

# YELLOWKNIFE MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

## NOVICE DIVISION PROGRAM

Approved: 15 June 2009

### 1.0 BACKGROUND

The Novice Division Program is intended for players who are 7 or 8 years old as of 31 December of the current year. However, the Association does permit players to move up or down from their assigned age level if it would assist the player's skill development (See Association policy). Each Novice team is allocated three sessions of ice time (1.0 hour each) per week subject to the demands of special events which take precedence. During the 2008/09 season, there was some debate over the Novice program format. There was a view that games should not be part of the program while other persons felt that games should be part of the program. A "game" refers to five-side competitive play on a full sheet of ice.

### 2.0 HOCKEY CANADA GUIDELINES

The goals of the Novice Program are to:

- Have fun while playing hockey and engaging in physical activity
- Learn the basic skills required to play the game
- Develop an understanding of basic team work through participation in a variety of activities and adapted game situations
- Create and refine basic motor skills
- Introduce the concepts of cooperation and fair play

The Novice Program focuses on skill development in the following areas:

- Skating
- Puck handling
- Stopping
- Passing
- Turning
- Shooting
- Basis hockey skills
- Team tactical skills

### 3.0 PROGRAM CHALLENGES

The Association faces a number of program challenges which reflect the:

- relatively small number of players in each division;
- significant range in skill levels among the players in each divisions;
- desire to meet the development needs of all players regardless of skill level;
- need to ensure that all players have a positive and enjoyable experience.

The latter challenge is especially acute with the limited number of players with a wide range of individual skills.

## 2.4 NOVICE PROGRAM

To ensure that all players receive consistent development from year to year it is imperative that there are clear expectations with respect to the Novice program. The following program description reflects input from members and relevant coaches will be implemented, starting in the 2009/10 hockey season. It is expected that all players (from both teams) will be pooled and that the teams will hold joint practices.

September (Wk 3 and 4):

- pre-season ice time
- three practice sessions per week
- skill development drills, practices and mini-half ice scrimmages

October (Wk 1 and 2):

- player evaluation and team selection
- three practice sessions per week
- mini half- ice scrimmages.
- no formal games,

Once teams have been selected a game between each team will held to ensure balanced teams.

October (Wk 3 and 4):

- two practice sessions per week shared by both teams on ice
- players divided by skill level
- one full-ice game per week

Game scores will not be kept or penalties called.

Offside will be called and there will be 2-3 minute shifts signaled with the score clock

Official referees will be used

Goalies will be dressed in full gear and rotated on a weekly basis. The designated goaltender will dress for the two practices and then play the game.

November:

- two practice sessions per week shared by both teams on ice
- players divided by skill level
- one full-ice game per week

Game scores will be recorded but no penalties will be called

Offside and icing will be called and there will be 2-3 minute shifts signaled with the score clock

Official referees will be used

Goalies will be dressed in full gear and rotated on a weekly basis. The designated goaltender will dress for the two practices and then play the game.

December:

- two practice sessions per week shared by both teams on ice
- players divided by skill level
- one full-ice game per week

Game scores will be recorded but no penalties will be called

Offside and icing will be called and there will be 2-3 minute shifts signaled with the score clock

Penalties will be called a penalty shot as the sanction

Changing on the fly will be introduced

Official referees will be used

Goalies will be dressed in full gear and rotated on a weekly basis. The designated goaltender will dress for the two practices and then play the game.

January to March:

- two practice sessions per week shared by both teams on ice
- players divided by skill level
- one full-ice game per week

Game scores will be recorded but no penalties will be called

Offside and icing will be called and there will be 2-3 minute shifts signaled with the score clock

Formal (three minutes straight time) penalties will be called a penalty shot as the sanction

Changing on the fly will be introduced

Official referees will be used

Goalies will be dressed in full gear and rotated on a weekly basis. The designated goaltender will dress for the two practices and then play the game.

Tournaments: Tournaments are available in Yellowknife at the Novice YKMHA tournament, Hay River and in other communities in southern provinces.

Year End Rewards:

The Novice Division will host a year end event where Esso Medals<sup>1</sup> will be handed out to three players from each team in the following categories:

- Most Improved
- Most Dedicated
- Most Sportsmanlike

Each player in the division will receive a participation certificate and/or medal/trophy.

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<sup>1</sup> See Annual Awards Planning Guide for ordering instructions.