



LEDUC MINOR HOCKEY

Initiation Hockey (<http://www.lmha.ab.ca>)

Welcome to Leduc Minor Hockey's Initiation Program!!

Here is a little bit of information/guidelines to get you off to the best start possible with LMHA. Any questions can be directed to your Initiation director:

Director: Gary Tremblay, hm 986-1215, cell 278-2417
Email: garykell@telus.net

I would like to give you an idea of what to expect this year in the Initiation program. We will be trying to get all the kids on the ice for one practice together before Thanks Giving and we will then split all the kids up into the appropriate amount of teams (last year we had 3 teams 42 players total). Pictures usually come very quickly after we start as we start a little later than most teams so we need to get our teams set and go from there. We will also be trying to get two ice slots a week this year so that we don't have to have three teams on the ice at a time, however this is dependant on how many teams there are in each division and how much ice LMHA is able to secure. One thing to note that did not get across last year is that the kids will always get their share of ice time before the season is over. Due to tournaments and other events out of our control sometimes we lose our ice. However we are able to pick up free ice for practices or games in December and later in the year when other teams are done playoffs. It will be up to each team to book their own games/tournaments and this is when it comes in handy to have an appointed team manager, if we are able to make it work with only two teams practicing at a time then it also makes it easier for those two teams to have a game against each other.

Another thing to keep in mind is the reasoning behind Initiation only getting one ice slot (which I know a lot of parents including myself wondered about) is that the price is set according to how much ice time the division uses and in Initiation we only pay \$125 with the rest of the fee being subsidized by LMHA. There has not been a raise in this price for some years now which I think is great for all those who wish for their children to try the great game of hockey with out the huge fees some have to pay in other areas.

One thing that I can't stress enough is how important it is to have assistant coaches, Best case scenario you'll have your head Coach and 3 Assistant coaches plus a team manager/Jersey collector (for the end of the year) 1 coach per 3-4 kids works best. So anyone interested in coaching or being an assistant coach please contact me or make a note of it on your registration form. At or around the beginning of the year there should be a coaches clinic for beginners which I took last year and found very beneficial, especially the binder full of drills and fun games to use. If interested please let me know. Also to remember is that **all coaches** (maximum 5 per team) that will be on the ice **MUST** turn in a criminal records check (free of charge) which you can sign up for at the LMHA coaches meeting (date to be announced) or go to the RCMP detachment and have it processed and then turned into myself.



In regards to ice time, what we did last year was try to have practices for the first month or two before getting into games (scrimmage with own team works to get them to have some game time during practice) this gives the kids time to learn some of the fundamentals of the game (and get them skating as not all can at the start) and also gives them a chance to play with the puck. In a game at this age the average child only touches the puck 2-3 times so practice is very important to give them the sense of accomplishment. A great way to see the improvement is to tape your first practice, one in the middle and then one at the end, it's amazing to see the difference.

Another important tool that LMHA has is their website at www.lmha.ab.ca, if you haven't checked it out yet please do so as you will use it a lot during the season to check practice schedules, game schedules, stats, or especially changes to schedules. By giving your coach your email address (make sure to give them the one you use all the time) they will be able to email you any changes of times places or any special events coming up.

If anyone has any questions before during or after the hockey season please give me a call or email me. This is my first year in the position so I will be learning as I go, but I will do everything to help that I can, or find someone that can.

Gary Tremblay

GENERAL INFORMATION

• Fun!

- Your child should be playing hockey to have fun.
- Our goal is for kids to learn to love the game of hockey – receiving lifelong benefits of physical activity and team sports.
- Parents and coaches should focus on positive reinforcement. Research has shown that athletes of all ages improve more with positive reinforcement than with negative criticism. In fact, studies show that most athletes will improve if you work with them in a positive way, and give them compliments for achievement and specific information they can use to work on skills.
- Please respect your coach, opponents, referees, fellow hockey parents and your kids. See Leduc Minor Hockey policy and regulations – Zero tolerance.
- Inappropriate behavior at the arena will not be tolerated.
- If you have any questions, concerns, or problems they should be directed to your Initiation representatives.

• Fees:

- Registration fees must be paid in full.
- Each family will be required to work one bingo for their child in Initiation, please contact Tammy Alexander at 986-6757
- The team will decide together how many tournaments, year end party and extraneous activities it would like to enter in and that will determine the total amount of extra team fees owed by each player.



• **Volunteer Time:**

- Your coach is a volunteer and will need help.
- There should be at **least** two on-ice assistants, if you would like to help out on the ice, talk to your coach.
- If you are planning to coach or help coach you will be required to get a criminal record check done at the local RCMP office. LMHA has the forms and will pay for this to be completed.
- Your coach will also need a manager and someone to look after the group photos. The Manager role and responsibilities are outlined in LMHA policy and guidelines manual.
- **EVERYONE** on your team is busy, especially the coach, so please make time to help.

• **Team Sheets:**

- A team sheet is a sheet of paper that lists the players, on-ice helpers and bench helpers. Coach and/or manager should have the team sheet on their possession should they ever be questioned who is on the team.
- Only the players, coaches, asst. coaches and parent helpers that are listed on the team sheet are allowed on the ice or bench during practices and games (tournament/exhibition/league)
- Affiliations are not allowed at the Initiation level. Thus if you enter a tourney – you can only play the players that are listed on the team sheet – as per Hockey Alberta. You are not allowed to take other players from another team.

• **Skating:**

- If your child has not been on skates much, please look into skating lessons; this will help their progression immensely and will enable your coach to run effective practices as the children will be at similar skill levels.

• **Teams:**

- The Initiation director will form teams as evenly as possible.
- The main objective of your Initiation hockey season is to have fun, make new friends, gain confidence and improve your child's hockey skills.

• **Ice times:**

- In Initiation:
 - There will be 45 minutes of ice time a week. The ice time will be primarily practice, with the possibility of a 10 – 15 minute full or half ice scrimmage (this is up to the coaches).

• **Equipment:**

- Used equipment is fine. Some suggestions of places you can go are:
 - Leduc Minor Hockey Website Classifieds <http://www.lmha.ab.ca/?p=classifieds>
 - Source for Sports
 - Red Wing Sports
 - All Sports Replay
 - Totem Outfitters
 - Many more



- Please note that a neck guard is mandatory. No player is allowed on the ice without a neck guard.

Fit and Fitness

This information regarding equipment fit and fitness is intended as guidelines only for parents/players to use when selecting equipment, and for trainers when checking and/or advising on players' equipment.

All hockey equipment is worn to protect the player from injury. This means that every piece of equipment chosen should fit well and be of the best possible quality. Equipment should never be purchased with the idea that the player will grow into it; ill-fitting equipment, whether too large or too small, leaves the player at risk of serious injury.

Equipment does not have to be brand new to provide adequate protection, but if preowned equipment is purchased or borrowed, it should be of gently used quality and be looked over carefully for signs of excessive wear.

Maintenance and Cleaning

All equipment, new or used, needs to be properly maintained to maximize its life span and provide maximum protection from injury. Any equipment that has cracks or tears and cannot be repaired properly should be replaced immediately. The exception to repairing equipment is helmets. Any helmet that has cracks cannot be repaired, it must be replaced.

To prevent premature aging of equipment it should be aired out and dried properly after each use.

Something could be growing in your equipment!

Hockey gear that smells is no longer considered 'part of the game'. The source of the smell can mean bacteria, fungus, mold, yeast and viruses are growing deep inside the padding and foam of hockey equipment that can pose serious health threats to the player.

The environment inside a dark, damp hockey bag is perfect for certain microorganisms to grow. Cuts or abrasions on the skin can allow these organisms to enter the blood stream and infection can set in rapidly.

Please consider the seriousness of this possibility. When Mikael Renberg of the Toronto Maple Leafs, developed an infection from an opened blister on the palm of his hand, he came very close to having his hand amputated due to a staph infection.

With this in mind, it is very important to regularly clean sports equipment. Your first line of defense is making sure equipment is taken out of the bag and allowed to thoroughly air dry after each use.

Equipment can also be soaked in a laundry tub with warm water and detergent and then hung to dry.



Professional Cleaning

Equipment can also be professionally cleaned and sanitized and ready for use usually within 24 hours. The cost of cleaning a full set of gear, including: helmet, chest protector, elbow pads, shin guards, pants, neck guard, jock, and gloves, will depend on the size of the equipment.

Please visit: www.esporta.ca for more information and locations in our area.

Helmets

Helmets must always have a CSA or HECC sticker of approval. Removal or absence of the sticker invalidates the helmet and the player will not be allowed on the ice.

Alterations to a helmet such as the removal of ear protectors or guards will invalidate the CSA or HECC certification and therefore the player will not be allowed on the ice. Any helmet with a crack(s) in the outer shell will invalidate the CSA or HECC certification, the player will not be allowed on the ice.

Helmets should fit the player's head snugly. Proper fit means that the helmet stays put and does not rattle if the player shakes his/her head from side to side. The front of the helmet should fit just above the eyebrows. The chin strap should be fastened and secure the helmet to the head. The strap is secure if the helmet remains stationary when an upward pressure is applied to the front of the helmet and does not ride up the forehead.

The padding inside the helmet should be checked over time to ensure that it has retained its protective qualities. Check the padding by pressing the thumb into it, if the padding is resilient and returns to its original form its protective quality is being maintained.

Facial Protectors (Cage)

The facial protector or cage must always have a CSA or HECC sticker of approval. There are several types of protectors available. It may be made of metal wire, high impact polycarbonate (visor) or a combination of both. All cages should be checked to ensure compatibility with the helmet. The cage should overlap the sides of the helmet and fully engage the helmet clips on the side when the straps are secured and the helmet is on the player.

Players under 10-years old who use junior sticks should check the spacing of the wire cage to the shaft of the stick. Some of the narrower shafts will pass through the openings and could result in facial injuries.

Mouth Guards

Mouth guards at the Initiation level are optional. They are recommended for all players as they help



reduce the risk of concussions.

Neck Guards or Throat Protectors

The throat or neck protector is a mandatory piece of equipment. **No player will be allowed on the ice without a neck guard. Coaches are to strictly adhere to this.** It should be snug but not restrictive. Bib style protectors are worn beneath the shoulder pads and protect both the throat and upper chest area. The bib and collar styles are designed to protect against a cut or laceration of the throat.

Undergarments

When choosing undergarments and socks: look for materials with a 50/50 cotton/polyester blend for maximum ventilation and comfort. A single pair of socks is recommended for the best fit, comfort and protection from chafing in skates. The choice of undergarments can be very personal, especially at the older age divisions. The most important consideration is comfort and choosing materials that will absorb moisture and avoid skin irritation.

Athletic Supports

The athletic support is a mandatory piece of equipment. **No player will be allowed on the ice without a Athletic Support. Coaches are to strictly adhere to this.** Supports are available in either a boxer-style short or strap style for both males (jock) and females (jill). Each style incorporates a protective plastic cup or shield. Proper fit is determined by a player's waist size. For maximum effectiveness it is imperative that the support be sized properly.

Shin Pads

Shin pads are usually sold in junior (8" to 13") or senior (14" to 17") sizes. The cap of the pad should be centered over the kneecap. The protective padding above this plastic cap should overlap with the bottom of the hockey pants by approximately 2". With the skate open, the player should ensure that the bottom of the shin pad rests 1" above the foot and that the ankle movement (up and down) is not restricted. It is now recommended that the skate tongue be positioned behind the shin pad for added protection. A properly fitted shin pad allows for maximum movement of the knee and ankle and effective coverage and protection of the knee and shin.

Pants

Hockey pants are fitted according to waist size. Pants should be fitted with the shin pads on to ensure that the pant leg overlaps with the upper padding of the shin pad by approximately 2".

Female players should fit the hips first then check the position of the leg and kidney pads. Correct positioning of the rib, hip, thigh, and kidney padding ensures effective coverage and protection of these areas. Padding on the bottom of the seat of the pants should cover and protect the tailbone. Proper fit is essential for maximum protection and unrestricted movement of the legs and trunk as well. The player should be able to squat comfortably with the padding remaining in place for proper fit.



Please note that pants with zippers in the inseam; the zippers must be closed when the player is on the ice.

Skates

Skates should fit approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 size smaller than street shoes. When trying on skates wear a pair of socks the same thickness as those to be worn when skating. Ensure that the socks are wrinkle free to prevent irritation and chafing. The laces should be loose enough to allow the foot to slide forward so that the tips of the toes press against the front of the skate. In this position you should be able to place one finger between the boot and the back of the player's heel. Before lacing up the skate reposition the foot in the boot by banging the heel of the blade against the floor. When lacing up the skate the first three eyelets should be snug, the next three eyelets loose (to prevent constriction) and the last two to four eyelets very snug. Fit of the skate is then determined by the width of separation between the eyelets on either side of the boot. This width should be 1-1/2 to 2" for proper fit. The skate tongue should be worn behind the shin pad to fully protect the lower shin.

Shoulder Pads

These pads offer protection to the shoulders, upper back, chest, and arm area above the elbow. The protective caps should be positioned on the top of the shoulders while the arm pads extend downward to meet the elbow pads. There should also be a slight overlap at the back with the top of the pants.

Proper fit is ensured if the player has good shoulder range while wearing his or her pads. The player should be able to lift his or her arms above shoulder level without the pads digging into the neck.

Elbow Pads

The elbow pad offers protection to the elbow and forearm and should meet or overlap slightly with the shoulder pads and glove to afford maximum protection of the forearm and arm area above the elbow. Some elbow pads are designed specifically for left or right arms. Ensure pads are placed on appropriate arms. To ensure proper fit place the donut ring inside the pad on the point of the elbow. Fasten the Velcro straps securely so that the pad remains in place when the elbow is extended. Elbow movement should be free of restriction. The elbow and forearm are protected from blows, falls, and slashing by rigid plastic moldings in the form of a cup over the point of the elbow and slash guard along the outside of the forearm. It is important to periodically check the cup for cracks and the donut pad for its absorbing qualities to ensure that the pad is still able to protect this area.

Gloves

A properly fitted glove should provide maximum freedom of movement and agility for easy stick handling. Padding covers the upper surface of the finger, hand, wrist and lower forearm. The elbow pad and glove should meet to provide protection to the entire forearm, wrist and hand from slashing. The glove should be made of light flexible material. Leather gloves may be durable but they are also heavy to wear and take longer to dry. If buying used gloves ensure that the palm and fingers are intact.



Lightly tapping on the padding over the fingers should not be felt by the player when the glove is worn.

Hockey Socks

Socks hold the shin pads in place and should extend from the ankle to the top of the thigh. Socks are held up by the garter belt or Velcro fasteners attached to the jock or jill strap. Using tape or straps above the knee can cause friction and circulation problems if too tight. Care must be taken in this area. Tape or straps below the knee should secure the sock and underlying shin pad.

Sticks

To ensure the development of good stick handling techniques and puck control it is important to pick the right stick. Sticks come in junior and senior sizing reflecting differences in shaft size and blade length. Senior sticks are larger and recommended for intermediate and older players who can control a heavier stick. The proper length of the stick is measured with the player in street shoes. The top of the shaft should rest between the chin and mouth when the toe of the stick is on the ground. If the player is in skates the top of the shaft should reach just below the chin. The stick may be made of wood or aluminum. Younger players will tend to have greater puck control with lighter more flexible sticks. The butt end or top of the shaft must be covered with tape or commercially made butt ends to prevent injuries.

Aluminum shafts come with a wooden plug, which must be inserted into the top of the stick and then taped. When taping the blade of a stick start at the heel and work towards the toe.

Goaltender Equipment

****NOTE: This section is only for future reference. Initiation does not use goalie equipment.**

Goalie pads should always be fitted with goaltender skates on. When kneeling the kneecap should be in the middle of the knee roll. When completely fastened, the pads should extend from the toe of the skate to approximately four inches above the knee.

Extra kneepads may be worn under the goalie pads for added protection.

Always dry goalie pads with the toe end up. This helps to keep the padding up by the knees where it is needed. Check all the straps regularly. Pants should fit similarly to regular hockey pants but should be loose enough to fit the belly pad inside. Goalie pants should be expected to be heavier than usual because of their extra padding. The extra weight may require suspenders to help keep the pants in a comfortable, proper position. Upper body protection should cover collarbone, chest, abdomen, and should extend down arms to the wrist. The belly pad should tuck in about two inches below the belly button. Goaltenders should wear special athletic support designed for goalies as it provides extra padding and protection.

Blocker and catcher should fit to the hand size of the player and should overlap arm pads.