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## 2009 - 2010 Atom Hockey Program

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Following SMHA aims and objectives, the Atom Hockey Program sets as its purpose the provision of a developmental program concentrating on skating skills and of a fun (enjoyment) opportunity.

The SMHA Atom Program has adopted a **ZERO TOLERANCE** policy in Atom hockey. This applies to coaches, players and parents. This covers all areas relating to and including verbal and physical abuse towards players, on-ice officials and team officials.

### **Purpose:**

The first purpose is to promote the SMHA policy of providing fun and enjoyment while at the same time stressing the values and appreciation of improved skating, hockey skills and body contact.

The second purpose is to ensure that there is fun and enjoyment in the context of good competition by encouraging players to play with other players of similar skills, abilities and desires. In addition, by ensuring that there is an equal distribution of player talent amongst the teams within the divisions, players are encouraged to compete against other players of similar caliber.

The third purpose is to provide a program which ensures that all players will enjoy equal opportunities of ice time during practice instruction and games.

The fourth purpose is to provide guidelines which encourage coaches and other team executives to improve their own coaching qualifications and instructing skills by participating in certification programs which emphasize theory, philosophy, technical and practical skills.

The fifth purpose is to promote within the Zones proficient, innovative and developmental programs for goal tenders. The aim is to identify and develop as many goal tenders as is feasible on developmental teams by using a player position rotation system.

### **Objectives:**

To emphasize the provision of fun and enjoyment while at the same time stressing the value and appreciation of improved skating hockey skills and body checking.

To allocate 50 per cent of program ice for team practice and 50 per cent of program ice for schedule games. (example: one half ice available will be used for scheduled games, one quarter will be used for half ice practices and one quarter will be used for full ice practices.)

**Note: Teams will receive one full ice practice before the March schedule, the practice to be the last week of February or the first week of March. All 1/2 ice practices are to be before the Christmas break.**

To encourage players to participate in power skating and hockey instruction programs other than those offered by the SMHA.

To implement a player rotation program on developmental teams to encourage the development of goal tenders. There will be no back up goaltenders on the bench. He

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or she should dress as a skater. With approval from the parents and coaches a player who wants only to be a goaltender may dress as back up goaltender.

To set standards for coaches at the different levels of the program.

To set guidelines for leveling players by the Zones.

**Coaching Standards:**

Level I teams - A coach shall:

- Have a record in good standing.
- Have a minimum of Coach Stream standing.

Level II Teams - A coach shall:

- Have a record in good standing.
- Have a minimum of Coach Stream standing.

Level III Teams - A coach shall:

- Have a record in good standing.
- Have a minimum of Coach Stream standing.

(Refer to SHA 8.06.01 for minimum standing required.)

**Leveling:**

Zones will level as follows:

1. Level I - advanced development teams.
2. Level II - intermediate development teams.
3. Level III - development teams of beginners and lesser skilled skaters.

Zones are expected to communicate to parents that Level I must consist of the most advanced players in the Zone, who are committed to becoming students of the game by attending practices for the purposes of developing individual skills as well as developing concepts of team play (strategies of attack, controlling ice, etc.) A major portion of the winter will be devoted to hockey (tournaments, fund raising etc.)

Level II players are expected to master skating and puck-handling skills first and sophisticated concepts of team play second. A lesser amount of parent resources and time is required.

Level III players are expected to concentrate on skating and puck-handling. Even fewer resources of parents are required.

Zones must use the following leveling requirements:

Each zone would be required to field an equal number of teams at each level:

- Where the number of teams is equally divisible by three (3), there would be

an equal number of teams at each level.

- Where the number of teams in the Atom age group is not evenly divisible by three (3), the additional teams would be placed according to the atom grid below.

Minimum team requirements 15 players.

Emphasis should be place in having the teams registered to play at the highest level possible in order to further develop player's individual skills and abilities.

**Exception:**

Where Zones are unable to field three (3) teams the following would apply:

- Two teams:
  - The Zone would be required to field one team at Level I and one team at Level II.
- One Team
  - The Zone would be required to field the team at Level II.

Breakdown of teams per level based on Zone team registrations:

#Teams	Level I	Level II	Level III
1		1	
2	1	1	
3	1	1	1
4	1	2	1
5	1	2*	2*
6	2	2	2*
6**	1	3	2
7	2	3*	2
8	2	4*	2
8**	2	3	3
9	3	3	3*
10	3	4*	3*
11	4	4*	3*
12	4	4*	4*

**\* Denotes the Zone's ability to register the team at a higher level.**

**\*\* If 65% of the Atom registration is first year players the zones could opt to go with this team formation.**

An exception to this grid is made for the Comets Female Zone. Until the Comets

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feel they have reached the level where they could be competitive with the male program at all levels.

It is anticipated that different zones will be strong in different years but that across several years each zone will have had the best teams.

Zones are expected to develop an objective method of player assessment. At Level I, the matter of convenience (i.e., same school, same neighborhood, etc.) and of aspirations of coaches will take second place to skill assessment.

Deviation from the prescribed leveling shall require the permission of:

1. Zone Commissioner
2. Atom Chairman
3. Majority vote of Atom Coordinators, and
4. SMHA Executive

#### **Guidelines for Team Formation and Play:**

1. Coaches shall ensure that all players on a team shall receive an equal amount of ice time in every game. Exhibition and Tournament games should be included in this rule. Emphasis should be placed on development and not winning.
2. Zones shall organize teams to consist of no less than 15 players (SMHA Rules and Regulations). There are no player position designations in Atom.
3. All teams in respective levels are expected to play against every other team in that level.
4. All teams within a zone must have no more than one player difference on rosters by level. Example: Level I - 15 players; Level II - 15 players; Level III - 16 players. All teams in each zone must be balanced in numbers.
5. All Atom teams to play a maximum of 8 tournaments per season (Tournament as defined by SMHA).
6. Contact hockey will be allowed in Atom.
7. Proper forms must be filled out for ice changes or coaches will be disciplined.
8. Running of the score will not be tolerated and offenders may face disciplinary action.

Failure to comply with the Atom Program may result in the loss of ice allocation as determined by the decision of the SMHA executive.

#### **March Schedule:**

Coordinators are to meet prior to March to determine scheduling requirements and to determine format. Intentions are to seed teams of existing caliber in all categories: in the same pools in order to provide a more balanced program - emphasis to be fun and enjoyment.

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**Rules:**

- a. Time breakdown for games:
  - 1st period - 20 minutes straight time.
  - 2nd period - 20 minutes straight time.
  - 3rd period - time remaining on the rink clock straight time. The last 2 minutes will be played stop time if there is a three or less goal difference.

Total 1 hour 15 minutes

- b. Penalties:
  - 2 minute straight time for all minor penalties and all other penalties as per SHA Rule Book.
- c. Score sheets:
  - Must be filled out correctly. Signed by coaches and ready by game time.
- d. Time Clock and Penalty Bench:
  - One timekeeper from each team.
- e. Referees will be a 2 man system with both referees being at least 13 years old.
- f. Atom teams may affiliate 8 skaters. Unlimited number of games until January 10 and after that date he or she can only play 5 games with the affiliated team. All coordinators are to receive a copy of all AP players.
- g. Comet female teams will play in the applicable Atom leagues and be subject to the rules and regulations of the Atom program.

**Program Committee:**

The Committee will consist of the Atom Program Chairperson plus 7 Atom Coordinators or their substitute representing the SMHA Zones. Each Zone Atom Coordinator will ensure that their zone is represented at each meeting.

Approved: April 21, 2008

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