



July 23, 2007

Dear Friends of Hanover Hockey:

We want to share some very exciting news about introduction to hockey programs offered by the Hanover Hockey Association (HHA).

The introductory programs offered in recent years, Learn to Play and Valley Mites, were joint offerings by HHA and the Greater Lebanon Youth Hockey Association (GLYHA). For the 2007-08 season GLYHA has decided to combine with Hartford Youth Hockey Association (HYHA) on a number of programs, including the introductory program. Consequently, HHA initiation programs will be offered independently and we have agreed not to use the "Valley Mites" name to identify our program.

The HHA Board has embraced this opportunity to redesign our introductory programs. While the HHA Board recognized the success of the former programs, we wanted to improve upon certain features based on feedback received from members. We solicited input from coaches and families who have been involved in the initiation programs and reviewed the principles for these programs recommended by USA Hockey (visit www.usahockey.com).

Introducing HHA's new introduction to ice hockey programs:

LEARN TO PLAY WILD!!

WILD MITES!!

The Learn to Play Wild and Wild Mites programs are designed to retain the best features of the former programs, and to address certain barriers to participation that may have existed. Here are some of the key features of the new programs:

Program Focus: The Learn to Play Wild and Wild Mites programs both focus on fun, skills development, and exposure to games (cross-ice initially). The programs are designed to be clinic format for the Learn to Play Wild sessions and a mix of clinic and individual team formats for Wild Mites. The Wild Mite Team Season will include games among these teams and, we hope, a number of games between our teams and house mite teams from other local associations.

Ice Rental: We cannot guarantee ice times and locations because we are limited by ice availability, but it is our goal that virtually all skates for introductory programs will be at Champion, Thompson, or Hartford. That said, it is likely that there will be some sessions at KUA and Woodstock. In the past the Wild Mite aged players have also been invited to a Jamboree or two that are within one hour drive from Hanover. We expect that most of the skate times will be Saturday and Sunday early mornings (7-10AM), but we also plan to work with the HHA Scheduler to include some midweek afternoon skates and some weekend days with no skates.

Player Eligibility: Both programs are intended for players born in 1999 or later. The Learn to Play Wild program is ideal for players aged 5-8 who can balance and move forward on skates but who have had little or no exposure to ice hockey. The Wild Mites program is ideal for players with at least one year of hockey experience (including pond hockey). To ensure that players end up in the program that best suits their skills, the coaches will have some discretion to recommend or require certain younger players to change programs if it is in the best interest of the player and program. We also encourage parents of players younger than 5 years to be actively involved on or off-ice to best ensure a good experience for their child. Some of you may also be interested to know that HHA plans to have a Travel Mite team this season. We are happy to discuss the appropriate program for your player at any time before or during the registration process.

Length of Season: Learn to Play Wild participants can opt for one, two, or three 8-week Clinic Seasons running from November 3 through April 12, while Wild Mites can choose the November 3 – December 22 Clinic Season and/or the December 29 – March 30 Team Season with individual team practices and games. We expect the Clinic Seasons will average 2 skates per week, while the Team Season will average 2-3 skates per week.

Fees: We have created a fee structure that reflects the projected enrollment and costs of the programs. Each Clinic or Team Season player will receive a hockey jersey. In addition to these fees, all players must be registered with USA Hockey before skating in any HHA program, including the three skate trial. This annual registration fee is \$30, which is waived by USA Hockey for players aged 6 and under.

Learn to Play Wild

\$30 three skate trial*

\$125 per individual Clinic Season

\$325 three clinic paid in advance option**

Wild Mites

\$30 three skate trial*

\$125 Clinic Season

\$225 Team Season

\$325 Clinic+Team Seasons paid in advance**

* Three skate trials are offered for the first three skates of any clinic session only. Fee will be applied to full clinic fee if player registers.

** Paid in advance options are available only if paid in full by September 8, 2007.

Other Topics: HHA is continuing to seek ways to decrease the financial burden of obtaining used or new equipment. We are also planning co-ed and girls-only introduction to hockey clinics in September. More information about these clinics will be available soon on the HHA website.

So ... What do I do next??

Great Question! Here are some next steps that you should consider:

1. **If you have questions** about either of these programs, call or email:

Mike Wagner	603.643-6261	michael.f.wagner@dartmouth.edu
Charlie Hackett	603.643-0084	charlie.hackett@hypertherm.com
Jonathan Bynum	802.649-3823	jdtbynum@juno.com
2. **Register!** Go to www.hanoverhockey.org to find the registration forms. September 8, 2007 is the registration deadline for the paid in advance options described above. The first skate of each session is the registration deadline for any session after September 8.
3. **Attend the HHA Skate Sale** at Champion Rink on September 8, 2007 (9:45 am – 1:00 pm) for great deals on used equipment.
4. **Monitor the HHA website** for Preseason clinic information and any other announcements.
5. **VOLUNTEER to help out!** We really need experienced and not-so-experienced coaches for the Clinic and Team seasons. Please contact Mike Wagner if you are interested in being a coach. Contact Jonathan Bynum if you are interested in helping out in an off-ice capacity; we are looking for any and all ideas that will help make this a great (and lots of fun) experience for the players!
6. **Spread the word!** Youth hockey continues to grow and flourish around the country and in the Upper Valley. We think these new programs will be a wonderful way to introduce young players to the great sport of ice hockey, so get your friends and neighbors interested as well ... if nothing else, it will help with carpooling!

Thank you for your interest in Hanover Hockey!

Mike Wagner
Charlie Hackett
Jonathan Bynum
On behalf of the Board of
Hanover Hockey Association