

PJHL working on solutions for interrupted season

By Brian Lockhart

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Provincial Junior Hockey League is deciding how to continue the season once hockey teams get back on the ice.

Current provincial restrictions have arenas closed until at least January 27, meaning most Junior C teams will be missing eight or nine games that have been postponed.

There is no guarantee that the season can resume after that date as the province has indicated that the January 27, date may be extended if it is deemed necessary due to public health concerns.

"The PJHL has been having discussions with teams and we have several possible scenarios ready to implement," said Terry Whiteside, PJHL commissioner.

The league had a 35-game schedule this year due to the late start at the beginning of the season.

A normal schedule is 42 games.

Once play returns, the League will have several avenues to take to complete the season.

The schedule can be extended and have the missing games played at the end of the year. This would result in playoffs being delayed.

If that happens, the final Schmalz Cup provincial championship won't be taking place until June.

The other likely scenario is to continue the season and consider the missing games to be a write-off. In that case, the playoffs will be determined by the team standings at the end of the schedule.

This could have a huge impact on some teams as it could really affect their position in the final standings.

A spokesperson said that as of this week, nothing has been determined yet as to which route the League will take, however team executive and League officials are working on a plan.

The spokesperson also indicated that they were considering finishing the season with a total of 28 or 30 games, meaning teams and the league are leaning toward picking up where the schedule left off and eliminating the postponed games from the season standings.

On Saturday, January 23, a new schedule was release with games for February and March.

More information is expected to be released this week.