

# METRO WEST FORCE ANNUAL REPORT

## 2023/2024 SEASON



MWF would like to take this opportunity to review the 2023/2024 season in detail and provide insight into our goals for the upcoming 2024/2025 season.

### STRATEGIC PATH

Our Board has been working diligently over the past year, to bring forth a Strategic Path to guide our association as we continue to grow. The approach our Board had taken was to work on our Values, Mission, Vision, Strategic Objectives and Brand.

We are proud to state MWF Values:

- Excellence: personal best, growth, integrity
- Community: trust, respect, support
- Inclusion: diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility
- Well-being: physical, psychological, healthy living
- Experience: positive, rewarding, fun

Our **mission** is to grow strong female leaders through the delivery of inclusive, rewarding, and unique hockey experiences.

Our **vision** is to become the premier female hockey association Atlantic Canada through the following strategic objectives:

- Growth
  - o Promoting our grass roots program
  - o Improve accessibility for underrepresented communities
  - o Building a leading female recreational program
  - o “Play to Compete” approach for our competitive programs
- Player Development
  - o Develop organizational structure to support paid positions
  - o Build corporate funding program
  - o Integrate Long Term Player Development program (every player has a plan)
  - o Implement coach development program
- Player Retention
  - o Deliver robust and transparent communication program
  - o Evolve on and off-ice community programming
  - o Enhance Hockey for Life programming
  - o Develop alumni program, engaging more players as coaches

## BRAND

As part of our strategic path work, our Board has reviewed our brand with the assistance of Roddis Communications. Metro West Force was created in 2017 when a need for female-only teams was becoming more obvious, parents from five associations (Tasa, Sackville, Bedford, Chebucto and Halifax) came together to create MWF. The original creators of MWF determined that by joining forces they could become something great, hence the name Force. As the female game grew, HNS created the HNS Female Council and any girls wanting to play on a female only team was required to join a female association in their area. As we've evolved over the years and have grown to become the largest female association in Nova Scotia, we realized that our brand needed to evolve as well. We were excited to announce our new logo at the AGM earlier this month. We are currently working on securing a vendor for new MWF jerseys and our MWF Merch Store – stay tuned for details!

## FINANCES

Due to the impact of Covid on operations in the 2020-2022 seasons and the membership growth of MWF across those same seasons, MWF did not have sufficient historical data to justify an increase in fees for the 2022-23 season. As a result, MWF operated in a deficit in 2022-23 of approximately \$30,000. For the 2023-2024 season, MWF had to significantly restructure the registration fees resulting in increased registration fees for our Members.

Increased registration fees were required for the 2023/2024 season to help cover:

- increasing ice costs;
- increasing development fees (i.e. New Technical Director);
- increasing bench staff certification fees with the introduction of the new requirement of having all bench staff First Aid/CPR certified; and
- future replacement of jerseys.

Registration fees covered approximately 98% of the MWF's operating expenses for the 2023/2024 season. The revenue generated through additional programming, such as conditioning camps, spring development and the Force Cup made up for any short-fall and deficit payment from the previous season.

### 2023 Financial Summary:

- Registration Fee Payments Received:	\$601,000
- Other Programming Income:	\$138,055
- Grants Received:	<u>\$2,565</u>
- Total Revenues:	\$748,655
- Total Expenditures:	\$681,008
- <b>Net Income (Loss):</b>	<b>\$67,647</b>

MWF has significant future expenses that will be incurred over the next 12 months including purchasing new jerseys and the cost of CPR and First Aid training for Bench Staff as required by Hockey NS.

MWF is committed to releasing mid-year 2024/2025 Financials to Members at a mid-year General Meeting, most likely held in January.

*Please see Appendix A for our Financials and Allocation of Registration Fees for 2023/2024.*

## REGISTRATION FEES

Prior to the 2023/2024 registration, MWF released a detailed communication via email and posted to our website <https://metrowestforce.com/U68/MWF/news/6529/Important-Evaluation-and-Tryout-Info-now-available/> regarding fees including a breakdown of player's registration fees based on age group and level.

Registration fees help pay for:

- Allocated ice time for practices and games;
- Fees for officials and timekeepers;
- Development fees including salary for technical director, development ice and staff costs and Goalie Development;
- Hockey NS Fees including HNS fees, team fees and certifications for bench staff; and
- Operating expenses including admin fees, equipment, Hockey for Life and jersey fees.

*\*Additional ice time for practices/development and exhibition games are at the discretion of each individual team and is funded through the team budget.*

There will be no change to the registration fees for the 2024/2025 season. Information will be released by the end of July with the registration communication.

## EVALUATIONS

Evaluations for the past season commenced mid-September and concluded by the end of the September. The process included a maximum of five (5) sessions where players participated in inter-squad games and specific skills sessions. Goalies participated in these five sessions and had two additional Goalie only sessions.

There will be a more robust evaluation strategy being employed this upcoming season. The updated evaluation process will be released over the summer along with the registration information.

MWF will be holding a parent consultation meeting to discuss plans for next season is forthcoming from Angela Lewis.

## TEAM MATRIX

Metro West Force is the largest female hockey association in Nova Scotia. Our final registration for this past season was 580 players. We had 7 recreations teams (5 U11 and 2 U13), 19 competitive teams, 4 U9 teams plus U7 Development and Sunday Night Lights for U15 and U18 players.

The following shows the team matrix for the 2023/2024 season.

	U11	U13	U15	U18
AAA	_*	1	2	_**
AA	2	2	2	2
A	2	2	2	2
Recreational	5	2	Sunday Night Lights	

\*There is no U11AAA league.

\*\*U18AAA league is outside of MWF

Currently, MWF is projecting the following team matrix for the 2024/2025 season. This matrix will continue to be under review until we complete evaluations in September 2024 and **all information is subject to change.**

	U11	U13	U15	U18
AAA	-	1	2	-
AA	2	2	2	2
A	2	2	2	2
Recreational (Estimate)	4	2	2	TBD
Project Player Pool	121	95	94	99
Projected Goalie Pool	3	6	13	7

The above matrix is not guaranteed and is subject to change based on actual registration numbers, the skills of players displayed during evaluations, ice allotment and the opportunities for recreational teams to play hockey against teams from other associations.

One of the biggest challenges we face as we head into next season is the lack of goalies at the U11 and U13 level. This is the main reason for projecting one team at the U13AAA level next season. We encourage Members to consider the role of goalie at these age levels. We have experienced terrific success with skaters transitioning to goaltenders at the U11 and U13 levels over recent years.

## ICE

HRM follows an Ice Equity Policy, meaning that each year, associations in HRM requiring ice must submit projected member numbers and ice is allocated to associations dependent on projected need. HRM provides an overall allocation of ice times, and each individual rink then provides the days and times set aside for MWF. MWF's ice coordinator creates the schedule and allocates ice times for team practices, games and development, including Player and Goalie development. MWF uses several rinks including but not limited to Greenfoot Energy Centre, RBC, Sackville Sports Stadium, LeBrun, and SMU.

Ice continues to be one of our biggest challenges as associations grow and require more ice time, but there is not an increase to ice surfaces in HRM. We recently received our ice allocations for the 2024/2025 season and our ice times have been reduced as our membership was less in 2023/2024 than

in 2022/2023, the ice is further decentralized (e.g. we lost ice at Greenfoot Centre and gained ice at Civic/Forum), which is challenging when scheduling officials, and the quality of ice is decreasing (i.e. less desirable times). Angela Lewis and Trevor Magarvey recently submitted a letter of disappointment to Halifax Parks & Recreation/ Facility Scheduling asking for reconsideration of our ice allocation for 2024/2025.

Once our ice allocation and contracts have been finalized, MWF will work diligently to ensure ice is shared appropriately amongst teams based on need. It is important to remember that ice allocations within MWF differ based on rec vs rep and level.

## **GAME SCHEDULE**

Once teams were determined across the Female Hockey Associations in NS, Game Schedulers with Female Council and Association Ice Schedulers created a schedule. When schedules are created, there are several factors that are taken into consideration:

- **Balancing of Schedules:** are all teams playing the same number of games? Is there a fair distribution of home and away games? Are teams playing each other an equal amount of time?
- **Travel:** There are policies in place to take into consideration for away teams, for example, it is often encouraged to not schedule games before noon if an away team must travel more than a specified number of hours to the designated rink. Game Schedulers are also encouraged to schedule more than one game when an overnight stay could be necessary.
- **Ice Availability:** when is ice available and where?

The game schedule was released for the 2023/2024 season in October and presented several challenges. Due to concerns and feedback from HNS members, the game schedule was removed, and associations were left questioning what was happening. Eventually a new schedule was released presenting fewer games than anticipated for most leagues. With the smaller game schedule than originally planned for, MWF encouraged teams to consider organizing exhibition games to keep the players on the ice and continuing to practice game situations.

The Playoff format was also released in January and presented a different format than in past years with specific placed teams receiving a bye to Provincials while other teams had to play one-off games to secure their place at Provincials. We know this format was not ideal or welcomed by Members and we have voiced our concerns regarding this format to Female Council. We anticipate an updated Playoff Format for the 2024/2025 season and will notify Members as soon as we are made aware.

## **DEVELOPMENT**

MWF was excited to introduce Player Development sessions for teams this season in addition to regular team practices. These sessions were organized and run by our Technical Director and his team. Development sessions were either in addition to the regular ice time or included in the regular scheduled practice sessions dependent on level and age.

We were also excited to provide Spring Development in April 2024 to our Members from U7 to U18.

Spring Development sessions were skills based and included:

- U7/U9 Core Skills
- U11 Puck Skills
- U13 Functional Skating
- U13 Puck Skills
- U11/U13 Forward Camp
- U11/ U13 Shooting Camp
- U11/U13 Defense Camp
- U15/U18 Functional Skating
- U15/U18 Puck Skills
- U15/U18 Forward Camp
- U15/U18 Shooting Camp
- U15/U18 Defense Camp

We did offer U11 Functional Skating but unfortunately registration numbers were quite low, and we had to cancel. The Development Camps filled up fast and had great attendance and good feedback.

## **GOALIE DEVELOPMENT**

During the 2023/2024 season MWF provided free Goalie Development sessions for the U11 to U18 Goalies run by Finn Goalie. This season sessions ran on Wednesdays from 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm at the HRM 4-Pad. At the beginning of the season MWF did have some challenges determining how to schedule these sessions to best meet the needs of the Goalies. It was eventually determined that it was best to group the U11/U13 and the U15/U18 goalies together and alternate sessions allowing each group to participate in a 90-minute Goalie development session every two weeks.

Feedback received from our year-end Member Survey suggested that majority of respondents were unsatisfied with the number of sessions provided and the drills offered.

There was also concern for the lack for Goalie Development provided at the team level during team practices. MWF will be reviewing this and looking forward to ensure that both players and Goalies are receiving adequate development throughout the season.

MWF is committed to reviewing Goalie Development and planning Goalie recruitment at the U11 and U13 level will be a priority for the 2024/2025 season.

## **COMMUNICATION**

MWF communicates information to Members through email, website and social media (Facebook and Instagram). All important information regarding such matters including tryouts, schedules, meetings, and more will be relayed through email and posted to the website.

There are times when communication is shared with coaches and managers, and they are asked to relay the information to their teams.

MWF is committed to improving communication through monthly newsletters throughout the season, Member meetings prior to evaluations, and virtual monthly updates for parents beginning in October. Our MWF website will also be under construction soon as we work on revamping it!

## HOCKEY FOR LIFE / COMMUNITY INITIATIVES / JUNIOR COACHING

MWF believes in providing opportunities for our Members to give back to our communities. During the 2023/2024 season MWF Teams were given the opportunity to participate in the **Acts of Kindness Challenge** in December and the **Feed the Need Challenge** in January.

During the **Acts of Kindness Challenge**, teams supported organizations such as Feed NS, Phoenix House, IWK, Seniors Homes, and so many more. Teams worked together to spread joy and kindness and we were pleased to award the U13C Lightning team with a team pizza party and SMU game.

The **Feed the Need Challenge** collected just over 700 items of food. We were excited to deliver 818 lbs of food to Feed NS and for the second year in a row the Cape Breton Blizzard Association accepted our challenge and held their own Feed the Need initiative. This year MWF won the challenge with 696 items collected and we're looking forward to working with them again next season! We were pleased to award the U11AA Citadels with a bowling party.

This year's **Gear Swap** held in September was a great success! This is an opportunity for players to come out and "shop" for needed gear. All the gear is donated by MWF Players and we saw lots of families coming out to pick up gear before the season starts. This is a great opportunity for new players to come out and grab gear without that initial expense. We even held an open skate the same day for new and current players to hit the ice and warm up their legs and some were even able to try out their new gear! Stay tuned for details on the 2024 Gear Swap

Over 60 girls participated in the **Junior Coaching Program** training in the fall and throughout the season 30+ girls consistently hit the ice with younger players to help grow their love for the game! The Junior Coaching Program will be back again this upcoming season – stay tuned for details!

MWF also participated in **Pink Tape Day** raising awareness for anti-bullying and provided on-demand **Mental Health in a Hockey environment** video content for Coaches, Managers and Volunteers.

For the second year in a row MWF is pleased to award a Senior player with **MWF's Educational Bursary**. We were pleased to award our Force Bursary to Brianne Bower of the U18A Avalanche this season. Congratulations Brianne and all the best in your future endeavors.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This year was our first season with a **Technical Director**. **Jordan Burke** was hired by MWF in September 2023 and is responsible for all aspects of player and coach development. The Technical Director leads and supports the development of our players and coaches and plays a key role in building a progressive development program for our association. We were pleased to offer Development sessions to all our teams with Jordan and his team. This provided an opportunity for players to work on skills outside of practice time and allowed Jordan the opportunity to meet and get to know MWF players throughout the season. You would often find Jordan around the rinks, watching practices and games and lending a hand

on the ice when needed. We think Jordan has been a great addition to our MWF team and look forward to another season with him as our Technical Director!

MWF was excited to introduce the **Pro Hockey Life Coach of the Month** this season. Every month from November to March, Members could submit nominations to our Director, Coaching Development, who would in turn review the nominations and award one Coach with the Coach of the Month award. Our Coach of the Month received a MWF Clipboard and a \$25 Pro Hockey Life Gift card and was recognized for their commitment and dedication on our social media. We received nominations from parents and players for so many wonderful MWF coaches and we want to thank you all for your time and hard work on and off the ice! Our volunteers are greatly appreciated, and we couldn't do this without you!

Congratulations to this year's Coach of the Month Recipients:

- November: Nathan Thomas
- December: Erin Poirier
- January: Calvin Lewis
- February: Sophie Beck
- March: Ryan Scott

Our recreational program at the U11 and U13 level saw growth this past season and we were able to house five U11C teams and two U13C teams. Metro East Inferno were also able to house recreational teams allowing the two HRM leagues the opportunity to play a regular season. The recreational teams had the opportunity to participate in exhibition games in Cape Breton and tournaments including The Force Cup. We know there are growing pains associated with recreational programs and we appreciate all those volunteers who have stepped up to help keep this program going. Having dedicated coaches, managers and organizers will allow us to continue to maintain and develop a successful recreational league. The U11C and U13C also participated in the first ever Day of Champions organized by MWF and MEI. This was a great event and well received by players and parents.

MWF saw many other great successes this past season including:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Force Cup in October 2023.
- 1<sup>st</sup> Annual U13C Force Cup and U9 Development Force Cup Jamboree.
- U9 Northern Lights participated in the 2024 Global Girls Game in Lunenburg.
- Establishment of the Force Fund.
- Introduction of Spring Development Camps.
- 10 Rep teams played at Provincials.
- U13AAA Warriors and U15AAA Citadels played at Atlantics.
- HNS Ron Conrad Award Recipients: MWF U15AAA Citadels.
- HNS Female Council Award Recipient: Peter Giles.



## CHALLENGES

Every season comes with challenges and this past season, our most notable were:

- Inconsistent game schedules across age levels.
- Change to the playoff format from previous years.
- Referee shortages, especially at the U9 and U11 levels.

As we head into the next season over the coming months, MWF is committed to working with HNS Female Council, our sister Associations and our Members to work through these challenges to ensure our Members are receiving the best of what this sport has to offer. Our intent is to keep our Members updated on the ever-changing landscape of Female Hockey to the best of our knowledge.

## MWF BOARD

We'd like to introduce our Board for the 2024/2025 season:

President: Angela Lewis  
VP - Hockey Standards: Mike Almond  
VP - Finance: Kelly Peck  
VP - Safe Sport: Chris Cotton  
VP - Coaching Development: Chris Larade  
VP - Hockey for Life: Krista Stewart  
Director - Hockey Operations: Trevor Magarvey  
Director - Membership Growth: Keri Irwin  
Director - Membership Experience: Michelle Flanagan  
Director - Administration: Michelle Lucas  
Director - Athlete Representative: Sara Macnevin



## APPENDIX A: Unaudited Financial Statement 2023/2024

	Budget 2023	ACTUAL 2024
<b>REVENUE</b>		
REGULAR PROGRAMMING	\$537,325	\$652,270
LESS Credits:	\$33,075	\$44,235
<i>Half-year</i>	\$8,700	\$10,105
<i>Goalie</i>	\$20,625	\$27,478
<i>Multi-child</i>	\$3,750	\$6,652
<i>Misc Credits</i>	\$0	\$1,235
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS DUE</b>		<b>\$608,035</b>
<b>REGISTRATION PAYMENTS RECEIVED</b>		<b>\$601,000</b>
OTHER PROGRAMMING	\$60,724	\$138,055
CONDITIONING CAMP	\$20,800	\$35,750
SPRING DEVELOPMENT	\$0	\$17,600
TRY-OUTS	\$36,300	\$50,000
FORCE CUP	\$3,624	\$34,705
GRANTS	\$2,565	\$2,565
<i>HRM Goalie Equipment Remainder</i>	\$3,300	\$3,300
<i>Return of Grant Funds</i>	-\$735	-\$735
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$600,614</b>	<b>\$748,655</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
ADMINISTRATION	\$26,607	\$24,117
<i>Bank Service Charges</i>	\$1,340	\$1,000
<i>Miscellaneous Charges</i>	\$2,000	\$2,000
<i>Gray Jay Pay fees</i>	\$333	\$2,665
<i>Online Payment Transaction fees</i>	\$22,934	\$18,452
TRY-OUTS	\$32,782	\$33,278
HOCKEY FOR LIFE INITIATIVES	\$11,333	\$8,213
<i>U13 A Final Wave Event</i>	\$0	\$811
<i>Gear Swap and Open Skate</i>	\$0	\$250
<i>1st Shift</i>	\$1,200	\$1,200
<i>Grad Night</i>	\$667	\$599
<i>Team Parties for Community Initiatives</i>	\$1,000	\$886
<i>Nutrition Workshop</i>	\$1,700	\$2,300
<i>Junior Coaching and Leadership</i>	\$3,955	\$2,167
INSURANCE & HNS FEES	\$53,828	\$50,382
JERSEYS	\$11,660	\$11,080
CERTIFICATIONS	\$17,400	\$12,386
EQUIPMENT	\$5,500	\$4,410
CONDITIONING CAMP	\$20,800	\$14,150
DEVELOPMENT COSTS	\$96,184	\$87,400
FORCE CUP		\$27,360
GAME OFFICIALS	\$58,430	\$61,034
TIME KEEPERS	\$8,730	\$7,336
ICE CONTRACTS AND RENTALS	\$414,078	\$493,037
<i>(Conditioning Camp Ice)</i>		-\$9,923
<i>(Try-outs Ice)</i>		-\$21,153
<i>(Force Cup Tournament Ice)</i>		-\$16,943
<i>(Spring Development Ice)</i>		-\$12,922
<i>(Development Ice)</i>		-\$19,530
<i>(LESS ICE SOLD TO OTHER ORGANIZATIONS)</i>		-\$6,000
<i>(LESS ICE and FEE RECOVERIES FROM TEAMS)</i>		-\$66,704
<b>TOTAL SEASON ICE COSTS FOR REGULAR PROGRAMMING</b>		<b>\$339,862</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>		<b>\$681,008</b>
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>		<b>\$67,647</b>

Includes Conditioning Camp Goalie Credits

Amount carried forward from 2022/2023

Allocated for future purchases

Ice costs and on-ice coaching

Includes Tech Director Payments, Developments Sessions and Goalie Development

Includes RIC Renumeration

Includes Provincial Qualifier Fees of \$11,000

**Registration Fee Allocation: 2023/2024 Season**

