

## Welcome Back

Hockey season is upon us again!

WMHA would like to officially welcome you to, or back, to hockey in Woodstock. We have an exciting season coming up for teams at every age.

### “Welcome Back” Day—Saturday, September 23rd

Come join us at the Complex from 8am-Noon to kick off our house league season with snacks, games, a bouncy castle, and music to celebrate the return to hockey. All players are welcome to drop by to partake in the festivities.

### Official Alliance “Jersey Day” - Friday, October 13th

All members of the Alliance are encouraged to wear their jerseys to school, hockey, or any other exciting place that day takes you. Photos of your child wearing their jerseys are welcome. If you are sharing on social media please tag us at @WMHA\_ (Twitter) or Woodstock Minor Hockey (Facebook). Your pictures could appear in a future newsletter to share the fun.

### WMHA Will Be Hosting Tournaments

WMHA is proud to host this year’s **House League Championship Tournament** at the end of the season. This tournament brings together the Divisional Champions from each Alliance Centre to compete to be the Alliance Champions! We will also be hosting the annual **Alf Langdon Memorial House League Tournament** over the Christmas Break and the **Regional Silver Stick Qualifier Tournaments** for Minor Atom, Minor PeeWee, Minor Bantam, and Minor Midget divisions. Keep an eye on the WMHA website for more information about these tournaments.



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## Pre-Novice Half-Ice Hockey Program

Hockey Canada believes that hockey should be, first and foremost, fun for all participants. A big part of delivering on that is ensuring the programming is age-appropriate.

Cross-ice/half-ice hockey has always been part of the Initiation Program, but has not been implemented in the same way in every community. Beginning this fall, cross-ice/half-ice is mandatory at the Initiation level.

Cross-ice/half-ice hockey at the Initiation age effectively right-sizes the playing surface for young players:

- You don't put five- and six-year-olds on a full-size soccer pitch, or expect them to play basketball on a full-sized court with no height adjustments – hockey is no different.
- Cross-ice/half-ice hockey allows young players the opportunity for more puck-touches which promotes greater opportunity for skill development (puck-handling, shooting, skating, coordination) and decision-making.
- Players on cross-ice/half-ice have been shown to receive five times more passes and take six times more shots than when they are on a full-sized rink.
- Small-area games are used at all levels of the game – including senior national teams and the NHL.

**“Beginning this fall (2017-18 season), cross-ice/half-ice is mandatory at the Initiation level” - Hockey Canada**

Woodstock Minor Hockey has purchased divider pads to enable us to effectively run this program and hosted a Parent Information session on Sept 16th to allow people to ask questions and understand the benefits the players derive from this program.

## Kids Outgrow Their Equipment?

In the run-up to each season, parents begin the process of evaluating how their child's equipment fits as they grow and mature. Each season invariably leads to equipment that no longer fits and is cluttering up your storage spaces. WMHA suggests a few different options to help reduce the clutter.

- **Donate the equipment to WMHA**
  - Each year WMHA hosts a "Just Try It" day over March Break to encourage kids to come out and try hockey for their first time. This program helps kids that for many reasons didn't get an early start or are unsure of whether it is a sport they enjoy. WMHA equips these participants with full equipment to participate safely and to have the confidence to push their limits.
  - Each "Just Try It" participant who registers in a Minor Hockey program the following year has the opportunity to receive donated equipment to help them with the financial burden of getting started in the game.
  - WMHA and the Alf Langdon "Play Hockey" fund also regularly work with JumpStart, Ingamo Homes, Big Brothers and Children's Aid to assist kids who need a little financial assistance to get into the game. Donated equipment is used to help equip these children to give them a chance to fall in love with hockey.
  - Donated equipment can be dropped off at the WMHA office.
- **Sell the Equipment on Kijiji:** Kijiji has become an easy tool to sell off used equipment or to buy used equipment as well.
  - Most mobile phones have an app that allows you to take pictures, describe the goods and post contact information to help connect you to interested parties. There is chat functionality that allows potential buyers to contact you and discuss specific questions and arrange times and places to meet up.
  - **Tips: 1)** As with any interaction where cash and unknown persons are involved follow basic safety rules to ensure a positive experience. If you do not want strangers at your address, arrange to meet at a public space (perhaps the arena), and if you are uncomfortable with carrying cash alone, bring a friend or relative along; **2)** Include a well-crafted title line that details important information, a thorough description of the goods, photos from multiple angles, details of selling features (or damage) that you want a buyer aware of, and listing a fair price that draws attention.
- **Sell the Equipment to a Local Sports Store/Pawn Shops:** Some local sports stores/pawn shops accept sports equipment for cash or on consignment. Since these services are often contingent on being able to re-sell the goods at a profit, the amount received may be lower than market value. Call around if you want to explore that option.

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## Player / Coach Development

WMHA continues to try to provide developmental opportunities to both our players and coaches.

WMHA recognizes that knowledgeable coaching staff goes a long way towards an enjoyable and successful hockey experience for the kids. To continue to build our bench-strength in this area, Woodstock recently hosted a Coaching Certification Clinic to allow coaches a local option to obtain/maintain their certification and learn important on and off-ice skills. We also try to encourage volunteerism and help to relieve the financial burden of obtaining coaching qualifications by funding up to \$150 lifetime maximum.

Once again WMHA has partnered with Total Package Hockey to run a number of power skating sessions for our players. With skating being an essential part of success in hockey and confidence in participants, we provide this service to bring in instructors who are familiar with age appropriate drills and with skills to observe and correct specific issues with skating and techniques to give kids the opportunity to thrive on the ice.

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## Goalie Development



WMHA continues to support goaltenders as players with unique coaching needs specific to the position. Once again WMHA has partnered with PK Goaltending to deliver a program of clinics and more individualized attention for our goalies.

Three clinics will be run in Woodstock through October and November to give kids a chance to gain the basic skills necessary to perform the role and to have dedicated practice time for goalie skills. In addition, each team's goalies from Tyke West through Minor Bantam (Bantam House League) shall have the opportunity for two semi-private lessons in Brantford at Cro's Nest's real ice training facility between October and the end of December. Please ensure you connect with your coaches and team manager's to have your kids on the list to participate in the program.