



St. Boniface Minor Hockey Association – U7 Timbits

U7 Initiation / Timbits Program Information Booklet



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Introduction

Setting Up the Year

Welcome to another exciting season of Timbits Hockey in St. Boniface! We are excited to welcome back our returning players (and parents) and to meet our new-to-hockey players. This guide has been put together to give you a preview of the season and to help answer some questions that you may have in regards to the program.

We will cover the various phases of the season and what you can expect as the season moves along (and it moves quickly). We will also cover a few ground rules to help make the season as enjoyable as possible for everyone.

As we move along, I'd like to remind everyone that this program is only possible due to volunteers, please keep this in mind as you interact with our coaches, and program coordinators/convenors – these folks are donating their time and energy to help your child. This program is strictly about the kids and ensuring that we can provide them with the most positive and fun experience possible so that they want to play hockey for many years to come.

Enjoy the season and have fun!



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Season Preview

What to Expect and When

- Phase 1: Hockey Canada Initiation Program Skates (Early September to Mid October)
- Phase 2: Team Formation (Early October)
- Phase 3: First Half of Season (Mid October – Late December)
- Phase 4: Second Half of Season (Early January – Beginning of March)
- Phase 5: Season Wrap Up and March Meltdown (Mid March)
 - * *March Meltdown Tournament will require volunteer support in order to take place this year
 - **More Details Regarding Each Phase In The Following Pages
 - ** These dates are subject to change depending on ice availability

IMPORTANT NOTE!

[PARENTS MUST COMPLETE 'RESPECT IN SPORT FOR PARENTS' COURSE BY NOVEMBER 1st](#)

Click the link above for more information



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Phase 1: Hockey Canada Initiation Program Skates

Overview:

Hockey Canada Initiation Program (IP) Skates kick off our Timbits season each year and is a great way, for our new-to-hockey players, to learn new skills and an opportunity to shake off some summer rust for our returning players. This year, these skates will begin on the weekend of September 8th .

Full Player Equipment Required:

Hockey Players require full equipment to participate in these sessions, a checklist is attached to this booklet for your information. If players do not have the appropriate equipment, they cannot participate. Please avoid disappointment and bring your hockey player with all of their gear. We ask that you please take a piece of white hockey stick tape and put it across the front of your player's helmet and write their name on it so that our coaches can address your child by name. Please bring your own jersey for the IP Skates.

Volunteers Needed:

Parents/Guardians are strongly encouraged to help out with the on-ice portion of these skates; if you can help, please email the convenor. IF YOUR CHILD IS NEW TO SKATING, PLEASE STRONGLY CONSIDER HELPING ON ICE, IF YOU ARE ABLE. With limited volunteers, our overall program becomes difficult to manage without the appropriate amount of help on ice, especially if we have a lot of new skaters (who are usually a little upset). Volunteers require a helmet, hockey skates and a good attitude – that's it!



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Phase 1: Initiation Program Skates Cont'd IP Skate

Overview:

Depending on the ice allotment from St. Boniface Minor Hockey, each player will be assigned to six hours of ice throughout the IP Skate phase – this translates to roughly one hour a week; usually these skates are early in the morning but there have been the odd session or two in the afternoon. Again, these skates are to introduce and reinforce basic hockey skills such as skating, puck-handling, passing and shooting. Fun games will be included, as well. IP Skates technically run until early October, most skates are on the weekend but given the shortage of ice at Southdale, we may have some afternoon ice and even the odd week night (usually 5:30pm) – stay tuned for a schedule.

Anyone who is intending to coach this season (please email the convenor if this is you), will be expected to run the on-ice portion of the IP drills for your child's group. Each team generally has between four and eight coaches, so please don't be shy – if you'd like to help out, please send an email and let us know. These skates are a good opportunity for our coaches or prospective coaches to get out there and see if they like it out there.

The Age Convenor has designed the drills for these practice skates and have been designed to encompass some of the Hockey Canada Skill Curriculum for Timbits/Initiation aged players (ages four, five and six); these drills will be emailed out to the coaches/volunteers that are assisting in the on-ice portion. If you intend on helping out, please familiarize yourself with the drills before stepping on the ice so that things run smoothly for you.



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Phase 2: Team Formation

Team Formation:

Along with the on-ice drill planning, putting teams together is easily the most time consuming part of our program preparation.

The number of teams and the number of players on each team will be determined once we see how many players we have registered and how many hours of ice we will receive for game ice throughout the season (expected to be received mid to late September).

Due to the sheer volume of emails received on this and other topics during the month of September, emails pertaining to team formation will not be responded to.

Team rosters will be emailed to the Coaches in early October.



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Phase 3: First Half of Season

First Half of The Hockey Season:

Following team formation, we will get into the regular season portion of the year. Generally, each team will be assigned one game on a weekend. Some teams will choose to share an hour of practice ice on the other day with another team.

Teams will generally be offered ice for practice from the Age Convenor but teams are free to find their own ice as well. Due to the uncertainty as to when and where our ice will be scheduled, we ask that coaches/managers refrain from booking practice ice until after our Ice Convenor has allocated game ice to us. Should a schedule conflict arise, your team is expected to participate in their game and forgo their practice ice or tournament game.

Your Age Convenor will try their best to schedule around practices but cannot and will not be guaranteed no matter how many emails are sent in this vain.



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Phase 3: First Half of Season

Game Format:

We use the Hockey Manitoba and Hockey Canada guidelines. A portion of each 'game ice' will be dedicated to practicing hockey skills while the 'game' portion will include 1/3 ice cross ice hockey games. More information regarding the cross-ice games can be found attached at the end of this booklet.

Again, the format will depend on the number of hours of ice we secure and our registration numbers. Some years we have had two teams on the ice for a game and eight teams in the league, other years we have upwards of three and four teams on the ice at the same time – stay tuned! Several formats are developed and ready to roll out once we determine the number of teams we have. Head Coaches will be briefed more on this topic as we near the commencement of the season.

***MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW



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Phase 3: First Half of Season

Scheduling:

Again, we will try our best to schedule around practice ice but no guarantees. The same goes for tournaments. There will be no exemptions allowed from the league schedule unless the coach discusses it with the Age Convenor at least a month prior to the tournament and only if the Age Convenor can find someone to fill in for the team's league games while they participate in the tournament. Ice is extremely scarce for league games so, unfortunately, we need to be rigid on this process. Games are generally scheduled out of Notre Dame, Southdale and, sometimes, Maginot.

Game Times:

Our game ice usually consists of 7:15AM, 8:30AM, or 9:15AM – the odd game starts later than that but not often, please be prepared for early mornings. We try to make the schedule as fair as possible but sometimes teams will be required to play several early morning games in a row in order to fit the schedule together. Due to the volume of emails received, complaints received about the schedule will not be replied to.

Jerseys:

Game jerseys will be handed out by your coach prior to your first game, these jerseys must be handed in to your coach at the end of the year, please.



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Phase 4: Second Half of Season

Game Format:

Following the Holiday/Christmas Season, the second half of the Timbits season will start up in early January and run until around March 1st.

Our format will stay the same all season long.

Schedule:

Depending on when we receive our second half ice allotments from the SBMHA, you can expect to see your second half schedule by the end of December.



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Phase 5: Season Wrap-Up /March Meltdown Tournament

Game Format:

As the season winds up, we look forward to our annual March Meltdown Tournament. Each team from our Timbits program is required and scheduled to participate in the tournament. If you have family or friends playing on a Timbits team in another area, please let them know about our tournament in hopes that they may want to participate, too.

Much, much more information will be forthcoming in regards to this tournament. In the last couple of years, we have asked for more support from each of our teams with respect to volunteers at the tournament to help ensure everything runs smoothly. Please volunteer to help with our 50/50, silent auction booth, general office duties or our pancake breakfast (to name a few jobs).

The money raised goes back into our Timbits and Novice programs and is a fun way to send another fun season off!



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Player Expectations

We will...

- Have Fun!!
- Work Hard!
- Be a team player – get along with your teammates and opponents
- Learn teamwork, sportsmanship and discipline
- Learn the rules of the game and follow them. Always be a good sport.
- Respect your coaches, your teammates, your parents/guardians, and opponents
- BE ON TIME!

No rough/aggressive play while on the ice. Body checking and stick swinging/slashing is not tolerated

**Rough play and stick work will not be tolerated. Coaches have been asked to watch this much more closely this season and we have a three strike policy:

- 1- Warning
- 2- Two-Minute Penalty
- 3- Time to go home

If an infraction is deemed to be severe enough by an on-ice coach then the player will be sent off immediately – steps 2 and 3 will be by-passed. In any event that a player is sent home, the age convenor is notified and a conversation with the parents will ensue prior to that player's next game ice. Infractions can lead to suspension.



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Parent Expectations

Expectations:

Applaud a good effort no matter what and enforce the positive points in the game. Never yell or abuse your child verbally or physically after a game or practice – it is destructive. Work toward removing the physical and verbal abuse in youth sports.

Recognize the importance of volunteer coaches. They are important to the development of your child and the sport. Communicate with them and support them. You won't always agree with what your coach says or does but she/he might not always agree with what you do as a parent either– please give them time and space; please refrain from gossip or negative talk regarding our coaches. Any serious concerns regarding your coach should be brought forward to the Age Convenor and should be only to ensure a player's mental or physical well-being is not compromised.

If you enjoy the game, learn all you can about hockey – and volunteer yourself! It is easy to criticize when you aren't on the inside yourself.

In the past, we have had parents run out onto the ice with no helmet on to 'correct', 'discipline' or coach their kid or another child on the ice – this is completely unacceptable and will result in immediate suspension from further Timbits activities for both the child and parent. Not only does it jeopardize the insurance policy that we have from Hockey Canada but it is unsafe. There is zero tolerance for this kind of behaviour.



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Parent Expectations

UNLESS YOU ARE A REGISTERED MEMBER OF THE COACHING STAFF, PLEASE NO PARENTS ON THE BENCH FOR GAMES, PRACTICES, IP SKATES or TOURNAMENTS – NO MATTER WHAT! There is enough going on in that area that we do not need to add to the congestion. Limit the number of adults in the dressing room to one per child and as few siblings as possible – sharp skates can be a danger to toes.



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Communication Protocol

Expectations:

Your Age Convenor is a volunteer; this is not a paid position. During the lead up to the season until the first few weeks of the season, it is not uncommon for this position to receive over 1000 emails, text messages or phone calls – it is unrealistic if you think your message will get returned immediately.

Once you are assigned to a team, if you have any issues that you'd like addressed please ladder them through your Head Coach; your coach can bring them to my attention, if he feels they are warranted. Unless the issue is a severe one and/or sensitive in nature, all issues should be dealt with at the coach level.

If you have concerns about your coach's behaviour, you can voice those concerns though we ask that you wait 48 hours after the incident before you contact us unless it is a serious infraction (physical/verbal abuse, serious language issue, drug/alcohol situation) – in which case you can contact your Age Convenor immediately.

Email is always the preferred method of conversation with respect to Timbits hockey.



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Required Hockey Equipment

Note:

Please ensure that your child has a mouthguard and wears it.

We know they are a pain and kids don't like them but it's the rules.

