

## **ST. THOMAS MINOR HOCKEY ENHANCED TYKE PROGRAM**

The future of the sport of hockey lies with our youth. In recognition of this the St. Thomas Minor Hockey Enhanced Tyke Program embodies the International Ice Hockey Federations Learn to Play Program as well as Hockey Canada's and the Ontario Minor Hockey Associations Initiation Program (IP). We also have incorporated many of the "best practices" learned and shared by some of the top associations in not only Ontario but internationally. The premier IP program is a structured, learn to play hockey program designed to introduce young players and parents alike - to the game's basic skills. The program enables participants to become contributing members of a team; to develop self-confidence; and to experience a sense of personal achievement. These goals are achieved in an atmosphere of cooperation and fun.

### **THE GOALS, PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES ARE:**

1. Teaching basic hockey skills so players can enjoy the game.
2. Assisting in development and enhancement of basic motor patterns.
3. Developing and encouraging the concept of team, through player participation in on and off-ice activities.
4. To implement fitness, fair play and co-operation aspects within the fun of the game.

### **THE INITIATION PROGRAM, WHAT IS IT?**

- The Initiation Program is a progressive, learn-to-play teaching curriculum. Children learn through participating in practice drills and informal and modified games (such as shinny, freeze tag, and obstacle courses).
- The Program consists of progressive levels of instruction; the program is designed for the beginner as well as the player with prior skating or hockey experience.
- The skills of skating, puck control, passing and shooting are introduced and refined in a progressive one step at a time manner.
- Although the emphasis is on fun and fundamental skill development, the Initiation Program also allows the youngsters to experience fitness, fair play and cooperation.
- To ensure a positive experience for the children, a 6-hour instructional clinic has been designed for the on-ice instructors (coaches) that focus on communication, teaching skills, leadership, skill analysis, lesson organization and safety and risk management.

## **PROGRAM GOALS**

- To have fun while playing hockey and engaging in physical activity.
- To learn the fundamental skills required to play the game of hockey.
- To create and refine basic motor patterns.
- To be introduced to the concepts of cooperation and fair play.

## **CO-ORDINATION OF PROGRAM**

St.Thomas Minor Hockey Director of Development will co-ordinate and oversee the on ice component to ensure the IP philosophy and program needs are being met. The Tyke convenor will co-ordinate coaches, player placement and ice scheduling.

## **NUMBER AND DIVISION OF PLAYERS**

The Tyke program currently has approximately 45 players who will be divided between 4 teams.

There will be 11-12 players per team.

Bruins

Canadians

Leafs

Black Hawks

Red Wings

Rangers

Flames

Oilers

## **DEVELOPMENT NIGHT– (Timken Arena unless otherwise posted)**

Tuesday nights have been designated as Development night (practice night) there are two 50 minute time slots for the Tyke program.

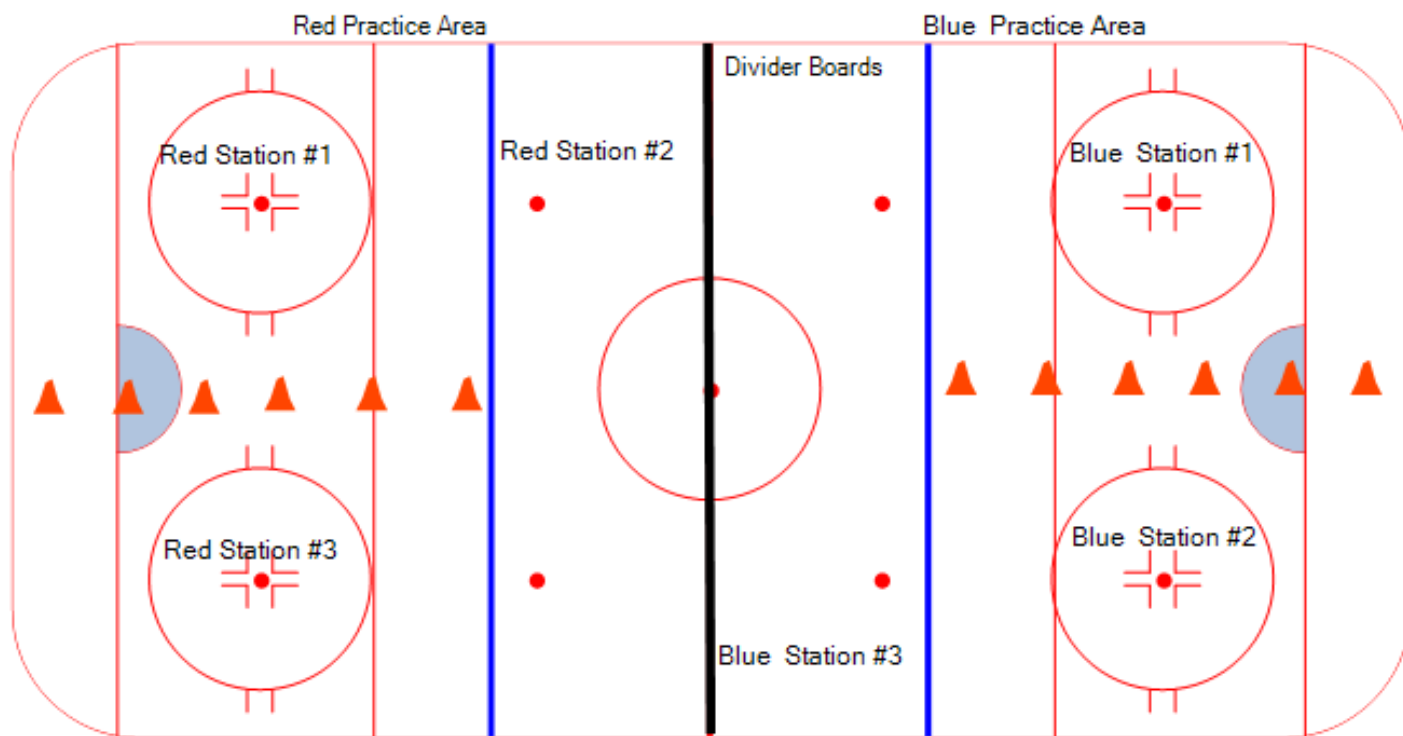
5:45pm to 6:35pm

6:45pm to 7:35pm

There will be four teams on the ice at a time during each 50 minute block. Two teams will share a dressing room until the arena grants us the use of dressing rooms #5 and #6. On development nights the 42 players (four teams) per 50 minute block will be divided into two groups based on skill and not teams. 12" High divider boards have been purchased and will be placed across the red line at centre and each skill based group will practice 1/2 ice. From there each group of 21 or 22 players will be divided into 3 groups of 7 or 8. There will be three stations set up in each end. Station #1 is Red

Line to Blue Line Cross Ice. Station #2 and #3 are from the Blue Line to the end boards and divided in half through the middle of the net. Four full size nets and six mini nets will be available for use. Players will then rotate through each of the three stations X 2 for a total of 6 different drills. Instructors will remain at their station and will only be required to instruct two different drills. Practice plans will be provided at each station and there will be a Lead Instructor co-ordinating each session.

At the first Development (practice) session players be evaluated and grouped into either entry level or experienced level. A coloured piece of tape will be placed by an on ice coach on each players stick just above the blade designating the skill group they are in. For example a Red piece of tape is will designate the entry level and a Blue piece of tape designates the experienced level. On Development nights colour coded cards will be placed on the glass designating which side of the ice Red is on and what side Blue is on, on ice coaches will direct players to the appropriate end. Players will then practice with their similar skilled group and not as a team however the complete team will be on during the same 50 minute block.



## **DEVELOPMENT REVIEW/GAME DAY– (Timken Arena unless otherwise posted)**

Saturdays have been designated as Development Review/ Game Days. There are two, 50 minute time slots for the Tyke program.

8:15am to 9:05am

9:15am to 10:05am

On game day the ice will be divided into three zones. Practice Area #1 will be Blue line in at one end, Practice Area # 2 will be Blue Line in at the other end. Game area will be Blue Line to Blue line with nets placed at each blue line. Divider boards will be placed across each blue line.

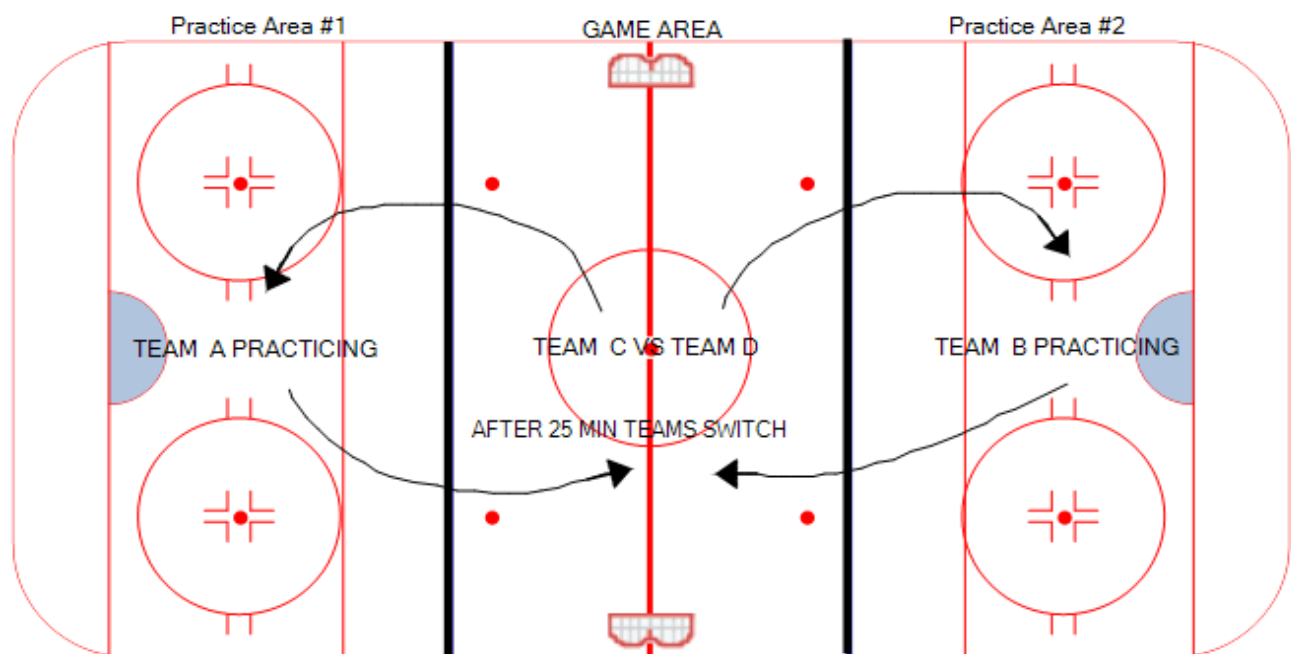
Let's say we have teams A, B, C, and D out for the first 50 minute segment.

Team A practices in Practice Area #1 for 22 minutes reviewing the skills from the Development night.

Team B practices in Practice Area #2 for 22 minutes reviewing the skills from the Development night.

Teams C and D will play a game Blue line to blue line for 22 minutes. 4 on 4 or 5 on 5. Players will play against their own skill level. Coaches will need to match up the coloured tape on the teams sticks so that for example Team A Red players plays against Team B Red players and Team A Blue players play against Team B blue players. A two minute buzzer will be set on the time clock. Score will not be kept and coaches will monitor the game and will minimize the stoppage of play.

After 22 Minutes of practice Teams A and B move to the middle for their game and C and D move out to the practice areas to review skills learned at practice night. Clean-up will take up the last 6 minutes.



## **ADVANTAGES OF CROSS-ICE PRACTICING AND REDUCED AREA PLAYING**

### **International Ice Hockey Federation Learn to Play Program**

The IIHF Learn To Play Program, which is for children, is based on a model of practicing hockey across the 80 – 90 foot width of the ice surface or reducing the playing area such as playing between the blue lines as compared to practicing and playing lengthways along the full 185 – 200 foot length of the ice surface. This cross-ice practicing and reduced area playing model has been used in many of the leading hockey nations in the world for a number of years and has stood the test of time. It has been shown that children who begin their hockey training in this environment have an outstanding hockey experience. Parents may ask the question why should my child play cross-ice, what will this bring? I want my child playing like professionals do, full-ice, because I want my child to experience “real hockey”. To help address these questions, let’s think about a child trying to skate with a puck while performing a drill the entire 200 feet from one end of the rink to the other, how long will this take? How much energy will this require? Will the player’s decision-making skills be enhanced more in the close action of the smaller cross-ice surface or in the wide-open area of the full-ice surface? In which situation will the child be more involved in the action?

#### **A study of hockey games played on the full-ice surface by George Kingston found the following:**

- In a sixty minute running time hockey game between 6-8 year old children, the average player had possession of the puck for 20.7 seconds.
- Top National Hockey League and international professional players were also timed and no player exceeded 85 seconds of puck possession time.
- In a sixty-minute child’s game the actual playing time of the game was 20 minutes and 38 seconds. Taking this into consideration, the individual player is only on the ice every third or fourth shift depending on how many players are on the team, resulting in even less ice time.
- An average of less than 0.5 shots per game for youth players and only 1.5 shots per game for junior and professional players.
- The study concluded that:
  - For young players in the “full-ice game model” of development, the youngest Players would require 180 games and the older youth players would require 80 games to enjoy 60 minutes of actual puck possession time to execute their stick handling, passing, pass receiving and shooting skills.
  - Professional and international players would require 60 games to ensure 60 minutes of puck control skill development.

## **Many players never touched the puck in the game, especially in youth hockey.**

To help you further understand the benefits of the cross-ice practicing and playing model, some of the advantages are listed below.

### **PRACTICING**

- The children have more energy with which they can improve their skills when they are skating 90 feet across the ice surface as opposed to the 200-foot length of the ice surface.
- Group sizes become smaller which mean learning and teaching will become more effective.
- The close feeling of belonging to a team will motivate a child to participate with even greater enthusiasm.
- Drills designed according to the varying skill levels of players within the group are easier to organize.
- More puck contact resulting in improved puck control skills.
- More repetition/frequency in drills in one ice session.
- Decision-making skills are enhanced as more decisions must be made more frequently at a higher tempo.

### **ACTUAL GAME**

- Playing on a smaller rink results in increased puck possession time for each player.
- Individual technical skills develop more quickly.
- More frequent line changes in the game means more ice time for each player.
- Each player's activity increases greatly.
- Scoring skills are enhanced since the players have more shooting opportunities and the child sized goal nets force the players to shoot more accurate.
- The goalkeeper's reading of the game and reaction to changing game situations becomes more effective.
- More repetition for goalkeepers.
- The game is full of continuously changing situations.
- The speed in playing situations increases, which will require quicker mental and physical reactions by players.
- Due to increased tempo, all of the team members take part in solving the playing situations which leads to a sharing of responsibilities between the players.
- The feeling of being an important part of the action increases because of the small size of the rink.
- Hockey sense, or understanding the principles of the game, is being developed at a young age.
- There are no unnecessary breaks in the game.

## **GENERAL ORGANIZATION**

- More efficient use of the ice time and space.
- The size of the rink is in proportion with the size of the players.
- The child sized goal nets are in proportion with the size of the players.
- The middle zone is available for other purposes (player's bench, warm-up area, skills competition) while the games are played in the end zones.
- The IIHF recommends that teams play with two or three units of four or five players and one goalkeeper which results in each player having more ice time.
- More ice time for practicing and playing is made available to more teams within a single club.
- Many teams can practice together by sharing the ice surface.

## **GENERAL SPIRIT OF PARTICIPATION AND FUN**

- More children get a chance to play ice hockey.
- More children will experience a feeling of success when playing hockey.
- The same exciting and fun environment as in a "real" game is created.
- Both more and less gifted children will benefit from close/tight action on the ice.
- Children are excited and motivated to continue playing hockey.
- Hockey will be more appealing and rewarding to a wider range of children and their parents.

We hope you enjoy the enhanced Tykes program!

St.Thomas Minor Hockey Director of Development