

## Senior C Division 2023 Season in Review

### 1. Growth and Recruitment

The Senior C Division maintained 8 teams. In the South Division we have Calgary Bears, Calgary Irish, Airdrie Mohawks, and the Mountain View Stingers. The North Division consists of the Blackfalds Silverbacks, Lloydminster Rage, Edmonton Warriors, and the St. Albert Miners.

Overall, the Division maintained the same number of players in 2023 as 2022, which are nearly identical to the pre-pandemic numbers, 247. Four teams increased in size from 2022, one stayed the same, and three lost players. The changes were all minimal anywhere from one to three players. The Division had rosters varying from 27 to 35 players. Despite this roster size, we had 4 games where one of the teams brought 10 or less players, and 21 games where one or both teams brought 11 to 15 players. When the season is 61 games including Playoffs and the Provincial game that is concerning. To quote a few of my Northern players, "We don't travel well." The need to call up Junior players ran all the way through to the Playoffs and the Provincial game.

We have a wide age range with our youngest player being 19 to our oldest being 65 years of age. The average age of the teams ranges from 25 to 36 when taking into consideration all the ages of the team's players. Overall, the average player is 28.74 years old. As an aside of the 247 players, 201 are the same age or younger than the Commissioner's oldest son. There are even a couple players whose son is old enough to play with them on their team or as a call up.

Teams continued to add players to their roster over the course of the season, including one trade right the deadline "for future considerations". Although a phrasing we try to avoid, trades come up so rarely in SrC; so, we are not anticipating future issues. It is expected that the borrowing team will be mindful of the respect that lending team made this season.

During regular season play, each team played only the other teams within their division. Each team play the other three teams twice at home and twice away. This allowed each team a total of 12 intra division games. Plus, we added in a Crossover weekend, where the teams played two games in the opposite Division. This made for an unbalanced schedule overall but great for team bonding. Playoffs were a best of three game rounds in the South and two with a minigame in the North due to scheduling constraints and travel distances. The winners went on to play for Provincial Championship in what turned out be a "one and done" final. The North Champions, Edmonton Warriors, defeated the Border Rage. The South Champions, Airdrie Mohawks, defeated the Calgary Bears. Provincial Champions were the Airdrie Mohawks.

### 2. Season Overview

Senior C is a unique environment. The goal is to play this high intensity, physical game balanced out with the reality of being able to get up and go to work the next day. We survive on the backs of our volunteers as the coaches, managers and the people that volunteer to run boxes.

The overall view is that the Senior C Division had a great season but was not hiccup free. This is a great adventure where there is a place to play and where the players' spouses and children can come and cheer.

### **3. Season Accomplishments**

The biggest accomplishment that the number of teams and players remained the same pre and post pandemic is a major accomplishment. Between periods, so many children would rush to the floor to grab a ball displaying the future of SrC looks good. Every game was played. Very few players were suspended. Every game sheet was submitted. Every Ref Evaluation completed. We reinstated the Crossover Weekend.

### **4. Season Setbacks**

It is very important prior to the start of the season to talk to your home cities about your home barns. When is the ice out? When does it go back in? Establish a relationship with your floor booker. The goal being when you must make changes as we approach Playoffs and Provincials, we have earned enough ass kissing credit to get the changes we need without horrendous financial penalty. This was indeed a problem this year.

When planning a season having this kind of rapport helps avoid situations where one team has all their home games within weeks of the start. A different team had games starting at once one a week, then nothing for a while, then several games in one week. Imbalanced in consistency of games per week makes running a bench difficult.

Throughout the season, the floors of the centres came up as a topic. The humidity inside arenas turned the floors to glass. The playing surface in another facility caused a wicked rash if a player tripped and fell on the slightly snarled artificial turf.

Throughout the season the cost of Referee travel fees was a genuine fear for the teams. Several games saw Referees travel hundreds of kilometers to be our third team on the floor. The Referees shortage was definitely felt across our Division through the entire season right through Provincials when we could not get Referees at all for two out of three games leading to the previously mentioned "one and done" final. It is a disappointing way to the end the season. When we had genuine concerns about the quality of the refereeing, we were most definitely listened to by the Referee in Chief and his assistance within the parameters of a Referee shortage were most definitely appreciated.

### **5. Looking to the Future**

We want to support our teams that struggle to fill a bench. We want to encourage our players to stay healthy and happy. When they are done playing find a way to keep them involved in the game whether that be by coaching or reffing or just being in the stands to encourage the generations to come. We want many seasons where both teams happily shake hands at the end of every game with their opponents and the referees.