



Hopkins Youth Hockey Association
Team Philosophy and Operating Procedures
Amended and Approved May 20th, 2019

Article I. Introduction

The Hopkins Youth Hockey Association (HYHA) is comprised of in-house developmental teams including Mites 1-4/6U/8U levels. Upon exiting the in-house programs, all players within HYHA are participants in the Travel Program consisting of all levels of Squirrels/10U, PeeWee/12U and Bantams/15U.

HYHA is guided by the principal that developmental hockey training in an appropriate competitive context results in true enjoyment of the game and continued participation in amateur hockey. To this end, HYHA balances competitive teams with the developmental needs of individual players. HYHA places a priority on player placements on teams that most appropriately match that player's skill level and developmental potential.

The HYHA travel teams are overseen by a Coach in Chief, a Youth Travel Coordinator and a Girls Travel Coordinator, who are members of the HYHA Board of Directors. The Coach in Chief is responsible for establishing and maintaining a Hockey Development Committee for the purposes of providing developmental and competitive guidance to the Travel Coordinators. The Travel Team Coordinators are responsible, under the direction of the HYHA Board of Directors, to conduct the travel team program in a manner consistent with the HYHA Travel Team Philosophy and Operating Procedures.

Article II. Information for Players and Parents

Section 2.01 The HYHA Newsletter is distributed electronically via email. It is the responsibility of all parents to keep family accounts updated with correct email addresses. Please contact the HYHA Webmaster if you are not receiving messages.

Section 2.02 Players who wish to be placed on any level of travel team must participate in evaluations/tryouts each season.

Section 2.03 Additional travel team information, including this document, is available on the HYHA website at <http://hopkinshockey.com>. Please review all relevant information.

Section 2.04 Playing on a travel team requires greater commitment of time and money relative to participation at the Mite/6U/8U levels. The travel team season spans the time period from October to March and may be extended by regional and state playoff games. Games may be played at arenas some distance from the Hopkins area. Parents are asked to fully support coaches and managers of the teams. A successful travel program requires parental support in many respects, including the annual Thanksgiving, District and Regional tournaments HYHA hosts.

Section 2.05 The HYHA Board of Directors establishes a mandatory attendance policy for PeeWee/12U and Bantam/15U players at all levels. As in any team sport, a critical part of development is player commitment to attend all team practices, scrimmages, district games and tournaments. Players and parents are asked to notify coaches in advance of an absence in accordance with team policies stipulated by coaches. While HYHA and coaches understand that some absences are unavoidable, any instance where the head coach is not notified of an absence in advance may result in disciplinary action.

- (a) Excused Absences. Examples of excused absences from any team commitment that are not subject to disciplinary action are defined as follows:
 - (i) *Player Illness*
 - (ii) *Religious Commitments*
 - (iii) *School commitments in which the player is directly involved*
 - (iv) *Significant family commitments (e.g. serious family illness, wedding, funerals)*
- (b) Unexcused Absences. All other absences from team commitments will be considered unexcused absences and may be subject to disciplinary action by the coach. Disciplinary action may include game(s) suspension. Coaches are instructed to be consistent and fair with all players when such action is deemed necessary.
- (c) Other. It is strongly recommended that a player may not be withdrawn from team commitments as a family disciplinary measure.

Section 2.06 Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use Policy

In accordance with Minnesota Hockey District 3 Rules and Regulations, players will not use alcohol, tobacco or any substance defined by law as an illegal drug. Parents are expected to cooperate with the HYHA Board of Directors and coaching staffs in enforcing this policy. Each player is required to sign a Code of Conduct at the beginning of each season indicating that they recognize their commitments as members of HYHA.

Penalties for violations follow the progressive penalty schedule of the MN State High School League. The current schedule is available at www.mshsl.org.

If a Travel Coordinator has reason to believe a player violated policy, the Coordinator must immediately investigate the incident and, with coordination of the HYHA Executive Committee, determine if the incident constitutes a violation. The Travel Coordinator and Executive Committee meets and makes final determination within three (3) days of the initiation of the investigation. The affected athlete and his or her parents and/or representative must present the athlete's perspective to the Committee before a final decision is made.

Section 2.07 Player Eligibility Waivers

Team and player eligibility is determined by the official boundaries of HYHA as defined by District 3 and MN Hockey Rules and Regulations, including with regard to school and level waivers.

Section 2.08 Type and Composition of Travel Teams

The HYHA Hockey Development Committee and the Travel Coordinator(s) meet in the spring of each year to determine projected player numbers for the following year. Projected team levels for the following season are presented to the HYHA Board of Directors. While this is necessary for planning purposes, the process refines specific team level plans throughout the offseason to ensure optimal development opportunities for players. Parent input is welcome in the spring and throughout the offseason. Roster numbers for each team is flexible within practical reason to ensure proper competitive levels for each player's skill.

- (a) A/AA Team. An “A” or “AA” team is the highest level of competition and will be composed of the highest evaluated players in each age division.
- (b) B1 Team. A “B1” team is the second highest level of competition in a division.
- (c) B2 Team. A “B2” team is a developmental team composed of a mix of younger and older players.
- (d) C Team. A “C” team is a developmental team composed of a mix of younger and older players. “C” teams are part of the travel program and considered travel hockey by MN Hockey.

Article III. Hockey Development Committee

Section 3.01 Mission – Set development structure for HYHA youth teams from Mite 1 through Bantams within the guidelines and rules of MN Hockey District 3, MN Hockey and USA Hockey. Coordinate and leverage expertise in the Hopkins/Park Girls Hockey Development Committee.

A core objective of the HDC is to foster a culture of continuous development aligned with the objectives stated in the HYHA Bylaws.

Section 3.02 Execution

The HDC develops guidelines and plans based on the principals of the American Development Model (ADM) as defined by USA Hockey.

- Continuous improvement of skills, tactics, team concepts, team play, systems and strategies
- A continuous improvement in individual and team competitive performance
- Develop and implement programs for players and coaches of all levels to enhance overall skill development and playing experience

Section 3.03 Responsibilities

(a) Coach Recruitment and Retention

The HDC members assist the Travel Directors recruiting, evaluating and retaining professional and parent coaches for HYHA teams. They advise the HYHA Board with regard to proper coaches at each level and directly support those coaches throughout the season.

- (b) Any interested person may apply for a position of travel team coach by submitting a written application to the Travel Coordinator prior to September 1
- (c) The HDC will make coach recommendations
- (d) The selection procedure is:
 - 1) The Travel Coordinator and HDC interview all applicants for head or assistant coach positions
 - 2) The Travel Coordinator and HDC select head coaches subject to the affirmative approval of the Board of Directors
 - 3) The ACE Coordinator is responsible for coordinating a player evaluation process and reporting on that evaluation at the beginning, mid-point and end of each season.
 - 4) Non-Parent travel coaches are eligible for a stipend. The HYHA Board of Directors approve a stipend amount prior to the season as part of the annual budgeting process.
 - 5) Parent coaches may not receive financial benefit for coaching HYHA teams. Parent coaches will not be required to work tournament volunteer shifts.

Section 3.04 Pre-Season Clinics

The HDC provides guidance on the skills focus, drills, and developmental priorities for players at each level during pre-season clinics.

Section 3.05 Team Size

The HDC provides guidance on optimal team size for teams at every playing level prior to the season based on best practices and team composition. Guidance is prioritized on providing the best possible developmental experience for every member of a team.

Section 3.06 Team Level Determination

The HDC is responsible for evaluating the proper team levels for a season and providing a recommendation to the Travel/Level coordinator for each level of play, as applicable. Evaluations are based on previous season playing levels, competitive analysis of previous season teams, player evaluation from coaches, mix of first-year vs. second-year players at a playing level and any other criteria deemed pertinent by the HDC.

- One month prior to the initial District 3 level declarations, the HDC delivers a Playing Level Recommendation for each age group to the Travel/Level Coordinator and President of HYHA.
- If the Travel/Level Coordinator affirms the recommendation in its entirety the team declarations are communicated to District 3.
- If the Travel/Level Coordinator does not affirm the recommendation in its entirety a Team Level Determination Arbitration is required.

Section 3.07 Team Level Arbitration

Team level arbitration is required only when the Travel/Level Coordinator does not affirm the HDC recommendation in its entirety. When team level arbitration is necessary:

- Travel/Level Coordinator schedules an arbitration meeting with the HYHA President, Vice President and the HDC Coach and Chief.
- HYHA President is the arbitrator of the meeting and, as such, makes the final determination based on input from the Travel/Level Coordinator and the HDC Coach in Chief. The Secretary records the proceedings.

If the result of the arbitration does not affirm the Team Level Recommendations of the HDC, one of two actions must be taken:

- The HDC Coach in Chief may amend the original recommendations noting the arbitration and an agreed-upon change in the playing level recommendations.
- The Travel/Level Coordinator and President must provide formal documentation stating why the HDC recommendation was not affirmed and append to the HDC Playing Level Recommendation.

The HDC Playing Level Recommendation and any amendments and/or appendices will be made available to the HYHA members and the District 3 Competition Committee upon request.

Section 3.08 Travel Team Player Policies

(a) Tryouts for selection of travel team players are posted on the HYHA website each season.

(b) Girls Program Move-Up Policy

In some circumstances, a girl may be offered the opportunity to play up to the next age level by the Girls Travel Coordinator. The player is invited by the association to participate in tryouts at the next older age level. If the player is evaluated in the top 50% of all players at the age-level she will be permitted to play up an age level.

(c) Youth Program Move-Up Policy

HYHA expects all players in the youth program to play in their age categories designated by MN Hockey, but recognizes that, in limited circumstances, it might be appropriate to place a player at a higher level. Age move-ups require approval by the HYHA Board following a written request from the player's family with a letter of support from one of the player's coaches from the prior season. The required ranking to be achieved to determine move up eligibility is determined by the HDC. The deadline for any move-up request must be submitted to the HYHA Board of Directors prior to the September HYHA Board meeting.

Section 3.09 Tryouts

The HDC is responsible for defining tryout criteria, format and evaluation procedures.

- HDC will provide at least 2 evaluators for every team tryout
- HDC will name at least 2 additional evaluators for every team tryout, which may include team coaches, Travel/Level Coordinator, other registered HYHA coaches
- HDC may nominate additional evaluators subject to the approval of the Travel/Level Coordinator.
- Final team composition will be determined by a majority of the evaluators responsible for each level tryout.

Section 3.10 HDC Leadership, Membership and Advisory Capacity

The HDC is an advisory body to the HYHA Board, the President, Vice-President and Travel/Level Coordinators specifically. As stated in the HYHA Bylaws, the President appoints a Coach-in-Chief who takes leadership responsibility for the HDC, including:

- Nominating members of the HDC, who are affirmed by the HYHA President and Travel/Level Coordinators
- Scheduling monthly meetings of the HDC
- Reporting to the HYHA Board of Directors
- Recommendation of spending budgets for player and team developmental activities for both in-season and off-season priorities.

Article IV. Rosters

Once a final Association Travel Team roster is complete, no player may be removed from the travel team for reason other than that player's serious injury, serious illness, suspension or expulsion as provided by applicable rules, acceptance of an offer to play for a high school team or acceptance of an offer to move up to play at a higher age level as described below.

- (a) High School Team. All players selected for a travel team must have fully participated in the travel team tryout process. Any player eligible to try out for a high school team may do so without consequence from the travel team. Any player accepting an offer to play for a high school hockey team must notify the Travel Coordinator in writing. An acceptance of an offer to play for a high school hockey team automatically terminates that player's membership in the Association and position on the travel team. The terminating player may be financially responsible for some expenses (e.g. clinic fees) to be determined by the Travel Coordinator.
- (b) Roster Move-Up. The head coach of any travel team losing a player to a high school hockey team, to a travel player quitting or to serious illness or injury may submit a written petition to a committee consisting of the Travel Coordinator and HDC to request a move up of a specified player from the next immediate lower playing level in the same age division. After appropriate due diligence including but not limited to consultation with all involved coaches, the player, and player's parents, the Travel Coordinator and HDC determines the disposition of the petition and either grants or denies such petition no longer than 10 days after its submission.
- (c) Girls on Youth Teams. Girls may tryout for and play on Youth travel team subject to the same rules of all other players.
 - 1) Once the player participates in tryouts for a Youth team she cannot return to the girl's program during that season.
 - 2) A player may only tryout for one team per season. A female player trying out for a Youth team must play on the team for which she is evaluated.

Article V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRAVEL TEAM COACHES

Section 5.01 Travel team coaches will abide by the travel team regulations of the HYHA, the Travel Team Philosophy and Operating Procedures, and the rules and regulations of the governing the District in which our travel teams compete. These directives will be provided to the travel team coaches by the Travel Team Coordinator at the mandatory coaches meeting prior to the beginning of each season.

Section 5.02 Travel team coaches will have a parent meeting as soon as possible following travel team selection. Items which must be discussed include:

- (a) Goals and objectives of the travel program;
- (b) Organization of the travel team program;
- (c) Expectations and responsibilities of players and parents; and
- (d) Tournaments and tournament play.
- (e) Travel team coaches will work with the HYHA Volunteer Coordinator to identify an appropriate parent manager or co-managers for the season.

Section 5.03 The travel team coaches will use sound judgment and discretion in scheduling practice times and non-district games.

Section 5.04 Due to the high cost of ice, travel team coaches will only under rare and exceptional circumstances cancel scheduled on-ice events. Coaches must notify the HYHA Ice Scheduler and all other travel team coaches of the availability of the ice as soon as possible.

- (a) HYHA stresses to coaches the importance of their position in working with young people. If a coach violates any of the following rules, the coach will be temporarily suspended from coaching for not less than two (2) weeks. The HYHA Board on an individual basis will determine the exact length of each suspension.
 - 1) A coach will not physically or verbally abuse players, other coaches, referees, officials, parents, or other spectators.
 - 2) Coaches will not use alcohol or illegal drugs before or during a practice, game, or scrimmage.
 - 3) Coaches will ensure there is adult supervision for the full duration of all practices, games, or scrimmages, in the locker rooms as well as in and around the arena.
 - 4) A coach is not permitted to use tobacco of any kind during practice, games, or scrimmages.
- (b) Coaches are required to attend all seminars, meetings and training sessions that they are asked to attend.
- (c) As is required by MN Hockey, all coaches are required to receive "Safesport" training and remain compliant with the rules of "Safesport". Coaches, both parent and non-parent, are responsible for locker room monitoring. HYHA will have zero tolerance for violations.

- (d) Player participation and equitable ice time. To the extent that team members fully participate in all team events to the best of their abilities (attendance and effort) and exhibit a positive attitude and spirit of teamwork, then it is the coaches' responsibility to ensure those players are treated fairly and equitably in games regarding playing time. Coaches retain discretion with regard to playing time and lineups.
- (e) Coaches will be responsible for providing a detailed year-end evaluation of each player (as defined by the ACE coordinator), that will be used at the next seasons tryout evaluation. The Girls Coordinator will retain records of each evaluation for the girls and by the Boys Travel Coordinator for the boys.

Section 5.05 Parent coaches will not be required to work in-season concessions or tournament volunteer shifts for the player they are coaching. If the parent has another player, who they are not coaching, they are required to work those in-season concessions and/or tournament volunteer shifts.

Each travel team is allowed 3 parent coaches to be excluded from in-season concession and tournament volunteer shifts.

Only the head mite or 6U/8U coach for each level is excluded from working in-season concession volunteer shifts. All assistant mite coaches are required to work their in-season concession volunteer shifts. If a mite head coach has another player on a different mite team and is not the head coach of that player's team, they will be required to work those in-season concession shifts.

Article VI. FINANCES

Section 6.01 Overall fiscal responsibility rests with the HYHA Board of Directors. Travel team financial affairs will be managed in accordance with the provisions of Article 9.2 of the HYHA Bylaws, and other provisions which may be established.

Section 6.02 Players wishing to play travel team hockey will register for HYHA hockey and agree to the schedule of payments defined in the registration information online. Directors will determine the allocation of these funds.

Section 6.03 A family is considered In Good Standing if all financial obligations to HYHA have been satisfied. Only families In Good Standing will be allowed to register a player for a new season.

Section 6.04 The players' families pay a portion of the cost of travel team participation and the remainder is offset by fundraising activities of the travel team program. There are limited scholarships available in accordance with the HYHA scholarship guidelines available at <http://www.hopkinshockey.com>. Scholarship requests must be made before registration.

Section 6.05 There will be no refund of a player's initial registration fee and deposit for the first installment of team expenses once travel team try-outs are completed and upon the player being placed on a travel team. If a player subsequently misses part of the season due to an injury or illness, the player will be responsible for the following amount of the player's portion of team expenses for the year:

- (a) Player misses 0-50 consecutive days: 100% of player's team expense portion
- (b) Player misses 51-100 consecutive days: 2/3 of player's team expense portion
- (c) Player misses 101 or more consecutive days: 1/3 of player's team expense portion

In cases of a player injury or illness of 51 or more consecutive days, the player's unpaid team fees will be paid to the team by the HYHA general fund. All such requests for unpaid team fees must be submitted to the HYHA Board of Directors for approval. Upon request by HYHA, an injured or ill player must furnish documentation from a physician stating that the player is not allowed to play hockey for the specified time period. The HYHA Board of Directors shall have the authority to modify the above-reference team fee reimbursement policy in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

- (d) A travel player who quits a position on a travel team, other than through a move up as provided in these Rules, either after travel team try-outs are completed, but before October 20, or to accept an offer to play for a high school hockey team on or before December 1, forfeits that player's entire registration fee and the first installment of team expenses. In such cases, the travel team losing a player position directly or through a player move up as provided in these Rules, may submit a written request to the Board of Directors for the General Fund to pay the unpaid team expenses for that lost player position. The Board of Directors must receive such requests on or before December 20.
- (e) A travel player, who otherwise quits his position on a travel team after October 20, must pay the entire portion of that player's team expenses for the entire season. For purposes of this policy, the official date a player quits shall be the date the Registrar receives notice, in writing, that the travel player quit the travel team or accepted an offer to play for a high school hockey team.
- (f) The Board of Directors may modify these player financial responsibility requirements and travel team expense reimbursement policies in the event of unforeseen circumstances or as it deems in the best interests of the Association.
 - 1) Any 15U girl that is named to the High School Roster to start the season at their High School and accepts the spot will have all fees refunded by HYHA except for the Clinic Fee. This entitles her to receive the same refund provided to Girls that tried out for the 15UA team with a Conditional Tryout Waiver and were cut and returned to their Native Hockey Association following tryouts.
 - 2) A travel player, who otherwise quits her position on a travel team after tryouts must pay the entire portion of that player's team expenses for the entire season. For purposes of this policy, the official date a player quits shall be the date the Registrar receives notice, in writing, that the travel player quit the travel team or accepted an offer to play for a high school hockey team.
- (g) The HYHA Treasurer will be responsible for paying all district fees.
- (h) The team manager will be responsible for working closely with the HYHA Treasurer to manage the team's finances. The team manager can delegate the responsibility to a team treasurer.

- (i) HYHA sponsored tournaments are fundraisers. Parents are required to volunteer per the HYHA volunteer policy. Registering a player in HYHA is considered an agreement to abide by the current volunteer requirements. Parents are responsible for reviewing and understanding the current volunteer policy as is posted at <http://www.hopkinshockey.com>.
- (j) Travel Team Uniform Deposits. Each youth travel team player (including Advanced Mites) shall make a \$150 uniform and equipment deposit at the beginning of the season, or agree during registration to be invoiced at the end of the season if not returned.

Article VII. TOURNAMENTS

Squirts will participate in the Hopkins Thanksgiving Tournament and two additional out-of-town tournaments. Squirt teams may elect to supplement their schedule with an additional in-town tournament, in the discretion of the coaching staff, provided game limits are not exceeded. PeeWees and Bantams will participate in the Hopkins Thanksgiving Tournament, one additional in-town tournament, and two out-of-town tournaments. PeeWee and Bantam teams may elect to add one additional tournament, in the discretion of the coaching staff and provided the parents of players on the team agree and will pay an additional amount for participation in an extra tournament. Teams seeking to add a supplemental tournament may not do so if there are any conflicts with District league games and may not request to reschedule a league game to attend a supplemental tournament. The HYHA Tournament Director will work with the coaches to determine appropriate tournament options.

Article VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

Section 8.01 District games, scrimmages, and tournament games will be limited for the Squirt age. HYHA abides and agrees with the current game limits for Squirts. Any attempt to manipulate, hide, or exceed the game limit by a manager or coach will be subject to immediate suspension. Current game limit information will be explained at the District 3 mandatory coach and manager's meeting and information is available at <http://www.d3hockey.org>. A ratio of two (2) practices to one (1) game is recommended. No team may have more than two (2) on-ice activities per day. There is a mandatory MN Hockey rest rule which requires three hours from the end of one ice time to the start of the next.

Section 8.02 In accordance with Minnesota Hockey District 3 Rules and Regulations, fighting, other forms of violence or profanity by players or coaches in the HYHA travel program will not be tolerated. During games or scrimmages, referees have the authority to penalize for misconduct. Parents, players, and coaches must support the officials.

Section 8.03 Coaches and managers are required to be aware of and compliant with all reporting of infractions as set forth by MN Hockey, District 3 and USA Hockey. The self-reporting guidelines are explained at the mandatory District 3 coach and manager meeting.

Section 8.04 Recognizing that special circumstances may exist in the future, the HYHA Board of Directors has the ability to grant an exception to this policy for the upcoming season of play if requested by a parent or player by July 30th. Such requests shall be in writing and directed to the President.