible growth across multiple divisions:

Division	25-26 Season # of Teams
U7	9 +2 from LY
U9	9 Same as LY
U11	6 +1 from LY
U13	4 -1 from LY
U15	6 +2 from LY
U18	9 +1 from LY
U21	3 +1 from LY
Rep B	7 (U10 – U16)
	+1 from LY
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>53</b>

**\*An increase of 7 teams from the 2024-25 Season.**

This past season marked an exciting milestone for our association as we were given the opportunity by the GHA to host our very first Rep B Tournament, "The Reg MacDonald Rep B Classic". We launched this initiative with our younger divisions, U10 through U13, and it proved to be an incredible success. Not only did we welcome strong participation and high levels of competition from across the region, but we also had the opportunity to showcase our own talent. **A special congratulations goes out to our Leitrim U13 team, who made history as the only Leitrim team to capture gold during this inaugural event.**

Building on that momentum, just two months later we hosted our U9 Jamboree — a massive undertaking that truly highlighted the strength of our volunteer base and our ability to execute large-scale events. Over four full days, both ice surfaces at Fred Barrett

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Arena operated at full capacity as we welcomed nearly 70 teams across half-ice and full-ice divisions. The weekend was filled with energy, excitement, and competitive spirit, culminating in another proud moment for our association as our U9 C3 team captured the Full-Ice C Division Shootout Competition title.

This season also demonstrated what we can accomplish when we think creatively and maximize every opportunity available to us. Through the introduction of drop-in skating sessions from September through December — utilizing 4:15 p.m. ice slots that otherwise could not be scheduled for team practices — we generated meaningful additional revenue while also creating valuable development opportunities for players across all levels. These sessions were well attended and, as a direct result of these efforts, we raised funds that were reinvested directly back into our programs — most notably allowing us to replace nearly all goalie equipment that was in need of refresh. This was a major step forward in ensuring our players have access to safe, reliable, and high-quality equipment.

We were also fortunate to welcome several new Board members this season whose contributions had an immediate and lasting impact. Nia Bruno, Scott English, and Shandeigh Moxness brought a level of organization and communication that elevated the experience for teams, coaches, and families alike. Jenn Smail stepped-in to support tournament-related initiatives, filling a critical gap with very little handover and helping ensure the continued success of our events. Heather Brennae took on Ice Scheduling for the first time, stepping into one of the most demanding roles within the association. Ice scheduling is a painstaking task in any season, but this year presented additional challenges across the district due to the extended closures at Navan and Lois Kemp arenas. Heather rose to the occasion, quickly adapting and working tirelessly to ensure our teams had the ice they needed despite an extremely challenging environment.

At the same time, it is important to recognize areas where we fell short this season — particularly when it came to development opportunities across the association. Changes to the Amped Goalie Development program mid-season were unexpected and outside of our control, and we were not as prepared as we would have liked to be to pivot quickly. In addition, ongoing ice shortages significantly delayed the rollout of U9 programming, C-tier skating sessions, and goalie development opportunities. These programs are critical to the long-term success of our players, and the delayed start limited the impact we were able to have this season. This is an area we recognize requires focus and improvement moving forward, and one that will remain a priority as we continue evolving our development model to better support all players within the association.

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Beyond the ice, our teams continued to embody the true spirit of community and leadership. Our U15 B Division organized a Cancer Fundraising Game, rallying support and awareness for an important cause. Our U10 Rep B team also stepped up in a meaningful way, raising funds to support a family in need within our community. These moments serve as reminders that while development and competition are key parts of our association, the values we instill — teamwork, compassion, and community — are what truly define who we are.

While we achieved a great deal this season, our work is far from done. The lessons we learned — particularly around development and adaptability — will directly shape how we move forward. The focus should remain on creating a stronger and more consistent experience for all players while continuing to manage rising costs and growing expectations.

The role of President was never just about hockey for me — it has always been about the people, the families, and the kids who show up every day simply because they love the game. Over this past season, I've had the privilege of seeing that passion play out in packed arenas, early mornings, late nights, and countless volunteer hours behind the scenes. I was incredibly grateful for my time spent supporting this community. I am hopeful that Leitrim will continue to be a place where kids can learn, compete, and belong. Signing off from my Leitrim duties now, to take on a new challenge at the District as the Vice President of Administration.

**Stacey Hall**

Past President

Leitrim Minor Hockey Association