

Parents of BHSA,

Yesterday started another exciting season for BHSA. I want to welcome you all back and hope that you all enjoyed a fantastic summer. I would like to update you from my last E-mail sent over the summer.

We have made additional improvements to the program. The board members have worked hard over the off months to provide a first class program to all of you.

This week starts our first week of skills that will run for 10 weeks once per week. We believe the addition of skills to the program will help focus on key areas of skill development from Mite to Bantams.

As outlined in my earlier note, John Roderick and Mike Pandolfo will be conducting our skill sessions. Both bring a strong background and core focus on key elements of skill development. Mike and his team have been working with our program for several years and do a fantastic job. I had the opportunity to watch several of John Roderick's sessions through multiple age groups. I was quite impressed with his offering. I welcome your feedback for both.

Roderick's team will support Squirt through Bantam and Pandolfo will support Mites. The Squirt through Bantam teams will have a focused goalie coach working with them during the skill sessions

The skill session is a mandatory practice session that our coaches are aware and will take attendance.

We had worked with Chelmsford last year to develop a cross ice program for our Mite C team supporting USA hockey ADM (American Development Model) requirements. The program included 5 other towns. The program was extremely successful.

This year the program has increased to 13 teams. Burlington will be supporting 4 of the 13. We feel the head count playing the cross ice games should be limited to 8 - 10 players to allow for adequate playing time. Both B and C teams will be divided into two teams during game time. The Mite coaches have been briefed of the program and will provide all the detail to you.

Next year all Mite programs will be cross ice to support the mandated USA and Mass hockey requirements.

Why Cross Ice?

Well, let's start with this fact: Hockey is the only major sport that doesn't shrink the playing surface to match the age group. We would never consider having our children at 8 years of age play on a big league-sized diamond. Instead, they play on an appropriately sized Little League diamond. When attempting to teach your 8-year-old to play golf, you would not have them tee off from the black tees. Football shrinks the playing field. Soccer uses a smaller ball and smaller field. Basketball uses a smaller ball and lowers the rim. Sensing a theme?

In hockey, we have 6- to 8-year-old kids skating the full rink surface, with some of them hardly touching the puck. How can we expect our kids to develop their skills — or a passion for the game — if they aren't really participating?

Playing cross-ice hockey works for hockey players of all ages. From Mites to Olympians, players split up the ice surface to hone their skills. Not only that, but it's fun for everyone because everyone is involved. And with kids, the more they're participating, the more likely they'll develop a passion for the game. In this cross-ice environment, a player's activity level skyrockets because their participation increases, leading to an increased skill set and love of the game. Mass Hockey has worked to develop the ADM (American Development Model) This program was created to address many growing concerns in youth hockey, some including, retention, decreased percentage of professional hockey players from the state, early peak and many others.

Our figure skating program will kick off next weekend under our new Director Colleen Smith. Kristine Perrotti has moved on and we thank her for all her efforts throughout the years.

Colleen has been involved with the figure Skating program for a number of years and has helped make the program what it is today. We will continue to improve the program and under Colleen's direction. She has been informing the Figure skating parents of our upcoming changes though the web site and E-mails.

As you are now aware, our program has moved to online credit payment only. This will help stream line the payment process and keeps up with the current technology that other programs in Burlington and surrounding towns use with great success. This is the only payment method we will accept. I appreciate that change some times comes with some challenge but I am confident you will all work to support this enhancement.

Our goal is for every player to enjoy their Hockey and Figure skating experience with BHSa while continuing to improve their skills. We believe BHSa is one of the strongest programs in the area and will continue to allow our children to develop skills, understand team play and have fun.

I wish our children a very happy and successful season.

Thank You,

Andrew Capobianco
President BHSa
Cell 781-799-9009