



## President's Report 2024–25

The 2024–25 season was one of progress, stability, and new ideas for the Cape Breton County Minor Hockey Association (CBCMHA). Our association introduced initiatives that not only strengthened governance and oversight but also advanced community engagement, discipline, and long-term planning. Some efforts were immediately successful, others remain in progress, and a few did not achieve all the outcomes we had hoped for. Together, however, they reflect our willingness to innovate and to put the needs of our players and community first.

The most significant achievement this past year was the strengthening of our governance and overall stability. One of the first steps the Board took was the creation of standing committees, including a dedicated Governance Committee. Midway through the season, this committee completed a thorough review of the association's bylaws, which had not been revisited since 2014. The review resulted in a series of important recommendations—among them the formal adoption of the standing committee structure piloted by the Board last season. These efforts have already proven effective in improving accountability, ensuring that programs are executed consistently, and laying the groundwork for long-term improvement. Adopting these recommendations will allow us to move with greater stability, clarity, and full attention on the needs of our own association.

For the first time in many years, the Board operated at full capacity. This added strength allowed us to tackle more initiatives, stabilize programs, and provide stronger oversight. A special acknowledgment is owed to Jack Chafe and Steve Schaller, who stepped into the difficult and often thankless responsibility of stabilizing our "C" program. Their efforts have already brought structure and growth, setting the stage for a stronger future.

This year, CBCMHA took meaningful steps toward building greater inclusion and strengthening community connections. We created an Indigenous Liaison position to help foster stronger relationships with the Eskasoni community and to reduce barriers to participation in our programs. This initiative reflects our ongoing commitment to reconciliation and to ensuring that our association is welcoming and inclusive for all. The role is continuing to evolve and is helping to guide our efforts in Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA), including our participation in the Orange Jersey Project, which marked an important first step on this journey. We are confident that this foundation will support the growth of many more meaningful initiatives in the months and years ahead.



Our governance reforms were further supported by the rollout of a new Code of Conduct, Fair Play Policy, and Discipline Policy, all of which were reinforced in in-person coach meetings. A transparent and structured discipline process was established with incident tracking and reporting. This work has already contributed to a cultural shift within the association, with improved behavior from players, coaches, and spectators, and a more consistent approach when issues do arise. At the strategic level, the association drafted a new Mission, Vision, and Values statement that will be reviewed by the Board and shared with membership in coming weeks.

Looking forward, I believe the association must look to expand upon its committee based structure. Simply, this approach gets more done with less pressure on individuals. The result is more profound programming for players and community alike. With that, there are three areas of focus I believe our community can engage with our Board that would have immediate and sustainable impact:

- Participation on a Committee or Sub Committee
- Fundraising/Revenue ideas
- Ideas/Feedback

In summary, the 2024–25 season was a year of stabilization, stronger governance, and fresh ideas. CBCMHA took important steps to build capacity, expand community engagement, reinforce discipline, and plan strategically for the future. While not every initiative produced immediate results, each reflected the association's commitment to growth, inclusivity, and the long-term success of hockey in Cape Breton County.