IM’s face problems next year

By Gordon R. Hoff

Next Sunday, Peter Lemme ’80, new IM Council Chairman, will hold his first meeting of the Council. Last night I talked with Lemme and he discussed the problems of referees and eligibility in the upcoming year.

The biggest problem which Lemme sees is referees. He said that at the upcoming MITAA meeting he would pressure for some sort of reffing class. He mentioned that these classes could probably be integrated with some sort of pay raise incentive — for example, those who take the class might start off with higher salaries than those who do not. Lemme said that he felt refs not knowing how to handle game situations caused many of the recent referee abuse problems. In particular, he mentioned that in basketball, “referees have the power to call a technical. They can’t abuse this power, though. A good referee doesn’t have a problem. Better referees will probably cut down on the incidence of serious referee abuse.” He added that basketball is a hot sport in which tempers can flare and that the referee abuse problem was tougher to solve in this sport than in others. However, some people connected with IM basketball are not as convinced as Lemme that the problem can be cured by getting better refs. Tom Potter ’79, the IM Basketball Assistant Manager, said that Steve Auschen ’81, who has reported being abused, is one of the better refs.

Much of the problem with referee abuse stems from fundamentally different attitudes as to the purpose of IM referees and games. Gerald Adolph, who was accused of abusing Auschen after an IM game, called me the other night to discuss his feelings on the subject. He denied physically abusing Auschen and went on to state his feelings on the matter.

He said that MIT students are under a lot of pressure to play IM sports to let off steam, and that it is therefore normal that they sometimes give not a hard time. He added that the quality of reffing was on the whole very bad, which also led to a lot of problems.

The second major problem which Lemme discussed was the way in which many A league teams totally ignored eligibility rules. Recently, the Sloan School A league team was discovered to have two junior high school players on the squad. Lemme called this “probably the worst infraction I have ever seen.” He is not quite sure how the problem will eventually be solved, but he suggested that bringing ID cards to the games might be required. The problems of referee and eligibility rule abuse have been steadily worsening over the last year. They have reached a point where they can no longer be glossed over and swept under the table. They must now be confronted by the new ExecComm and Council.

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This seminar will be held Wednesday, March 7, 1979 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 9-150. Refreshments will be served.

Watkins-Johnson will be on campus for interviews March 8 and 9, 1979. Interested students should sign up at the Career Planning & Placement Center.