Dear Hockey Friends –

While there has been much consternation and discussion about the recent rules WHAM provided for the upcoming season, I am writing this guest column to hopefully put things into perspective.

The rules for this upcoming season are all about being able to play in a safe way and to limit our exposure to each other and the general public.

**You can only field 8 players for a game?** Consider yourself lucky you will be on the ice a lot! You get the ultimate workout and hopefully can practice playing at a different position or with a different line.

**Your lower level team isn’t going to field a team** but an upper level team wants you to join them? Go play with that upper level team – you may find you are better suited to play up than you thought and next year IF things go back to normal in the world, you can go back to your lower level team – no questions asked.

**Can’t play more than two games a week** because we are limited to one team this year? Get over yourself. I had to. My overall health and the health of those around me is more important than playing 4-6 games a week during the winter season. By limiting our exposure we are helping to keep the curve flat. This is really important.

A couple things to consider as we move toward the August 15 deadline to declare our teams: playing for the love of the game and can you afford to do this from both a health and financial perspective.

**Playing for the love of the game** – we are not playing for stats, we are not playing for the Stanley Cup. Sign up to play if you just love to be on the ice and love to play. That’s it. Nothing else.

**Can you afford to do this from a health perspective?** Who are you around daily? Can you afford to quarantine if someone you may be exposed to tests positive? Who will you expose? Who in your life is immunocompromised and can’t risk seeing you? These are important things to think about.

**And can you afford this from a financial perspective**? As a team, we are responsible for the ice we book. I don’t know many rinks that will let you cancel games because of last minute Covid-19 risk. If your home rink gets shut down – you will be on the hook for paying for ice. What is your liability? Can you afford to pay $400 to not play?

**We are all in this together** and we all have a responsibility to be diligent about our own health risks as well as those around us. This virus knows no boundaries. Don’t be the break in the D line that allows a shot on the net.

# “Activities that carry small (but not zero) risk, such as going on walks with friends, at a safe distance, will be important for people’s mental health and sense of social connection as the crisis drags on. But it’s vital that even as our states and cities reopen, we continue to use great care and consideration for others in deciding where to go, whom to see, and how close to get.” ([Just Because You Can Doesn’t Mean You Should, The Atlantic June 30, 2020](https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2020/06/reopening-makes-citizens-responsible-public-health/613666/?utm_source=pocket&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=pockethitsJust&fbclid=IwAR3bT0oihNSnIfIRGvKDRb6dVZvuhxvj4fIW_fpsBFk0z1waOU6EKjSAAos))

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