

Annual General Meeting, January 2006, President's Message

The Bay Area Field Hockey Association (BAFHA) is a premier men's hockey league since its inception in 1975 in the San Francisco Bay Area region. Women are welcome and encouraged to play in our league. Our primary hockey fields are the artificial turfs at the Berkeley and Stanford campuses. Obtaining field time has been a challenge for us in the past, and will remain our first priority this year. A major lesson from last year is that we must finish our league schedule by end of July, as field availability becomes extremely difficult starting in August due to fall sports activities at the two campuses. Therefore, we must start our season in February so as to complete it by end of July. I have directed both Palo Alto and Berkeley representatives to contact their respective sports programs for field time starting in February. I will also personally contact the Berkeley scheduling office, as well as look at Berkeley High School as the potential third field. The schedules will be available soon and posted on our BAFHA website (www.BAFHA.org).

As per our December 2005 planning meeting, the league format will be modified this year. The first half of the season will be a single round robin, followed by a double round robin within the 1st and 2nd tier teams. The top 4 or 5 teams will become the 1st tier teams, and the bottom 4 or 5 teams will become the 2nd tier teams. The total number of games will be approximately the same as last year. We may also try some format changes, such as 1-hr games and 2 games per day as schedules and dates are formalized.

I have been a strong proponent of starting the Golden Gate tournament this year, and currently the 4th of July weekend is our preferred schedule (for this year that will be July 1 - 3). I have already requested the Berkeley scheduling office for these dates. This first year we will utilize one field and limit the number of teams as a practice year for a much larger tournament next year, when we utilize up to three fields. Therefore, the tournament this year may be mostly local teams with a few visiting clubs.

Another priority for this year is to organize some social events to get better integration of teams. We will have a league BBQ sometime in the early part of the season. I will look for new ideas from others.

Umpire training will also be high on the priority list. I will look to the umpiring committee chairman and the head umpire to organize such training this year. This is a much-needed training for existing player/umpires, and for others who are interested to start umpiring. Also for this year, we will increase payment to graded umpires as we want to make it worth their while to

umpire our league games .

Record keeping has been a challenge over the years. I believe the BAFHA web site can be one of the venues to keep records, including an archive of league schedules, past winners, and scoring records. Other items like disciplinary actions and red/yellow card records must be protected from general public view. I will ask the web manager, Heidi Faith, to create password protected pages for such records. I also like an idea of having a BAFHA blog for everyone to provide comments, suggestions, and discussion on hockey. I have asked Varun Devanathan of Berkeley to start such a blog.

Lastly, I will continue to talk to teams before each game about player conduct and inform them on any , especially in the early part of the season. These 2-minute talks were successful last year and brought comradery and friendship between teams. The idea is to create a friendly but competitive environment in our league.

Thanks and have a happy hockey season.

Humayun Khan
President, BAFHA