



# Andover Hockey Association Parents' Meeting

March 15, 2023

# Welcome to the Andover Hockey Association!

## Our Mission:

- Fun
- Safe
- Developmentally rewarding hockey experience for all Andover children

We are a **family-centered organization** that places the needs of our members first, giving all players the opportunity to participate to the best of their ability, to develop as athletes, and to **grow more confidently** into young adulthood.

We serve our **members**, the town of **Andover**, and our greater **community**.

“We strive to develop great people, not just great players.”



# Our Values

- We teach players skills to better compete at the game of hockey.
- We identify and develop coaches that can rapidly elevate player skills and serve as both educators and role models.
- We instill qualities of commitment, teamwork, sportsmanship, self-confidence, discipline, and respect for others.
- We create a partnership with member parents and increase community participation.
- We foster camaraderie and the creation of lifelong friendships across the AHA community.
- We promote, uphold, and exude “town pride”.



# What Makes AHA Great?

- **History**– We have been serving Andover youth for over 50 years
- **Non-profit**– We are not motivated by profits or pressure to win. We are dedicated to developing physical, mental, and emotional skills for hockey players including the love of the game.
- **People**– We recruit and train coaches that believe in our philosophy.
- **Facilities** – We have access to Phillips Academy, one of the premier, dual rink facilities in the state as well as convenient facilities at Elev802/XP/GDS.
- **Community** – We believe in and foster the passion and town pride in Andover. Our kids love playing with their friends, neighbors, and classmates and we love watching them grow and mature together.
- **No Cuts / No Contracts** – Our players are placed on team by ability and do not sign contracts to play hockey at the exclusion of other activities.



# 2022-23 AHA Experience

## Program Numbers 2022-23

- LTS: 102
- LTP: 111
- MHL: 53
- Mite Travel/U8: 55
- Squirts/U10: 98
- PeeWees/U12: 87
- Bantams/U14: 65
- HS/Midgets: 110
- Rec Hockey: 28
- Warrior Cup 28

**TOTAL - 737 Players & 118 Coaches**



# 2022-23 AHA Experience

- **Successful against league, out of state, and club opponents**
- **Best skills vendors in the business**
- **Relationship w/ AHS**
- **Scholarships and Academic Initiative**
- **Officiating initiative**
- **Bruins LTP**
- **Girls' "Select" team experience**
- **Full ice mites**
- **Rec hockey**
- **Hosting girls' states**
- **Community service initiatives and partnership w/ sled team**
- **Warrior Cup**



# Details for 2023-24

## 2023-24 Tuition for AHA Full Season Youth *Travel*

- Mites/U8 - \$1700
- Squirts/U10 - \$2300
- PeeWees/U12 - \$2300
- Bantams/U14 - \$2500/\$2300
- Goalies - \$500

## What Payments Are Due Now?

- \$200 will be charged to all players at the time of registration (less for full time goalies)
- Non-refundable fee applied to tuition (refundable if no supplemental program offered at an age level)



# What's New for 2023-24?

## Supplemental/Game Only Teams - Squirts, PWs, & Bantams

- Fun, safe, and developmentally rewarding hockey experience
- Play with friends, neighbors, and classmates in a fun, convenient, and flexible setting
- Andover town pride!
- Full time AHA and non-full time AHA players eligible subject to roster rules
- Highly skilled players competing against challenging opponents
- If sufficient interest tryouts will take place (after AHA “full season” tryouts)
- Placements Committee will finalize details (number of teams, rosters and coaches, where to play, how many games leagues, and tuition for the program)





# Looking Ahead to 2023-24

## What does AHA Offer for Goalies?

In recognition of the extra expenses incurred by our goalie families, AHA has significantly reduced tuition for goalies.

We also have an arrangement for special discounts and other offers from our goalie skills provider, GDS.



# Looking Ahead to 2023-24

## **What Will AHA's Girls Program Offer Next Season?**

- Full game and practice schedule as well as sessions with AHA's skills vendors, for U8 through U14 (full season)
- Fall High School Half Season
- Alternate players will be permitted on U10, U12, and U14
- Supplemental “game only” girls teams as well



# Looking Ahead to 2023-24

## Should My Mite/U8 Player Sign Up Now?

- Birth years 2015-2017 need to register now if you want to try out for travel mites/U8
- *At least one year of experience in the MHL or an equivalent program for travel mites*
- MHL next season? Then no need to register at this time
- If you are uncertain whether your player would be ready for travel, ask your coach or MHL commissioner
- Any players not selected for a mite/U8 travel team automatically placed into MHL



# Looking Ahead to 2023-24

## 2009 Birth Year Freshman

- Male 2009s (i.e. second year Bantams) who will be entering their freshman year in high school **must register as full season AHA Bantams** in order to be able to participate in AHA's HSHS program; in doing so they will be permitted to participate in the AHA HSHS program *for free*
- Female freshmen 2009s who register as full-season AHA U14 players may participate in the AHA HSHS program *for free*
- Female freshmen 2009 who are not full-season AHA U14 players are invited to participate in the AHA HSHS program *at cost*.



# AHA Player Development

1. **Ninety percent of this is effective practice planning, which requires...**
  - a. **Clear skill development targets**
  - b. **Tools to make it easy for coaches to plan drills aligned with those development targets**
2. **Effective Coaches**
  - a. **Not just about where they played...need the right values, the right demeanor, and an ability to connect with kids. This is a game they play with their friends.**
  - b. **And if it matters to you, AHA's coaching staff includes 5 coaches who played pro hockey, another 18-20 who played at various D1 and D3 colleges, and another dozen or so who played at elite high school levels.**
3. **Expert Partners:**
  - a. **Elev802**
  - b. **Erika Hammar**
  - c. **XP Strength & Conditioning**



# AHA Player Development continued...

## Goals for 2023-2024 Season:

- Implement supplemental Power Skating offering to focus on speed and agility
- Implement supplemental Skill & Position Clinics like what we experimented with over the February school break.
- Introduce a video library for coaches to help introduce players to individual and team concepts in a format that kids already readily consume.
- Identify a location for teams to conduct stick handling and shooting practices off-ice



# The AHA Path

LTS □

LTP □

MHL □

Mites/U8s □

Squirts/U10s □

Pee Wees/U12s □

Bantams/U14s □

High School/Midgets □

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Warrior Cup?



# AHA PLACEMENTS OVERVIEW 2023

- The purpose of this discussion is to offer a transparent overview of the placement process.
- We continually try to improve what is inherently an imperfect and subjective task.
- On-ice tryouts for AHA's full season youth travel teams will take place beginning next week Monday, March 20<sup>th</sup>
- Specific dates and times for each age group posted on website
- *If your player cannot attend both sessions please let us know!*
- Tryouts for other programs, including HSHS and supplemental "game only" teams, will be announced at a later date.





# The Evaluation and Placements Process

**Consists primarily of three phases:**

- ▶ **Coaches' Rankings (February)**
- ▶ **On-Ice Evaluations (March)**
- ▶ **Team Formation Meetings and Roster Announcements (April)**



# Placements Overview

## Coaches' Rankings

- All coaches are asked to rank all players (except their own) in order by game impact, and then place players into three tranches (A, B, C) to distinguish recognizable breaks in ability.

## On Ice Evaluations

- The purpose of on-ice evaluations is so all players from an age group are evaluated against each other to determine rankings from top to bottom.
- Coaches' rankings alone cannot provide comparisons between different teams (e.g., rising first year squirt on Mite 2 compared to a returning second year squirt on Squirt 3).

## Team Formation

- Teams are formed based on the final rankings based on the targeted number of players for each age group.



## **Managing Conflicts of Interest**

AHA is dedicated to making the process fair and ethical:

- Coaches cannot rank their own children
- AC's submit their rankings directly to the PC (i.e. not funneled through HC, so we get a fair rank of HC's child)
- Evaluators cannot evaluate their own children
- Evaluators should conduct "blind" evaluations if possible



## Coaches' Rankings

- Coaches' rankings and comments are the **most important** component of the placement process.
- Players have the ability to move up (or down) during the evaluation process but they generally cannot "pass" teammates with higher rankings (unless the placements team believes strongly that a player is ranked incorrectly, in which case the coaches will be consulted).
- The philosophy behind this policy is that generally a coach who sees a player day in and out for eight months is likely to provide more meaningful input than an evaluator who sees a player for three hours under stressful tryout conditions.
- Ranked top to bottom on game impact; and tranches of A, B, C.
- Tranches of A, B, and C levels to demonstrate meaningful splits between groups of players within the same team.
  - A players tend to stand out as the best players on the team.
  - B players are typically average contributors.
  - C players are noticeably less skilled than the average players.
  - Coaches' rankings do not have to have a set number of A, B, and C players although the B tranche is typically the largest (think bell curve).
  - Goalies should also be ranked; if there is only one goalie on the team, coaches should provide accurate commentary as to his/her strengths and areas for improvement,



## Targeted Team Sizes

- Mite/U8
  - 9-11 players, no designated goalies (*“pass the pads”*); 4 v 4
- Squirt/U10
  - 13-15 skaters, 1-2 goalies
- Pee Wee/U12
  - 13-15 skaters, 1-2 goalies
- Bantam/U14
  - 15-18 skaters, 2 goalies
- HS/Midgets
  - 18-20 skaters, 2 goalies

*\*AHA cannot guarantee exact roster sizes for each team year to year*

- Odd numbers of players at a given age level
- Clear differentials in skill
- Ice time constraints
- Coaching considerations
- Family/other special needs



## FAQs

1. Should any preference be given to second-year players trying to make a team?

A: No, other than if you have two players in a "tie".

2. The tie should go to the second-year player. But can a first-year player make the top team?

A: Absolutely!

3. How many on-ice evaluation sessions are there?

A: Approximately 3 hours per player.

4. What happens if my player cannot make evaluations?

A: He/she will be placed on a team based on their coach's ranking or other external factors.

5. My player is on a lower team this year. Is he/she stuck there?

A: No. Top-ranked players on every team have the most upward mobility and will be competing with players that were on higher teams.

6. We have twins. How is that managed?

A: Parents have the option of having them compete independently; otherwise, they will be placed according to the lower-placed child.

