

## **Helmet Update**

Last year we had 6 reports of coaches in Minnesota receiving skull fractures after falling or being knocked to the ice. One incident was nearly fatal and the family reports that he is doing well. He suffers from some headaches and other issues but for the most part he has recovered as much as possible, has returned to work and life moves on.

During the winter I received several emails and verbal reports of coaches going down and hitting their heads on the ice. They all thanked us for the helmet rule. No injuries reported.

Since the end of the season however I have noticed that the helmets have been relegated to the equipment bags once again. Since the off season is not sanctioned we have no authority.

In mid February a squirt coach from our area was skating outside without his helmet with his off season team and he fell hitting his head. He is still in the hospital six weeks later after spending 3 weeks in ICU. I am told 5 days were in an induced coma in order to control the swelling of his brain. He remains in the hospital in critical condition with loss of some motor skills which could be permanent. There is no estimate when he is expected to get out of the hospital. What a tragedy even if not on our watch.

USA Hockey did the right thing requiring coaches to wear helmets. Please continue to educate coaches about the benefits of safety on the ice.

Thanks,

Hal Tearse  
Minnesota Hockey Coach in Chief