

2019 MENS U19 WFC

Final Report

ORGANIZATION

- ✓ The LOC managers were mostly picked from personal networks and from LinkedIn where specialized services were needed. For the most part, those selected had managed to get control of the different aspects of their sections. That said, four months prior to the event 2 key managers (sponsorship & media) resigned sighting they were too busy with their own personal lives which added a bit of extra responsibilities to the existing LOC managers
- ✓ The biggest struggled the LOC faced was finding a manager for Volunteers and subsequent volunteers. Halifax hosts over 200 events every year and the drain on the local volunteer database was evident.
- ✓ The most important part of the organization were the volunteers from the Floorball Canada who managed the Match Secretariat roles. Most notable were Simon Roethlisberger, Sonja Hotke, Karl Simpson who lead a team of other Floorball Canada volunteers from Ontario (Walsh brothers etc.)
- ✓ Cooperation with the Jury and Referee Management started off shaking as MUCH of the preparations had fallen behind (most particular the Gerflor at the main venue). The IFF Staff were extremely accommodating in putting in extra labour to get the venue ready. Near the end of the event the IFF, LOC started to gel and be on the same page.

ECONOMY AND FINANCES

✓ To be finalized by LOC

✓ The event ran a deficit, as was expected, however there were a number of budget revenues that fell extremely short of their goals. There were a number of theories associated with these shortfalls having to do with the loss of key LOC members, lack of pre event revenues from sponsorship, drained volunteer resources and no local media interest (although during the week a number of TV/Radio media did broadcast the event).

SERVICE AND LOGISTICS

✓ Accommodation

- o No major issues reported regarding the accommodation of either the IFF officials or teams. Switzerland changed accommodations two days into their stay which had our Transportation Manager scramble a few times with the local bus company.
- o Of the 16 teams, 10 teams accepted the accommodation offer from LOC while others stayed at other hotels/hostels but, with the exception of Czech Republic, all were within the 10 km driving distance.

✓ Transport

○ The was only one bus company in Halifax, so a heavy dependance was on this company to deliver ontime service. In spite of a few delays due to congested traffic across the bridges from Halifax to Dartmouth (main venue), the Manager of Transportation was able to work with the bus company to add extra buses in the loop to ensure the teams got to their respective venues to play. In one case, the team had arrived 45 minutes prior to their game but were given the full hour so they could get their practice/ warm up routine in prior to the game start. As a result the game started 15 minutes later.

○ One of the underestimated transportation plan was the Technical Meeting. The LOC had planned on the meeting being for Captains only so had arranged for the existing SUV/mini van rentals to pick up each captain at their residences. Once it was discovered that the meeting would consist of about 40+ people, the Manager of Transportation arranged for an extra bus to put into the circuit for both Tuesdays & Fridays Technical Meeting. Same was the case with the Anti Doping Education. This was not expected by the LOC, however, transportation was added at the last minute. Overall the bus company was flexible and helpful in solving what could have been many delays. Kudos should be given to Chris Bewsher, the LOC Manager of Transportation.

○ There was no reports of Jury Management, IFF Staff of any transportation issues

WFC PARTICIPANTS

- ✓ Not all the teams had a Team Guide. This was mostly due in part from the lack of volunteers (see Volunteers section)

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

- ✓ Floorball Canada does not have any relationships with any sponsors other than a competing equipment brand, so there were no existing opportunities for the LOC to acquire any existing revenues.
 - ✓ The LOC had hired a person to search & acquire sponsorship partnerships. This person had 6+ years experience in sponsorship with a number of marquee events in Halifax & Nova Scotia. For the period of May 2018 to January 2019, this person had exhausted most of his networks as they had already committed to their traditional events. As he reached out to hundreds of other companies/businesses it was determined that, without any history or past floorball events or knowledge of the sport, only 3 companies agreed to take a chance on sponsoring the event. In January 2019 he resigned sighting the challenges with trying to promote an “unknown product” which resulted in a significant loss of potential revenues. Several sales representatives were hired by the LOC for January & February 2019, only to have the same result.
 - ✓ The only local sponsor willing to undertake this event was Premier Floorball as they have a future stake in growing floorball in North America (and they represented three of the 12 LOC managers)
 - ✓ The LOC had approached the four largest media companies in Atlantic Canada/ Canada but none were not interested (unless the LOC provide \$100K in sponsorships).
 - ✓ The LOC did manage to strike a discounted media purchase to have the event promoted via their local station with local player interviews, Facebook contests, online Bell Media website digital display ads (50K impressions), 56 x 30 second Virgin Radio commercials (32K listeners) and local TV ad commercial ads during
- [2019 Men's U19 World Floorball Championships - YouTube](#)
- ✓ The LOC working in partnership with the local Canadian Hockey League Major Junior Hockey team

(Halifax Mooseheads) to run ads on their jumbotron during their league hockey games. Although there was a cost, it did expose the sport of floorball to 40,000 spectators over the four home games leading up to the event

✓ The LOC ran ads in the local newspapers 6 weeks leading up to the event that reached over 60K households.. As well, send out 35,000 flyers to neighbourhoods within 2 kms of the venue and offered a contest to get engagement in ticket purchases.

✓ The LOC had partnered with the Halifax Regional Centre of Education which represents 135 schools and 48,000 students within Halifax area, to send out regular email correspondences and install posters in all schools. All schools were given the opportunity to attend the DAY games and also receive a 50% discount on Team Canada tickets. The only cost would be for the school bus rental. Turns out this was a deterrent for the majority of the schools (even though the LOC had pre arranged the local school bus company to have available schools buses AND had requested from the IFF a time change in the morning games to accommodate the school schedule). Furthermore Nova Scotia Floorball Federation conducted over 75 in school workshops during phys-ed classes to demonstrate the sport of floorball and promote the event and performed workshops during annual phys-ed teacher conferences to expose floorball to schools outside Halifax, NS

✓ The LOC partnered with 4 charities to help promote the event to their membership (Mental Health Nova Scotia, Dreams Take Flight, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Special Olympics). These charities used social media and their membership database to promote their Team Canada Game Night.

✓ The LOC reached out to 8 local minor hockey association totalling 5,000 hockey players to promote the event and incentivise their memberships to attend Team Canada games

✓ The LOC hired the professional services of Be responsive Media to create the website, social media graphics, posters, banners, apparel etc. to create the brand around MU19 WFC. There was a consistent branding and messaging in all the marketing & promotions. BeRepsonsive Media engaged the services of a social media person to consistently puch out social media in Instagram, Facebook, Twitter 8 weeks leading up to and during the event. Hundreds of social media postings and media engagements were pushed out during this period of time. Floorball Canada marketing person joined in as a social media partner to duplicate the efforts of the LOC/ BeResponsive Media

MEDIA OPERATIONS

- ✓ No local television production was used in this event as no media company was interested.
- ✓ Live streaming was provided by a third party company, 3SixtyLive. Aside from a connection issue on one of the YouTube channels (which caused a delay), all of the games were streamed live
- ✓ For the period of April 30/19 to May 14/19 the Floorball2019.com website saw
 - o 13, 319 users of which 12, 505 were new users (2,093 from USA and 1,739 from Canada)
 - O 36, 225 page views

VOLUNTEERS

- ✓ All the positions that were planned to be covered by volunteers were NOT successfully filled. This was in part, and arguably a major reason, due to an event that was scheduled to start five days after the event. The Halifax Mooseheads (local CHL Mjr Junior Hockey Club) won the bid to host the Memorial Cup in Halifax, NS. This event is the largest and most prestigious junior hockey championships in Canada. They won the bid one year after the LOC was awarded the MU19 WFC. The Memorial Cup not only drew much of the attention from our event but also drew 700 volunteers from the pool of volunteers in Halifax. The local government was not able to find other volunteer networks to supply candidates. As a result the LOC had to reach out to family & friends (some who had to travel into Halifax for the week). The lack of volunteers was probably the MOST challenging part of hosting this event. As a result, the LOC were not able to meet the IFF volunteer protocols each night so each day phone calls and incentives had to be incorporated to bring people into helping with the event.
- ✓ The biggest hurdle in getting volunteers was that many had expressed their lack of interest in being part of floorball as they had no knowledge about the sport (apparently volunteers choose to volunteer as a means to view/ benefit from the event). Those who did volunteer had MANY positive experiences and comments about how exciting the sport was and how surprised they were (and glad they did volunteer)
- ✓ There were enough of highly motivated volunteers that had a big impact on making the event happen and many spent 12 hour days helping to ensure the event ran smooth. Special recognition should be given to Jason Stubbs, who bore the brunt of many of the daily operational issues and arrived each morning a 7 AM

but did not leave until 11 PM each night. Jason put MANY long hours in to ensure the details requested from the IFF were satisfactory every day!

✓ Volunteer clothing had to be purchased by the LOC as there were no companies/organizations willing to sponsor the apparel. As a result, any clothing that was within view of the live stream had to be interchanged among volunteers. Those who would regularly show up each day were given their apparel to keep.

✓ During the DAY games, particularly the week days, it was extremely challenging to get volunteers for the Rink Squad and other floor duties. The LOC had reached out to the schools that indicated they would attend prior to the day, and arranged for several of their students to serve these capacities. In a few cases, the school bus had arrived later (15 minutes prior to the game) so some Rink Squad positions were vacant until the start of the game. There were a few students who did receive permission from their parents to take time off school and did show up each day to help. The weekend games were easier to find volunteers.

✓ The LOC, nor Floorball Canada had no employees so many of the LOC/ key volunteer persons (Match Secretariat, Manager of Transportation, Manager of Production, Director of Marketing, Manager of Accreditation/Ticketing, Director of Photography, Director of Catering, Volunteer Manager etc.) took a weeks vacation from their regular jobs to help out with this event. In some cases, they also incurred travel/flight expenses to be in Halifax. This is something that is highly commendable and worth noting.

✓ Overall, there is NOT a strong following/ awareness of floorball in Halifax/ Nova Scotia/ Canada and therefore no real desire for people to get involved. Arguably in countries where floorball is strong, this might not be as big a challenge as it was during this event in Halifax, NS (there are only about 150 youth playing floorball in Nova Scotia)

COMPETITION

✓ All but one of the games, were played as planned and there were no major issues regarding the changes in the practice venue during the tournament week

✓ A total of 8 Doping tests were conducted during the WFC by the Canadian Centre of Ethics in Sport for a cost of \$6000 to the LOC

✓ The floor delivered from Gerflor from Montreal, PQ for the A Venue (Zatzman Sportsplex) was not in the good shape and was rolled the wrong way (according to the local installers) and most likely was stored for 3+ years, which has caused a delay in allowing teams to practice prior to the start of the competition. During the tournament, the floor had to be repaired a several times as the edges that kept curling up. After every period the seams had to be rolled. This MAY be in part that the floor was installed on thermal boards and the rink temperature had fluctuated each night after the last game and before the next morning game. After the second day, the Gerflor for Venue B (Dalplex Gym) had settled into being in good shape. Upon uninstallation, the installers informed the LOC that Gerflor had not sent the higher quality tape for Venue A, so this may have been

part of the issue.

✓ All teams practices were held at Dalplex gym adjacent to the official playing floor. A number of teams did not respond to the LOC to arrange transportation to practices and that put an extra burden on the Manager of Transportation to find/add bus into the schedule as teams were requesting practices after they arrived in Halifax.

✓ There was enough seating and barriers to prevent any noise during the games as teams practiced on the adjacent gym area

✓ The Dalplex (Venue B) unfortunately had the dressing rooms underneath the gym and travel time to the locker rooms during period breaks took extra time. To compensate, temporary locker rooms were set up in the gym area behind the official playing area so teams could rest there as opposed to going to their locker rooms.

✓ There were some minor issues with the stopping of the game clock. This was primarily due to inexperienced time keepers and lack of trained volunteers on the LOC part.

✓ Although the LOC had First Aid/ Responders on staff as well as First Responders/ CPR Certified attendants in the venues, we did not have a dedicated First Responder at the Secretariat Table (for teams that did not provide their own medical staff). Part way through the event we staffed up with a nurse/ first responder volunteer

SPECTATORS EXPERIENCE / VENUE

✓ The majority of the spectators who attend their first WFC were very impressed.

✓ Both venues used experience DJ and Speakers which helped create a professional event

✓ Neither venue was equipped with a jumbotron so replays were not available

✓ Premier Floorball created a website (FloorballRules.com) to help spectators understand the rules of floorball by using their Smart Phones.

✓ Unihoc had a display within Venue A, at the entrance, which allowed for spectators to feel the sticks and make a purchase.

✓ Premier Floorball had a display adjacent to Unihoc that promote local floorball clubs and capture people's contact information for a follow up after the event

✓ There were two floorball clinics (Friday at 6 PM, Saturday at 11 AM) offered to the membership of Zatzman Sportsplex (Venue A) and advertised to the public. David Crawford (@floorballguru) was invited to conduct the clinics. David played on the USA Mens National Team and is a big promoter of floorball in the USA

✓ During the period breaks of the Team Canada games, local hockey teams (players in age from 8-10 years old) were invited to play a 10 minute scrimmage on the official "pitch" (Venue A). These were teams selected from local minor hockey associations and was intended to give these young players a chance to experience playing floorball, with hopes they (and their minor hockey association) will consider floorball as an off ic training activity and steer their membership towards spring floorball clubs.

✓ Also during the period breaks there were floorball skill competitions where spectators who participated had a chance to win prizes.

TICKETING

✓ The final income from ticketing \$29,149 (short of the budget \$50K)

✓ The final amount of sold tickets was 4,321 (many were discounted as they were sold a Weekly Pass). The total amount of complimentary tickets distributed was about 1,200

✓ Estimates indicate that there were about 250 +/- foreign spectators, mostly family & friends of the players and primarily from the top four teams and Team Canada

✓ Overall largest single game attendance was Friday 7 PM Team Canada game with an estimated 900 spectators. Of this amount, 350 were from local minor hockey associations

✓ The overall attendance fell short of expectations, most notably less than 1000 school students attended out of a possibility of 48,000 and only 350 minor hockey players attended out of a possibility of 5,000, in spite of a year long campaign of school workshops/ minor hockey cross training clinics (75+ schools, 8 MHAs)

✓ The main Venue A, had a capacity of 3000 seats. The second Venue B had a capacity of 1200 seats

HOSPITALITY

- ✓ The LOC hosted a Local VIP reception each night for key persons in Halifax, NS who would be influential in growing floorball (i.e President/VP of Hockey Nova Scotia, Hockey Canada Director of School Programs, Presidents/ VP Development from 8 local minor hockey associations, Sport Coordinator of Halifax Regional Education Centre, 14 City of Halifax Councillors, Directors of Sport Nova Scotia, Executive of Halifax Mooseheads etc.). Each night prior to Team Canada game, a VIP reception was hosted (consisting of food & drinks). Of the 120 guests invites, 30 attended.
- ✓ The LOC provided the IFF/ NSO daily catering consisting of coffee/baked goods in the AM and lunch w refreshments in the afternoon, each day. Additionally, the LOC provided bar services from 5 PM to 9 PM.
- ✓ The LOC provided all the volunteers morning coffee/tea & baked goods along with lunch
- ✓ Every day the referees were provided water and fruit in their dressing rooms

ADJACENT

- ✓ Each team was left to their own to provide their off time tourist events. Many of the teams attended the Halifax Mooseheads playoff hockey games, some took trips to Peggys Cove, many tasted the fresh local food (seafood and DONAIRS) while others enjoyed the city culture/ historic exhibits
- ✓ The “opening ceremonies” for the event comprised of a 20 minute pre Team Canada (first) game in which the Mayor of Halifax, Deputy Mayor of Halifax and CEO of the 2020 North American Indigenous Games gave a short ‘welcoming remark’

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SUMMARY

- ✓ POSITIVES:
 - hosting an event in the mens U19 category in Canada allowed for 16 countries and 400+ young athletes an opportunity to experience Canada and (hopefully) appreciate Floorball Canada as a "player" in helping grow the sport of floorball in the world.

- The IFF got credit for hosting an IFF WFC in North America
- Having the event locally allowed for Floorball Canada athletes to experience the hometown feeling that they seldom get when they travel abroad.
- With less travel costs, many Nova Scotian floorball players were able to be part of the team, even though they did not play (and who typically would not travel overseas). This is important that young players form strong bonds with experienced players in a WFC setting so that as they embark on their journey to be the future Floorball Canada players they will be equipped with the experience/ excitement. Even now several of them are investing in travelling to Ontario for training camps (i.e. broadened the dept of the National Team)
- this event exposed Nova Scotians (and travelers from North America who otherwise would not have traveled overseas) to the highest level of youth floorball play (i.e. best product).
- the DAY games allowed for 600+ junior high school students a chance to see floorball played by athletes who are not much older than themselves. The goal is to leverage this exposure to continue to build floorball programs in schools.
- the event gave the LOC an opportunity to invite key persons in their network to show how significant the sport of floorball is worldwide. These key persons involve Recreation Directors, Minor Hockey Executives, School Administrators.
- the event allowed the IFF to experience the challenges with organizing/executing on a (relatively) unknown sport in a country that is not in the top 10 floorball countries of the world (hopefully to discover unique differences than running similar championships in stronger floorball markets)
- this brought together Floorball Canada members in collaboration to deliver the event
- the event allowed the LOC team to learn & experience what it takes to host an WFC. MAYBE this will be helpful in aiding other North American cities if/when they host a WFC
- The IFF staff were EXTREMELY helpful, patient and accommodating in spite of the many challenges during the operation

✓ NEGATIVES

- Teams had lengthy travel schedules and time zone adjustments
- The learning curve, and not having an experienced WFC on the LOC team (and solely relying on Eventello tasks) left many holes in the planning and priorities not addressed
- Lack of volunteers and losing key LOC members within months of the event had a dramatic effect on the LOC performance
- Major events happening near the same time drew much attention away from the WFC as well as volunteers
- Issues with the flooring contributed to many hours of frustration (and concerns with teams)
- Relying on sponsorship funds as the only source of revenue in advance of the event and not having good cash flow, put the event at risk in pre paying major suppliers
- Fundraising initiatives targeted at the developed member countries were disappointing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Speaking mostly from the perspective of hosting an WFC in a member country that is less developed and/or hosting for the first time:

- Recommend more “hand holding” from 1 year out (assign a Competition Manager from 1 year, with one/two on site visits with LOC 8 months and 4 months in advance of event, etc.)
- Prior to awarding a WFC event to a member country, there should be a requirement for the member country (or LOC representing the member country) to have a minimum revenue stream in place within the organization (i.e. member fees) and preferably available cashflow to help with the pre and post costs associated with any upfront costs (marketing, deposits, advance payments) as well as any shortfalls resulting in lower revenues/ higher expenses, respectively.
- There should be pre set milestones far enough in advance of the event that the IFF/LOC determine the inability of being able to deliver the WFC, an option for either IFF/LOC to intervene
- IF the IFF is using the WFC to grow the sport, there should be a shared financial responsibility (profit & loss), particularly where there is an inherent value for the IFF (i.e. meet the requirements of the IOC to expand into new countries)
- Teams should be required to choose from the LOC list of hotels/accommodations. This would ensure the LOC hotel rebate revenues and ease of transportation planning.
- IFF should help to secure international sponsorships to help with financing the WFCs
- Possibly more contribution from developed member countries (in the form of sponsorship, GoFund programs, staffing etc.)
- More assurance from all levels of government, well in advance, should be mandatory.

In summary, events outside of the core (developed) member countries will be essential to broaden the awareness for floorball and showcase the 'best product' (the highest caliber of floorball athletes in the world). It will require more than just planning an event. It will require collaboration by the IFF, strong member countries (particularly those who have an interest in seeing floorball grow), experienced LOC personnel working alongside the new LOC team and a shared responsibility by all (not left to the resources of just the LOC)