



Gary B. Bettman | Commissioner

August 10, 2011

Mr. Richard Lacroix
Capitalware Inc.
90 Morrison Crescent
Markham, ON, Canada
L3R 9K9

Dear Mr. Lacroix:

Many thanks for your recent letter. I appreciate the time you took to articulate your thoughts and I want to assure you the National Hockey League shares your belief that everything possible should be done to keep hockey exciting, entertaining, skillful and – above all – as safe as possible for the players.

With that in mind, I wanted to make sure you had an update on all the safety-related measures we have enacted over the past few months and why we feel certain issues that arose late last season are much less likely to occur in 2011-12. The actions that have been taken are the result of outstanding cooperation among the General Managers, our Hockey Operations Department, our Board of Governors, the Competition Committee and the National Hockey League Players' Association.

Five separate initiatives have been implemented since last March:

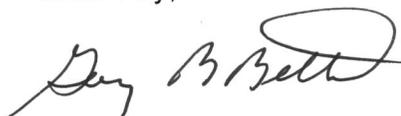
- Brendan Shanahan was charged with the responsibility of engaging the NHLPA to determine the steps that could be taken to make equipment that continues to protect the wearer but is not a threat to the safety of an opponent in the event of a collision during play. Additionally, Brendan was promoted to Senior Vice President, Player Safety – the first position of its kind in professional sports. Brendan will visit all 30 teams in the months ahead and will make clear the standards of conduct the players are expected to maintain while playing the sport that features the most speed, the most sustained action and the most body contact. Brendan also will be in charge of supplementary discipline.

- The League updated its concussion evaluation and management protocol and scheduled mandatory concussion education and training sessions for coaches, athletic trainers and team physicians, in addition to providing educational sessions for the Board of Governors and General Managers. The NHL has been at the forefront of concussion management since 1997 and will continue its leadership role in this important area.
- Teams and coaches will be held accountable for the behavior of their players. If a player is assessed supplementary discipline more than once, his team may be fined and his coach may be fined or suspended. We also will be focusing on supplementary discipline and how to best ensure it deters inappropriate conduct.
- A committee of hockey executives who were outstanding former players – Rob Blake, Joe Nieuwendyk, Brendan Shanahan and Steve Yzerman, all of whom played under the rule changes implemented after the work stoppage – was empaneled to work with the General Managers and the Competition Committee on rule modification and enforcement issues. The committee's work resulted this summer in the revision of rules regarding boarding and hits involving the head.
- The focus on player safety extends to the playing environment, specifically to the boards and glass. The League retained an engineering firm to conduct a thorough safety analysis of NHL arenas to identify areas that could, and should, be "softened" to diminish the impact of (and possible injury from) collisions with the boards, the glass, the stanchions that support the glass – or any combination of those components. Particular focus was directed toward the points at the ends of the player benches at center ice. When you go to your favorite NHL arena this season, or watch an NHL game on television, that area will be noticeably different in appearance.

Every sport is confronted by challenges, and I always have believed that the way our sport responds to a challenge is the most compelling way to reassure our fans that we are constantly in touch with the issues of the day – and that we are responsive to feedback such as yours. With elements outlined above, I strongly believe that 2011-12 will be one of our best seasons ever!

Again, many thanks for your connection to our game and for your insightful contribution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary B. Bettman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Gary B. Bettman
Commissioner