

# ArbiterSports

## History of NIHOA

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### **NATIONAL ICE HOCKEY OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION HISTORY**

The National Ice Hockey Officials Association (NIHOA) evolved from various independent hockey officials associations formed in the 1930's. The 1938 NCAA Men's Ice Hockey Guide (Rule Book) listed the Eastern Hockey Officials Association. The Association was comprised of five Chapters; Massachusetts, Northern New England, Connecticut, Upper New York and Vermont, and Metropolitan New York. Sixty-three "Approved Members" were listed (plus one from Texas.) It was from this Association that NIHOA, as a national organization, was eventually formed.

By 1951 ten Chapters and "Other Officials" from ten other states were listed in the Guide. This group was eventually eliminated and by 1952 the Guide listed "APPROVED ICE HOCKEY OFFICIALS" and, for the first time, with a sub-heading "National Ice Hockey Officials Association". Twelve chapters were included in the list, but in reality, these chapters had not been formalized into a national organization. A formal organization was established in 1955 when a Constitution and By-laws was developed and accepted by several chapters.

1956, a group of interested officials and administrators met with Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) Assistant Commissioner for Ice Hockey, Scotty Whitelaw, at the ECAC offices then located in New York City. At that meeting the NIHOA organization, as formally structured by the Constitution and By-laws developed in 1955, was selected as the officials' organization to service ECAC hockey. There were unforeseen difficulties, however, as only six chapters; Connecticut, Maine, Metropolitan New York-New Jersey, Northern New York, New Hampshire and Rhode Island, joined the new organization as charter members. Once the initial difficulties were overcome and with the strong backing of the ECAC, NIHOA progressed successfully and grew steadily. The first annual meeting of the Association was held in 1956.

NIHOA also developed a strong relationship with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Bill Clark, New Hampshire Chapter, was the prime factor in the development and success of NIHOA, while serving as national Secretary-Treasurer from 1959 until 1981. He also served as Secretary-Editor for the NCAA Men's Ice Hockey Rules Committee from 1965 until 1974. Bill was succeeded, as Secretary-Editor, by Bill Cleary, Jr., former NIHOA official and Harvard University Coach. NIHOA has been represented each year at the NCAA Rules meeting since 1965. Succeeding Bill Clark was Tom Lynch, South Shore Massachusetts Chapter, who served as NIHOA Secretary-Treasurer from 1981 until 1993 and represented NIHOA at the NCAA Rules Meeting from 1981 through 1997. Tom was succeeded, in 1993, as NIHOA Secretary-Treasurer by Jack Doherty, Central Massachusetts Chapter.

1957 saw the first NIHOA Annual Rules Examination issued. Wes Moulton, former Brown University Coach, NIHOA officials Bill Cleary, Sr. and Bill Stewart, Jr. of the then Boston Chapter wrote the exam. The exam has been completed annually since 1957 and issued to all chapters. Originally it consisted of fifty questions and addressed only NCAA Rules. As NIHOA grew, and it was apparent NIHOA officials were working with multiple sets of rules, the exam was expanded to one hundred questions and addressed USA Hockey (AHAUS) and National Federation of High School rules, in addition to NCAA rules.

1965, the NCAA accepted for printing in its Ice Hockey Guide an article entitled "Directive For Ice Hockey Officials" written by Herb Gallagher, a NIHOA official and former Athletic Director at Northeastern University. The "Directive" has often been referred to as the "Bible for Hockey Officials". It was included in the Guide for many years. Any year that it was not printed in the Guide it was included in the NIHOA Directory. For many years it was included in the NCAA Ice Hockey Officials Manual and can presently be found in the NIHOA Manual/Directory.

1981, when the NCAA discontinued printing the list of NIHOA Chapters with rosters of APPROVED OFFICIALS, the NIHOA Directory was first published. Initially the Directory only included the rosters of approved officials in the various NIHOA chapters. In subsequent years additional features were added. These include the President's letter, helmet and face mask information, a listing of NIHOA Honorary Members, an organization chart and, of prime importance since NIHOA officials officiate multiple sets of rules, a comparison of National Federation, NCAA and USA Hockey rules. This comparison has been provided annually by Bob Hayden, past NIHOA National President and current USA Hockey Playing Rules Chairman. As features were added the Directory evolved into a combined Manual/Directory.

Annual clinics have been vital in the training of NIHOA officials. Even before being organized nationally, various chapters, which eventually became NIHOA members, conducted training clinics. After organizing in the early years, particularly in the Boston area, NIHOA conducted or participated with the ECAC in clinics that covered rules interpretations, procedures, mechanics and other officiating concerns. These clinics were conducted annually.

1979, NIHOA President Chet Stewart, Illinois Chapter, organized and directed the first NIHOA national clinic that included both classroom and on-ice sessions. Chet served as AHAUS Referee-In-Chief for many years and also worked with the NCAA Rules Committee. In 1983 NIHOA President, Bill Reynolds, Connecticut Chapter, organized and directed the second NIHOA national officials clinic with an on-ice session at Rye, New York. It was during Bill's term in office that the need for NIHOA officials to be trained and informed on multiple sets of rules was emphasized.

1984, working with Bill Hutchinson, ECAC Hockey Supervisor, saw the start of a series of co-sponsored NIHOA/ECAC clinics conducted annually in the Boston, Connecticut and Upstate New York areas. On-ice sessions were added to these sessions in 1987.

Since 1987, NIHOA and the ECAC have participated in NCAA clinics, conducted by former NIHOA officials Charley Holden, former NCAA Coordinator of Officials and Paul Duffy, Geneseo Coach and Secretary-Editor of the NCAA Rules Committee. 1995, NIHOA organized and conducted, with the NCAA, a clinic in Providence, RI during the championship games. This on-ice clinic was designed to

identify potential college officials.

NIHOA gained further recognition with the appointment of Jack Doherty as chair of the National Federation Rules Committee in 1994. Also in 1994, through the efforts of Jack Doherty, representatives of the National Federation, NCAA and USA Hockey Rules Committees met at the National Federation headquarters in Kansas City, MO as an "ad hoc" committee focused on minimizing the differences in the playing rules.

October 1997, NIHOA participated in a "Summit" of international ice hockey rules committees' representatives. The meeting of individuals representing various ice hockey organizations was held in Chicago. Individuals representing the NCAA, National Federation, USA Hockey, NHL, IHL Canadian Youth Hockey, Canadian Major Jr. Association, IIHF and NIHOA came together, in what is believed to be the first joint meeting of these organizations. Tom Lynch, NIHOA President, represented NIHOA. Jack Doherty, NFHS Chair and NIHOA Secretary-Treasurer represented the National Federation of High Schools. During the weekend the philosophies, organizational structures and rules of each organization were fully discussed. Brian Lewis, NHL Supervisor of Officials, said it best when asked why he attended the meeting; "For the betterment of hockey". The meeting was organized by Bob Hayden, past NIHOA President, member of the Western Pennsylvania Chapter and Chair of the USA Hockey Playing Rules Committee.

April 1999, Tom Lynch, received the New England Hockey Sportswriters Sheaffer Pen Award. The award is presented to an individual that has made an outstanding contribution to amateur hockey. Previous winners include past NIHOA members: William Cleary, Sr. (1974), Bill Riley, Sr. (1977), Jim Edgeworth (1979), William Stewart, II (1985), Bill Cleary (1991), and Dana Hennigar (1995).

September 2000, Jack Doherty participated in a Rules Stabilization Meeting hosted by the IIHF held in Toronto. Representatives from the Canadian Hockey Association, Canadian Hockey League (CHL), NCAA, National Federation of High Schools, NHL, USA Hockey and NIHOA participated in the 3 day meeting. The meeting was designed to address the continuing efforts to reduce rule differences and rule issues which occur in our sport.

On September 11, 2001 America was attacked by terrorists. This attack resulted in the destruction of the World Trade Center in New York City and a portion of the Pentagon in Washington, DC. Some 2800, men, women and children lost their lives in the attack. A number of those were associated with the game we all love; ice hockey. In remembrance of those who lost their lives and in support of those who are called upon to defend the way of life Americans cherish, NIHOA's membership displayed, on their helmets, the flag of the United States. As was pointed out so often in the days following this tragic event, NIHOA's crest has long symbolized its dedication not only to the sport it serves, but to the country this Association calls home.

September 2002, Jack Doherty represented NIHOA at the fourth International Rules Summit meeting held at the NCAA, National Federation of High Schools' facilities in Indianapolis, IN. The meeting included representatives of various international ice hockey rules making bodies. Attending the meeting were individuals representing the Canadian Hockey Association, IIHF, NCAA, National Federation of High Schools, NHL, USA Hockey and NIHOA. The group agreed to present to their respective committees recommendations that would reduce the number of differences presently

existing between the rules of the various organizations.

April 2005, William Stuart, III, Eastern Mass. Chapter, followed in his father's footsteps when he received the New England Hockey Sportswriters Sheaffer Pen Award. The award is presented to an individual that has made an outstanding contribution to amateur hockey.

September 2008, William P. Sapelli, Western Mass. Chapter, was presented the Eastern Collegiate Athletic Conference's (ECAC) George L. Shiebler Award. The award is presented annually to an ECAC official who has demonstrated dedication to the avocation of officiating and the ECAC. The award is named for George L. Shiebler, former ECAC commissioner, in honor of his leadership over the many years he was associated with the ECAC.

June 2009, John Robinson was presented the 2009 Chet Stewart Award. John has held a number of Southeastern U.S. Chapter officer positions, and was the Southeastern U.S. Chapter President in 2009. He served as a NIHOA National Officer from 1989 to 1995, and as NIHOA National President, 1993 – 1995. He was USA Hockey's Southeastern District Treasurer, a past Southeastern District Referee-In-Chief, and was Director of Risk Management for USA Hockey. The Chet Stewart Award, established in 2000, is presented annually by USA Hockey at its annual Congress. The award recognizes the outstanding achievements of a grass roots officiating program volunteer. The award is named for the late Chet Stewart of Illinois, who served NIHOA as National President from 1979 to 1981. Chet founded the Illinois NIHOA Chapter. He was longtime chairman of the USA Hockey Playing Rules Committee and National Referee in Chief.

Jack Doherty, Central Mass. Chapter, who served as NIHOA Secretary-Treasurer from 1993 until 2014 was succeeded in that position by Michael Komich, Maine Chapter, at the Association's annual meeting.

NIHOA officials have traditionally officiated all levels of hockey and are annually selected to officiate NCAA Championships. The organization is healthy and strives for continued growth and success.

Revised 07/14

## **CHAPTER GROWTH**

<b><u>Year</u></b>	<b><u>Chapters</u></b>
<b>1957</b>	<b>Charter Chapters - Connecticut, Maine, Rhode Island, Metropolitan New York-New Jersey, Northern New York, New Hampshire</b>
<b>1958</b>	<b>Central New York, Western Mass.</b>
<b>1961</b>	<b>Central Mass.</b>
<b>1963</b>	<b>Cape Cod, Eastern New York, Eastern PA-NJ</b>
<b>1964</b>	<b>North Shore Mass.</b>
<b>1965</b>	<b>South Central NY, South Shore Mass.</b>
<b>1966</b>	<b>Eastern Mass., Illinois</b>
<b>1967</b>	<b>Berkshire Mass.</b>
<b>1968</b>	<b>Vermont</b>
<b>1969</b>	<b>Western New York</b>

<b>1970</b>	<b>Western College Hockey Association</b>
<b>1973</b>	<b>Niagara Frontier, Saint Louis, Syracuse, Western Pennsylvania</b>
<b>1974</b>	<b>Southern Indiana, Westchester NY</b>
<b>1975</b>	<b>Champlain-Adirondack</b>
<b>1976</b>	<b>Ohio Buckeye (Now Northeast Ohio)</b>
<b>1977</b>	<b>Mid-Hudson New York, Southeastern U.S.</b>
<b>1979</b>	<b>Iowa Hawkeye (Now Iowa)</b>
<b>1980</b>	<b>Central Illinois, Indianapolis</b>
<b>1983</b>	<b>Southwestern U.S. (2009 - To Rocky Mountain West)</b>
<b>1989</b>	<b>Southern U.S.</b>
<b>1996</b>	<b>North Carolina-Virginia (2003 - Became two separate chapters)</b>
<b>1998</b>	<b>Florida</b>
<b>2000</b>	<b>South Central Ohio</b>
<b>2002</b>	<b>Lone Star TX, South Carolina</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>Long Island NY</b>