

# S&DMHA Player Development Program Book Two

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Compiled by Wayne King to be used as reference for all minor hockey coaches

# S&DMHA Development Program

## Yearly Plan

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### Design a Yearly Plan

The organized coach realizes the importance of planning beyond the immediate practice. To be effective and to ensure that both short and long-term goals are attained, you must carefully map out an overall master plan that includes a schedule of, for example, practices, training, competitions, and socials for the entire season.

You may be faced with a number of limitations (e.g., no control over practice times or league schedules) when designing your master plan. However, when possible a thorough yearly plan should be developed providing contingencies for such limitations that may occur.

This section discusses what steps to follow for planning before, during, and after the season, how to start the season on the right foot, and some ideas on how to finish the season on a high note.

Upon completion of this section, you will be better prepared to:

- coordinate the first team meeting
- establish rap sessions
- develop a master plan for the season using the principles of seasonal planning
- finish the season on a high note

### Pre-Season Meetings

Once the team is selected, the necessity of communicating important elements of the program to all those participating in the program cannot be overemphasized. Specifically, the needs and concerns of support staff, players, and parents must be addressed.

Areas which should be given consideration in pre-season meetings with parents and support staff are well covered in the chapter "Communicate with Parents, Referees, Support Staff, and Administrators".

In the Coach Level manual, the chapter "Communicate with Players" discusses many key points in communicating effectively with players. However, here are some further points which will help make your first meeting with the players a positive one:

#### ***Notify Athletes, Parents and Coaching Staff in Advance***

Provide an agenda containing such details as time, place, date, and specific purpose of the meeting.

#### ***Tell Those Coming to the Meeting what they will be Expected to do and if they Need to Bring Anything.***

#### ***Allow Time for Discussing Goals.***

Include a discussion of both team and individual goals,

#### ***Have Plenty of Time to Answer Questions.***

Attempt to answer questions in a relaxed and unhurried atmosphere.

#### ***Be Prepared to Make Suggestions Regarding, For Example, Equipment Purchase, Individual Training, and Old Injury Problems.***

If questions arise that you can't handle on the spot, say so, and try to get some help and have the answer at the next session.

After the first meetings with your athletes, their parents, and your support staff, the stage should be set for starting the season well:

- they should feel welcome and wanted
- you should have some idea of their expectations
- they should have some idea of your expectations
- they should feel free to make constructive suggestions
- You should leave them with the feeling "It's going to be a good year! We're going to have a good time and we're going to learn something."

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### For the Coach

#### **Maintain Communication and Motivation (Rap Sessions)**

An excellent way to maintain communication and motivation among your players is to plan for regular rap sessions with them. These sessions should be spaced throughout the season (e.g., once every two weeks) and could be held, for example, at the end of practice or the first time back after a game. The session can be brief and can focus on any current area (s) of concern. In this way, the coach can have a barometer of how well things are going at any point in the season.

You can then do something about minor problems or concerns before they become major issues. The feedback received through rap sessions should be used by the coach in periodically evaluating and adjusting, where necessary, some of the team and individual goals as well as aspects of the seasonal plan.

Some questions for a rap session might be:

- What went well this week?
- Did you complete any of your goals (for example, playing good two-way hockey, being less anxious, having fun, or helping each other)?
- What did you learn?
- Where do you still need work?
- Is there anything I (coach) did that you wish I hadn't done?
- Is there anything that you wish I did more often?

Now that you have been introduced to some of the events which comprise the season, you are better prepared to create your master plan.

#### **Designing the Master Plan**

Seasonal planning means organizing yourself for the entire hockey season. The key is to plan and then be flexible! Start with an overall plan of, for example, the progression of skills you will teach, physical training, mental preparation, and time for fun and relaxation. Then, feel free to make adjustments, as appropriate, throughout the season.

For good coaches, planning is a never ending process. They plan and evaluate all season long. The master plan is an indispensable tool which can be used on a multitude of occasions: get commitment from the team and players, conduct periodic evaluations, and motivate players by showing them their progress;

In addition it will permit you to gain credibility in the eyes of your players and parents since you undertake coaching in a professional way.

#### ***Steps in Seasonal Planning***

The master plan for the hockey season should be drawn up with the following principles in mind:

#### **Step I: Identify Your Long and Short-Term Goals for the Season**

- When are the key competitions (e.g., tournaments and playoffs)?
- A chart, highlighting major events for the year, can be posted. This chart can also identify key performance goals (e.g., goals for and against, victories, and skill development).
- Establish an exhibition schedule that will contribute to your team's development and pursuit of overall objectives.
- Create a progressive time-table with which to measure seasonal development.

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### **Step II: Divide Your Season into Three Parts**

A season can be divided into three basic parts:

- Pre-season
- In-season
- Post-season

The length of time for each part of the season is dependent on the age and category you will be coaching.

#### **Pre-Season**

Preparing yourself and your athletes for the upcoming year is the first step towards a successful and enjoyable season.

Administratively, acquaint yourself with your local association and with the league in which you will be playing. Learn league and association rules and guidelines.

#### ***In-Season***

With your athletes, examine the progress you are making with respect to goals and objectives. It may be appropriate to modify previously set goals and objectives as well as develop and implement new objectives.

#### ***Post-Season***

Carefully examine all aspects of the season and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of your program. In so doing, both you and your athletes can finish the season on a positive note while establishing a solid foundation for the future.

### **Step II: Identify Your Training Priorities**

#### ***Physical Preparation***

It is important that the following physical training areas be designed to reflect the various age level requirements of hockey players:

- flexibility
- strength
- energy systems- aerobic, anaerobic lactic, and anaerobic alactic

Flexibility, strength, and energy system training can take place year round. When possible, provide your players with off-ice programs to enhance their physical conditioning.

Create a thorough program for each of these physical conditioning components. By establishing a complete plan, you will have a measuring stick with which to observe the progress of your athletes and thus ensure that all aspects of their developmental program are covered.

By providing your players with an organized, well balanced program, they too can observe the benefits of physical conditioning while measuring their fitness level improvements. Positive incentives such as this are important in establishing a successful program.

The essential elements of the physical conditioning component are covered in the Physical Conditioning modules: How the Body Works (#11. 1.0.) and Developing Fitness (#11.2.0.). Read these chapters in preparation for establishing your seasonal plan.

#### ***Mental Preparation***

Ensuring that your athletes are aware of overall team objectives is a must! Mapping out a program to measure the important mental preparation objectives of your program is desirable.

Perhaps a questionnaire measuring both intrinsic and extrinsic components of motivation could be administered to each player. Examine and discuss the results with them to determine individual objectives.

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Communication in this area should be given special attention. Determine group and individual meeting dates to ensure that you are aware of the needs and desires of each of your athletes. Establishing such a calendar allows you to map out the development of your motivational programs, as well as helping to control individual concerns of possible anxiety problems.

### ***Technical Training***

Techniques or skills are often referred to as the basic fundamentals of hockey (e.g., skating, passing, and shooting).

Establishing the level at which your players are currently performing is essential when designing a plan for technical development. Determine strengths and weaknesses, then, create your seasonal objectives accordingly. If, for example, your players are weak skaters, you may set a general objective to improve their skating skills. To achieve this, specific objectives such as improving stopping, starting, and turning should be established. By practicing and perfecting these specific components of skating, you will be taking a positive step towards fulfilling your general objective - improving your team's skating skills!

Again, by mapping out player development, you can measure and adjust your program while your players are provided with important feedback identifying their strengths, weaknesses, and improvements. Make sure that all of the basic skills are covered. By omitting one or two, you may leave a serious gap in the skill development of your players.

### ***Tactical Preparation***

The development of tactical skills is dependent on the age of your players and their skill level. After determining what they are capable of, introduce them to basic tactics such as give and go and support. Principles of team play can then be developed. Gradually introduce more complex tactics while constantly reviewing and refining those already learned.

### **Step IV: Allocate Time, Space, and Equipment According to Your Priorities within Each Part of the Season**

For example, during pre-season it is more important to improve physical conditioning and technical skills than to develop tactical skills. Therefore, if practices are one hour in length, you may devote 45 minutes to skill development drills and cardiovascular exercises and perhaps 15 minutes to one on one's or team checking drills.

Use your seasonal plan to determine week to week practice objectives. As the season progresses, these objectives will change to accommodate player and team development in order to get your team peak at the proper time.

## **CHECKLISTS FOR PRE, IN, AND POST-SEASON PLANNING**

### **PRE-SEASON TIPS: A CHECKLIST**

Here is a handy checklist you can use to help you plan the pre-season. Add in extra tips.

- Talk to your athletes about their goals.
- Decide what training you will need to supervise personally and what your athletes can do on their own using your plan.
- Continue emphasis on the development of a strong aerobic base, before starting anaerobic lactic training.
- For older players, strength training can also be included in pre- season training.
- Flexibility training, important for all age levels, should also accompany the strength training carried out by the older players.
- Develop and administer a pre-season motivation questionnaire.
- Other?

### **IN-SEASON TIPS: A CHECKLIST**

- Here is a checklist of things to do during the season. Add in extra tips.

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- Access goals and progress with athletes. Adapt previous goals or set new ones.
- Maintain the physical conditioning of your players that has been built up during the pre-season.
- Simulate the competitive situation in practices.
- Use the principle of over-learning in practices. If a player must perform a skill once but repeat it many times during a game, let the individual do it numerous times in a row in practices.
- Maintenance of physical training is a separate workout or follows skill training in any one workout.
- The longer the season, the more important is maintenance of physical conditioning. Use tests to periodically check the level of physical conditioning.
- Make sure athletes receive lots of constructive feedback and emotional support.
- Have a social gathering with team members.
- Other?

### POST-SEASON TIPS: A CHECKLIST

Wrapping up the season properly means you end on the right note. Here are some tips to use in planning your post-season. Add in some extras in the space provided.

- Have a post-season rap session about what went well, where the players could improve, where you could improve, and plans for post-season workouts.
- Encourage participation in vigorous recreational sports to help with weight control and to provide some variety, diversity, and enjoyment.
- Have athletes set individual post-season goals such as working out a certain number of days per week, improving on a particular skill, and increasing their level of physical conditioning.
- Point out all the good things and the improvements you witnessed over the season. Leave things on a positive note with athletes looking forward to coming back.
- Have a post-season social gathering with team members (and perhaps their outside friends or families).
- Prepare, or have your team prepare, a year-end report for the athletes including, if appropriate:
  - team goals achieved
  - individual goals achieved and statistics
  - tournament results
  - photos
  - news clippings
  - recommendations
- Other

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**For the Coach**

**Designing Your Master Plan:** Complete the following master plan priority checklist.

**MASTER PLAN PRIORITIES**

Activity	Priority	Pre-Season	In-Season	Post-Season
Try Outs				
Goal-Setting				
Meetings				
• Parents				
• Players				
• Support Staff				
• Referees				
• Administrators				
Physical Conditioning				
• Aerobic				
• Anaerobic Lactic				
• Anaerobic Alactic				
• Strength				
• Flexibility				
Technical Training				
• Individual Skills				
• Skill Sequences				
•				
Tactical Preparation				
• Give and Go				
• Support				
• Team Systems				
•				
Mental Preparation				
• Motivation Assessment				
• Competitive Anxiety				
• Assessment and Control				
•				
•				
• Simulation of Game Conditions				
• Rap Sessions				
• Social Get-Togethers				
•				
•				

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## **Finishing on a High Note**

The feeling your athletes take away with them at the end of the season is the major factor determining whether they will return to participate again. Here are some tips for finishing the season on a high note:

### ***Review Your Goals***

If pre-season goals were approached or reached, reinforce that. If they weren't reached, lay out a positive plan for making sure they can be reached next season or set new goals.

### ***Highlight Positive Experiences***

Go over enjoyable experiences such as trips, outstanding performances, and improved performances. Re-cap enjoyable or humorous incidents with anecdotes and stories to emphasize the value of those experiences.

### ***Emphasize Real Progress That Has Been Made***

Refer to pre-season levels of skill, fitness, and performance. Compose test scores over the season to emphasize progress. Where appropriate, re-establish the link between things that were emphasized in practice and improved performances.

### ***Praise Real Accomplishment and Effort***

Point out individual as well as team improvements. Encourage those who were slow in coming along. Try to find something positive about everyone. Above all, don't leave anyone out.

## **SUMMARY**

Well conducted pre-season meetings with players, parents, and support staff are an important start to a successful and enjoyable season.

Designing a master plan will enhance the continuous and complete development of your players and allow you to more effectively use your time throughout the season.

There are four steps to follow when designing a master plan

Step I: Identify Your Long and Short-Term Goals for the Season

Step II: Divide your Season into Three Parts

Pre-season

In-season

Post season

Step III: Identify Your Training Priorities

Step IV: Allocate Time, Space, and Equipment According to Your Priorities