



# Stillwater Area Hockey Association Initiation Program (Mite/U8) 2010-2011

## Registration by age Rules

<u>Birthday</u>	<u>Option 1</u>	<u>Option 2</u>	<u>Requirements</u>
On or after 9/1/02	Select mite/U8 level below		
7/1/02 through 8/31/02	Select mite/U8 level below	Squirt/U10 move-up (see below)	See Squirt/U10 move-up <b>AND</b> Early move-up
7/1/01 through 6/30/02	Select mite/U8 level below	Squirt/U10 move-up (see below)	See Squirt/U10 move-up

## Mite/U8 Levels in SAHA:

<u>Level</u>	<u>Description</u>
Mini-Mites	4 year olds or kids in kindergarten with little or no skating experience. Boys and girls are combined in this program
Mite/U8 Level 1	Kids in kindergarten or those in 1 <sup>st</sup> grade that are new to hockey
Mite/U8 Level 2	Kids in 1 <sup>st</sup> grade or 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> graders that are new to hockey but can skate
Mite/U8 Level 3	Kids in 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade <b>AND</b> have completed Level 2 or played at least 2 years of hockey

## What level should I sign my child up for? What is the difference between the levels?

**Mini-Mites:** This program is designed primarily for 4 year olds or kids in kindergarten with little or no skating experience. These kids will skate once or sometimes twice per week. "Game days" will take place once per month after **January 1** where the kids will play **cross-ice games**. They will also participate in the end of year Jamboree. All other activities will focus primarily on **skating skills & fun**.

**Mite/U8 Level 1:** This program is designed primarily for kids that have completed mini-mites, a kindergarten who can move on his /her skates or a 1<sup>st</sup> grader new to hockey. These kids will usually skate twice per week (Saturdays and Sundays) and an occasional mid-week skate outdoors. "Game days" will take place once per month with primarily **cross-ice games**. They will also participate in the end of year Jamboree with 2 full ice games. All other activities will focus primarily on **skating skills and fun** along with the **introduction of puck skills**.

**Mite/U8 Level 2:** This program is designed primarily for kids that have completed level 1 or kids that are just starting hockey in 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> grade but can skate. These kids will usually skate twice per week (Saturdays and Sundays) and an occasional mid-week skate outdoors. "Game days" will take place once per month with primarily **half-ice games**. They will also participate in the end of year Jamboree with 2 full ice games. All other activities will focus primarily on **skating, puck skills and fun** along with the **introduction of game skills**.

**Mite/U8 Level 3:** To play level 3, a player must have completed Mite/U8 level 2 and their skating skill must be sufficient for level 3. We will conduct an informal clinic and the beginning of the year and reserve the right to request players to play level 2 if necessary. We encourage parents to not push kids up to level 3 if skating skills are not there simply because there is a desire for more "games". We will not "cut" players to fit a set number of mite 3 teams. However, if at the pre-skate it is clear that skating skills drop far between the main body of players and one or more kids we will place those children on level 2 teams. Experience has shown that a second year at mite 2 is a great way to develop skating and confidence. Level 3 kids will usually skate **three times per week** (Saturdays, Sundays, and Wednesdays) and an occasional mid-week skate outdoors. Approximately 12 "Games" will be scheduled throughout the season. They will also participate in the end of year Jamboree. All other activities will focus primarily on **fun skating, puck, and game skills**.

**Squirt/U10 Early Move Up Information on Back of this form**



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## Squirt Move-up (option 2 from table above):

- 1) Indicate squirt/U10 move-up preference at registration.
  - a. Player must have completed at least one year at level 3
  - b. Please read this entire document before electing to move up especially the MAHA rules below
  - c. Read, "early move-up" clause if it applies to your son or daughter
- 2) Girls have just one tryout for U10 for both the A and B teams. U8 early move up players cannot play on the A team. Some or all of the U8 early move-up players may be on a B team.
- 3) Boys who elect B-squirt tryout will participate in a B-squirt tryout in mid October.
- 4) Boys who select C-Squirt only, and those not placed on a B team attend a C placement session in late October.
- 5) Some or all of the early move-up Boys who attend the placement sessions will be placed on a C-squirt team.

## Early Move-up for July and August Birthdays

The Minnesota hockey age cut-off (7/1) is 2-months earlier than Stillwater Area Schools (9/1). SAHA permits mites in this "gap" to move-up to squirts when their classmates are eligible to do so, provided the child has completed at least one year at Mite3. **Rules governing this "early" move-up...**

- a. Once this early move-up decision is made, it carries-through all years within SAHA.
  - a. After 3 years at Squirts/U10, player **MUST** move up with to Peewees/U12.
  - b. After 2 years at Peewees/U12, player **MUST** move up to Bantams/U14.
- b. **At Registration, you must sign a form indicating you understand these terms.**

## Rules and SAHA thoughts on Mites and the decision to move up to Squirts 1 year early

**Minnesota Hockey (MAHA) Regulation:** *"Two-thirds (2/3) of the players on a team must be within the age division in which the team is registered."* What this means is one-third (1/3) of the team can be of Mite/U8 age, and the remaining two-thirds (2/3) of the team must be of Squirt/U10 age.

**Additionally, SAHA reserves the flexibility to channel some children to C-Squirts or U10-B, while keeping others at Mites/U8 due to the above MAHA rule, team numbers, or skill level.**

The late October C-Squirt and U10 placement sessions for Mite and U8 move-ups will be an informal "tryout" of sorts. It is preferred that no player be asked to move back to mites or U8 due to skill level. Parents can help this by seriously considering their child's abilities before choosing a Squirt/U10 move-up.

The main difference between Level 3 Mites/U8 and C-Squirts or U10-B is that the game emphasis is slightly greater at the Squirt/U10 level. However, this is not the most important exposure for young hockey players. Developing solid skating skills (through practices much more so than through hockey games) will set the trajectory for a young hockey player in future years. As an example, in a typical one-hour "game", a player is on the ice for approximately 15 minutes and touches the puck for less than one minute. The improvement of core skills during that game as opposed to a one-hour practice is significantly less.

In summary, Stillwater Hockey strongly believes that Mite/U8 Level 3 play will provide appropriate training for many children otherwise eligible to move up to Squirts/U10. Please consider this when selecting an option for your child. Also consider if your child is prepared for the mild, "tryout" that takes place with Squirts and U10. It might be a good experience for some children, but not appropriate for others. **Please call** Bob Kaufman, Initiation Director at 612-210-8182 if you desire guidance in making this decision for your child or if you have any questions regarding the Initiation Program. Thanks.