

# TFNHL Rules and Guidelines

(revised June 2010 for the 2010-2011 season)

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## Chapter 1: The League

The Fans National Hockey League (TFNHL) is an STHS based 30-team league, each ran by at least one (1) General Manager. In this document, the TFNHL is referred to as “The League,” while General Managers are referred to as “GMs.”

## Chapter 2: Code of Conduct

The TFNHL code of conduct applies to both league management and general managers. Treat others in the manner in which you would like to be treated. Be polite and courteous to others, and while rivalries are encouraged, know where to draw the line. Any racist or other disrespectful remarks are grounds for immediate dismissal.

Not all trade offers are good ones, so avoid childish comments and instead reply with a simple “no thanks”. This league is for fun, and anyone caught cheating shall be immediately dismissed.

League participants who do not abide by the code of conduct will be subject to dismissal. At the discretion of the Commissioner or by majority vote of the Board of Governors.

## Chapter 3: League Structure

### 3.1. Commissioner & co-Commissioner

The League Commissioner is responsible for maintaining the League website, reviewing trades, and running of the day-to-day League operations. The Commissioner is also responsible for interpreting the rules as they exist and making additions or changes that need to be made. All situations not covered herein are left to the sole discretion of the Commissioner.

The co-Commissioner retains all the authority of the Commissioner but reserves his responsibility for when the Commissioner is unavailable or he is asked to step in to act as Commissioner by the Board of Governors or the Commissioner.

Currently, Mike O’Fallon is serving as the League’s Commissioner, and Michel Mousseau is serving as co-Commissioner.

### 3.2. Director of Hockey Operations

The League will also have a Director of Hockey Operations. The DHO is responsible for simulating games, processing trades, line submissions, and other changes within the simulator as deemed necessary. The DHO is available to advise and help the Commissioner. Moreover, DHO will run the League’s day-to-day operations in the absence of the Commissioner.

Currently, Dom Romano is serving as the League’s Director of Hockey Operations.

### **3.3. Board of Governors**

The Board of Governors (BOG) is a group of three (3) current general managers in the TFNHL, (each with at least one (1) full year of affiliation with the League. The members stay on the board for an unlimited time, but can be changed during the course of the League. The BOG serves as an advisory board, reviews an annual Commissioner's report, and votes on approval of Commissioner's services. Moreover, whenever a Commissioner makes a ruling, any General Manager could appeal to the Board of Governors, which may overrule the Commissioner. If a Commissioner is overruled three (3) times within the same season the Board might chose to perform a review and ask the Commissioner to step down. If the Board overturns up to five (5) rulings within the same season, the Commissioner's actions should automatically be reviewed.

The Board of Governors also serve as a trade review panel. If a posted trade is protested by any TFNHL GM, the Board will review the trade for fairness & equity. A trade may be rejected by majority ruling of the Board. Further detail on trades is detailed in chapter 11.

Currently, Phil Grote, Gary Brown, and Wayne Proulx serve as members of the Board of Governors.

### **3.6. Player Agents**

Player Agents bargain with GMs to sign all eligible players to new contracts. Player Agents are encouraged to think from a player's point of view. During contract negotiations, Player Agents will take many factors into consideration including (but not limited to) existing TFNHL contracts, NHL contracts, players' ratings, potential, & age.

Currently, Michel Mousseau is serving as the Player's Agent.

### **3.7. Salary Arbitrator**

The League must have a Salary Arbitrator at all times. The Arbitrator must rule on all issues when a Restricted Free Agent and his current team agree to the arbitration, bypassing regular free agency. The teams must honor Arbitrator's decision or decline it and therefore declare the player an Unrestricted Free Agent.

Currently, the BOG is collectively serving as the League's Salary Arbitrator(s).

## **Chapter 4: SimonT Hockey Simulator**

### **4.1. SimonT Hockey Simulator**

The League uses the SimonT Hockey Simulator (STHS), version 1.1. The League may upgrade to any future releases without notice, unless necessary. In the event that STHS releases versions 1.x, the League may switch to said version only after the completion of the current season.

## Chapter 5: General Managers

### 5.1. GM Duties

As a GM in the TFNHL there are certain duties you should do on a regular basis. Some of these duties include: sending in lines, making trades to improve your team, participating in drafts, etc. If a GM frequently does not live up to these duties, then they are subject to dismissal.

### 5.2. Participation

Participation is what makes or breaks a league, and thus is as just important as some of the duties listed above. TFNHL uses a number of ways to communicate between the GMs: e-mail, ICQ, the League's message board and the League's Chat Room.

Activity on the message board is very important, including reading and posting. If you do not pay enough attention to the message board then you are bound to miss things. It's also important to check your e-mail frequently and reply when necessary, at least once every 48 hours. Again if you do not frequently live up to these duties, then you are subject to dismissal.

### 5.3. Sending Lines

Lines should be send in on a regular basis as there is no minimum number of times that a General Manager should do so. However, if there are ANY issues with the lines of your team (be it a suspension, injury, or what not) the Director of Hockey Operations will AUTO your lines in STHS, which MAY cause a player to be sent down having to clear waivers, another goaltender to be starting, etc. After the DHO has had to AUTO your lines three (3) times in one season, you will receive a warning, each time after that your lines need to be AUTO-ed, you will be fined \$1,000,000 for up to five (5) times, after which, the Commissioner may relieve you of your duties as a General Manager. If you are away on a business trip and/or vacation or any other reason, let the Commissioner know in advance, this type of situation will NOT result in fines and/or penalties.

You are encouraged to make sure to send in lines as often as possible. Most important: make sure that your lines are never ineligible (for example if you have only one healthy goaltender or only two healthy LWs, your lines are NOT eligible and the DHO cannot simulate any games). When such situation happens, the DHO will have no choice by manually correcting the issue. If that happens you will be fined: 1st offense is \$1,000,000, 2nd offense is \$3,000,000 and 3rd offense is \$5,000,000 and automatic Board of Governors review.

### 5.4. Leave of Absence

Since real life does come first, exceptions will always be made if you are unable to perform your duties as a GM. In such a case, please e-mail the Commissioner or post on the message board that you will be away. If a GM is gone longer than they stated, has been away a while without notice, or if frequently too busy to perform his duties, then that GM will be subject to dismissal.

## 5.5. Complaints

If you wish to file a complaint about something going on in the League, please e-mail the Commissioner. Under no circumstances should a complaint be sent league wide via email or posted on the message board. If your complaint is regarding the Commissioner and/or his actions, please e-mail the Director of Hockey Operations or co-Commissioner who will bring the issue to the Board of Governors.

## 5.6. Participation Fines

Inactive or out-of-contact GMs essentially take an entire team out of the League for as long as the inactivity lasts. The League needs to be reminded of each GMs presence in the league. For that reason, Out-of-Contact fines will be enforced. If, during a 4-week period, during the regular season, a GM does not either: A.) Send in lines, or B.) Post on the message board, their team may be fined \$500,000. Each subsequent week without contact, the fine may be re-assessed, with an added \$500,000 for each week. These fines will be assessed unless the GM has announced ahead of time that he will be away or unavailable. If there are 3 or more fines, the GM is automatically fired and a replacement will be found ASAP.

GMs must also be in contact via e-mail. If multiple GMs report that another GM has repeatedly failed to respond to emails or ignored trade offers, and this is found to be true, the team will be fined \$500,000. This fine will be assessed even if the GM has sent in lines or posted on the message board.

Any fines levied against a team may be rescinded upon the GMs dismissal thereby precluding the entire organization from being punished by the former GMs actions. Fines will be reversed at the sole discretion of the Commissioner.

## 5.7. Participation Rewards

On the flip side, GMs who are active in the League will be financially rewarded. Each post on the message board that is either a team report, trade review, game review/preview and is at least 3 full paragraphs long will be rewarded with \$250,000 credit to their team bank. Participation awards will be summed & added monthly during the regular season and on occasion during the off-season.

Participation in other League activities (such as Power Rankings, Playoff Predictions, etc.) will be rewarded as well.

# Chapter 6: Coaches

## 6.1. General Information

Coaches affect the way your team performs. Coach ratings can be seen on the coach page. Each coach has a separate contract negotiated by a Player Agent. Coaches can have their contracts

renewed or extended at any time. Each time a coach's contract is renewed or extended, their salary must go up by at least 12%. Coach ratings are based on the NHL performance.

## 6.2. Coaching Changes

Coaches may be fired at anytime, however, they must be paid 80% of their entire contract immediately. Once a coach is fired, a team must hire a coach immediately. Any coach on the coach list who is not signed by another team may be hired. A coach who retires in the NHL will finish the current TFNHL season before retiring in the off-season. Once a coach retires, he forfeits his pay and his contract is voided. The coach's former team will retain the coach's rights. New coaches may be added to the list at any time, however a coach must have previous NHL coaching experience in order to be accepted.

# Chapter 7: Rosters

## 7.1. Roster Restrictions

Teams must have a minimum of 20 active, non-injured players on their pro roster at all times. Of these 20, at least 3 must be listed at each forward position (C, LW, RW), 6 must be defense, and 2 must be goaltenders. By sending in lines regularly via the GM Editor program, it will ensure that you remain in compliance with this rule. Teams are also encouraged to have 3 goalies signed to TFNHL contracts in case of an injury. If a team doesn't have 3 goalies and one is injured the team will be automatically fined. Please see section 5.3 for more information.

Farm teams need to have be able to fill two full lines and have at least 1 goal tender. It is understood that injury on the pro roster may force farm players to pro causing shortages on the farm.

Teams may have a maximum of 25 active, non-injured players on the pro roster at any time during the regular season and playoffs. The rule is void during the off-season.

A team may have a maximum of 50 players signed to TFNHL contracts and appearing on either pro or farm rosters.

To make room for another player you may outright release a player currently under contract.

Fines may be assessed for roster infractions. For more information, please see section 7.4.

## 7.2. Goalie Restrictions

During the regular season a goalie may play a maximum 72 games, or 4,320 minutes. If a goalie plays a 73rd game, then that goalie will be suspended for the remainder of the season. If a goalie plays his 73rd game on the last day of the season, then that goalie will be suspended for one playoff game. Should the team not make the playoffs, they will be fined \$3,500,000.

### **7.3. Players Position**

You may switch a player's position, however you must provide proof that the player has played that position before by providing a link which shows the player listed in that position. The link must come from TSN.com, ESPN.com, NHL.com, or from an NHL team's official website. Wings may be changed to their opposite wing more freely than other position changes. The Director of Hockey Operations is the final and only judge of whether online position documentation is valid or not.

### **7.4. Rookie Status**

In order to qualify as a rookie, the player must be 25 years old or younger at the start of the TFNHL season. A skater will remain a rookie for the first 48 pro games played, while a goalie remains a rookie for the first 24 pro games played. Once a player has exceeded the number, they give up rookie status. Any player who starts a season as a rookie will remain a rookie until the end of that season.

### **7.5. Roster Fines**

Failure to comply with the minimum roster requirements will result in a fine of \$1,500,000 for the first team game played with rosters in violation of the rule, and \$3,000,000 for each subsequent game played with rosters in violation of the rule. If a goalie plays in 73 or more games, then that goalie will be suspended for the remainder of the season. If a goalie plays his 73rd game on the last day of the season, then that goalie will be suspended for one playoff game. Should the team not make the playoffs, they will be fined \$3,500,000.

If at any point during a season your roster is ineligible and the DHO will have no choice but to manually correct the issue, you will be fined: 1st offense is \$1,000,000, 2nd offense is \$3,000,000 and 3rd offense is \$5,000,000 and automatic Board of Governors Review.

## **Chapter 8: Lines**

### **8.1. Line Restrictions**

As stated in article 7.1, a valid roster must include 20 active, non-injured players. Of these 20, three must be listed at each forward position (C, LW, RW), six must be listed on defense, and two listed as goaltenders.

A team must submit the best lines possible. Any team caught submitting lines that significantly hurt their chances at winning in order to throw games will be subject to fines or dismissal. This will be left to the Commissioner's discretion.



## 8.2. Players Playing out of Position

Players may be played out of position; however, a forward cannot be played as a defenseman or goaltender, and vice versa. It has been discussed by the creators of STHS that when a player is played out of position, their performance is reduced by 20%.

## 8.3. Submitting Lines

GMs submit their lines using the STHS Client, free download available via link on TFNHL home page. The essentials of using the editor are as follows. First, you must download the "League Files" from the TFNHL home page. Unzip the contents of the file onto your computer in the directory of your choice. While running the STHS Client, select "File > Open" and open the files for the TFNHL. Select your team and from there it should be pretty self-explanatory. Once your lines are set choose "Save Lines". Then send the Director of Hockey Operations an e-mail with the lines file attached. The filename should be "yourteam.lns"

# Chapter 9: Player Ratings

## 9.1. Rating Abbreviations

Player performance is based on their ratings in a variety of skills. Abbreviations are as follows:

### Skaters Ratings

CK = Checking  
FG = Fighting  
DI = Discipline  
SK = Skating  
ST = Strength  
DU = Durability  
PH = Puck Handling  
FO = Face Offs  
PA = Passing  
SC = Scoring  
DF = Defense  
EX = Experience  
LD = Leadership  
MO = Morale  
PO = Potential  
OV = Overall

### Goalies Ratings

SK = Skating  
DU = Durability  
ST = Strength  
SZ = Size  
AG = Agility  
RB = Rebound Control  
SC = Style Control  
HS = Hand Speed  
RT = Reaction Time  
EX = Experience  
LD = Leadership  
MO = Morale  
PO = Potential  
OV = Overall

### Coaches Ratings

PH = Physical  
DF = Defense  
OF = Offense  
PD = Player Discipline  
EX = Experience  
LD = Leadership  
PO = Potential  
OV = Overall

"Overall" is a composite of the other ratings shown above. The weighting of these ratings is different for offensive players, defensive players and goaltenders, recognizing their important roles on the team and the relative value provided.

## 9.2. Re-Rates

TFNHL uses ratings based on NHL seasons, and not by player performance during the TFNHL season. New ratings will be retrieved and implemented during the off-season. The TFNHL will leverage the database provided annually by the SIMHL until further notice.

## 9.3. Mid-season Ratings Review

There are currently no plans to conduct mid-season re-rates of any kind.

# Chapter 10: Suspensions

## 10.1. Automatic Suspensions

An automatic suspension can be issued after a game by the STHS for player misconduct on the ice. Suspensions will not be reversed by the League. The suspension will vary in length based on the type of infraction and the result to the opposing player due to the infraction. A player cannot be dressed until the full suspension has been served.

## 10.2. Reviews

If a player suffers an injury and a player on the opposing team was given a penalty at the same time, then the infraction is subject to review by the league. The GM of the injured player's team may send an e-mail to the Board of Governors and make a message board post. The e-mail/post should be in the form of a videotape (i.e. explain what we'd see when watching the incident). The League will then decide whether or not that player will be given a suspension.

Some other things that could determine whether a suspension will be given or not is the seriousness of the injury, other incidents in the game, and the player's history in the TFNHL.

# Chapter 11: Trading

## 11.1. Trade Assets

GM's in the TFNHL may trade players under contract, draft picks, prospects, cash, and future considerations. If future considerations are included, they must be clearly stated.

## 11.2. Trade Limitations

There could be trade limitations which GM's will need to abide by. Currently, teams may not trade more than \$5,000,000 cash in one trade. No deal should include future considerations that are based on NHL performance. Future considerations that suggest a player involved in the deal will return to his original team that he was traded by in the same season, via another trade or through waivers, will not be allowed.

Trades will not be allowed if the trade will put a team over the salary cap or below the floor. Exceptions may be made if the GM sells his case to the Board of Governors. The Board must set a deadline for the salary correction. If the salary correction is not made by the deadline, the GM will be subject to a fine of \$1,000,000 and may be forced to add/drop a player to bring the team in line with the salary cap/floor. Fines & roster penalties will be assessed by the Commissioner subject to approval by the Board of Governors.

### **11.3. Trade Deadline**

Towards the end of every regular season will be a set deadline where trading will end until after the playoffs. This deadline will occur after approximately 85% of the TFNHL season games have been played.

### **11.4. Trade Process**

Both teams must agree to the trade terms before posting to the message board. A message board thread will be dedicated to the posting of trade announcements. Once posted, one of the trading GMs must send a league-wide email announcing the trade. After a wait time of 48 hours, the trade will be processed in the SIM by the Director of Hockey Operations.

### **11.5. Protesting a Trade**

Upon receipt of the league-wide email announcing a trade, any GM who feels the trade is unbalanced, unfair, biased, or suspicious may file an official protest to the Board of Governors. A protest is sent via email directly to the Board members, and cc the Commissioner, co-Commissioner, and Director of Hockey Operations.

Do NOT post a message or “reply all” to the league-wide email to file a protest. This could be discourteous and distressing to the GMs involved in the trade. Keep your arguments offline and directed toward the Board.

## **Chapter 12: Waivers**

### **12.1. Waiver Eligibility**

Any player who is 23 years old or older will be placed on waivers if a team sends him down to the farm team. Players who are 18-22 years old can be freely sent to the farm club.

### **12.2. Waiver Wire**

Once a player is placed on the waiver wire, any team may claim him for 48 hours. If two or more teams claim a player, the team who is the highest in the waivers priority list will get the player. Waiver priority is listed in the SIM and is determined by reverse standings. The last place team in the current standings received top priority. Teams with the better records have lower priority.

If a team claims a player, he must be put on the pro roster; otherwise he will be placed on waivers again. If a player is not claimed in 48 hours, he will go to the original club's farm team, where he is paid 10% of his salary. After the regular season is over, a team may send any player to the minor leagues without having to go through the waiver process.

Players who have played 10 games or more at the pro level will continue to receive full salary on the farm through the end of the season.

## **Chapter 13: Prospects**

### **13.1. General Information**

Each TFNHL team has a prospect list. Players on the prospect list have their rights owned by that particular team but have not been signed to a contract. Each player on the prospect list costs the team \$1,500 per year which will be assessed at the beginning of each season AFTER the entry draft.

### **13.2. Prospect Promotions & Entry Level Contracts**

At the beginning of each season, any prospect who played in the NHL or AHL in the prior season will be created in the SIM. Prospects will be signed to a standard entry level contract to be three (3) years in length at the current NHL salary. The NHL salary will be determined via online research.

When a prospect is created in the SIM, the GM may choose to exercise a "walk away" option and not sign the prospect to an entry level contract. In this case, the GM forfeits all rights to the player, and the player becomes an unrestricted free agent (UFA) on the Unassigned List.

Upon signing a prospect, the player will be transferred to the farm team. Because each team has a roster limit of 50 pro/farm players, a GM may choose to keep a new player on the prospect list by paying his entire annual farm salary (10% of contract) at the beginning of the season. The Director of Hockey Operations will deduct the players salary from the team bank and return the player to the prospect list with a notation of contract terms in parentheses. For example, John Smith (3x850).

Players should not be held back on the prospect list if they are getting regular playing time at the NHL level. We need to maximize the number of valuable, rated players in the SIM.

### **13.3. Releasing Prospects**

Teams may have any unsigned player removed from their list at no cost and released, meaning the player is no longer considered a prospect but rather an unrestricted free agent (UFA) and can be signed by anyone. Signed players will be compensated their full remaining contract salary at the farm rate (10%).

For example, prospect John Smith has 2 years remaining on a \$600k entry level contract. If he is released by the team's GM, he is paid  $(2 \text{ years}) \times (\$600,000) \times (10\%) = \$12,000$ .

### 13.4. Prospect List Limitations

Up to 50 players may be kept on the prospect list at one time.

### 13.5. Acquiring a New Prospect

Any player not listed on any team's prospect list, not signed to a TFNHL contract, and who is 20 years of age or older on October 1st, can be acquired by any team at any time, except during times where new free agent signings are not allowed. Exceptions to the 20 years old rule will include any player who has been through an NHL draft or who has signed with an NHL club.

The current process to claim a prospect is to send an email to [fnhl.prospects@gmail.com](mailto:fnhl.prospects@gmail.com). Claims received will be processed monthly during the regular season and on occasion during the off-season. If multiple claims are received for the same potential prospect, the team with the highest waiver priority will win the prospect's rights. See section 12.2 for detail on waiver priority.

## Chapter 14: Player Termination

### 14.1. Retirement

If a player retires in the NHL while a TFNHL season is still in progress, then the player will retire at the end of the following TFNHL season. If a player retires in the NHL during an TFNHL off-season, then he will remain in the SIM for the following season and retire immediately thereafter.

Once a player retires from the TFNHL he forfeits his pay and his contract is voided (except in scenarios outlined in Section 16.7).

If the unfortunate occurs and a TFNHL player/prospect passes away in real life, then that player/prospect is immediately taken out of the TFNHL out of respect for the player/prospect and their family. The player's contract is voided in this scenario.

### 14.2 Playing Internationally

If a player decides to leave North America to play overseas, he will be removed from the SIM at the end of the following TFNHL season. A team can choose to honor 50% of the player's total contract in order to retain his rights upon returning or opt to release the player immediately without penalty.

Scenario: Evgeni Malkin signs with a Kontinental Hockey League team in the off-season.

Option A: Team honors the player's contract (50% total value). By doing so, they retain his rights upon returning to North America. The player is transferred from the team's roster to the team's prospect list. If the player returns to North America, a new contract must be negotiated with a TFNHL Player Agent.

Option B: Team releases the player without pay. By doing so, the team holds no exclusive rights upon returning to North America. The player is removed from the team's roster and/or prospect list and deleted from the database.

If the player in question is not signed to a contract, but is on the team's prospect list. The player can remain there indefinitely thereby allowing the team to retain his rights.

A player's rights can be traded just as any prospect can be. If the player is released by their former team, they will become an unrestricted free agent upon returning to North America and participating in an official game.

### **14.3. Unavailing Players**

An unavailing player is one that has NHL experience, but that has not played an NHL game in the previous NHL season without cause, is not rated in the SIM, and if it doesn't look like they will be playing an NHL game anytime soon.

Unavailing players are judged by the Commissioners and each player will be looked at on an individual basis. Once a player is unavailed, they are placed onto the team's prospect list.

### **14.4. Releasing a Player**

A team may buy-out a player at anytime. However, the team is obligated to pay the player's full remaining contract as one lump sum at the time of termination - 100% of his remaining contract out of your team's balance during the season. Teams may buy-out players in the off-season for 50% of the player's contract. In other words, if the player has three years left on his contract at \$1,000,000 salary per season, a team has to pay him \$1,500,000 in order to release him outright during the off-season.

Once the player's contract has been terminated, that player becomes an unrestricted free agent regardless of his age. If the player being bought out has retired from the NHL then they will be removed from the League.

## **Chapter 15: Contracts and Ages**

### **15.1. General Information**

In order to play for a team, a player must be signed to a contract. Contracts must be at least \$525,000 per year, and may be no more than ten (10) years long. Contracts must be negotiated with the appropriate TFNHL Player Agent. Contracts may include signing bonuses, which are deducted immediately from the team's cash balance.

Contracts may also include stipulations such as a no-trade clause or limited trade clause. No-trade clauses may only be offered to players 30 years of age and older. Players who are on the farm roster are paid 10% of their full contract for the time they are in the minors.

A player's base salary may only be a maximum 20% of the team's total cap space. With a current cap of \$58.6 million, the max a player is allowed to earn is \$11.72 million per season.

## 15.2. Eligibility

Any player may be signed to a TFNHL contract provided they satisfy all the following conditions:

- 1.) The player is not already signed to a TFNHL contract
- 2.) The player is not on another TFNHL team's prospect list
- 3.) The player is not retired
- 4.) The player is at least 20 years old at the time of signing or is currently signed in the NHL
- 5.) The player has played professionally in North America

If a player signed is not in the TFNHL (either on rosters or prospect list) the GM has an option of sending the player on the prospect list, while paying his entire salary. The same rules as described in the Teams and Rosters section apply.

## 15.3. Expiring Contracts and Increasing Ages

The league will increase every player's age, and decrease contracts one year, once the playoffs are finished. If a player is 31 and has 1 year remaining on his contract during the season/playoffs, he will become 32 and his contract will become expired once the playoffs are finished, making that player an unrestricted free agent for the upcoming offseason. Players will be aware during the season that they can become unrestricted free agents once the playoffs are finished, and may reject contract extensions for that reason.

## 15.4. Bonuses

Bonus structure to ALL contracts signed by TFNHL players is as follows: all bonuses combined (signing and performance) can't exceed 50% of the player's total salary. In other words if a player signs 4 year deal at \$1 mil per, his total salary is \$4 mil, so all of the bonuses he is eligible for are no more than \$2 mil.

Bonuses do not count toward the salary cap, however, teams wishing to be creative and offering extravagant options/clauses to go around the 50% of salary rule - be warned only the contract itself counts toward the total salary, any option years do not. Moreover, any possible performance bonuses (e.g. \$1 mil for reaching playoffs) count toward the 50% rules - it is assumed that the player will reach all performance clauses. In other words, a 4 year contract (regardless of any option years) that pays the player \$1,000,000 annually allows for \$2,000,000 in bonuses total, including ALL performance bonuses (regardless of whether the player will or will not be able to reach them).

## 15.5. Farm Salaries

Players who are on the farm roster are paid 10% of their full contract for the time they are in the minors. However, if a pro player is demoted to the minors after playing 10 or more games at the pro level, he will continue to receive his full pro salary for the remainder of the TFNHL season.

## Chapter 16: Free Agency

### 16.1. Types of Free Agents

There are two types of free agents, restricted free agents (RFAs) and unrestricted free agents (UFAs).

### 16.2. Unrestricted Free Agents

UFAs can be signed by any team without compensation to former team. Conditions for becoming an UFA are as follows:

Any player not listed on any team's prospect list, nor signed to a TFNHL contract with another team, nor retired from the NHL, nor eligible for the NHL Draft, can be signed by any team at any time, except during times where the commissioner halts new free agent signings.

Any player aged 28 or older on July 1 whose current contract has expired becomes an unrestricted free agent.

### 16.3. Restricted Free Agents

Players whose contracts expire who do not qualify for unrestricted free agency can have their free agent rights restricted by their former club. By default, all players under 28 will be given a qualifying offer of 110% of their current salary. These players then become restricted free agents, and may be signed to a contract by any team.

However, if another team signs the player, the player's former team has the right to either match the offer (in which case the player automatically returns to his former team with the new contract), or decline, and take compensation from the new team. See section 16.6 regarding RFA compensation.

### 16.4. Player Agent Negotiations

The TFNHL Player's Association handles all the leagues financial contracts. The TFNHL will have one or more Player Agent(s) who will be in charge of negotiating contracts for their clients. The agent will act as the player's voice in negotiations and carefully decide where they would like to sign and why.

Players may sign with a team for various reasons such as location, money, contract length, whether the team is a contender, if they have played for the team in the past, they have



someone they know on the team, they need a change of scenery, etc. GM's are encouraged to develop a good relationship with the agent(s) otherwise it may affect their GM credit, see Chapter 17 for more information on GM credit.

## 16.5. Signing Unrestricted Free Agents

Off-season unrestricted free agency is for any player aged 28 or older whose current contract has expired, becoming an unrestricted free agent. UFA's can be signed by any team without compensation to the former team.

Released free agents are players that have been bought out by their former teams or prospects that have been let go. These players will become UFA's immediately and placed on the "Unassigned List".

The process will be very much like the NHL. GM's will be able to send in offers after a certain date to the unrestricted free agents, and the TFNHL Player Agent(s) will begin negotiations.

The free agency signing period will begin on or about July 1 of each year and end on the TFNHL trade deadline during the regular season. After the trade deadline, no additional free agents may be signed. The only exception to this rule is where a team's lines cannot be made given their current roster due to injury. The commissioner must give explicit approval for this type of emergency contract, and the GM may be fined for failure to maintain an adequately staffed roster.

## 16.6. Restricted Free Agent Compensation

When a team loses a RFA to another team then they are entitled to some compensation. This compensation may be negotiated, but the default is as follows:

| New Annual Salary         | Compensation   |
|---------------------------|--|
| \$999,999 and below       | No Compensation  |
| \$1,000,000 - \$1,499,999 | a third round draft choice                                     |
| \$1,500,000 - \$2,999,999 | a second round draft choice                                    |
| \$3,000,000 - \$4,499,999 | a first round draft choice <u>and</u> a third round            |
| \$4,500,000 - \$5,999,999 | a first, second, <u>and</u> third round                        |
| \$6,000,000 - \$7,499,999 | Two (2) first round choices, a second <u>and</u> a third round |
| \$7,500,000 or more       | Four (5) 1st round draft choices                               |

If a team has more than one applicable draft pick then they will offer either their own or the one that is highest in the draft order. If a team has two or more picks in applicable rounds they both will go to the team who is losing the free agent. Picks have to be as soon as possible, even if it means 3 picks in 1 draft. All picks must come within the next 4 drafts,

A team who does not have the appropriate draft picks to compensate for an RFA signing risks being unable to negotiate compensation with the team losing the free agent. If no appropriate compensation can be agreed upon, the offer sheet will be voided.

Teams may opt-out of the qualifying offer for any player by emailing the Commissioner and the pertinent Player Agent before the announced date. Players whose RFA protection is declined in this manner become unrestricted free agents.

## **16.7. Free Agent Contract Restrictions**

**Signing Bonus:** There is a signing bonus limit of 50% of a total contract value. For example: If you offer a player a 3 year deal at 5 million per year, the maximum amount you may award in terms of a salary bonus would be 4.5 million.

No deal may be awarded to a player if it contains a salary which is broken up over the next X amount of years. For example: If you offer a player a 4 year deal worth, in total, 20 million, the deal must be 5 million per year, and not 4 million the first year, 6 million the second, etc.

Signing players who are 35 years old or older to contracts longer than 1 year in length will require either buyout the player or counting his salary toward your cap number in case such a player retires prior to his contract ending. The following rules will apply:

1 year left on player's contract upon his retirement – you can buy him out at 50% of remaining salary OR count his entire salary toward your cap

2 years left on player's contract upon his retirement – you can buy him out at 75% of remaining salary OR count his entire salary toward you cap.

3 or more years left on player's contract upon his retirement – you can buy him out at 85% of remaining salary OR count his entire salary toward your cap.

Failure to comply with these rules will result in the contract offer being void immediately and a possible fine of \$1,500,000 to the team, which will only be used at the discretion of the TFNHL Commissioner and will only be enforced should numerous attempts be made at violating the above rules.

## **16.8. Salary Arbitration**

If a GM cannot agree to terms with an RFA, they reserve the right to go to Salary Arbitration. If the GM chooses not to go to Arbitration, the player in question will automatically become an Unrestricted Free Agent (with the caveat that any other team willing to sign him, has to do so at least at the salary decided by the Arbitrator). Each GM may submit one (1) player for arbitration per calendar year. The GM MUST accept the decision of the Arbitrator.

In an effort to simplify RFA signings and avoid arbitration, GMs and Player Agents will be encouraged to look toward actual NHL contracts as a general guide.

## Chapter 17: GM Credit

### 17.1. General Information

Each General Manager (GM) will be assigned a credit rating based on their dealings with the TFNHL Player Agent(s). GM's will be graded on how fair their contract offers are, whether or not they show their players respect and whether or not they keep their promises or stick to what they say. The credit ratings range from "A" (being the best) to "F" (being the worst). Every GM will start out with an "A". When a new GM comes in they will start with an "A", the previous GM's credit rating is terminated. The worse the credit rating a GM has, the harder it will be for that GM to sign a player. For instance, a GM with a "C" is going to have a harder time signing a player than a GM with an "A".

### 17.2. Ways to lose credit

Giving a significantly low contract offer

Trading a player who was signed via UFA in the last year or a prospect that was just brought into the league in the last year

Not sticking to what you say to players (i.e. if a GM tells a goalie that if he signs he will be the #1 goalie and then makes him his backup goalie instead)

Disrespecting the TFNHL Player Agent(s)

### 17.3. Ways to gain credit

Continuously making decent contract offers

Keeping to what you say

Holding onto players signed via UFA or signed prospects for over a year

Offering contract extensions prior to player's contract being down to 1 year or offering to restructure a player's contract ahead of time if he significantly outperforms his present one.

Showing respect to the TFNHL Player Agent(s)

## Chapter 18: Finances

### 18.1. General Information

One of your goals as GM of a TFNHL franchise is to make sure the franchise remains financially sound. All teams will start out with \$40,000,000, including new teams if any are added at a later date. Franchises gain money by selling tickets, and they must sell enough tickets to pay for their expenses. Team expenses include, but are not limited to, pro and farm payrolls, coach salary, prospect fees, signing bonuses and more.

### 18.2. Salary Cap & Floor

There is a hard salary cap set at \$58,600,000 and floor set at \$40,800,000 for the 2010-2011 season and forward. The cap & floor may be adjusted in the offseason to keep in line with the NHL standard.

The salary cap & floor apply to all teams and at all times. The cap & floor are checked throughout the year by the Commissioner, co-Commissioner, Director of Hockey Operations, and the Board of Governors. Violations of the salary cap & floor noticed by other GMs should be reported to the Commissioner.

If for any reason a team is over the salary cap or under the floor, the GM has 48 hours rectify the situation. Extensions may be granted by the Board of Governors if the GM can present a plan of action to correct the problem.

All of the payroll caps apply to Pro Roster payroll ONLY. However, teams may NOT hide players on the farm roster. If a player has appeared in the majority of team's games during the current season, he cannot be sent down to the farm before the trade deadline to clear up cap space. The Commissioner will check this closely!

### **18.3. Salary Cap & Floor Penalties**

If a team goes under the salary floor and does not fix the issue within 48 hours, then the following penalties apply:

Day 1 - Team is fined \$5 million dollars

Day 2 - Team is fined an additional \$7 million dollars

Day 3 - Last day to get over the cap by signing or trading for a player

Day 4 - If the team is still under the floor, then the Commissioner may ask (or force) the GM to resign. If a plan of action to correct the problem long term can be presented the Board of Governors, the Board may choose to provide an extension to the GM.

If a team goes over the salary cap and does not fix the issue within 48 hours, then the following penalties apply:

Day 1 - Team is fined \$2 million dollars

Day 2 - Team is fined an additional \$3 million dollars

Day 3 - Last day to get under the cap by waiving/buying out/trading a player

Day 4 - If the team is still over the cap, then automatically player(s) are waived to get under.

### **18.4. Player(s) That Will Get Automatically Waived**

If the League is forced to automatically waive a player because of salary cap penalties, then one of two situations will occur, in this order:

Situation 1

The highest paid player that gets the team under the cap will be waived.

For example if Team X is \$4,000,000 over the cap and Team X's top paid players are:

Joe Blow - \$9,000,000  
John Joe - \$5,500,000  
Jim Jensen - \$4,100,000

Then Jim Jensen would be the one to get waived as he is the highest paid player that gets the team under the cap.

#### Situation 2

In the event that the team does not have one player that will get them under the cap, then the highest paid player on the team will be waived along with the lowest paid player that gets them under the cap.

For example if Team X is \$5,000,000 over the cap and Team X's top paid players are:

Henry High \$4,200,000  
John Kent \$3,600,000  
Peter Paul \$3,500,000  
Jeff Joe \$3,200,000  
Fred Frank \$2,700,000

Then Henry High would be waived as he is the team's highest paid player along with a player who makes \$800,000 or the next step up from there (the lowest paid player that gets the team under the cap).

### **18.5. Injured Reserve List**

If a player is injured for 3 weeks or longer, teams will be allowed to exceed the cap by whatever the injured player's salary is to replace him. Cap restrictions are applied to the team again once the player is set to return within 1 week time.

Example: If Player A who makes \$2,500,000 gets injured for 3 weeks or longer, the team is allowed to exceed the cap by \$2,500,000 until Player A's status returns to 1 week or less.

Any GM wishing to place a player on the injured reserve list MUST notify the Commissioner. If a team fails to do so and attempts to go over the cap using this rule, they will be fined as per section 18.6.

### **18.6. Generating Revenue**

Teams will earn revenue by selling tickets to their games. The amount a team earns depends on the arena size, attendance, and ticket prices.

Ticket prices can be changed any time during season.

Attendance will be based on whether a team is playing well and if the team has any star players, (superior ratings), for the fans to watch play.

## **18.7. Arena Upgrades**

Each team starts off with an arena that the NHL team has at the time. You can purchase more seats for your arena in the off-season. Extra seats will cost \$15,000 per seat. Price of seats is subject to change at any time. An arena will only be able to increase in seating capacity by 2,000 before a new arena must be built.

Building a new arena costs \$100,000,000, and takes 2 years to build. Once the new arena is complete, the new arenas capacity will start off at the previous arenas maximum capacity limit (so if the old arenas max was 20,000, the new arena will start off with a minimum capacity of 20,000, with a 22,000 maximum capacity limit). The new arena then must be upgraded by 2,000 seats again before a team may build another new arena.

## **18.8. Special Achievement Bonuses**

There will be special achievement bonuses given out at the end of each TFNHL season:

A team will be given \$500,000 for each playoff round they win plus,  
\$1,000,000 for winning the division  
\$2,000,000 for winning the Stanley Cup  
Additional bonuses may be introduced

Awards: Any team that wins an award or has a player that wins an award will be given \$500,000 for each award.

## **18.9. Teams in Financial Distress**

No team may be managed into a position in which the team's projected losses for the year result in a negative projected balance. Check the finances page often to make sure where your team stands fiscally. Teams in violation of this limit will be permitted to continue as they are, but will not be allowed to sign any prospects or free agents, nor will they be allowed to make qualifying offers to potential restricted free agents, nor will they be allowed to make any trade which adds to their team's payroll. Any GM whose team goes bankrupt will be dismissed from the league.

# **Chapter 19: Drafts**

## **19.1. General Information**

Drafts will be held on the league's message board or chat room. If a GM cannot participate in the draft, then it is up to them to make arrangements to send in a draft list to the Commissioner or have someone draft for them. If a GM does not make these arrangements then the Commissioner can draft for them and they may not be the best of picks.

## 19.2. Draft Etiquette

One of the biggest issues with organizing a draft is that GM's often fail to respond promptly. When it is your turn to choose, GMs must make selections in a timely manner otherwise a Commissioner will make the pick for them.

## 19.3. Entry Draft

The entry draft will occur in the off-season. All players that were eligible for the previous NHL entry draft will be included in the TFNHL entry draft and only these players. The entry draft will consist of seven (7) rounds. GM's will be allowed to trade during this draft. The draft order will be in reverse order of the previous TFNHL standings, with the non-playoff teams entering a draft lottery. The draft lottery only affects the first round of the draft; all other rounds will be in reverse order of the previous season's standings.

## 19.4. Entry Draft Lottery

For all the non-playoff teams there will be a draft lottery held. The team who finished the season in last place will have the best odds of winning the lottery; the second to last team will have the second best odds, and so on. The lottery will have one winner. The lottery winner will receive a promotion of his 1st round pick. The winner can move no more than five (5) places upwards in the draft order.

Here are the odds of selecting first for non-playoff teams:

|                  |       |
|------------------|-------|
| 30 <sup>th</sup> | 25.0% |
| 29 <sup>th</sup> | 18.8% |
| 28 <sup>th</sup> | 14.2% |
| 27 <sup>th</sup> | 10.7% |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> | 8.1%  |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> | 6.2%  |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> | 4.7%  |
| 23 <sup>rd</sup> | 3.6%  |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup> | 2.7%  |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> | 2.1%  |
| 20 <sup>th</sup> | 1.5%  |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> | 1.1%  |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> | 0.8%  |
| 17 <sup>th</sup> | 0.5%  |

## 19.5. Expansion Draft

If the League decides to expand existing clubs may choose either of the following protection plans:

Plan A: Up to 5 defensemen, 9 forwards, and 1 goaltender

Plan B: Up to 4 defensemen, 8 forwards, and 2 goaltenders

Each club must expose for claim the following players who meet the experience requirements indicated below:

One Goaltender - For teams protecting one goaltender, no experience requirement is necessary. For teams protecting two goaltenders, one of the goalies must have at least 15 games of experience in the TFNHL pro league. Games played include regular season and playoff games.

One Experienced Defenseman - A defenseman who has at least 40 TFNHL games of experience. Games played include regular season and playoff games.

Two Experienced Forwards - Two forwards who have at least 40 TFNHL games of experience each. Games played include regular season and playoff games.

## **19.6. Equalization Draft**

If the Commissioner or the Board of Governors feel an TFNHL team or teams, have become too weak, then an equalization draft may be necessary as a last resort to balance the League. The equalization draft is to be used for emergency purposes only and will hopefully never have to be used. If there is an equalization draft, it will take place in the off-season. The rules and stipulations will be made by the Commissioner, and every GM will be given a fair amount of time to prepare for the draft.

## **19.7. Contraction Draft**

The contraction draft is a tool the Commissioner & Board of Governors can use if they feel the league is unjust, and if a team is unable to compete in any way, shape, or form. The TFNHL will contract in the first off-season following an NHL contraction, or if the Commissioner feel a contraction is needed in the TFNHL. If there is still a GM on a team that needs to be contracted then that GM will either be let go, temporarily out of work until another GM spot opens up, or contraction will be put on hold.

A contraction draft will be held in the off-season. The team or teams that are being contracted will have all their assets put into the draft including roster players, prospects, draft picks, and any other players or coaches that they may own the rights to. The draft order will be a reverse order of the previous TFNHL season standings and the draft will continue until all the assets have been selected.

# **Chapter 20: Special Events**

## **20.1. All-Star Game**

Each season, between the 30-50 game mark (per team) the TFNHL will host an All-Star game. The city that will host the All-Star game will be given \$5,000,000, and will be randomly selected.



A city may only host an All-Star Game once every five (5) years. There will be a break in the schedule to allow for the game to take place.

There will be two All-Star teams, though the format may be determined by the Commissioner. Some seasons may consist of an East Conference vs. West Conference exhibition. Other seasons may consist of North American players vs. non-North American players, or some other creative setting.

Each team will be made up of at least 3 players at each forward position plus 3 other forwards at any position, 6 defensemen and 2 goalies. All TFNHL teams have to be represented. There will also be one coach selected from each conference to coach the teams. Lines will be made by the GMs with highest points during the season. Any stats that are cumulated in the game will be separate from regular season stats.

The all-star selection list will be created by the Commissioner and sent out to be voted upon by the GMs around mid-season. The ballots will contain the players for both teams, with at least three players (six for defensemen) in each category making the team:

- 6 Centers
- 6 Right Wingers
- 6 Left Wingers
- 8 Defenders
- 3 Goalies

## **20.2. Awards**

At the end of each TFNHL season, awards will be handed out. Some awards will be automatically given (Art Ross Trophy, William M. Jennings Trophy, Presidents Trophy, etc.) but the majority will be decided by the vote of all GMs (GM of the Year, Lady Byng Trophy, James Norris Trophy, Conn Smythe Trophy etc.). Teams will be rewarded money for each award, see sections 18.8.

## **Chapter 21: Miscellaneous**

These rules are not exhaustive. They are just some of the most common things GMs and other need to know about the league. Changes to these rules will usually be made public on the league web site and/or message board, and some official league rules may be made on the website without being added to this rulebook.