



Celebrating 25 Years of Success

PRESS RELEASE

PETER SOURIS
Director of Public Relations
Hockey East Association

591 North Ave – #2
Wakefield, MA 01880
Office: (781) 245-2122
Cell: (603) 512-1166
psouris@HockeyEastOnline.com

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HOCKEY EAST PROMOTION ADDRESSES FAN BEHAVIOR

WAKEFIELD, Mass. - Hockey East is looking to make the fan experience a positive one at all of its facilities. That is the goal of a new campaign highlighted by fan-friendly posters being sent to all campuses this weekend, which was announced on Thursday by Hockey East Commissioner Joe Bertagna.

The headline on the posters, which depict a photo of children and families enjoying a game, says: "Give your team a cheer but remember who else is here!"

"We have the best fans in the country and we are so pleased that they have been turning out in record numbers this year," said Bertagna. "But we have also had some isolated instances where language has offended some of our fans and we felt it was appropriate to address the matter."

The issue of fan behavior has been the subject of national media attention in recent months. Bertagna does not characterize the issue as a "league problem" or even a "hockey problem."

"This is a national and cultural issue. Certain behavior and certain language previously considered distasteful has become commonplace," says Bertagna. "The overwhelming majority of our fans, including our student population, is absolutely terrific. But we acknowledge that there have been some isolated incidents and there are a few institutionalized cheers at some venues that we would like to see go away. We certainly want our fans to be energized and have fun supporting their teams. But we want all the fans to enjoy the experience, especially families coming to our arenas with young children."

Every Hockey East institution has policies and procedures in place to address this issue and all schools have been doing this in various ways for many years. Adds Bertagna, "This league initiative is offered as simply one more tool in a common attempt at limiting offensive behavior and language at our games."

The posters should start appearing in Hockey East arenas as soon as this weekend.

The Hockey East Association is a 10-team, Division-I college hockey conference, with offices based in Wakefield, Mass. Founded in 1983, the league has won five NCAA championships in the past 16 years. The conference also sponsors an eight-team women's league which began play in 2002-03.

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