



LNHL 2021 Tournament Cancelled

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NIPISSING FIRST NATION (November 2, 2020) – Members of the Little Native Hockey League (LNHL) 2020 Host Committee and the LNHL Executive met last Thursday via conference call to discuss plans for LNHL in March 2021.

As you know, the onset of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic forced the cancellation of the tournament earlier this year. Everyone involved was hopeful that the situation would improve and that Nipissing would host the tournament in 2021 instead.

However, as we enter the second wave of this global pandemic, and with so much uncertainty still ahead, regrettably the tournament organizers decided that the **2021 LNHL will be cancelled**. While we are disappointed about having to make this difficult decision, we are considering the health and safety of community members first and foremost. In the course of our deliberations, we also discussed the possibility of postponing the tournament until later in the year and the feasibility of hosting a regional format. Having considered all of the many factors, we have decided that a postponement or alternate format was not feasible.

As you know, organizing a tournament of this size and scale (there were 223 teams registered for LNHL 2020) requires a tremendous amount of time, energy and work from both the host community and LNHL Executive Committee members. There is so much that goes into organizing the LNHL including the management of logistics and hockey operations, team and player registration, volunteer coordination, facility management and accommodations, special events, as well as soliciting sponsorship revenues to offset the various costs.

In addition to many children not playing hockey this year or playing a modified format, fundraising efforts within First Nation communities to attend the event have been impacted by the pandemic. Priorities within our communities have understandably shifted significantly in the past eight months as we work to protect our citizens and support them through the various challenges that this pandemic is creating.

“The decision to cancel this event for the second year in a row is regrettable, but unavoidable in light of the serious health risks associated with COVID-19 and its rapid spread in urban centres,” said Nipissing Chief Scott McLeod. “Our team worked so hard to host what would have been an incredible tournament.” He adds that Council will need to discuss the possibility of Nipissing hosting LNHL 2022 at a later date.

“Our number one priority is the health and safety of community members including the youth, players, coaches and elders,” said LNHL President Marian Jacko. “While are very saddened to have to make this decision, we know it is critical in order to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 to First Nation communities. With all things considered, it is simply too risky to proceed at this time”.

We want to assure you that we will take this time to work on improving the LNHL experience for the future.

- 30 -

In the Spirit of Hockey,

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