

# Hyland Hills Junior Hockey Association 2006-07 8 & Under Program



## Welcome and Overview

Welcome to the Hyland Hills Junior Hockey Association 8 & Under Program for 2006-07. Rob Cuscaden is the Program Coordinator for the 8 & Under Program and the best way that he can be reached, is by e-mail at [rcuscaden@yahoo.com](mailto:rcuscaden@yahoo.com). This is a great deal of information, but it should describe the program for the upcoming season, especially for those of you who are new to hockey.

## 8U Divisional Meeting

We will be having a pre-season 8U Divisional Info Meeting before evaluations take place. The date and time of this meeting is still to be determined; but it should take place during the first week in September. Please make sure to check our home page at <http://hhha.org> for information regarding the scheduling of this meeting. The plan of the meeting is to go over the 8U program and to answer any questions that parents may have. Anyone who has any questions regarding the Hyland Hills 8 & Under Program may attend.

## 2006-07 8U Program

The primary goals of the 8 & Under Program are for the players to have fun and to develop basic skating and hockey skills. There will not be an over-emphasis placed on winning games; however, scores will be kept, introducing the players to winning and competition. Coaches, managers, and parents are strongly discouraged from giving out goal scoring prizes or keeping track of wins and losses.

This season, we will have 4 Pool Coordinators that will report to the Program Coordinator. There will be one Pool Coordinator for each of our 8U pools (A, B, C and D pools). These Pool Coordinators will handle many of the issues that arise throughout the season from evaluations to game management to concerns and suggestions.

## Evaluations and Team Placement

Each pool is determined during evaluations based on the players' age and skill level and team placement will emphasize balanced teams. Evaluations will run from September 9<sup>th</sup> through September 24<sup>th</sup> and will be conducted on each Saturday and Sunday. Please make sure that you check in early for the first evaluation session as your player will be checked in, measured (height and weight), and issued an evaluation jersey (that must be returned at the end of evaluations).

The evaluation schedule will start on September 9<sup>th</sup> with the players divided into 4 numbered groups. These groups and the evaluation schedule will be posted on the Hyland Hills website (<http://hhha.org>). Initial group placement will be based principally on age with some returning players placed based on known skill levels. It will be important for parents to check the posted group listings on the HSHA website prior to the start of **EACH WEEKEND**. If a player is changed to a different group between

Saturday and Sunday of a weekend, the player's parents will be told in person or be called that Saturday afternoon or evening.

Players should attend all evaluation sessions so they can be thoroughly and fairly evaluated to ensure they end up in the correct pool and the teams are properly balanced. Players may be moved between the groups during evaluation process based on their performance. On-ice coaches will conduct evaluation drills while the head coaches grade the players on various basic skills such as skating (starts, stops, turns, speed, backwards), shooting, puck control, and game abilities for selection to the appropriate pool and for team placement.

The evaluation process will include skating drills, hockey skill drills, and scrimmages. September 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, the players will be divided into groups by their ages and known skill levels. September 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, the players will be divided into groups by their identified skill levels with groups blended to allow special attention to be paid to the players who are more difficult to place in the appropriate pool. After September 17<sup>th</sup>, the players will be placed in the A, B, C or D pools. The primary focus for pool and team placement will be on game skills and game understanding since that determines competitive balance of the teams. Team selection will occur during the week of September 25<sup>th</sup>. Team assignments will be posted as soon as possible on the web site and head coaches and/or managers will call each player's parent to notify them of their team placement and team meetings and/or first practices.

If you have a request for players to remain together, the Pool Director will entertain such buddy requests **via e-mail only** ([rcuscaden@yahoo.com](mailto:rcuscaden@yahoo.com)). The Head Coaches and Pool Coordinators will make efforts to accommodate such requests, especially if there is a carpool or siblings involved, but there can be no guarantee that the players will be on the same team due to competitive balance considerations.

## **Pool Descriptions**

The A pool will consist primarily of players who are new to the association and have not played hockey before or have played only one year of recreational hockey. Placement in the A-pool is for players who need rudimentary skating and hockey skill development. The A-pool this year will consist of four teams. Each team will have about nine or ten players per team by the end of the evaluations. Each team will have an assigned head coach, several assistant coaches, and a team manager.

The B pool will consist of players who have played a year or two in the A pool or have been through several hockey clinics or skating lessons. The B pool will consist of three or four teams with approximately nine or ten players each. As with the A pool, the B pool teams will have an assigned head coach and several assistant coaches each to allow lower skater to coach ratios during practices.

The C pool will consist of players who have played a season or two in the B pool or are better game-time players with a couple of years skating and/or hockey experience. There will be three C pool teams with each team having approximately 10-14 players.

The D pool will be made up of our highest skilled skaters and players. Primarily these players will come from last season's C and D pool teams. There will be three D pool teams with each team having approximately 10-14 players to start the season. Each team will have a head coach who will select his assistant coaches as well as a team manager.

## Scheduling and Equipment Requirements

A season schedule will be posted online as soon as possible. It is expected that the players will be dressed and relinquished to the coaching staff at least 15 minutes prior to their scheduled ice time. This time is important for the coaches to discuss the day's practice or game plan and to warm up the players prior to going on the ice.

Check the schedule on the website frequently as unforeseen events occasionally require changes to ice times. If there is a conflict between a printed schedule or prior posted schedule and the website, the website schedule will prevail. Patience is appreciated with the scheduling as it is a difficult task for a volunteer to coordinate with two other association schedulers, the rink, and the web master.

Players will be required to wear full hockey gear for all evaluations, practices, games, and clinics including:

- Helmet (HECC certified) with full face cage or shields (half shields are not permitted),
- Shoulder pads, elbow pads, hockey gloves,
- Hockey pants (breezers) (suspenders may be necessary for smaller players),
- Shin/knee pads,
- Skates (sharpened),
- Hockey socks (tape, garter belts, or Velcro shorts recommended to hold up socks) (sweat pants can be worn in lieu of the hockey socks),
- Mouth guard (optional, but recommended to get players used to wearing, will be required at higher levels),
- Cup (or pelvic protector) and jock (optional, but recommended to get players used to wearing, will be required at higher levels),
- Neck pad (optional),
- Jerseys (sweaters for those of you from North of the border) (see discussion below regarding game and practice jerseys).

Players arriving or found on the ice without the proper equipment will be forced to leave the ice until proper equipment is donned.

Players will be issued two game jerseys for the season after they turn in their evaluation jerseys. The jerseys, **orange for home and white for away (please note the change from previous years; this will be consistent with the NHL and other CCYHL/DNHL teams)**, must be returned at the end of the season. You may **not** keep this jersey, so please do not have it autographed or have permanent names or lettering attached. Failure to return the evaluation or game jerseys will result in additional fees being added to your invoices.

## Practices, Clinics, and Games

Practices and games will be conducted emphasizing a three-to-one ratio (clinics are considered practices for this ratio). A pool practices will be conducted on one-third ice all season long. B pool practices will alternate between half ice and one-third ice. C and D pool practices will have half-ice practices all season long. C and D pool "traffic" practices (designed to emphasize puck handling in limited ice areas) will be third ice practices utilizing the Border Patrol system. Clinics will be conducted on the full ice sheet with all teams from the given pool participating in a group lesson or

activity. Scheduled ice times will be very similar to last season. At this time, they look identical, but that is always subject to change.

A and B pool games will be played either 3-on-3 or 4-on-4 (plus a goalie). This format will be followed for the entire season. The coaches will change the line numbers to ensure the skill level of all players on the ice is similar. If a gross disparity in scoring or shots develops in any game, the team behind may add an extra player per shift to even the play. This ensures competitive balance during the game and that the lower skilled players have a good opportunity to play the puck. Coaches also have the discretion to penalize a player by withholding a shift if the coach determines the player's conduct on the ice would have warranted a penalty if seen by the referee or, within the coaches' discretion, the player's conduct requires correction.

A and B pool games will be one hour long with a 5-minute warm-up period and three 12-minute periods (give or take depending on how soon the games actually get started). Intermissions will only last a minute each. The clock operator will stop the clock and sound the buzzer every 2 minutes for line changes. The B-pool will evolve into live-puck changes by season's end.

The C pool is designed to allow the coaches to run half-ice games using a 4-on-4 or 5-on-5 (plus a goalie) format. The coaches will not be required to match skills of players on respective lines, but at this level, it is expected that the skill levels will not vary as greatly as they do in the A and B pools. If a penalty is assessed, the offending player will serve the penalty in the penalty box and will not be replaced on the ice (power plays). C pool half-ice games will be live puck changes with a buzzer every 1½ or 2 minutes and will include appropriate stoppages and face offs for goals and penalties.

The D pool is designed to allow the coaches to run full-ice games using a 5-on-5 (plus a goalie) format for the whole season. If a penalty is assessed, the offending player will serve the penalty in the penalty box and will not be replaced on the ice (power plays). All D pool full ice games will be change on the fly. Full ice games will include appropriate stoppages and face offs for icing and off sides.

Each home team manager will be required to arrange a scorekeeper for each game. Each visiting team manager will be required to arrange a clock operator for each game. Training on how to run the clock and properly fill out the score sheets will be provided. It is important that all parents learn how to operate the clocks and keep score as they will be required to do so during the jamboree we host over Presidents' Day weekend in February.

## **Volunteers**

HHHA's success and the success of each player depend on the willingness of parents to volunteer their time. All Pool Coordinators, coaches, and managers will be volunteers. Other volunteer opportunities exist within the program and organization, especially with tournaments and other fund raising events.

Each player's parents are expected to help the team managers with certain issues. The team managers will be putting together a schedule for items such as post-game snacks, locker room key check out, and border tossers/rink divider assemblers. The locker room key must be checked out by an adult 30 minutes prior to each practice, clinic or game. The locker room should be left **unlocked** during practices and games (for late arriving or early departing players), so valuables should **NOT** be left in the locker room. The border tossers must either toss the borders on to the ice at the beginning of practices or games or take them from the ice doors and put them away when games are finished. The

rink divider assemblers will bring the carts with rink dividers onto the ice after the scheduled ice time starts and assemble them and/or disassemble the rink dividers, place them on the cart, and remove them from the ice surface prior to the end of the scheduled ice time. Your help with this is greatly appreciated.

## **Fees**

If you haven't already, please review the HHA fees policy you received with your registration paperwork and signed prior to the evaluations. The fees are expected to be paid in a timely manner upon receipt of the invoices. If you do not make timely payments, you will be assessed a late fee and your player will not be allowed on the ice until the fees are paid. The head coach and manager will be expected to enforce this policy, so please don't place your head coach in the position of not allowing your player on the ice for failure to make timely payments. The Program Coordinator will be in contact with you, your head coach, and manager should enforcement of this rule should it become necessary.

The fee agreement you signed also includes payment of team fees. At this level, team fees usually don't amount to much. For example, the team may wish to purchase matching team socks (about \$10 per pair) or participate in a jamboree (about \$25-50 per player per jamboree). Most team fees at this level are also discretionary; however, if you chose to participate in an event or receive a benefit purchased with team fees, then you will be required to pay them as if the fee was a mandatory association fee. Failure to pay for these team fees will result in suspension of ice privileges and could lead to collection efforts including legal action.

## **End of the Season**

The pool skills competitions will be held the final weekend of the season. Each player will be able to compete in the various skill challenges and will receive a certificate for participating.

Each player will receive a participation trophy or award from the association at the end of the season. Team managers will be given the trophies and the team can determine when and how to distribute them. Most teams do this at an end of the season team party.

If you have any questions, feel free to drop me an e-mail message and I will be happy to get you an answer. Welcome to the Hyland Hills Junior Hockey Association 8 & Under Program for 2006-07.

*Rob Cascaden*

HHA 8U Program Coordinator