

## **2023/2024 U7 Cranbrook Minor Hockey Division Report**

The 2023/2024 U7 season was another successful year! U7 Major had 21 players this year spread out over 2 teams. U7 Minors had started the season with 28 players and ended the year with 29 players spread out over 2 teams.

We had a great group of Head Coaches, Managers, Assistant Coaches, On-Ice helpers and parent group in both Major and Minor. This is critical any year for a successful season, but especially this year with two of the three ice surfaces being closed for majority of the season resulting in everyone needing to be more flexible with scheduling, etc.

From September to February both the Majors and Minors shared ice just like the rest of CMHA. Majors practiced as a group twice a week, once during the week and once on the weekend. Usually this involved shared ice with the U9 Division, First Shift, and the U7 Minors. Minors practiced as a group once a week on the weekend, often sharing ice with the U7 Majors.

In February and March once the second ice surface opened up, U7 moved into the Kinsmen and we were able to move away from shared ice. During this time Minors would practice as a group of 29 on Sunday mornings, followed by the Majors as a group of 21.

The U7 Majors attended tournaments in Creston, Kimberley, Fernie and Sparwood. The Kimberley Minor Hockey U7 group was great to work with as they collaborated with Cranbrook's U7 Major Teams to play several games in Kimberley throughout the year. This gave the kids some more game experience. Later in the season Cranbrook's U7 Majors were able to return the favor and have Kimberley come down for a few games. U7 Minors finished their season with a few games against one another, which was enjoyable for both the players and parents combined.

All 50 players in the U7 group improved immensely throughout the season, which is the best part of all.

Overall feedback from everyone involved in U7 this season has been positive. Some feedback from first time Head Coaches was it would have been beneficial to have had a few weeks worth of practice plans prepared for them going into the season, as it was found to be overwhelming at the start. Feedback from the parents was positive. They were not sure how the season was going to look with two of three ice surfaces being closed, but feedback was that parents were very pleased with our CMHA and how the U7 group handled these circumstances. It was expressed from U7 Major parents that they appreciated the opportunity to attend a 4<sup>th</sup> tournament this season. They all commented on how great it was to see the players improve throughout the year.

I would like to wish all the best to the U7 Majors moving up into U9 Division next season, and to the U7 Minors moving up to U7 Major.

Dan Ortynski  
CMHA U7 Division Head