

# Ill-trained coaches causing hockey abuse

**Re: Hockey officials fed up with abuse, Jan. 17.**

Having almost 30 years of high-level coaching experience, one develops many insights into the game of hockey. The abuse of referees primarily can be attributed to ill-trained and uninformed coaches. These are normally found at the house league, "Rep B" and "Rep A" levels of the sport but not double-A and triple-A competitive levels.

Why then? One would ask. Simply, there are not enough willing persons to become good or better coaches. Admirably, many parents take on the task but really don't want to be there. They are not students of the game and do nothing to improve or meet the demands they have agreed to provide.

Watching hockey on television does not make an expert. In fact, qualified coaches only watch for entertainment value as coverage is poor at best.

For a new coach to steer the bumpy road, he or she must study, go to games alone with objectives in mind to learn zone coverage, entries, the difference between pressure and containment. And of course, to learn bench management.

There are too many subjects to be listed in this letter for a coach to learn and become seasoned. However, all of these assist in the development of the

coach and the respect given to him/her by the players. This respect is then passed on to game officials, time-keepers, fans and their opponents.

It is not uncommon for coaches at the higher levels to discipline their own players for wrong doings and missed calls by officials. It is simply unacceptable for a coach to brush these aside or have them swept under the carpet. Abusing an official is the end result of a coach's inaction.

The Canadian Hockey Association has a fantastic certification program for those who are eager, but it falls way short for those who have taken on the responsibility of head coach or an assistant and just show up. Accordingly, at least four more in-class tutorials or seminars with take-home assignments should be added throughout each season.

Being a coach in any sport is a respected profession and just because you have the position does not mean you are good. Each coach has to earn his or her own respect everyday through various forms of study and communication.

If you are not up for challenge, then let someone else do it. At the very least, please do not influence any player with your attitude.

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