

Tornado Youth Hockey American Development Model

Tornado Youth Hockey has chosen to adopt the ADM for its in house program, to continue to refine what works best for our entire association. The 2011/2012 season will be the second year using the ADM. The ADM has been created by USA Hockey for the development of youth players. This model was designed for skaters of all ages, using specific targets at specific ages. For the in-house program (mites up to and including 8 years old) the target is to develop the fundamentals of hockey. Step 1 is to introduce the basics. This is done through the learn to skate program, and then reinforced during the first year of skating. At this stage it is simply to get comfortable in skates and pads, and on the ice. Step 2 is more focused on the fundamentals. The targets of these include developing on-ice balance, coordination, agility and speed, and start to introduce basic puck control. While the ADM is very standardized in the goals it is trying to achieve, it is left for each individual organization to mold it to their program. With last year being our first year we have outlined some proposed changes to enhance the program to our needs. The new proposal for the model will be as follows.

All Mites will be placed into 4 individual levels. This will allow the most direct attention possible for the players. By splitting them into these four groups the level of challenge can be designed for the specific group. All four groups could be doing the same drills, but with different targets at each level. As the skaters progress through the various basics, they will have the ability of being moved. They can be moved by agreement of coaches, along with appropriate scores of evaluations. The evaluations will be done three times throughout the season; within the first month, in December, then at the end of the season. These evaluations will be primarily for the skaters and family to see how they are progressing. This allows for the family to work on areas needed on their own time. The evaluations will help the coaches with player placement along with knowing the skills that could use more focus on during drills. The evaluations will be done by the coaches on ice during a regular practice session. Input by all coaches may be asked for and used in the evaluations.

Group ONE (New Skaters):

Group number one will be all of the first year skaters. Most of these kids will have just completed Learn to Skate, and have little to no other exposure to the ice. The focus of this group is the simplest of the 4...fun. These skaters are going to use one zone to themselves. They are going to play follow the leader, tag, soccer, negotiate obstacle courses etc. The main idea for the coaches at this level is to distract the skaters. The less they think about being on the ice, the better they skate. The end goal for these skaters is to be able to control themselves. Once they have control of their movement, and are able to start, glide and stop, they are ready to start some basic drills. As the season moves on it will be up to the coaches to introduce some basic drills into the group. That being said the focus is still fun. Each practice session for group 1 skaters should include 15 minutes at the end for games. Torpedo, cops and robbers, relays etc. Group one will have two practices during the week, and one on Saturdays. The Saturdays will primarily be for games. They will split into teams and play cross ice games, and have some fun at the end by playing games.

Group TWO (Advanced beginners-beginning intermediate):

Group 2 will be the individuals that have moved on from the first level. While most of these skaters will be second year skaters, some skaters that move quickly through level one will be at this level also. This level is the beginning of skill development. At this level we will be teaching the skaters basics about edges, stopping using a hockey stop, and basic puck control. This level is the most critical of the 4. It is at this level that the kids must be broken of their bad habits that are forming. Not only do they need to avoid starting with bad habits, they need to master the basics. If the basics are not mastered correctly, the bad habits or incorrect motions will be compounded when new skills are added. For example one of the biggest places our upper level coaches said our skaters need improvement was in turns. If a skater does not learn both inside and outside edges, they cannot properly perform a tight turn. If the outside edge is not mastered, the cheat (bad habit) is having the lead foot toe up, turning on the heel only. Once a player turns this way, it is very difficult to break that habit. This level is the place to identify, and fix those habits. Group 2 will skate at the same practice time as group 1. Group 2 will use the remaining ice not used by group one. The practice sessions will vary, but will be set up with several stations, each station working on a progressive drill. There will be an area that is used for small area games. Whether it is a drill or just tag, the small area game will be fun and work skill. The Saturday sessions will be cross ice games and include some fun at the end. The end goal for these kids is basic edge control, stopping on both feet, backward skating, C cuts, crossovers, etc.

Group Three (Advanced intermediate):

Group 3 will be the skaters that have taken the basics, and are ready to expand on them, and start some puck control, stick handling drills. Drills will be similar to those in Group 2, but coaches should expect better execution than group two. These skaters should be pushed a little harder to focus on mastering the skill. This is when transition skating, backwards crossovers and puck movement are brought in along with fine tuning the existing skill set. These skaters will have some of the basics of positions, zones, and some rules introduced. Skaters will have already learned to push the puck, and general movement of/with the puck. At this level we will start passing, and teaching puck control. Passing both forehand and back hand, receiving and controlling the puck. We will also incorporate some small area games that will teach stick handling. Advanced Intermediate will start hearing the positions, what the offensive, neutral, and defensive zones are, and they will be familiar with offsides, (they may not understand it, but will have heard it and know it). At this level, skaters that are interested in playing goalie will be encouraged to try the gear out (borrowed from TYH). Most kids try it out and don't follow through, but it is imperative that those interested get the chance to try. These kids will have shots taken on them during practice, and in our games, and may be asked to play goalie when we go to events such as Mite Jamboree or Winter Rec Fest. The end goal of this level is to have these kids ready to learn the game play of hockey, and incorporate the skills into gameplay.

Group 4 (Advanced Team):

These skaters are the most advanced of the 4 groups. These kids will be expected to know all of the skills that have been learned in the prior 3 levels. These skaters will be pushed the hardest, with the highest expectations on skills, puck control, and personal conduct. These skaters will have a short period of drills in each practice, then move on to small area games. Groups three and four will share the ice for practice time, but be split each using half the ice. These skaters will begin incorporating multiple skills together,

preparing for game play. Drills and small area games will include half ice skating using neutral zone and the blue line. These drills will be to teach the kids offside, and positions during gameplay for both offensive and defensive zones. All kids will play all positions and learn the appropriate play for them. These skaters are being prepared for the transition to Squirts. They will leave the in house program with a core group of skills and technics, knowing the rules and positions of hockey. The Saturday practices will start as regularly with the group three playing half ice games. The point of this is to begin the team mentality. This handful of kids will be together all season, playing games and attending a tournament. It is important that they learn to be a team mate, as well as to play with each other. Beginning in December/January, these skaters will have some of their own ice time with no other groups. They will be broken into two teams (different picking each week) and play a real full ice game. The Advanced team will be able to organize full ice games (friendly scrimmages) with other associations. With as many associations close to us as there are, it would be relatively easy to have 6/10 games throughout the year. We will roster all these kids and be able to have them play in tournaments at the end of the year. It would be up to the parents to pay for the costs of these. The game play throughout the year, along with the scrimmages against other associations will have gotten these kids to skate as a team, and have learned the basics of game play. The end goal for these kids is to enter the Squirts able to play, and understanding the basics of the game, along with a solid skill set.

Practice Outlines:

Practice sessions will be outlined for each group one month ahead of practice. A week before the season starts, the first four weeks worth will be sent via email to each coach. This will allow each coach to know what the practice will be and give them some time to digest the drills at hand. While the drills and games will vary, the overall layout will be the same. 50 minutes of ice gets eaten up quickly, especially with 40 5 year olds. It is important for each coach to be prepared for practice just as we expect the players to be prepared. Practices will always start the same: 5 minutes of warm-up, which is skating and stretching. Touch toes, reach high overhead, toe drags etc. Then the next 5 minutes will be spent skating. Goal line to blue line or center ice, short sprints. This allows 40 minutes of practice time for the kids go straight into the drills. The drills will be predetermined, along with the amount of time to be spent on each drill. The coaches will be able to set up the drills quickly, and move the kids through in the correct amount of time. Group three for example has about 36 kids, if there are four drills set up, each station has Approximately 9 kids. The coaching ratio of 1 or 2 to 9 allows the coaches to focus on the kids. Seeing as only threes are together they can all be pushed to get the most out of each drill. It is important that we have at least 6 coaches on the ice for each hour. We will be coordinating with the Chill to use some of the players as coaching assistants, they are willing to do it, all we have to do is ask. The kids enjoy skating with the players, they are able to fully demonstrate the drills for the kids, and they help with the ratio of coaches to skaters. For Saturdays the ice will be split to accommodate three cross ice games. The skaters will warm up, go into their games, then end with some fun. The Advanced team will be a part of the split ice in the beginning of the season, but in the end of December/beginning of January we will have ice time for just them. They will be split into two teams, play full ice game with refs. This will offer the older skaters (pee wee/bantams) some referee practice.

Evaluations:

These will follow soon.