



# **Confederation Hockey Club**

## **Registration Information**

# **SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR FIRST-TIME HOCKEY PARENTS**

**Last edited: June 2011**

## **Welcome to Confederation Hockey Club!**

This information guide is intended to provide answers to questions commonly asked by parents of children becoming involved in hockey for the first time. This guide is for you if:

- you are registering a child in hockey for the first time
- you have not been involved in a hockey program before, and
- you have questions about how the game of hockey is organized and played at your child's level, what is required, and what you can do to prepare for his/her first hockey season.

Most of our first-time players begin at the "Initiation 2A" level. The various levels of hockey are explained in the "Organization" section. As it is not unusual for players to join at other levels, there is useful information in this guide for parents of new players at all levels.

### **What am I getting myself into?**

The decision to become involved in hockey is an important step for you and your child. The skills and personal development that your child experiences will serve him/her for a lifetime. The rewards for you as a parent can be many. The time you spend together can bring some of the most satisfying experiences that you can share with your child.

At the beginning level, hockey is not about winning – it is about learning the basics of the game, coupled with personal development and acquisition of life skills.<sup>[1]</sup> Hockey is a unique opportunity for your child to grow and for you to share in that growth.

Your child needs your help and support to make the most of this opportunity. Understanding your responsibilities as a parent is an important step toward ensuring your child's success in hockey.

### ***How much work is involved for me as a parent?***

At a minimum, you are expected to provide for your child's transportation, equipment and fees. Normally, your child will have one practice and one game each week. At the Initiation 2A level these are often both on the weekend, one each day, but for older players the practices may also take place during or evenings of weekdays. Transportation to and from the games and practices, as well as purchasing and maintaining equipment, and registration fees are parents' basic responsibilities.

In addition to the basic responsibilities, the amount of work for you as a parent depends on the extent to which you become involved in your child's team and/or club. You may want to coach, assistant coach, manage or time keep for the team, or you may want to become involved in Confederation Hockey Club or its activities. Becoming more involved, while requiring a sometimes substantial time commitment, can also greatly increase the satisfaction that you and your child derive from the hockey season. The club is run entirely by the efforts of volunteers, so the efforts of parents like you are vital to its continued success.

### **Organization**

#### ***What is "Confederation Hockey Club"?***

The Confederation Hockey Club is a chartered, non-profit organization that operates hockey programs for youngsters between the ages of four and fourteen in Southwest Edmonton. The club is run by an elected Executive of (parent) volunteers from the communities of Lendrum, Aspen Gardens, Blue Quill,

Duggan, Ermineskin, Greenfield, Malmo, Royal Gardens, Twin Brooks, Yellowbird, Heritage Point, and Blackmud Creek.

The [Executive](#) includes at least one Director for each of the five player categories: “Initiation 1A and 2A” (age 4-6), “Novice” (age 7-8), “Atom” (age 9-10), and “Pee Wee” (age 11-12). Most first-time players will play in the Initiation 1A, 2A and Novice categories, but it’s not unusual for players to join at the other age levels.

### ***What are the "Initiation 1A" and "Initiation 2A" categories?***

Initiation 1A and 2A are the beginning level for hockey. All players who are less than seven years old before January are classed as "Initiation" players. A player who turns seven after December 31st of the current calendar year is still in the "Initiation" category

The Initiation 1A program is for beginners, and Initiation 2A (Half-ice) is for more advanced players who are ready to begin learning the game of hockey.

#### ***Initiation 1A***

Beginning players who have never skated wearing hockey equipment before, and are not ready for hockey games, will usually benefit from Initiation 1A. This program is based on the Canadian Hockey Association (CHA) Initiation program. It is intended to teach beginning skaters (usually 4 and 5 year olds) how to move and skate wearing hockey equipment.

The program features basic movement and skating through development drills for about 2/3 of each 45 minute ice slot. The remaining 1/3 of the session is devoted to playing non-competitive fun games that develop the skills learned in the practice portion of that ice slot (e.g. frozen tag, broom ball, soccer, bean-bag toss, etc.).

#### ***Initiation 2A (Half-ice)***

*Note: Initiation 1A is NOT a pre-requisite for registration in Initiation 2A.*

Initiation 2A (Half-ice) is intended to introduce players to the game of hockey at its most basic level. The program is best suited to 5 and 6 year olds who have acquired the basic skills needed to stand and move (forward) wearing hockey equipment, and who want to begin to play hockey.

This program focuses on development of forward and backward skating, stopping and puck handling. Teams of 10 to 12 players are formed. No regular goalies are assigned – players rotate through all positions, including goaltender.

### **Registration and Fees**

#### ***What does it cost to register?***

Registration fees are set each year by the Executive. For Initiation 2A registrants, fees may be reduced through involvement in fund-raising activities (e.g. bingos). Please note: bingo fund-raising activities are not mandatory.

Roughly three-quarters of the fees are needed to pay for ice rental. The remainder pays the cost of instructors (for Initiation), equipment, insurance, scheduling, and various other operating costs. (Hockey at the Initiation 2A level, actually all levels, is subsidized by the club).

#### ***What other costs are there?***

Depending on your team’s preferences, in addition to registration fees and equipment costs, you may encounter additional expenses for items such as:

- Confederation Christmas tournament registration
- additional tournament(s) (e.g. Tournament of Nations)
- additional practice ice
- year end party

### *How do I get my child into hockey?*

In-person registration is held June. Advertisements are placed in community newspapers, on road signs and posted on our website. You may register outside of this time by contacting the Registrar OR Online anytime starting June 1<sup>st</sup> through to the beginning of September, through our website at [www.confedhockey.org](http://www.confedhockey.org).

Registration forms must be completed to register your child. Photocopies or scans of your child's Alberta Health Care Card AND either their Birth Certificate or Passport AND proof of residency (ie drivers licence, power bill) must be supplied, as well as the name and phone number of an alternate emergency contact person.

The information on the registration form is used to officially record the player with Confederation Hockey Club, the Hockey Edmonton (formally EMHA), and Hockey Alberta, as well as to apply for insurance and prepare for player evaluations and team selections.

### **Hockey Equipment**

Your child will need the hockey equipment listed below. Used equipment in good condition is generally a good alternative to new equipment.

#### Item

- CSA approved helmet and full cage mask wire or clear plastic
- Mouth guard
- neck guard
- one set of shoulder pads
- one pair of elbow pads
- one hockey jersey (for practice)
- one pair of hockey gloves
- one pair of hockey pants
- one athletic cup
- one pair of shin pads
- one pair of hockey socks
- skates - please have them sharpened!
- hockey stick
- tape for hockey sticks
- hockey equipment bag

#### Optional equipment

- skate guards
- long underwear

Several sports stores offer excellent starter packages for first-time hockey players. Sources for new and used hockey equipment in the local area include:

- United Cycle 10328 - 78 Ave. 433-1181 new & used
- Allsports Replay 8315 Argyll Road 440-4835 used equip.
- Canadian Tire Calgary Trail 438-4921 new equip.
- Sport Chek 130 3803 Calgary Trail S. 435-8488 new equip.
- Sports Exchange (Totem) 7430 - 99 St. 432-0070 new & used

In addition to the equipment noted above, the hockey club supplies goal equipment for the team (only a stick at Initiation 2A level), a pair of socks and a numbered jersey for each player **to be worn for games only**.

### ***What should I know before buying hockey equipment?***

The most important pieces of equipment are skates and helmet. Skates should fit snugly, but should not “pinch” the foot when tightened. Have the child’s foot measured and have the skates checked by a qualified individual to ensure that they fit properly. Skates should not be more than 1/2 size larger than your child’s current skate size. Don’t buy skates that are too big and wait for your child to “grow into them”. Your child will find it much harder to learn to skate, and could develop ankle problems if his/her skates are too big. It is up to you to keep the skates sharp! Put in new laces and keep a spare pair of laces in the equipment bag. The helmet must fit snugly at the front and back, as well as the sides. (Tip: put the helmet on your child and hold it securely in your hands. Ask the child to move his/her head up and down, and side to side. Watch for excessive head movement inside the helmet. Adjust to fit snugly.) The face guard may be either wire-cage or clear plastic – plastic is easily scratched and therefore may be more suitable for older players who can take care of it. Be sure that the chin strap fits snugly, but does not hurt the chin.

Be sure that the hockey stick is junior-sized. Small hands need a hockey stick with a small shaft. (Cutting the end off Dad’s old hockey stick won’t do. The shaft will be too broad for your child to grip comfortably.) Cut the stick below the child’s chin level when standing on skates. A stick that is too long can hinder player movement and development.

### **Player Evaluation**

#### ***Why are the players evaluated?***

All registrants (IN 2A and Up) must attend player evaluation sessions during September. In Initiation 2A this is to ensure that each team contains a balance of players of all levels of ability. In the other categories, it ensures that players of similar abilities play together at a level appropriate to their abilities.

Note: during the evaluations there will be many players on the ice who are unknown to the on-ice staff. At the Initiation 2A level, we like to be able to address the players by name, so in order to help us, parents should write the player’s first name in BIG letters on a piece of masking tape and stick it to the front of the helmet. At the other levels, anonymity is thought to be fairer, and players will normally wear numbered pinneys.

#### ***Where do we go?***

Evaluations will be held at one of the city arenas, usually on the south side. You will be notified by the beginning of September of the exact time, date and location of your child’s first evaluation. At the Initiation 2A level you will not be notified until mid-September. If you are unsure, please call one of the [directors](#) for your child’s category. At the Initiation 2A level, players are usually evaluated twice. At higher age-levels, four or more evaluation sessions are used.

#### ***What equipment should be worn?***

ANY TIME YOUR CHILD IS ON THE ICE, including during evaluation, all of the equipment listed above must be worn.

#### ***What is evaluated?***

Initiation 2A players are evaluated on forward and backward skating, stopping and puck handling. This year, in order to make sure the evaluation process is fun for the children, and is similar to the evaluation process they will experience at higher levels, the evaluations will take place in a mini-game format during which the child's skills will be evaluated.

#### ***My child can’t skate. What should we do?***

Your child may benefit from the Initiation program. This program is based on the Canadian Hockey Association (CHA) Initiation program. It is intended to teach beginning skaters (usually 4 and 5 year olds) how to move and skate wearing hockey equipment. Alternatively, If possible, before the season begins, take your child to public skating sessions at local arenas. It will help to build up confidence on skates, as some children are very shy or self-conscious when starting out. Having tried earlier in a public setting might ease this a little.

If your child is shy or frightened at the first evaluation, please tell one of the on-ice evaluators – a little gentle encouragement is often all that's needed.

Above all, don't worry. Young players soon learn that everyone falls down lots when starting out, and that it doesn't hurt when you're wearing all that padding – in fact, it's actually fun! You'll be amazed how quickly your child learns to stand, walk, glide and stop on the ice.

Hockey professionals say that 80% or more of the game of hockey is skating. Most of the practice time is devoted to learning to skate. The coaching staff and others will help your child learn to skate. If you want more professional instruction, several excellent power skating programs are available throughout the year.

There's no substitute for ice-time. Your community league membership entitles you to free public skating at the indoor city arenas – the arena public skating times are available on the City of Edmonton website.

### **Team Selection**

At the Initiation 2A level the selection process is designed to ensure a reasonable degree of balance and parity between teams – each team should have some good skaters, some average skaters and one or two non-skaters.

At other levels, the directors and coaches select the teams based on the evaluation results.

#### ***Can my child play on the same team as a schoolmate/friend?***

At the Initiation 2A level, new players are encouraged to play with schoolmates or friends. Every effort will be made to accommodate requests to play with friends, if possible, provided that they do not spoil the balance between the teams. Please make a note on your registration form of any friend(s) that your child would like to play with.

#### ***How many players are on a team?***

The target is an 11 or 12 player team at the Initiation 2A level, increasing as the players get older.

#### ***Will the team have a name?***

Yes. The coach is responsible for ensuring that a name is chosen for the team. Please share with him any suggestions that you or your child may have.

#### ***What can I do to help the team?***

Your team will welcome any help that you can offer. Become involved as a coach, assistant coach, manager or timekeeper, if you can. (Please indicate your preference on the registration form or by sending an email to registrar@confedhockey.org)

Confederation Hockey Club requires that all team officials (Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Managers and Trainers) provide a completed application for a Volunteer Police Information Check from the Edmonton Police Service. All team officials are required to complete the Canadian Hockey Association (CHA) "Speak Out" program, or now the New Respect in Sport Program. Initiation 2A coaches are required to complete the Initiation coaching program. Participation in these courses is paid for by Confederation Hockey Club.

Even if you didn't volunteer as coach or assistant, there will be many off-ice tasks that need to be done during the year. You may be able to help with some of these - ask your coach or manager.

Support the coaches on and off the ice. They are all volunteers and they need all the help and support that you can give them. If you have any questions or concerns resolve them as quickly as possible.

### **Games**

Please be on time for the games. Games must start as scheduled, or they will impact on others to follow. *If you can't make it to a game, let the coach, manager or another parent know.*

In Initiation 2A, one half-ice game is played each weekend. Boards placed at centre ice separate the ice surface into two halves. Two games are played at the same time on each of these half-ice surfaces. Coaches from each team act as co-referees.

For Initiation 2A, every player will have a chance to play forward, defence and goaltender in the course of the game. Goaltenders may use the team goal stick or their own hockey stick. No other goaltending equipment is used in half-ice games.

For Novice and above, all games are played on full-ice. Sanctioned referees are used, and all rules are enforced. Body checking begins at Pee-Wee level.

### **Practices**

**Practices are important.** They are the best opportunity your child will get to learn to skate and play the game of hockey. *They are not optional.* If you must miss a practice, let the coach, manager or another parent know in advance, if possible.

If you have problems getting to a practice, talk to the coach. You may be able to work out an arrangement with another parent, family member or friend.

Practices generally include a combination of skating, puck handling and passing drills designed to teach skating and the basics of hockey. They may also include on-ice games and/or scrimmages.

Your child will normally have one practice per week, either on the weekend or in the evening on a weekday. You will be notified in advance when and where the practices are to be held.

Practices for Initiation 2A are generally held on weekends.

### **“I Need Help!”**

Help is available, whatever the problem.

Before and during the registration process, contact the [Registrar](#).

During evaluations, talk to the Directors for your child’s age category, but please bear in mind that this time is extremely hectic for them – contacting 150-200 players, evaluating them and placing them on teams, all in the space of a couple of weeks, requires a huge time-commitment.

Once your child has been placed on a team, the coach (or manager) should be the first point of contact if you have problems or need help. If this is not possible, or does not help you, then contact one of the [Category Directors](#).

As a last resort, you may contact the [President](#), who will bring the matter to the [Executive](#) if necessary.

Participating with your child, and becoming involved with the club, will greatly enhance your enjoyment of the game of hockey!

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<sup>[1]</sup>The mission statement of the Confederation Hockey Club states: "The Confederation Hockey Club will provide a quality hockey program for youngsters ages 4 to 14, which emphasizes basic hockey skills, and personal development and life skills, including effective work habits and thinking skills, positive self esteem, teamwork, fair play, discipline, fun and enjoyment of the game."