



NEW FAMILY HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO THE
SAUK CENTRE MELROSE
YOUTH HOCKEY ASSOCIATION



Blue Devils
PRAIRIE CENTRE

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Welcome to SCM Youth Hockey!

We're so excited to welcome your family to the rink! Whether you're new to hockey or just new to our program, this guide will help you navigate your first season—from registration to game day.

SCM Youth Hockey offers a fun, supportive environment where kids build skills, confidence, and lifelong friendships. Let's get started!

SEASON AT A GLANCE

Our season typically runs from **mid-October to early March**.

- **Practices** for all levels begin in **mid-to-late October**.
- **Games** for Squirts through Bantams usually start in **early November**.
- The season generally wraps up in **mid-to-late February**.

Your team representatives and coaches will share more detailed schedules once teams are formed.

This informational packet should answer most of the questions that new families have about our hockey associations. However, if you want more information USA Hockey also has a New Parent Handbook available online at: <https://www.usahockey.com/newparents>

Sincerely,

Sauk Centre-Melrose, Long Prairie and Prairie Centre Youth Hockey Board Members

If you have additional questions, please reach out to one of our ACE Coordinators or an association board member. Contact information can be found on the Prairie Centre Youth Hockey Association website under Resources then Board Information.

Level Overview (Mighty Mites through High School)

Prairie Centre Youth Hockey offers programs for skaters of all ages and skill levels. Below is a breakdown of each level, including general age ranges, focus areas, and what to expect during the season.

MIGHTY MITES (MINI MITES) – AGES 5–6

- Focus: Skating fundamentals and introductory hockey skills, ideal for young and brand new skaters
- Practice: 1–2 times per week (hosted individually in Sauk Centre and Long Prairie)
- Ice time is spent primarily in practices; there are optional half-ice Jamborees toward season's end

MITES – AGES 7–9

May include experienced 6U players who are ready for the next level.

- Focus: Skill development and basic positioning
- Practice: 1–2 times per week, occasional extras (host individually in Sauk Centre and Long Prairie)
- Games: Mix of half-ice and full-ice games vs. other associations; Half- or full-ice Jamborees at season's end
- Note: May be divided into multiple teams based on skill level

SQUIRTS [AGES 9–11], PEEWEES [AGES 11–13] AND BANTAMS [AGES 13–15]

Starting at Squirts, Sauk Centre-Melrose and Long Prairie players combine into one program for all practices and games. Practices and games will be split between the Sauk Centre and Long Prairie arenas.

- Practice: 2-3 on-ice sessions per week; practices split between Sauk Centre and Long Prairie
- Games: Full-ice games vs. other associations (average of 1-2 games per weekend)
- Tournaments: Typically 3 weekend tournaments (1 Home, 2 Away), including District Tournament
- Tryouts: Held if registration numbers support multiple teams to determine team placement (A, B, B2, C)

HIGH SCHOOL

Players who age out of Bantams may advance into local high school programs. Coordination typically happens through the Sauk Centre or Long Prairie school districts.

GIRLS-ONLY CLASSIFICATIONS

Offered based on registration numbers. Girls can also play in co-ed divisions until they join the High School team.

- **8U (8 & Under):** Alternative to Mites
- **10U (10 & Under):** Alternative to Squirts
- **12U (12 & Under):** Alternative to PeeWees
- **15U (15 & Under):** Alternative to Bantams

Equipment

All players must have the following equipment each time they take the ice:

- **Helmet with Cage**
- **Shin Guards**
- **Shoulder Pads**
- **Elbow Pads**
- **Gloves**
- **Hockey Breezers (Pants)**
- Mouthguard
- Neck Guard
- Skates
- Stick
- Hockey socks (for over shin guards)
- Jersey (must purchase practice jersey)

Bolded items are included in the rental equipment for Mighty Mites and Mites.

All other items are required and will need to be provided by families.

NEED HELP DRESSING YOUR SKATER?

It's normal to feel overwhelmed at first! Watch the quick video from USA Hockey walks you through how to dress your child in full gear, just scan the QR Code to watch.



TIPS + TRICKS FOR PUTTING ON GEAR

- **Skates should be tied tight**—snug enough to limit foot movement and prevent blisters.
- Don't hesitate to ask for help! Other parents and coaches are happy to lend a hand, especially in the locker room or hallway.
- Bring an extra pair of socks (thin, non-cotton) and label your gear to avoid mix-ups.

WHERE TO BUY NEW OR USED HOCKEY GEAR

- Cowing Robards (Alexandria)
- Play It Again Sports (St. Cloud)
- Pure Hockey (Waite Park)
- Scheels (St. Cloud)
- Facebook Marketplace
- Ask other hockey families - passing hockey equipment down is a hockey tradition!

SKATE SHARPENING

Typically **every 5–8 hours of ice time**, or sooner if they feel dull or nicked. Coaches or experienced parents can help you check if they're due.

You can get skates sharpened at the Sauk Centre Civic Arena (ask arena staff), Cowing Robards – Alexandria and multiple places in St. Cloud, including Scheels, Play It Again Sports, or Pure Hockey. Not all away arenas offer skate sharpening. We recommend sharpening skates **before** traveling to tournaments or games.

DIBS/ Volunteer Commitment

Prairie Centre Hockey is powered by volunteers, it takes a village to keep our youth hockey program running smoothly. Every family's time and support makes a difference! Volunteer commitments are tracked through **DIBS**, an online tool available through the Prairie Centre Hockey website (via SportsEngine).

DIBS is our system for posting, claiming, and tracking volunteer opportunities throughout the season. You'll find opportunities like Game & tournament roles (clock, book, announcer, penalty box, etc.), Concessions, Special Events (Food Truck, Wine & Beer Night, Jamborees, etc.), team-specific or association-wide needs. Not sure what a role entails? Training or walk-throughs are available—just ask your Team Manager or a board member or your team coach. 🙌 **All volunteer shifts must be claimed through DIBS to receive credit.**

VOLUNTEER HOUR REQUIREMENTS

- **First-Year Families:** 20 hours
- **Returning Families:** 40 hours per season

Some volunteer roles, such as coaching, receive automatic credit toward volunteer hours. These are applied before the end of the season.

HOW TO CLAIM A DIBS SHIFT

1. Go to the **DIBS** tab on the Prairie Centre Hockey website
2. Log in using the same SportsEngine account used during registration
3. Select the correct DIBS session/season
4. Adjust the date filter and find "Unclaimed" DIBS items
5. Click the opportunity you want and select "**Claim DIB Item**"
6. Make sure the athlete name and fulfiller info are correct
7. Confirm by entering a phone number/email for the person working the shift (must be age 16+)
8. You'll receive an email confirmation when successfully claimed

HOW TO TRACK YOUR COMPLETED HOURS

You can view your claimed and completed DIBS hours in your SportsEngine account under the DIBS tab. If you're unsure or have questions, reach out to your Team Rep or a board member.

WHAT IF I DON'T FULFILL MY DIBS REQUIREMENT?

Families who do not complete their required hours by the end of the season will be assessed a **\$500 (first-year families) or \$1,000 (returning families) volunteer fee** (2025–2026 Season).

- This fee is **not pro-rated**—**all hours must be completed** or the full fee applies.
- Families acknowledge this at the time of registration.

Fundraising

Fundraising plays a vital role in keeping youth hockey affordable for all families at Prairie Centre Hockey. Your participation is crucial to our association!

Here are our main fundraising activities for each season:

- **Croissant Sales (Fall):** Each family is required to sell a minimum of 20 croissants before the October deadline. You pay for these 20 croissants (\$100) in advance when you register for the season. We'll email you details about order deadlines and croissant making sessions. Each family also needs to attend one 1.5-hour croissant making session (these hours don't count towards volunteer hours). You can find an order form under the "Fundraiser" tab on our website.
- **Calendar Raffle Tickets (December - January):** Each family must sell 15 raffle tickets. Tickets are distributed in early to mid-November, with the drawing in late February. We'll email you handout and turn-in dates.
- **Beer & Wine Tickets (February - March):** Each family needs to sell or buy at least 10 tickets for this event. **New hockey families are exempt from selling tickets** for this specific fundraiser, but we still encourage you to try. New families are also asked to help with available shifts before, during, or after the event.
- **Fair Booth Food Truck (August):** During the Stearns County Fair (last week of July), each family is required to work two 2-hour shifts at our food trailer, or until the schedule is full (these hours don't count towards volunteer hours). We'll email you when the fair schedule is posted on DIBS.
- **Charitable Gambling:** SCM Hockey also receives revenue from our local gambling sites, like the Lynx National Golf Course and the Next Door Bar, through pull-tabs. This partnership helps promote youth hockey and supports local businesses.

SportsEngine

The SportsEngine platform is your hub for all team information throughout the season. We encourage all families to download the SportsEngine mobile app and enable notifications to stay up-to-date!

FINDING YOUR TEAM & TEAM CALENDAR

After your player is rostered, you will receive a team invitation via email. Once you've accepted the invitation:

- **On the website:** Log in to your SportsEngine account. In the top-right corner, click on "My Organizations" and select your team name. Here you will find the Team Center with the team schedule, roster, and other important information.
- **On the mobile app:** Download the SportsEngine app and log in. Your team should automatically appear on the home screen. Tap on the team name to view the schedule, game and practice details, and the team roster. You can also sync the team calendar to your personal calendar (like Google Calendar or iCal) for easy access.
- **Check the calendar often:** Due to multiple teams utilizing our two rinks and the unpredictable winter weather, practice and game schedules are subject to change throughout the season. We encourage all families to **check their team's calendar regularly** for the most up-to-date information.

TEAM COMMUNICATION

- **Team Chat:** The mobile app has a "Chat" feature that allows for quick communication among team members. You can send messages and even attach photos. Many coaches and team managers will use the Team Chat for updates to practice and game schedules; we encourage families to download the app and enable notifications to receive these messages and updates.
- **Team Messages:** Coaches and team managers can send messages to the entire team, which will be delivered via email and/or text message to all registered guardians, based on your notification settings.

ADDING A GUARDIAN TO A SKATER'S PROFILE

To ensure that multiple family members (like a spouse, grandparent, or other guardian) can access the team schedule and communications, you can add them to your player's profile.

On the website: Log in and go to your Household tab. Click on your skater's profile and look for the "Guardians" section. Click to add a guardian and enter their email address.

On the mobile app: From the home screen, tap the "Account" tab. Under "Household," select your skater's profile, then tap the "Guardians" tab and choose "Add Guardian." Enter the email address of the person you want to add.

The invited person will receive an email to accept the guardianship. Once accepted, they will have their own SportsEngine account with full access to the player's team information.

Frequently Asked Questions

What should I do if I want to coach?

- We are always looking for new coaches! If you're interested, please reach out to a current coach or a member of the Board. They can help guide you through the registration process and answer any questions you have.

What should I do if I have an issue with a coach, another player/parent, or a concern?

If you have a concern about a coach, player or another parent, please follow these steps:

- During a game: Wait at least 24 hours before speaking with the coach. This cooling-off period is essential for a productive conversation.
- During a practice: Wait until the practice is over before approaching the coach.
- If you are unable to resolve the issue directly with the coach, or if it is a safety concern, please contact the ACE Coordinator.

Are boys and girls on the same teams?

It depends on the number of players who register each season. We will form girls-only teams whenever registration numbers support it, which requires a minimum of 11 girls per team.

If we don't have enough girls to form separate teams, our teams through the PeeWee level will be co-ed. Once girls are old enough, they have the opportunity to join the girls-only Junior Varsity and Varsity Blue Devils teams.

Where are practices and games held?

- **Mighty Mites and Mites:** Practices are held at the Sauk Centre Civic Arena. Mites may also have optional practices in Long Prairie. Both levels will generally play in 2-3 Jamborees each season, one held in Sauk Centre and one in Long Prairie. Any additional jamborees will likely be one-day events within an hour's drive of Sauk Centre. Some Mite teams may form a travel team to play games against other towns, most of which will be within a 1-1.5 hour drive.
- **Squirts through High School:** These teams are a combination of SCMYHA and LPHA players. Practices will be held at both the Sauk Centre Civic Arena and the Todd County Expo Center in Long Prairie. Games will be played at our home rinks as well as in other associations. Most travel games will be within a 1-2 hour radius, though teams may choose to schedule tournaments or games that are farther away.

Do I have to be at every practice/game?

- **Mighty Mites and Mites:** While your child will get the most out of the experience by attending as much as possible, we understand that this level is about introducing kids to the sport and building a love for hockey. We know that things come up and that hockey is not the only commitment your family has. We just ask that you let your coach know if your skater won't be at a practice or game.
- **Squirts and Up:** At this level, there is an expectation that skaters will attend all practices and games. We understand that absences will happen due to illness, family commitments, or other valid reasons—we just ask that you communicate with your coach beforehand. Being on a team is a commitment, and attending practices and games is part of the valuable life lessons about teamwork and responsibility that we teach in youth sports.