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**OPERATIONAL POLICY:** Mite / Novice Division Structure

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## **Preamble**

The SMHA Mite (Initiation) and Novice programs have been structured around the guidelines and directives sent out from Hockey Canada and Hockey Alberta. It is important to note that these guidelines and directives were essentially modeled around how SMHA has been operating Mites and Novice programming for the past 40+ years.

The program has a number of key principles:

1. Provide a high quality age appropriate skill development environment that focuses on fun and participation.
2. Ensure a minimum of 2:1 practice to game ratio.
3. Play 80% of games in Stettler to keep cost and time commitments minimal.
4. Utilize small area playing surfaces to increase puck touches, maximize ice usage and increase competition.

## **Program Guidelines**

### **Initiation**

This program is designed for beginners ranging in age from 5-6 years. The emphasis is on enjoyment and skill acquisition. The objectives are to have fun, stimulate interest in hockey and a desire to continue participation, develop basic hockey skills and promote physical fitness. Players will be introduced to the concepts of cooperation, sportsmanship and leadership.

### **Format**

Duration - 2 times per week starting the week after Thanksgiving and concluding no later than the end of February (approx. 20 weeks).

Age - Introduction to hockey; generally 5-6 years old as per Hockey Canada but could be older depending on skill level.



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League - No defined league, scoreboard not used and no league standings.

Teams - 13 players per team maximum. (Team selection completed before December 1<sup>st</sup>)

### Ice Usage

#### Practices

- All players registered in Division to practice (No team practices).
- Individual age appropriate skill based teaching stations and small area game(s).
- Focus on skating, puck-handling, shooting and passing.
- Practice 2 times per week (1 hour ice allocation) until December 1<sup>st</sup>. After December 1 practice 1 time per week.
- Utilize 4 oz blue pucks where possible.
- On-Ice Coordinator to plan practices and allocate coaching responsibilities accordingly. (On-Ice Coordinator to be approved by the Board of Directors).
- Utilize integrated station approach as outlined in the Hockey Canada Skills Manuals.

#### Games

- Game play begins December 1<sup>st</sup>. Practice 1 time per week and 1 game per week.
- Game duration is 1 hour.
- 1/3 ice games using rink dividers. (Blue line to boards with neutral zone being open for skill activities).
- Positions - Goalies and skaters on rotation.
- Buzzers – 3 minute shifts.
- Utilize 4 oz blue pucks. No goalie equipment only goalie sticks.
- Coaches to act as referees.

Tournaments - Maximum of two tournaments (1 home tournament and 1 away tournament).

Travel – No travel other than to 1 away tournament.

Practice to Game Ratio – Prior to December 1 (2:0) after December 1 (1:1) for an overall ratio of approx. 3:1.

#### Coaches

- Coach 1 (Intro to Coach) certified, minimum of 2 per team.
- All coaches must have successfully completed “Respect in Sport Coach”.
- 1 coach per team to have completed “Safety” certification
- Minimum 2 coaches per team and maximum of 4.



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## Novice

This program is designed for players ranging in age from 7-8 years. The emphasis is on enjoyment and skill acquisition. The objectives are to have fun, stimulate interest in hockey and a desire to continue participation, develop age appropriate hockey skills and promote physical fitness. Players will be introduced to the concepts of cooperation, sportsmanship and leadership. Progression to hockey concepts, positional play, expanded. All players will be evaluated in October and placed on teams based on age and skill progression.

Duration – 3-4 times per week starting the week after Thanksgiving and concluding no later than the end of February (approx. 20 weeks).

Age - Introduction to hockey; generally 7-8 years old as per Hockey Canada but could be older depending on skill level.

League - No defined league, scoreboard may be used in some cases but no league standings.

Teams - 16 players per team maximum. (Team selection completed before November 1<sup>st</sup>).

Team Selection - Teams to be selected by head coaches (approved by Board of Directors) after each player is ranked based on skill and game play as determined prior to November 1<sup>st</sup>. Half ice game play prior to November 1<sup>st</sup> to be used to determine player rankings.

### Ice Usage

#### Practices

- Full ice with 2 teams using ice at the same time.
- Individual age appropriate skill based teaching stations and small area game(s).
- Focus on skating, puck-handling, shooting and passing.
- Practice minimum 3 times every two weeks (1 hour ice allocation).
- On-Ice Coordinator to plan practices and supply all head coaches with weekly practice plans to ensure a consistent skill acquisition experience. (On-Ice Coordinator to be approved by the Board of Directors).
- Utilize integrated station approach and full ice skill drills as outlined in the Hockey Canada Skills Manuals.

#### Games

- Full Ice game play begins December 1st. Teams will play 1 game per week with a max of 3 games every 2 weeks.
- Games will be scheduled by the Director.



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- Game and practice duration is minimum 1 hour and maximum 1.5 hours depending on how ice is allocated.
  - 1/2 ice games using rink dividers to determine team selections and up until December 1st. ½ games can be used to allow groups of players to play against another teams group of players of similar skill levels.
  - Positions - All skaters will play on rotation. Goalies and Players are on a per game rotation prior to Jan 1. Teams can designate specific goalies after January 1 for those more interested in the position. Interested goalies are encouraged to and participate in goaltending clinics offered by the Association or as available.
  - Buzzers – For ½ ice games use a 2 minute shift. After December 1 during full ice games team will “change on the fly” and during stoppage in play
  - Full goalie equipment to be used by goaltenders which is supplied by SMHA.

Tournaments - Maximum of three tournaments (1 home tournament and 2 away tournament).

Travel – At the discretion of the Director but limited to three exhibition games and max 2 away tournaments. Exhibition Games to be scheduled by the Director in master schedule.

Practice to Game Ratio – 2:1

Coaches

- Coach 1 (Intro to Coach) certified, Head Coach only.
- All coaches must have successfully completed “Respect in Sport Coach”.
- 1 coach per team to have completed “Safety” certification
- Minimum 2 coaches per team and maximum of 4.

**Coaches**

- Utilize the Hockey Canada Skills Manuals and other print and online resources as a standard base of technical and tactical skill development and seasonal planning and focus on motor coordination skills in players. Develop these skills through age appropriate drills that incorporate agility, balance and change of direction.
- Continue to play players in multiple positions to develop all the skills of the game.
- A high number of repetitions is combined with a below maximum intensity level during practice sessions.
- The success rate is at least 70% when practicing skills.
- Players to be exposed to numerous repetitive demonstrations. Coach must create a precise mental image of the technical action that must be duplicated. The participant must imitate the correct movement as precisely as possible



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- The decision making process according to standard situations is introduced at these age and technical or tactical learning take place at the beginning of the practice, after the warm up. There can be no learning if the player is tired.

## **Job Description**

### **Division Director(s) – Mite & Novice**

Appointed by the Executive Committee, the Division Director shall supervise the instructors, coaches, managers, and business of the Initiation and Novice Division(s). Position will represent the Division(s) on the Stettler Minor Hockey Association Board of Directors.

Specific responsibilities and duties:

1. Attend all Board of Directors Meetings and represent interests of the Division at the Board of Directors Meetings and report accordingly.
2. Oversee coach selection with Vice-President, Development
3. Coordinate preseason parent meeting to review division program, objective, expectations with on-ice coordinator and establish home tournament hosting responsibilities.
4. Ensure all on ice instructors/coaches have the necessary certification requirements as defined by Hockey Alberta.
5. Ensure that all instructors, coaches and managers adhere to the policies and procedures of SMHA.
6. Provide a list of on-ice instructors, assistant coaches managers to the Registration Director.
7. Provide a list of on ice instructors to the Division On-Ice Coordinator.
8. Make and distribute complete ice schedules, date time and place, for all divisions once ice times have been allocated by the Ice Coordinator. Schedules to include all practices, house league games and exhibition games as per Division policy outline.
9. Coordinate hosting of division tournament and assign duties accordingly.



10. Assist in the player evaluation process and any player movement with the On-Ice Coordinator.
11. Coordinate Dodge Caravan Kids sponsorship requirements (team photo's, etc.)
12. Investigate any complaints and bring unresolved complaints to the Executive Committee for direction.
13. Represent interests of the Division at the Board of Directors Meetings.
14. Manage division finances, including bank account and allocate home tournament funds as per policy.
15. Prepare year-end financial report for Division.



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## Job Description

### On-Ice Coordinator - Mite & Novice

Approved by the Board of Directors, the Division On-Ice Coordinator will take an active role in developing the Division's seasonal technical plan and its delivery to the participants. Position shall supervise the instructors and coaches of the Initiation and Novice Division(s).

Specific responsibilities and duties:

1. Develop and present on-ice programming within the SMHA for the assigned division.
2. Ensure that all on-ice instructors and coaches within the division adhere to the policies and procedures of SMHA.
3. Assist the Division Director in the selection of instructors, head coaches and assistants for the assigned division within the Association
4. Coordinate the evaluation process and any player movement with the Division Director.
5. Create a seasonal plan for Division based on Hockey Canada Skill acquisition outline and individual practice plans for all on-ice sessions based on ice allocated for the Division. Communicate same to all instructor and coaches in the Division.
6. Assist Division Director with preseason parent meeting to review division program, objective, and expectations.

### Qualifications

- Have all necessary coach certification requirements met or exceeded.
- Strong interest in and personal commitment to coaching.
- Ability to work with and communicate with others to deliver program objectives.
- Ability to prepare season plans for division and individual practice session plans and communicate such to instructor and coaches of the division.
- Ability to design and implement other programs as may arise from time to time such as skill evaluations, mini-tournaments, etc.
- Ability to evaluate players for team selection.
- Strong commitment to SMHA and Hockey Alberta Coaching/Initiation Programs