



Intitiation (Tyke) House League Program

Beginning in the 2017-18 season, Hockey Canada is implementing a new policy that mandates cross-ice/half-ice hockey for players at the Initiation age level (traditionally 5- and 6-year-olds) to all Minor Hockey Associations.

While the policy making it mandatory is new, half-ice/cross-ice hockey has been part of the Initiation Program since it was first developed more than 35 years ago. The purpose of the IP is to introduce the basic skills of the game, and make a child's first introduction to the game one that is safe, enjoyable, and fun.

Cross-ice/half-ice hockey at the Initiation age effectively right-sizes the playing surface for young players:

You don't put five- and six-year-olds on a full-size soccer pitch, or expect them to play basketball on a full-sized court with no height adjustments – hockey is no different.

Cross-ice/half-ice hockey allows young players the opportunity for more puck-touches which promotes greater opportunity for skill development (puck-handling, shooting, skating, coordination) and decision-making.

Players on cross-ice/half-ice have been shown to receive five times more passes and take six times more shots than when they are on a full-sized rink.

Small-area games are used at all levels of the game – including senior national teams and the NHL.

Therefore the DWGHA is moving forward with changes to our Tyke house league program and to be followed by the mandatory implementation of the new Novice program for the 2019/2020 season.

Unlike other associations, the DWGHA will be offering two ice times per week whereas most associations are offering only one ice time per week. The DWGHA program will consist of 6-8 weeks of core development along with mini games being played at the same time. Following these very important development sessions the program will evolve to Saturday development sessions (6 stations broken into skill level) and Sunday Funday games (Half Ice games, 2 games running at the same time.)

There will not use referees and scores/standings will not be recorded or posted.

With this program DWGHA players will progress and develop sooner and will be more prepared to transition to full ice Hockey.

Sincerely
Ted Boggs
Director of Development
Durham West Girls Hockey Association