



Implementing a Cross-Ice Program



*Implementing a Cross-Ice Program
presented by Association Coaching Education*



Implementation Topics

- Cross Ice Objectives
- Education
- Program Structure
- Program Necessities
- Coaches Meeting
- Mite Skills Progression
- Practice Structure
- Organizing of Players
- Game Day Structure
- Practice Examples
- Game Day Example



Objectives of a Cross-Ice Program

1. To provide an intermediary program between the Skills Development Program and a full-ice program.
 - Modify and reduce the size of the playing surface and equipment to meet the needs of young players
 - Examples in other sports:
 - Little League Baseball
 - Youth Soccer
2. To increase opportunities for players to touch the puck
 - Players will become better skaters in traffic, as well as better puck handlers.
 - Allows players to learn concepts of time and space
 - Develops hockey sense/enhances decision making skills



Objectives of a Cross-Ice Program

3. To emphasize participation, fun and skill development
 - Smaller teams = More Ice Time, smaller coach to player ratio
4. To provide a positive environment for learning the fundamental skills of hockey.
5. To improve utilization of ice time
 - 50 Players paying for Ice time vs. 15/17 players paying
6. To promote creativity and self-learning
7. To accelerate the learning process



Educate Your Association

- You must sell the potential benefits of the Cross-Ice Program to the local Association Board of Directors, Coaches, and Parents.
 - **Meet with the Association Board of Directors**
 - Be very prepared and organized throughout the whole process.
 - If possible, utilize the Cross-Ice PowerPoint Presentation and Video provided by USA Hockey.
 - Present a “long-range” plan
 - Include a list of the potential immediate benefits to the Mite Program and later benefits for the Squirt, Pee Wee, Bantam, and Midget Programs as these players move up in age brackets in succeeding years.
 - Ask the Board of Directors for their public support for implementation of the program.



Educate Your Association

- **Meet with Mite Coaches**

- Emphasize the potential benefits to be derived from the Cross-Ice Program.
- If possible, utilize the Cross-Ice PowerPoint Presentation and Video provided by USA Hockey.
- Give details of how the Cross-Ice Program can be implemented.

- **Meet with Mite Parents**

- Before registration, conduct a Mites Parent Meeting to explain the Cross-Ice Program and answer any questions.
- If possible, show the Cross-Ice PowerPoint Presentation and Video provided by USA Hockey.



Program Structure

- All Mite-level players should be involved in a Cross-Ice Program.
 - Within the Cross-Ice Mite program, players can be divided into different skill and experience levels.
 - Playing levels may be determined by the number of years the player has skated and his/her ability. For example:
 - 1 year experience in the Skills Development Program:
 - Practice 1-2 times/week with work on skills in a station approach and playing games
 - 2 years experience in the Skills Development Program:
 - Practice 2-3 times/week with one of the times being a game day and other time(s) practicing skills in a station approach and playing games
 - 3 years experience in the Skills Development Program:
 - 3 times/week with one of the times being a game day and other time(s) practicing skills in a station approach and playing games



Program Structure

- All practice times and game times should be consistent from week to week.



Cross-Ice Program Necessities

- Items to be purchased:
 - Some type of rink divider that can be used to divide the ice surface into three sections
 - Smaller nets.
 - Sweaters/scrimmage vests of different colors for each team
 - Blue pucks
- Equipment can be purchased through:
 - Sport Resource Group, Inc.
(612) 584-3030
www.sportresourcegroup.com



Cross-Ice Program Organizational Coaches Meeting

- Prior to the start of the hockey season:
 - A Cross-Ice Program Director with strong organizational skills and leadership abilities should be appointed.
 - Recruit coaches in sufficient numbers that the coach-to-player ratio is 1 coach to 6-7 players.
 - Conduct a Mite Coaches meeting to discuss detailed job responsibilities.
 - Go over lesson plans, practice structure, game days, goals, and direction of program.
 - Assign specific duties to each coach
 - Lesson plans should be made and distributed to all coaches prior to arriving at the rink for practice.



Mite Skills Progression

- The following are skills that Players must learn and master.
 - **Movement Skating**
 - Aggressive Edge Control
 - Inside Edge Control
 - Forward Weight and Stick Shaft
 - Forward Power Strides
 - Forward Starts
 - Control Stops
 - Control Turn w/cross under push
 - Backward Basic Stance
 - Backward Power Stride
 - Backward One Skate Stop
 - Backward/Forward Transitions
 - Forward Cross w/Cross under Push



Mite Skills Progression

- **Puck Control**
 - Stick-Stance-Grip
 - Wrist Roll
 - Split Vision
 - Basic Dribbling Skills
 - Forward Stride with Pulls
 - Weave & Control Pulls
 - One Hand Puck Acceleration
 - Attacking the Triangle
 - Forehand and Backhand Shifts



Mite Skills Progression

- **Passing and Receiving**
 - Passing – “Look, Slide, Guide and Point”
 - Receiving – “Right Angle, Cup and Give
 - Forehand Passing
 - Backhand Passing
 - Stationary Passing
 - Continuous Moving Passing



Mite Skills Progression

- **Shooting**
 - Basic of Shooting
 - Forehand Sweep shot
 - Backhand Sweep shot
 - Screen and Deflection
- **Checking**
 - Poke Check
 - Stick Lift
 - Stick Press
 - Angling



Practice Structure

- The lead coach should give a lesson plan to all coaches before they arrive at the rink for practice.
 - Before each coach steps on the ice, they must know what their role will be.
- If using rink dividers, it is important to have a group of parents that will help set them up.



Practice Structure

- **Basic Practice Outline**

- 5 minute warm-up - fun free play...dump pucks, balls etc and let them play around...and warm up
- 45 minute individual skill drills / stations - skating, puck handling, passing, shooting, body contact, fun / competitive games
- 10 minute scrimmages - cross-ice, ½ ice
- Practices can include up to six teams – two teams in each section of the ice. (Approx. 60 – 70 players)
- All practices should be upbeat, high energy and most importantly FUN.
 - *It's important that the players leave the rink each day with a smile on their face.*
- ***See practice plan examples at the end of the presentation***



Organizing of Players

- The number of teams will depend on the number of players in your program.
 - Teams could have as many as 10-12 players or as few as 5-6 players.
 - You will want teams to be as equal and competitive as possible.
- Each team could be named after a NHL or College team.
 - Kids absolutely love saying that they are on a NHL/College team and they will end up becoming fans of those teams.



Organizing of Players

- **A suggested strategy to create competitive teams:**
 - During the first 2 weeks of the season, coaches could put players into 4 different skill level groups and color code them accordingly. Each level should have an equal number of players.
 - Put the same number of the 4 different skill level players on a team. Example: 2 players from each of the 4 skill levels.
 - This will also organize your players for practice. While working on skill development, you can put the like skill groups together. This will be a selling point to your parents in a 1st year program as players of equal ability will be working together on skill development and will be playing against each other in games. This is exactly what they would be doing in a full-ice program.
- Teams can be selected in many different ways.
 - Remember that no matter how the teams are made up, **make sure the kids are having FUN!**



Game Day Structure

- Games need to be conducted as a special event for both kids and parents, especially early on in your program.

Suggestions:

- The 1st Game Day that you have announce each team and each individual player.
- Have music playing during warm-ups and in-between games.
- Have a schedule ready for coaches and parents so everybody knows where they are playing. (See Game Day Layout Example)
- Teams should shake hands at the end of each cross-ice game.
- After your last Game Day, announce each player and team and hand out individual medals/trophies to all players.
 - Allow parents to come on the ice and take team and/or individual photo's
- Parents must be recruited and ready to help put dividers out and nets on the ice and also take them off after the games.



Game Day Structure

- The number of games played will depend on how many teams and how much ice time you have .
- Conduct 20/25 minute games...blow horn every 90 seconds...clock continues to run while player's line-up
- Have a quick 5 minute warm-up in the zone where the teams are playing.



Game Day Structure

- Play 4 v 4 plus skater as goalie, if possible.
 - Be flexible - if rotation works better to play 3 v 3 or 4 v 4 one shift, 3 v 3 the second shift if it makes rotations even. You can even play 5 v 4 or 4 v 3 if it makes your teams rotation smoother
- Face-offs to start each shift...very quickly...don't worry about all players being lined-up perfectly...drop the puck & get play going
- Face-offs to side if goalie covers puck...very quickly...
- Face-offs after each goal...very quickly...same thing...drop the puck & get the play going quickly
- Refs should have several pucks in their pockets...idea is to drop the puck quickly
- Remember: our #1 job is to make sure the kids have fun!!!



Time	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4
5:30-5:35 PM	Warm-up in all zones: free play			
5:35-6:20 PM	Station Drills (7-11 minutes each)			
	Forward Skating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper stance • 2 foot strides with full extension, recovery, and return. • 1 foot strides (rt/lf) with full extension and recovery 	Backward Skating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper stance • 2 foot swizzles • 1 foot C-cuts (rt/lf) • Alternating 2 foot C-cuts 	Stick handling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move puck between cones arranged perpendicular to the feet • Stagger cones • Sharks and minnows 	Tight turns/stops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 foot tight turns around cones while keeping both skates on the ice • 2 foot snow plow stops (rt/lf) • 1 foot T stop • 2 foot hockey stops (rt/lf) • Freeze tag
6:20-6:30 PM	Cross-Ice Scrimmage	Cross-Ice Scrimmage	Cross-Ice Scrimmage	Cross-Ice Scrimmage

Example Mite Cross-Ice Practice – 10/17



Time	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4
5:30-5:35 PM	Warm-up in all zones: free play			
5:35-6:20 PM	Station Drills (7-11 minutes each)			
	Forward <u>Skating</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 foot strides with deep knee bends, push to side, full extension, recovery & glide • Relay race while pushing partner • Relay race with puck 	Backward <u>Skating</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper stance with DEEP knee bend, head and chest up • 2 foot swizzles in straight line with full recovery • 1 foot C-cuts (rt/lf) with DEEP knee bend of glide leg and full extension and recovery • Alternating 2 foot C-cuts • Bumper butt game inside circles 	<u>Stick handling</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stick handling thru straight line of cones with hands away from body, head up • Stick handle between cones while keeping feet on ice straddling cones • Full 180° around cones (rt/lf) Stagger cones zig-zag • Keep away inside circle; all but one with puck. 	<u>Tight turns/stops</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 foot tight turns around 2 lines of 4 cones leading with inside foot and both feet on ice. • 2 foot snow plow stops (rt/lf) at cones. • 1 foot T stop at cones • 2 foot hockey stops (rt/lf) at cones • Freeze tag
6:20-6:30 PM	Cross-Ice Scrimmage	Cross-Ice Scrimmage	Cross-Ice Scrimmage	Cross-Ice Scrimmage



Example Mite Cross-Ice Practice – 10/22



Time	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4
5:30-5:35 PM	Warm-up in all zones: free play			
5:35-6:20 PM	Station Drills (5-8 minutes each)			
	Forward <u>Skating</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 foot strides with deep knee bends, push to side, full extension, recovery & glide • Pull partner while he resists with snow-plow • Relay race while pushing partner • Relay race with puck 	Backward <u>Skating</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper stance with DEEP knee bend, head and chest up • 2 foot swizzles in straight line with full recovery • 1 foot C-cuts (rt/lf) with DEEP knee bend of glide leg and full extension and recovery • Alternating 2 foot C-cuts • Bumper butt game inside circles 	<u>Stick handling</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stationary stick handling with hands away from body, head up (wide/narrow) • Stationary stick handling standing on one leg • Stick handle through cones in straight line while keeping feet on ice straddling cones • Full 180° around cones (rt/lf) Stagger cones zig-zag • Keep away inside circle; all but one with puck. 	<u>Tight turns/stops</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side-step-plant 15 ft each way – slowly • 2 foot hop over stick • Hop on 1 foot inside circle; bump into others on the coach's command • D-Cuts with swizzles • 2 foot slalom skiing • Freeze tag
6:20-6:30 PM	Cross-Ice Scrimmage	Cross-Ice Scrimmage	Cross-Ice Scrimmage	Cross-Ice Scrimmage



Example Mite Cross-Ice Practice – 10/25

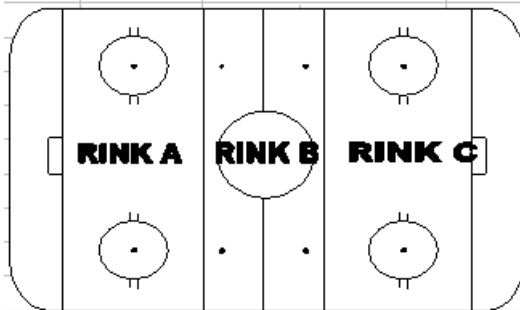


Time	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4
5:30-5:35 PM	Warm-up in all zones: free play			
5:35-6:20 PM	Station Drills (8-11 minutes each)			
	Stick-handling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A. Stickhandle puck between cones in straight line; deep feet on ice straddling cones with head up • B. Zig-zag around staggered cones; keep hands away from body, head up; shoot on goal with chaser. • C. Multiple 1 v 1 keep away (30 sec), then switch; keep away with all but two with puck in zone, 1/2 zone, below goal line 	Passing/Receiving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stationary passing: 10 ft apart; 20 ft apart • Moving give and go with stationary player/coach; hot at end • Score, but leave pucks in net to get winner • Two team keep away around zone, no shots or scoring 	Balance & Agility + FUN: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obstacle Course with jump over cones and sticks, dive, role turn, x-overs, etc. • Bumper butt game inside circles • Freeze tag with the zone with 1/2 skating forward and 1/2 skating backward 	Forward skating, Sprints, Tight Turns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward striding while holding stick straight ahead; deep knee bend, long strides • Gliding on 2 feet; 2 foot squats; 1 foot tucked behind other (rt/lf); shoot the duck • Sprint game to partner's stick that is standing up on end; start at 10 ft (may use tennis ball) • Relay race while passing partner (in stance) down around cone and back
6:20-6:30 PM	Cross-Ice Scrimmage	Cross-Ice Scrimmage	Cross-Ice Scrimmage	Cross-Ice Scrimmage



Example Mite Cross-Ice Practice – 12/11





Time	Rink A	Rink B	Rink C
Warm-Up: 10 min.	Team 1 and Team 2	Team 3 and Team 4	Team 5 and Team 6
Game 1: 20 min.	Team 1 vs. Team 2	Team 3 vs. Team 4	Team 5 vs. Team 6
Rotate 5 min.			
Game 2: 20 min.	Team 3 vs. Team 6	Team 1 vs. Team 5	Team 2 vs. Team 4
Rotate 5 min.			
Game 3: 20 min.	Team 1 vs. Team 4	Team 2 vs. Team 6	Team 3 vs. Team 5
Take down rinks: 5 min			
Total: 1 hr 25 min			



QUESTIONS ?



**Please contact your
ACE Coach Director
for more information**

www.usahockey.com

