

BULLDOG YOUTH HOCKEY COACH'S HANDBOOK

PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK

The purpose of this handbook is to communicate the goals, expectations and responsibilities of everyone associated with Bulldog Hockey. Most problems can be headed off or diminished by good communication, and we hope this handbook is a step in that direction.

Bulldog Youth Hockey Vision

The overall goal is to continually improve the program by creating a positive atmosphere, while making sure the kids are having fun and developing the individual and team skills they need to be successful hockey players and people.

Rink Rat philosophy

The HOC believes that the most important factor in the development of a hockey player is ice time. Hockey Teams are made in practices and games. Hockey Players are made in open hockey, open skating, the outdoor rink, and private rinks at home and during the off season. Coaches should encourage kids to skate as often as possible and take advantage of the opportunities available to them. If no ice is available, the Le Sueur rink has a great spot to practice shooting and a wonderful workout room for strength conditioning (age appropriate). If that is not an option, the kids should organize a game of street hockey with their friends/siblings or spend time at home working on skills such as stickhandling, shooting, and overall athleticism.

Encourage kids to not only play hockey as much as possible but also watch hockey. Take them to Bulldog high school games and let them see where they will be one day. There are numerous pro, college, junior, and high school games every weekend. We are the State of Hockey, take pride in this and take advantage of all of the opportunities!

Team Placements - Teams have tryouts at the beginning of the season. A three day player evaluation will be held in order to determine which players are suitable to play on a given team. HOC evaluators will make this decision. Final rosters need to be signed and will be submitted by the Registrar to the District.

USA Hockey Rosters - The MN Hockey District 9 Director sets the "try-out date deadline" that all organizations must abide by. Players must be on a USA HOCKEY TEAM ROSTER to play in a games, scrimmages, and practices. All rostered players must play on their team and their team only. They cannot sign a

roster with another team until their season is done. This includes any All-Star teams not sponsored through the District or MN Hockey.

All players (including mini-mites) must be registered regardless of age or level. At the mite and mini mite levels kids are encouraged to join later in the season if interested. All required registration materials need to be completed before playing or practicing.

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

Our purpose in collecting and listing these specific skill progressions is to help players and coaches understand the scope of skills and abilities that are required in hockey. The list for players has been divided by age: 6 and under (Mini Mite), 8 and under (Mite), 10 and under (Squirt), 12 and under (Pee Wee/U12), 14 and under (Bantam).

MINI MITE DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

Overall goals:

Learn to skate (forward, backward, cross-overs). Get past the “walking on ice” stage.

Stick handling - basics of puck control.

1. Individual Skills:

Skating--hockey stance, posture, proper stride, balance, forward and backward strides, stopping, forward crossovers, control turns.

Puck handling--stationary, straight ahead “puck push”, side to side control while skating, control around cones.

Passing and receiving passes--little or none at this level. Focus is on skating and skating with puck.

Shooting--forehand, backhand, no slap shots.

Goaltending--no pads, all players will play goalie.

2. Team Skills:

None! Essential to learn skating and stick handling fundamentals.

3. Mini Mite Coaching Philosophy

- Keep players moving--no waiting at end of long lines.
- Lots of fun, lots of encouragement.
- No goalie equipment--everyone learns to skate.
- Use a skater, Mite or shooter-tootors in net (for older Mini Mites).
- Need a dedicated coach to work with newcomers/non-skaters to teach them how to skate and get off the skating bar.
- Coaches should be creative with drills in order to keep kids interested in hockey. If the kids like to play tag, or “pump” go ahead and let them.

Individual Hockey Skills

Players must learn and master:

- Balance, by midseason 1st year skaters should not need a chair or other means of support.
- Taking strides, not steps.
- Controlled stops - snowplow.
- Avoid “slapping” the puck. New players will automatically slap the puck around, that is ok but work on not doing this as much as possible.
- Handle the puck with 2 hands on the stick.

MITE DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW (8 years old and younger)

Overall Goals:

Skating--continue to work on skating, front and back crossovers.

Stick handling--puck control.

Puck movement--introduce passing and receiving, keep working on skating with puck.

Understand basic rules of the game.

Find and identify goalies to enter the squirt program.

1. Individual Skills (Focus on skating, stick handling, and passing/receiving)

- a. Skating--stick on ice, forward, backward, crossovers, variety of stops (2 foot snowplow, 1 foot snowplow), starts, speed and quickness drills, mohawk turns.
- b. Stick handling--lateral, forward, backward, forward to backward, cupping, puck control while skating, techniques and speed drills (cones, etc.) lateral / deke moves.
- c. Passing/receiving--forehand, backhand, fundamental techniques of passing and receiving with accuracy (stationary and moving), look up and pass.
- d. Shooting--wrist shot, backhand, how to create “quality” shots (emphasize slot area, discourage wide-angle shots), goalie dekes.
- e. Face-offs--introduce fundamental technique (draw back to defense/taking man or go for puck/open). Positional line-up at a face-off.
- e. Goalkeeping-- Basic stance, parallel shuffle, lateral t-glide, forward and backward moves, stick save, body save, glove save, blocker save and positioning. Continue to rotate all players through the position. Goalies should also participate in all skating drills.

2. Team Skills:

- Rules of the game--understand spacing- get to an open area of the ice to receive or make a pass, what to do when your team or other team has the puck.
- Basic offensive positioning, basic defensive positioning, basic neutral zone positioning.
Examples:

Offensive Zone; if the puck is in the corner there should be two defenseman high, one forward in front of the net, one forward up high on the defensive side of the puck, and one forward in the corner of the puck.

Neutral Zone: Two defenseman on the defensive side of the zone, one forward in the middle of the rink, and one forward on either side of the ice.

Defensive Zone: If the puck is in the corner there should be one defenseman in that corner, one defenseman in front of the net, one forward in the corner with the defenseman, one forward on the sidewall ready to receive a break out pass, and one forward up high in front of the net covering the opponents defenseman.

- Penalties- Understand what they are. (unsportsmanlike conduct, body checking, cross checking, checking from behind, holding, high sticking, tripping, slashing).
- Appropriate passes (offensive and defensive), game flow awareness, defensive angling of the puck carrier.

Mite Coaching Priorities/Philosophy:

- Skill development has priority over winning games.
- Develop defensemen--all players play defense 1/2 of the time.
- Encourage players to skate with puck.
- Back checking--importance of.
- Use cross-ice opportunities to develop skills in tight areas.
- Encourage all players to try playing in the goal.
- Teach to an objective--stay focused, keep kids focused on skill being taught

Individual Hockey Skills

Players must learn and master:

1. Skating

- Edge control (Know difference between inside and outside edges)
- Ready position
- Forward start
- Forward Stride
- Control stop (two foot snowplow, one foot snowplow)
- Backward skating
- Backward stop
- Control turn
- Forward Crossover

2. Puck Control

- Lateral dribble
- Forward to backward dribble
- Accelerating with the puck

3. Passing and Receiving

- Forehand
- Backhand
- Receiving (Soft Hands)
- Keep the head up

4. Goaltending

- Basic stance
- Parallel shuffle
- Lateral t-glide
- Stick save
- Glove save
- Blocker save
- Pad save
- Positioning- Get in front of the puck, don't "hide" in the net.

SQUIRT/U10 DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW (10 years old and younger)

At the 10-and-Under (Squirt) players should focus on the skill progressions listed below:

Overall Goals:

Achieve sound skating ability. Stick handle while skating with head up. Pass and receive puck with accuracy while skating and keeping the head up. Know the rules of the game and understand basic game strategies.

1. Individual Skills:

- Skating--powerful stride, deep knee extension drills, edges, balance drills, control turns, agility and acceleration drills with and without the puck.
- Stick handling--lateral, forward, and backward, forward to backward cupping, pushing puck on the fly, technique and speed drills, one on one moves, attacking the triangle, wide separation, use of feet.
- Passing/receiving--continue with fundamental techniques, forehand and backhand, on the move accuracy, drop pass, bank pass (use of boards), break to open areas of ice to receive a pass.
- Shooting--wrist shot, backhand, goalie dekes, rebounds, tips, shooting on the fly (keep feet moving), strength and quickness drills, finishing around the net.
- Faceoffs--Continue fundamental techniques, positions.
- Communication--on ice, verbal communication between players, positional awareness.
- Goaltending--Rotate through any players who show any interest in the position.
 - All players should be encouraged to play in net some. Any players who may be interested should attend Bulldog goalie sessions when offered.

Individual Hockey Skills

Players must learn and master:

1. Skating

- Edge control
- Ready position
- Forward start
- Forward start right/left
- Forward stride
- Control stop one foot stop
- Backward skating
- Backward stop
- Control turn
- Forward crossover
- Backward crossover
- Mohawk (forward to backward transition while skating)
- Lateral skating

2. Puck Control

- Lateral side to side dribble
- Forward to backward dribble
- Diagonal dribble
- Attacking the triangle
- Forehand shift
- Backhand shift
- Change of pace
- Puck protection
- Give and take
- Accelerating with puck

3. Passing and Receiving

- Forehand
- Backhand
- Receiving (with stick and skate)
- Indirect (board) pass

4. Shooting

- Wrist
- Backhand
- Flip
- Screen and deflection
- Rebounding

5. Checking

- Poke check
- Lift the stick check
- Covering

- Gap control concept
- Body positioning

6. Goalkeeping

- Basic stance
- Parallel shuffle
- Lateral t-glide
- Forward and backward moves
- Stick save
- Body save
- Glove save
- Leg save
- Stacking pads
- Control rebounds

2. Team Skills:

- Neutral zone--move and pass puck, headman or carry it, move to get open, create good passing angles, basic regroupings, try to create 2 on 1 (odd man situations).
- Faceoff plays--positioning and coverage.
- Introduce forecheck system, 2-1-2. Once players understand this, a different system may be introduced during the season such as 1-2-2.

Forwards:

- Offensive--zone entries, introduce offensive plays, center trail, center break, attack wide, stay on-side, support puck carrier, control / movement of the puck, puck rotation, use of defensemen.
- Defensive--Zone coverage system (center is low, wings high), positions, coverage, transitions (offensive to defensive and vice versa), man-to-man angling, breakouts basics.

Defensemen:

- Offensive--breakout basics, rushing the puck, following the play, holding the blue line, point-shooting decisions/angles, diagonal support, D to D passes, pinching decisions.
- Defensive--net coverage, corners, D to D passes, diagonal support, 1-1,2-1 and 3-2 rushes/situations, know goalie responsibilities.

Team Play

Players must understand and learn:

1. Offense

- Positional offense
- Offense in the defensive zone
- Face offs
- One on one confrontations
- Triangle offense
- Box offense

- Entering the zone

2. Defense

- Territorial defense
- One man fore checking
- Two man fore checking
- back checking principles
- Basic defensive zone coverage

Squirt Coaching Priorities/Philosophy:

- Develop defensemen--top players play defense "1/2" the season.
- Establish discipline on passing, positional play, and teamwork.
- Back checking--develop two-way players.
- Emphasis on development, not winning games.
- Encourage team play.
- Teach to an objective—focus on skill being taught
- All players that wish to play goalie will have that opportunity.
- Practices should be played at "game speed".

Knowledge:

Players should know Rules

- Icing
- Off sides
- Common Infractions: unsportsmanlike conduct, body checking, checking from behind, cross checking, charging, elbowing, falling on the puck, high sticking, holding, hooking, interference, tripping.

Goal Setting

Players should establish specific and measurable performance goals that are written, shared with their coaches and parents, and revised on a regular basis to promote development.

Examples: To develop game and rink awareness during practices and games. Be on-side for all rushing drills during practice as well as all offensive rushes during a game.

Divide performance goals into three categories:

- practices
- games
- working on your own

Be able to engage in evaluations of your performance at practices and games. Re-adjust game and practice goals based on those evaluations.

PEE WEE/U12 DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

At the 12-and-Under (Pee Wee/U12) level, players should focus on the skill progressions listed below:

Knowledge

Players should know:

Rules

- Body Contact
- Checking from behind

Common Infractions

- Charging
- Cross checking
- Elbowing
- Interference
- Tripping

Individual Skills:

- Skating--Continue emphasis on basics, turns, stops, pivots, edges, look for and work on individual player's skating weaknesses. Full speed drills, acceleration drills, lengthen stride drills.
- Stick handling--expansion of reach, cupping the puck, backwards skating with head up, puck protection, dekes, escape moves, handling puck in feet.
- Passing/receiving--forehand, backhand, on the move--full speed drills, accuracy techniques, drop pass, bank pass, break to open areas, angles, passing before challenged, vacating/filling lanes.
- Shooting--wrist shot, introduce snap shots and slap shots, shooting on the fly (feet moving), shot selection, accuracy, quick release, shoot to score, creating screens, goalie dekes.
- e. Defensive skills--techniques for delivering/receiving checks, finishing and holding checks, body handling, blocking vs. attacking, containment. Forechecking, proper angling, finishing, creating turnovers. Playing 1 on 1, 2 on 2. Back checking responsibilities-first man, second man, third man.
- Offensive skills--1 on 1 attacks, creating odd man situations, attacking wide with speed, driving to the net, "seeing" the ice, face-offs.
- Defensemen--board to board vision, diagonal support, escapes with puck, reverse escapes, reversing the puck, D to D passes, board passes, using the net. Goalie support (moving people in front of net so goalie can clearly see the shot).
- Communication is crucial at this stage of development. Emphasize the importance of on ice communication (forward to forward, goalie to defenseman, etc.)
- Goaltending--Goalies who are most interested should play most often. Ideally, each team should have two goalies alternating games. When not starting a game in net, the "backup goalie" should be dressed as a skater. Do not exclude any players from playing in net if they show interest. Goalies may purchase their own pads, but the Association will help families that have a need. If interested, goalie camps are encouraged. Bulldog goalie sessions are mandatory.

Individual Hockey Skills:

Players must learn and master:

Skating

- Edge control
- Ready position
- Forward start right/left
- Forward stride
- One foot stop
- Backward skating
- Forward crossover
- Backward crossover
- Mowhawk
- Lateral skating
- Backward cross under start
- Backward two skate stop
- Backward power stop (one skate)

Puck Control

- Change of pace
- Slip through
- Slip across
- Puck off the boards
- Puck protection
- Give and take
- Backward puck control

Passing and Receiving

- Forehand
- Backhand
- Snap
- Receiving with the stick
- Receiving with the skate
- Receiving with the hand
- Surround the puck
- One touch pass
- Indirect (board) pass
- Breakout

Shooting

- Wrist
- Backhand
- Snap
- Flip
- Slap

- Fake shot
- Rebounding
- Tipping

Checking

- Poke check
- Hook check
- Stick press
- Covering
- Receiving a check
- Shoulder check
- Angling, steering, deflecting
- Gap control

Goalkeeping

- Parallel shuffle
- Lateral t-glide
- Forward and backward moves
- Glove, leg, skate save
- Stacking the pads save
- V drop (butterfly)
- Playing the angles
- Rebounds
- Situations
- Communication

Team Skills:

- Intro to team systems-offensive/defensive, neutral zone strategies, and creating/filling passing lanes, appropriate passes, lugging the puck.
- Forwards:
 - Offensive--cycling, face-offs, positions, zone attack options, screening/tipping, breakouts, forechecking, power play.
 - Defensive--forecheck systems, back checking, defensive zone coverage, face offs, penalty kill, covering for rushing defenseman.
- Defensemen:
 - Offensive--breakout options, rushing, follow the play, regrouping, holding the offensive blue line, diagonal support, play making decisions, power play.
 - Defensive--penalty kill, diagonal support, net coverage, pinching, odd man rushes, defensive zone coverage, gap control, holding defensive blue line.

Team Play

Players should understand and learn:

- Offense

- Offense in the defensive zone
- Offense in the neutral zone
- Offense in the offensive zone
- Power play systems
- Face offs
- 1 on 1's, 2 on 1's, 3 on 2's, etc.
- Entering the zone
- Defense
 - Territorial defense
 - One man fore checking
 - Two man fore checking
 - Back checking - (breakaways, covering the trailers, transition to D zone coverage)
 - Center on point defensive coverage
 - Wings on point defensive coverage
 - Man short situations
 - One on one confrontations
 - Shot blocking
 - 1 on 1's, 2 on 1's, 3 on 2's, etc.
 - Play in front of own net

Overall Goals: Continue emphasis on skating. Refinement of passing/shooting- wrist shots, snap shots, slap shots. Develop defensemen. Ice awareness and positional play. Encourage creativity and aggressive puck movement.

3. Pee Wee/U12 Coaching Priorities/philosophy:

- Develop defensemen.
- Establish team discipline on passing and teamwork.
- Teach “safety valves” --some actions are never wrong. (If your team gets stuck in defensive zone, it is ok to put the puck off the boards/glass and out of the zone. It is ok to “eat” the puck. Once your team crosses the red line it is ok to dump and chase).
- Develop creativity with puck--encourage puck handling.
- Individual puck protection/individual attack the puck.
- Maximize “game like” conditions in practice.
- Teach shooters to finish drills with speed and following shots to net. Also, give goalies enough time to finish the play during drills, space shooters accordingly. At this level technique cannot and will not be rushed.
- Develop two-way players--back check.
- Teach rink safety--for self and others.
- Teach to an objective.

Goal Setting

Players should establish specific and measurable performance goals that are written, shared with their coaches and parents and revised on a regular basis to

promote development.

Examples: To develop saves (glove, blocker, etc.) in a goalkeeper. With a designated shooter, be able to save seven out of 10 shots successfully using the specified save technique.

- Divide performance goals into broad categories. Daily tasks should then be planned based on the goals set:
 - long term one season
 - intermediate 6 - 10 games or practices
 - short term 1 - 5 games or practices
- Be able to engage in evaluations of your performance at practices and games. Re-adjust goals based on those evaluations.
- Set goals that encompass a variety of areas in your development including skills, tactics, fitness and team play.
- Demonstrate external motivation.

Examples:

- show intensity during practices and games
- be attentive and dedicated to training

BANTAM DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

At the 14-and-Under (Bantam) level players should focus on the skill progressions listed below:

Individual Skills:

- Skating--build on previous fundamentals (maintenance). Identify weak skaters-focus on improving shortfalls, stress-muscle strength, speed, power, and endurance.
- Stick handling--maintenance/improvement. Stress quickness.
- Passing--maintenance/improvement, touch pass, tape-to-tape passing, speed, and anticipation pass to spot.
- Shooting--maintenance, quick release, shooting on the fly, goalie dekes, screens, tips. Identify weak shooters-focus on improving.
- Offensive skills--control puck (use of body/boards), faceoffs-positioning, strategies.
- Defensive skilled--holding/finishing checks, not allowing give and goes, always face the puck.
- On ice communication at this level is critical.
- Focus on improving all weaknesses.
- Goaltending--Goalies should be known, but they should also skate out when appropriate. External goalie camps are strongly encouraged. Bulldog goalie sessions are mandatory. Off-ice activities should be encouraged (anything to improve hand eye coordination) ; juggling, racquetball, tennis, baseball, etc.

Individual Hockey Skills:

Players should continue to master all the previous skills listed as well as the following:

Skating

- Quickness
- Speed
- Agility
- Power

Puck Control

- Change of pace
- Slip through
- Slip across/slip around
- Fake shot
- Spin around
- Stop and go
- Puck protection

Passing and Receiving

- Surround the puck
- Receiving (skate, hand, feet, stick)
- One touch pass
- Indirect (board) pass
- Saucer pass (backhand and forehand)
- Breakout
- Wrap around
- Flip to open ice

Shooting

- Wrist
- Backhand
- Snap
- Flip
- Slap
- One timer
- Tipping
- Rebounding
- Approach to net

Checking

- Covering
- Gap control
- Angling
- Shoulder check

- Taking a check
- Hip check
- Body check
- Back checking
- Angling, steering, deflecting.

Goalkeeping

- Skate save
- Stacking the pads
- V drop
- Playing angles
- Rebounds
- Situations
- Moving behind the net
- Stopping the puck along the boards
- Poke checking
- Communication

Team Skills:

Forwards:

- Offensive--breakouts/danger zones, regrouping, puck control in danger zones/critical areas, creating offense behind opponents net, 3rd man high in scoring zone for scoring opportunities plus good defensive position, no turnovers, and puck cycling.
- Defensive--shot blocking, backchecking-pickup man, not puck carrier, 2 man short penalty kill, covering defensemen rushes, counter-attacks, offensive insertions, pressuring puck carrier, odd man defenses.

Defensemen:

- Offensive--breakouts, breakout danger zones, rushing puck, when to gamble on offensive blue line, shooting-on net, tips, height, screens, D to D passes.
- Defensive--reading odd man rushes with and without back checkers, holding defensive blue line, always pressure puck carrier, and backs to the net.

Team Play

Offense

- Offense in the defensive zone
- Offense in the neutral zone
- Offense in the offensive zone
- Power play systems
- Face offs
- Principles; pressure, transition, support, control
- Cycling

Defense

- One man forecheck
- Two man forecheck
- back checking (neutral zone)
- Center on point defensive coverage
- Wings on point defensive coverage
- Man short situations
- Principles; pressure, transition, support, control
- Defense in defensive zone
- Defense in neutral zone
- Defense in offensive zone
- Boxing out
- Anticipation

Overall Goals:

Develop scorers, puck handlers/playmakers, goalies, and defensemen.

Bantam coaching priorities/philosophy

- Respect for others--self-control, behavior on/off ice.
- Develop/refine defensemen.
- Establish team discipline in executing systems of play.
- Practice like you play--game-like conditions during practice.
- Shooters--finish at the net, quick release, on net shots.
- Encourage creativity with the puck.
- Reinforce player in-ice communication.
- Back check, back check, back check!
- Teach to an objective in every drill you do.

Goal Setting

Players should:

- Set written goals that encompass a variety of areas in their
- development including skills, tactics, fitness and team play.
- Demonstrate external motivation.
- Watch varsity games and see how fast the pace is.

Examples:

- show intensity during practices and games
- be attentive and dedicated to training
- Have written goals and a plan of action demonstrating a detailed approach to training. Practice good habits in nutrition, overall health and practice performance.
- Participate in a fitness program which includes training for both aerobic and anaerobic energy systems as well as strength training.
- Consider keeping a daily training log book which includes:
 - practice goals

- note your pre- and post-practice attitude
- note your pre- and post-game attitude
- record your positive self talk for the day
- nutrition record

GOALIE DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW

Overall Goals:

Encourage all players to play goalie.

Provide/have available goalie training tapes, materials, literature.

Encourage/facilitate attendance at goalie schools/clinics/camps.

Appoint an individual to take "ownership" of goalie development/monitoring.

Mini Mite: No equipment, rotate kids through the positions, use cross-ice play. Work hard on skating.

Mite: Continue to rotate kids through the position, take turns wearing the equipment. Stress the importance of staying up, getting up when down, and moving in front of the puck. All players should experiment with being a goalie.

Squirt/U10: Rotate through any players who show any interest in the position. All players should be encouraged to play in net some. Any players who may be interested should attend Bulldog goalie sessions when offered. Work to ensure that we have at least a few of our more athletic players interested in the position.

Skills; lateral movement, including parallel shuffle, lateral T-glide, forward/backward movement. Focus on stick saves, but they should start to utilize their entire body to stop the puck. Work on positioning, starting to move out to cover angles and controlling rebounds. Be aware of players locations.

Pee Wee/U12: Goalies who are most interested should play most often but try to settle on goalie. Ideally, each team should have two goalies alternating games. When not starting a game in net, the "backup goalie" should be dressed as a skater. Do not exclude any players from playing in net if they show interest. Goalies may purchase their own pads, but the Association will help families that have a need. If interested, goalie camps are encouraged. Bulldog goalie sessions are mandatory.

Skills; reinforce controlled lateral movement. Work on vertical movement. leg saves, butterfly position. Emphasize angles and knowing where the goal is at all times. Control rebounds, use drills paced to encourage following and controlling them. Start to stress game awareness and communication as well as puck handling, passing and clearing. Goalies should do stick handling drills along with other players.

Bantam: Goalies should be known, but they should also skate out when appropriate. External goalie camps are strongly encouraged. Bulldog goalie sessions are mandatory. They can purchase their own pads when appropriate, but pads should be available for use. Off-ice activities should be encouraged, juggling, racquetball, etc.

Skills; reinforce controlled lateral and vertical movement. By this time the goalies should have their own style, work with that, reinforce strengths, modify when necessary. Angles and location of puck and players should be known at all times. Goalies should be aware of the game flow and constantly communicating. They should be proficient at handling the puck, passing and clearing. Goalies, defense and coaches should discuss how to play different scenarios. ie: what to do for odd-man rush coverage and players in front.