



Michigan Amateur Hockey Association

July 16, 2011

To: Association & Club Presidents
MAHA Directors

From: George Atkinson – President

This past weekend, the Michigan Amateur Hockey Association (MAHA) Board of Directors voted to pass a revised rule change proposal that will substantially improve skill development for eight-and-under age hockey players. The rule change phases in a reduced playing surface size by the 2012-2013 season and does not affect those 2003 players who played full-ice in the 2010-2011 season. Once phased in, it allows associations the ability to fully adopt the American Development Model (ADM) for this age level.

By now I hope that you, as association board members, have come to learn the positive aspects of station-based practices and cross-ice / half-ice games. The science and the research behind the ADM has shown that reduced ice surfaces will be good for the development of the youth players. Until now, the question has been when and how it should be implemented. Now that the decision has been made, I hope that everyone will come together and do the best job possible to implement this program for the benefit of their players. For some associations this will all be new. For others that have been leaders in implementing this program in the last few years, this will only require minor tweaking. I hope that those that have already had the experience can share tips with the others on how to make this transition as smooth as possible. I know larger associations such as Grand Rapids and Lansing implemented the program last year and have had success both developmentally for their players as well as financially for their organization. It will not be easy, but the rule change allows you to implement over the course of two years what Grand Rapids and Lansing did in one.

Below is a timeline for your implementation over the next two years. You will also find a chart attached that will help explain the full-ice options available during the 2011-2012 season. These will help you to lay out your plan of action. Also below is a list of frequently asked questions. These are questions that have come up in the last few months and some in the last few days. We want to give you straight answers so you will know how to go forward and answer your parents' questions. Also attached is the ADM Administrators guide that was rolled-out at the summer meeting which will also provide you with helpful information.

Time Line

2011 – 2012 Season

Six-and-under Players – No Changes - Must play cross-ice / half-ice games.

2004 Birth Year Players - Must play cross-ice / half ice games. No full-ice games or tournaments.

2003 Birth Year Players – May play cross-ice / half-ice games. Full-ice Mite AA and Mite B teams allowed. (Exceptions can be granted by District Council, according to guidelines established by rule change, for small associations to add 2004 players to a Mite B team if they can not make a viable team with only 2003 players.)



2012 – 2013 Season

Six-and-under Players – No Changes - Must play cross-ice / half-ice games.

2005 Birth Years Players - Must play cross-ice / half-ice games. No full-ice games or tournaments.

2004 Birth Year Players – Must play cross-ice / half-ice games up until December 19, 2012. Full-ice Mite teams allowed to play games on December 20, 2012. Must receive District Council approval prior to forming teams. Criteria is as follows:

- **Associations must have completed a minimum 10 ADM station-based practice sessions and completed 8 cross-ice / half-ice game days.**
- **Associations may begin submitting their requests for full-ice teams on December 1st to their district council which shall certify that they are compliant with practice / game criteria by December 15th.**
- **Upon certification, teams can be formed and full-ice practices can begin. Games can be played after December 20th. Teams must be rostered as full-ice teams prior to their first game. Players can continue to participate in cross-ice in cross-ice practices and games.**
- **Team shall be made up of those players that are in their last birth year of the eight-and-under age classification (Mites). Exceptions can be made by the district council to include those born in the first birth year of Mites if the association does not have enough Mites to field or fill a team. For Associations with six or fewer players in the last birth year, they may supplement with players from the first birth year up to thirteen players for one team. For Associations with seven or more players in the last birth year, the teams formed must have more than 50% of their players from the last birth year.**

Frequently Asked Questions

Could an association have teams in both MAHA and another sanctioning organization?

No, if you allow your Mite teams to participate with another group outside of MAHA and USA Hockey, it will jeopardize all of your remaining teams. Your other teams would no longer be eligible to play in MAHA / USA Hockey-sanctioned leagues, tournaments or District and State Playoffs. A team may split away from your organization but, if they do, they must be totally separate. They may not be part of the association, use the same uniforms, team names etc.

Does an Association have to offer reduced ice surface Mite Programs?

Yes, we expect that all our affiliates will have active Mite cross-ice / half-ice programs at all age groups. Failure to offer and run these programs will affect your affiliates good standing with MAHA.

If some teams choose not to play within MAHA / USA Hockey, can our teams still play them?

No, you cannot play any teams that are not part of MAHA and USA Hockey. Those non- MAHA and USA Hockey teams will not be able to join any of our sanctioned leagues. They will also not be able to play in any sanctioned tournaments or play teams in other states and Canada that are members of USA Hockey or Hockey Canada. Playing teams not registered with USA Hockey or Hockey Canada voids your insurance and can lead to disciplinary action for your head coach.

Could an individual coach participate in both MAHA and another sanctioning organization?

Yes, as long as they meet all the coaching certification requirements within MAHA / USA Hockey.

If we had a 2003 Travel team in during the 2010-2011 Hockey season, can we have a 2003 Travel Team during the 2011–2012 season?

Yes, if your association had a team made up of 2003 players that was rostered any time between 9/1/2010 and 7/10/2011 you can. The maximum number you can have is equal to the greatest number of teams you had in either the winter or the post season. If you did not have a 2003 team during this time frame, then you may not field a team during the 2011–2012 season. Independent Clubs are not allowed to have 2003 travel teams, as has been the case in the past.

We have a 2004 Mite B player that played full-ice during the 2010–2011 season. Is he/she eligible under the grandfather rule to play full-ice in 2011–2012?

No, they are not automatically allowed to play full-ice in 2011–2012. If an association did not have enough 2003 players to fill a team roster up to 13, then they could ask their District Council for an exception to add 2004's to fill up a team per the rule change guidelines.

We don't have enough 2003 players to make our Mite B team, what should we do?

If you have less than 13 2003 players, you can petition your district council to add 2004 players up to a team total of 13 players. If you have more than 13 but less than 26 you can have two teams and fill up to 26 total players with district council permission. If you have more than 26 but less than 39 you can have three teams and fill up to 39 total players with district council permission etc..

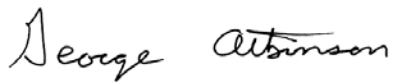
Can Mite players move up to Squirts?

The answer is yes, players can move up. However the team may not have more than 50% of their players from the lower age classification. Most associations also have an approval process that the players need to go through as well before they can move up. Normally the rule for moving up is that the players should be in the top 25% of the ability of the players in the group they are moving up to. If that is not the case we do not recommend the move.

We hope this answers the majority of the questions. If you have further questions, please contact your District Directors.

We look forward to the implementation of these new rules over the next two years. Once phased in, the ADM program will help all children reach their maximum potential in the game of hockey. We appreciate all you will do to provide the best possible development through the use of this program for your players.

Sincerely



George Atkinson
President
Michigan Amateur Hockey Association