

Southwest 8U Parent Info and Listening Session (March 21, 2011)

Meeting Notes

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Topics:

1. Introduction
2. History and Perspective
 - USA Hockey, The Governing Structure, Districts, Affiliates, Associations
3. ADM (American Development Model)
 - Philosophy, retention, athlete development followed by player development
 - LTAD, long term plan
 - Red, White, and Blue hockey (the 8U portion of the ADM)
4. Mite Hockey at Southwest
 - WSRHL history
 - Current program
 - Proposed Region 4 Red/White/Blue program
5. Implementation and Lessons Learned

1. Introduction

- Introduce Association representatives
- ACE coordinator: from USA Hockey role definition
 - Ensure that the association is promoting age-specific skill development in all of its programs.
 - Encourage associations to implement the USA Hockey Skill Development and Cross-Ice programs.
 - Deliver parent education programs to the association.
- Why we are here, what we will be discussing.

2. History and Perspective, Organizational Structure:

- Provide background on organizational structure in USA, mandates vs incentives, guidelines vs laws, etc.

a. USA Hockey, WAHA, Region 4 Affiliates

USA Hockey: Governing Body (National)

http://www.usahockey.com/Template_Usahockey.aspx?NAV=AU_12&ID=185082

Annual Guide published each year. 360 pages.

Districts: Atlantic, Central, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mid-American, Minnesota, New England, New York, Northern Plains, Pacific, Rocky Mountain, Southeastern

http://www.usahockey.com/Template_USAHockey.aspx?NAV=NO&id=180122

Example of 'hands on' district level governance: Atlantic District, Atlantic District ADM implementation

Example of 'hands off' district level governance: Central District

Affiliates: WAHA, Minnesota Hockey, etc, examples of 'hands on' vs 'hands on' governance here as well

Regions: Region 4 summary

"The Region 4 Hockey Council is a non-profit educational organization with the objective of providing guidance, direction and leadership to those organizations and teams in Dane County and in WAHA Region 4, which provide recreational and competitive youth hockey programs.

The Region 4 Hockey Council also administers regulations and provides assistance for the successful promotion of youth hockey in WAHA Region 4 in accordance with the regulations and purposes of the United States of America Hockey (USA HOCKEY) and the Wisconsin Amateur Hockey Association (WAHA).

The Region 4 Hockey Council's primary goal is to provide competitive league play for the teams involved. As such Region 4 Hockey Council is not locked into WAHA classifications. This means that teams are allowed, and encouraged, to play at a level in which they are competitive. The first round game schedule is intended to allow each team to find its competitive level, regardless of the program run by its member associations."

Associations: Wisconsin: Tier 1, Tier 2

3. ADM (American Development Model) (ADM/LTAD/RWB Presentation Material)

a. *Philosophy, retention, athlete development followed by player development*

b. *LTAD, long term plan*

c. *Red, White, and Blue hockey (the 8U portion of the ADM)*

d. *Also proposing significant changes to HPCs (Tier 1).*

- Massive undertaking, attempt to make significant nationwide changes to current hockey culture and development in the USA
- Focus: Retention, athlete development, love for the game
- Major investment and support by NHL
- Based on years of work at USA Hockey, with that work based on many more years of international sports science and athletic development research (LTAD)
- LTAD:
 - Age appropriate Training, Skill Development, and Common Sense
 - Windows of Trainability
 - 10 key factors
- Role of the ADM:
 - Provide guidelines, standards, and structure
 - Mandates vs incentives
 - Circulate best practices
 - Address LTAD principles
 - Better service clubs, teams, players
 - Places emphasis on child, not just the hockey player: Play, Love, Excel
 - Age appropriate programming
- NGB: Win the gold, or learn fundamental movement and sports skills?
- RWB hockey is only part of the ADM
- 8 Stages of LTAD: Stage 2: 6U and 8U FUNDamentals
- Changes to coaching program, improved practice materials and information – consistent message in reference material.

4. Mite Hockey at Southwest

- Current program,
- Station based practices and reduced surface hockey for a large portion of the program
- Provide a transition program for the reduced surface to full-ice process
- Many aspects of the ADM are familiar to our club and coaches
- WSRHL
- Proposed Region 4 Red/White/Blue program
 - Region 4 wide restructure of Mite Program
 - Participation has been indicated by all major clubs in the area

- This is happening on a national, district, state level. We are a small part of a larger picture, and the transition has already been completed in many other regions in Wisconsin and across the Midwest.
- Some affiliates are mandating the transition, while others are leaving the process up to the local regions and associations.
- While there is currently Mite A State tournaments scheduled for 2012, the current speculation is that these tournaments will be removed at the Annual meeting (April/May)
- Region 4 is one of the last regions in WAHA to proceed with the Mite Restructure.
- March 16 Meeting:
 - Patriots: Strongly Committed, will participate in RWB leagues. Voting completed.
 - Wildcats: Strongly Committed, will participate in RWB leagues. Voting completed.
 - McFarland: Committed; have plans for a part-time full-ice team
 - Sun Prairie: Strongly Committed, will not participate in RWB leagues (entirely in-house program).
 - Southwest: Have indicated that a general membership vote needs to be completed. Coaches Committee and Board support
 - Polar Caps: Strongly Committed, will participate in RWB leagues. Do not require a general membership vote to make the change, but will include it on the annual meeting agenda. Have interest in a full-ice transitional aspect.
 - Stoughton: Strongly Committed, will participate in RWB leagues. Voting completed.
 - Oregon: Strongly Committed, will participate in RWB leagues. Voting completed.
 - Janesville: Support transition, but have expressed concerns. Primary concern is affect on players in the transition process.
 - Monroe: Committed, considerable pushback from some members. Many Illinois members in club, and worry about losing these members to Illinois clubs.
 - Middleton: Committed, have had considerable pushback from members. Interested in including a full-ice transition aspect to the program.
 - Beloit: Indicated support but will stay in-house.
 - Dodgeville: Will not likely have a Mite program next season.
- RWB program for 7-8 year old skaters. WSRHL will maintain a U6 league for 5-6 year olds. RWB skaters divided by skill level (Red – most advanced, Blue – least advanced).
- Skaters can move up and down between skill divisions / colors during the year.
- Association will divide players into R/W/B skill groups at start of year (1 – 2 practices to observe skaters).
- Start of year tournament will be held. Associations will place their teams in R/W/B leagues based on level of competition at tournament.
- ½ ice Games
- 4 players + goalie
- May play multiple games per hour
- Black pucks
- 90 second shifts

5. Implementation and Lessons Learned

Many lessons learned in the transition from two to one Mite Tier 2 team. Primarily:

- Competition versus other clubs in weekend games
- Transitional year

The SWE Coaches Committee met March 14 to discuss the Mite Restructure. The committee strongly supports the restructure as a positive step for player development, but recognizes that there are implementation details to be defined, and is also aware of the hurdles.

How do we move forward:

- have a second meeting / Q&A session with parents of the 2011-2012 U8 skaters.
- With feedback from our members,
 - identify a plan to implement the restructure at Southwest
 - identify a contingency plan
 - discuss what options are provided for which skaters during the 2011-2012 transition.
 - Players that have 1 year on the Mite A team (4)
 - Players that have played at 2 years of Mite 2 and have a 2003 birth year
 - Players that have played 1 year of Mite 2 and have a 2003 birth year
 - Others?
 - We have some very skilled young players in our current program, and it's important we maintain their passion and interest for the game.
 - Other clubs:
 - Patriots: Transition policy not defined
 - Wildcats: 3 players will be given the option to play Squirt (will likely have 1 player move to Squirt)
 - McFarland: Transition policy not defined
 - Sun Prairie: In-house, does not affect our skaters.
 - Polar Caps: 5 skaters
 - Stoughton: 3 players will be given the opportunity to play Squirt
 - Oregon: 3 players will be given the option to play Squirt B
 - Janesville: Transition policy not defined
 - Monroe: Transition policy not defined
 - Middleton: Will allow players to participate in Squirt evaluations. Subject to play-up policy and must be ranked in top 5 of all Squirt players to play at the Squirt level
 - Beloit: in-house, does not affect our skaters.
 - potential solutions for SWE transitional year (1 year only). These are only my thoughts at this time, and do not represent anything that the association has discussed or considered.
 - one last "Mite A" team
 - may not have any teams to play
 - evaluated as a Squirt
 - play-up rule waived
 - play-up rule in-place
 - place on Squirt B team
 - create a Squirt C team with 8U players

- Squirt aged players try out for A/B teams
- We'll need to look at numbers and get feedback from families on what their plans/preference would be given a choice.
- Concerns regarding moving players up to Squirt
 - Development of players moved up AND the development of other Squirt aged players. It may work for some, but definitely won't be the best for many of the skaters
 - Survive vs. thrive
 - Size and maturity differences
 - Safe environment
 - Play vs peers