



SOUTH DELTA MINOR HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

Message from Lawson "Boots" Boutilier

SDMHA Director of Hockey

In my role as Director Hockey, I am excited to continue to work with the players and coaches in Initiation Hockey and continue to build on the foundation of skill development we started fourteen years ago. I strongly believe that the first years of hockey are critical to Individual skill development. South Delta Minor Hockey follows the Hockey Canada and BC Hockey LTPD guidelines. Building a solid foundation will ensure success within the entire association for years to come.

Here are some interesting stats:

The following facts and figures relate to a 60-minute practice session:

- 1 efficient practice will give a player more skill development than 11 games collectively.
- Each player should have a puck on their stick for 8 - 12 minutes.
- Each player should have a minimum of 30 shots on goal.
- Players will miss the net over 30% of the time in a minor hockey practice.

The following statistics were recorded during a 60-minute minor hockey game:

- Players will have the puck on their stick for an average of 8 seconds per game.
- Players will take an average of 1 - 2 shots per game.
- Players will take an average of 8 two-minute shifts per game. (16min a game)
- 99% of the feedback coaches give players is when they have the puck.
- Ironically, players only have the puck on their stick for 0.2% of the game.

There will be cross ice games in U7 – U9 (U9 will play full ice games starting in January). I want to stress the importance of skill development. The more proficient a player becomes in the skills of playing hockey, the more enjoyment they will have, no matter what level they play throughout their hockey careers.

SKILL EVALUATION & GROUPING (For Practices)

Let me share SDMHA views regarding skills sets at this age group. Skill at this young age is a matter of ice time, proper instruction and repetition. There do seem to be children who are naturally gifted athletically, but it takes ice time for that to show up at the rink. Skating does not appear to be a natural ability to any child I have encountered. They master the skill over time and over many, many repeated exposures to learning.

Whether or not your child is in one group, or another should not be perceived either positively or negatively in terms of rank. There is no rank. No child is more or less important than any other. Every child will be taught our curriculum, some just advance sooner.

If a child has previously been enrolled in skating programs and comes into Initiation as an accomplished skater, then I believe the program owes that child the opportunity to continue to grow developmentally while being challenged in a positive manner. Just as importantly, the child who is a beginner or intermediate at skating deserves the same opportunity to be appropriately developed and challenged. At the Initiation level we will have skaters who are putting on skates for the first time, some who have good skating skills and some who are very good (for their age). Every child is as equally important as the next.

Our goal is to provide every child with a positive experience and to have every parent feel they received great value. Balancing the needs of the various ability levels will be difficult and we expect a few speed bumps along the way. Realistic expectations and a bit of patience are greatly appreciated.

I look forward to meeting the parents and working with all the players.

Sincerely,

Lawson “Boots” Boutilier

SDMHA Director of Hockey