

The Model Hockey Program

NARCE

May 2004

Identify Program Philosophies and Objectives

- There is no 'perfect' program
- Complete on-ice program vs. specialty?
 - Recreational, Competitive or Both
- Priority on winning
- Parent Education programs
- Coaching education – ACE Coordinator
- Officiating programs

Ideal Structure

- Learn To Skate
- Learn To Play
- Initiation Program / Cross-ice
- House / Rec program
- Travel / All-Star / Tier 1, 2
- Girls hockey
- Adult league

Learn To Skate

- The Key to your long term success
- How will you market?
- Who will run?
 - Assoc.?
 - Skating club?
 - Rink?

Learn To Play

- What time of year is best?
- What format will you follow?
- Include boys and girls
- How long will your program run?
- Will you provide equipment?
- Who will coach / organize?
- What will you charge?

IP / Cross-Ice

- What age groups?
- Who will oversee or manage?
- Who will coach?
- How many kids on each team?
- How many ice sessions per week?
- What are the benefits to the player...to the Association?

House / Rec Hockey

- Emphasize recreation & fun
 - Special rules; ie. no-check
- Keep the cost reasonable
 - Shared ice practices
 - No travel
- Who will coach
- Team selection process
- Focus on individual skills
- Practice to game ratios

Travel Hockey

- Start at what age?
- Team selection process?
- Coach selection?
- Organizations philosophy
 - Development
 - Recruiting
 - Winning

Travel Hockey (cont)

- Practice to game ratios?
- Maximum number of games?
- Number of tournaments?

8 And Under Program

- All in-house - no all-star teams – no travel
- 3 to 1 practice to game ratio
- Cross-ice games
- Lots of small area games in practice
 - Play to learn
 - Get them hooked with FUN
- Loan equipment if possible
- Individual development is the priority

10 And Under Program

- 3 to 1 practice to game ratio
- Emphasize individual skills
- Skating & puck handling should be the priority
- Should teach contact confidence
- Recommend 'habits' instead of systems
- Might implement very basic team concepts...
- 30 games max (= 90 practices)

12 And Under Program

- First year for body checking
- Individual skills still should be the priority
- Stress agility, quickness, balance, coordination
- Players desire acceptance from their coach and teammates
- Habits and concepts vs. team systems
- Development should be prioritized over winning
- First year for Youth National Championships
- 40 games max (= 120 practices)

14 And Under

- Desire and abilities dictate level of participation
- Develop strength, quickness, agility and flexibility
 - Play other sports
- Continue individual skill development
- More team tactics
- More specific positional skills
- First year for USA Hockey Select Camps
- 50 games max (= 150 practices)

16 & Under And 18 & Under

- Development of team awareness in game situations
- More complex team systems
- Continue to develop strength, quickness, agility
- Continue to develop individual skills
- Play games involving physical contact
- 60 games max (180 practices)

High School Hockey

- Level is all over the map
- Great opportunity for kids to play in front of peers
- Opportunity to market the game

Materials

- Brochures
- Rule Book
- Annual Guide
- "Relax It's Just a Game" pieces
- Zero Tolerance posters
- Practice plan manuals
- ½ Ice Drill book
- Body Contact and Body Checking books

Conclusion

- There really is no 'perfect' program
- Have a philosophy
- Take advantage of USA Hockey's materials
- Pay attention to what other programs do
- Do what's right for the kids
- Stick to your guns!