Canadian Player Pathway

ATOM

2018 - 19
How a player gets that first experience of hockey is crucial. If a beginner has fun while developing the fundamental skills and building confidence in their ability to perform those fundamental skills, there is a strong probability that player will go on to enjoy hockey for many years.
Hockey is Canada and Canada is hockey.

Let’s face it – hockey is a touchstone of Canadian life. It is Canada’s national theatre and it is the chatter of the country. Hockey is more than a sport for Canadians, it is a part of the country’s heart and soul.
The main goal is to continue to have fun while developing skills. When players continue on a positive note they automatically enjoy the game and usually go on to have fun playing hockey for many years.
WHAT IS THE ATOM PATHWAY?

Developing and refining fundamental movement skills (skating, turning, acceleration), manipulation skills (shooting, puck control, passing) and overall motor skills (balance, coordination, agility) in a fun and safe environment that promotes skill development through self-confidence.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

- Continue to grow their impression of hockey a positive one for players and parents.
- Play/Games should be small area games in practice transitioning into full ice for formal games.
- Some streaming of the players – goal is to have players working with players of like skills to develop confidence and self-esteem.
- Introduction to position specific skills.
SEASONAL STRUCTURE

IDEAL HOCKEY SEASON: Refers to an optimal seasonal structure - this is a guideline and is subject to a range of minor differences regarding suggested numbers.

PREP / TRYOUT PHASE: Refers to the period of time prior to the season starting - typically when prep camps and / or tryouts are held.

DEVELOPMENT PHASE: Refers to the period of time following tryouts or evaluation prior to the regular season starting.

REGULAR SEASON PHASE: Refers to the period of time from first regular season game to the start of playoffs or Provincial / Branch Championships.

PLAYOFF PHASE: Refers to the period of time from the end of the regular season through to the end of Playoffs.

OFF SEASON: Refers to the period of time from the end of the playoff season to the start of the next Prep or Tryout season. No tryouts are allowed during the off season

COMMUNITY (recreational)

DEVELOPMENT PHASE
- Up To 4 Weeks
- 8 Practices
- 2 Exhibition Games

TOTAL PRACTICES: 25 - 30 | TOTAL GAMES: 25 - 35

REQUIREMENTS:
- No tryouts / evaluations prior to or during the first week of school
- Must provide a minimum of 4 skates before formal tryouts
- Tryouts must be minimum 3 sessions
  (1 skills session / 1 small area games session / 1 formal game)
- Tournament style playoffs - no rounds

CONSIDERATIONS:
- Full time goalies - Goalie not playing in games plays out
- Rotate all players through all positions - no early specialization
- Small Area Games in Practice
- Skill/Station based practices
- Fair / equal ice time

DEVELOPMENTAL (competitive)

DEVELOPMENT PHASE
- Up To 4 Weeks
- 12 Practices
- 2 Exhibition Games

TOTAL PRACTICES: 50 - 60 | TOTAL GAMES: 40 - 45

REQUIREMENTS:
- No tryouts / evaluations prior to or during the first week of school
- Must provide a minimum of 4 skates before formal tryouts
- Tryouts must be minimum 3 sessions
  (1 skills session / 1 small area games session / 1 formal game)
- Tournament style playoffs - no rounds

CONSIDERATIONS:
- Full time goalies - Goalie not playing in games plays out
- Rotate all players through all positions - no early specialization
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- Skill/Station based practices
- Fair / equal ice time
Requirements

Prep / Tryout Phase: Refers to the period of time prior to the season starting – typically when prep camps and / or tryouts are held

1) No tryouts / evaluations prior to or during the first week of school
   - No tryouts during Off Season Phase (Previous season including March through August)
   - No tryouts during the first week of school where school starts the week after labor day
   - Where school starts prior to labor day, there must be 4 skates / practices starting the week following labor day before tryouts commence

2) Must have a minimum of 4 practices / skill sessions prior to formal evaluations starting

3) Must have a minimum of 3 formal tryout / evaluation sessions – Recommended - 1 skills session, 1 small area games session, 1 game

Development Phase: Refers to the period of time following tryouts or evaluation prior to the regular season starting.

4) Must have a period of development time following team selection and prior to the start of the regular season

Playoff Phase: Refers to the period of time from the end of the regular season through to the end of playoffs

5) Must be tournament style playoffs versus elimination rounds
Rationale

1) No tryouts / evaluations prior to or during the first week of school
   - Give MHA’s and parents back the summer – season does not need to start that early only to be finished in February (Start later / End later)
   - Start of school year is stressful enough for players, they do not need to have hockey tryouts start the same time
   - Give MHA’s a chance to get organized and begin planning

2) Must have minimum of 4 practices / skill sessions prior to formal evaluations starting
   - A players first experience with hockey should not be a formal tryout – give all players the chance to get back on the ice in a more “player friendly” scenario
   - Helps to level the playing field as not all kids have a chance to go to hockey schools or prep camps
   - Give an MHA a chance to run their own prep camp instead of members spending money outside the association

3) Tryouts must be minimum of 3 formal tryout / evaluation sessions – Recommended - 1 skills sessions, 1 small area games session, 1 formal game
   - Players need a fair chance to evaluate – a standard process will show transparency and consistency
   - Will provide coaches with the basis of a development plan based on a solid and quantifiable evaluation.

4) Must have a period of development time following team selection and prior to the start of the regular season
   - Very important to give coaches the chance to develop and improve their players skills prior to getting into organized games
   - Skills before tactics, tactics before systems
   - Eliminate or reduce pressure to try and win right away

5) Must be tournament style playoffs versus elimination rounds
   - Give all teams the chance to play to same end point.
   - All players deserve the same chance to play to the end of the year
   - More teams / more players playing longer into the season
   - Allows more rest and recovery within the season and the regular season schedule can be spread out
   - Greater opportunity for more players to participate in different activities
**SEASONAL STRUCTURE**

**Recommendations**

**General Development**
- Season should allow for 2 seasonal breaks (not including Christmas/long weekends – Seasonal Break would be considered minimum 5 days without a scheduled game or practice)
- Recommended maximum of 45 games per year (including exhibition/league/tournaments and playoffs)
- Recommended length of game is a 60 minute ice time
- Small Area Games in practice/Station based practices/Skill focused drills

**Tryouts/Evaluations**
- Players should not tryout based on a specific position – should be encouraged to play both
- Players should be selected for teams based on their skill, not positional preference ie teams should be selected based on the top X number of players and not based on position specific player preferences

**Ice Time**
- Fair/equal ice time (goalies must rotate for equal number of games and/or playing time throughout the regular season and playoffs)
- All players should play both special teams, end of period and end of game situations.

**Position Specific Teaching**
- Only 15% of practice time should be spent on team play and strategy/systems – 85% of practice should be on skills and tactics
- Basic positional play/rules of the game can be introduced at the end of the previous novice season or prior to the start of the atom regular season. Basic defensive zone positioning, off side/icing etc can be introduced during the ice sessions prior to tryouts/evaluations or after teams are selected and prior to the regular season starting
- Players should rotate through Defence and Forward positions in the first half of the year and then may move to more consistent positions in the second half.
- Limit position specific specialization (except goalies – recommend goalie not playing plays out as a skater)
SEASONAL STRUCTURE

The Hockey Canada Skills Development Program for Atom recommends 50% technical skills, 20% individual tactics, 15% team tactics, 10% team play, and 5% strategy.
MONTHLY GOALS

SEPTEMBER
- Technical Skills - Introduce
  - Skating
  - Agility
  - Balance
  - Coordination

Puck Control
- Stationary & Moving

Passing
- Stationary

Fun Games

OCTOBER
- Technical Skills - Develop
  - Skating
  - Agility
  - Balance
  - Coordination

Puck Control
- Stationary & Moving

Passing
- Stationary

Fun Games

NOVEMBER
- Technical Skills - Develop
  - Skating
  - Agility
  - Quickness
  - Speed

Puck Control
- Moving
- Dekes

Passing
- Moving
- Stationary

Fun Games

DECEMBER
- Technical Skills – Develop / Refine
  - Skating
  - Agility
  - Quickness
  - Speed

Puck Control
- Moving
- Dekes

Passing
- Moving
- Stationary

Fun Games
Relays
Competitive Drills

JANUARY
- Individual Tactics - Introduce
  - 1 on 1’s
  - Give and Go’s

Refine Technical Skills
  - Skating
  - Agility
  - Quickness
  - Speed

Puck Control
- Moving
- Dekes

Passing
- Stationary / Moving

Fun Games
Competitive Drills

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER
- No tryouts prior to or during the first week of school – must have 4 Development skates prior to formal tryouts commencing
- Players can be grouped by skill
- Multiple Stations

SPECIALS
- SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER
- OCTOBER / NOVEMBER
- NOVEMBER / DECEMBER
- DECEMBER / JANUARY
- JANUARY / FEBRUARY

SPECIALS
- SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER
- OCTOBER / NOVEMBER
- NOVEMBER / DECEMBER
- DECEMBER / JANUARY
- JANUARY / FEBRUARY
MONTHLY GOALS

FEBRUARY
- Individual Tactics - Develop
  - 1 on 1’s
  - Give and Go’s
  - Positioning
  - Breakouts
- Technical Skills – Refine
  - Skating
    - Quickness
    - Speed
  - Puck Control
    - Stationary/ Moving
    - Dekes
  - Passing
    - Stationary / Moving

MARCH
- Technical Skills - Refine
  - Skating
    - Quickness
    - Speed
- Puck Control
  - Stationary/ Moving
  - Dekes
- Passing
  - Stationary / Moving
- Individual Tactics - Develop
  - 1 on 1’s
  - Give and Go’s
  - Positioning
  - Breakouts

APRIL
- Tournaments / Playoffs

MAY / JUNE / JULY / AUGUST
- Off season
  - Spring Skills ( No Games ) Multisport Activities
  - FUN!!!

SEASONAL STRUCTURE BREAKDOWN CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>ITS</th>
<th>DTS</th>
<th>RTS</th>
<th>IIT</th>
<th>DIT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEBRUARY</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARCH</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APRIL</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAY / JUNE / JULY / AUGUST</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 30% - Introducing Technical Skills - ITS
- 30% - Developing Technical Skills - DTS
- 15% - Refining Technical Skills - RTS
- 10% - Introducing Individual Tactics - IIT
- 15% - Developing Individual Tactics - DIT
# ATOM SKILLS

**LTPD STAGE – Learn to Play**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Balance and Agility</th>
<th>Edge Control</th>
<th>Starting and Stopping</th>
<th>Forward Skating and Striding</th>
<th>Backward Skating</th>
<th>Turning and Crossovers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• All Skating Skills from Initiation and novice</td>
<td>• Figure 8’s – forward – inside &amp; outside edge</td>
<td>• Front v-start</td>
<td>• Forward striding</td>
<td>• C-cuts – left foot / right foot</td>
<td>• Glide turns / Tight turns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Forward Scissor Skate</td>
<td>• Figure 8’s – backward – inside &amp; outside edge</td>
<td>• Crossover start</td>
<td>• Linear crossovers</td>
<td>• C-cuts – around circle – outside foot – forward &amp; backward</td>
<td>• C-cuts – around circle – outside foot – forward &amp; backward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lateral Crossovers</td>
<td>• Heel to Heel (Mohawk)</td>
<td>• Backward c-cut start</td>
<td>• Acceleration</td>
<td>• Crossovers – forward &amp; backward</td>
<td>• Crossovers – forward &amp; backward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• C-cuts toe on puck</td>
<td>• 1 leg weaving – fwd / bwd</td>
<td>• Outside leg stop</td>
<td>• Quick Feet</td>
<td>• Pivots – bwd to fwd &amp; fwd to bwd</td>
<td>• Pivots – open &amp; reverse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stationary Puck Control</th>
<th>Moving Puck Control</th>
<th>Stationary Passing and Receiving</th>
<th>Moving Passing and Receiving</th>
<th>Shooting</th>
<th>Individual Offensive Tactics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Narrow / Wide</td>
<td>• Narrow / Wide</td>
<td>• Stationary fhd pass</td>
<td>• Moving forehand pass</td>
<td>• Forehand - wrist shot</td>
<td>• Body fakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Side – front – side</td>
<td>• Open ice carry – forehand &amp; backhand</td>
<td>• Stationary bhd pass</td>
<td>• Moving backhand pass</td>
<td>• Backhand - shot</td>
<td>• Stick fakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Toe drag – side/front</td>
<td>• Weaving with puck</td>
<td>• Forehand saucer pass</td>
<td>• Pass and Follow</td>
<td>• Forehand / backhand shots in motion</td>
<td>• Dekes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Attack Triangle</td>
<td>• Toe drag – front &amp; side</td>
<td>• Cross and Drop</td>
<td>• Forehand - flip shot</td>
<td>• Backhand - flip shot</td>
<td>• Moves in Combination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Defensive Tactics</th>
<th>Team Play</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Angling</td>
<td>• Basic Positioning – D Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Basic 1 on 1’s</td>
<td>• Basic Breakouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Escape moves</td>
<td>• Basic Entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Puck retrievals</td>
<td>• Tracking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COACH DEVELOPMENT

ATOM Coaching Pathway
- Hockey University – On-line Module
- Coach 2 – Coach 2 in Class and On Ice Clinic
- RIS – Activity Leader – On-line Module

Hockey University – On-line Checking Skills / In –Class Checking Clinic

Continuing Education Opportunities - NCCP Instructional Stream
- Skating Clinic
- Skills Clinic
- Developing Defencemen Clinic
- Small Area Games Clinic
- Goaltending Clinic
RESOURCES

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The Hockey Canada Skills Development Atom Manual is broken up into 32 separate practice plans. Each individual drill can also be accessed. Favorite, download and share an entire practice plan or individual drill.
RESOURCES

Skill Development – Atom Skills

- Warm-Up Drills
- Puck Control Drills
- Passing Drills
- Shooting Drills
- Scoring Drills
- Defence Drills
- Skating Drills

SORT BY:
- Most Recent
- A - Z
- Progression

SELECT PROGRAM(S):
- Atom
- Peewee
- Bantam
- Midget
- Junior

CLEAR FILTERS

- A/B/C's - Edge Control
- 1,2

- Skating - Transition: Ride Inside Edge
  Skating No. 13

- Skating - Warm Up 5: Agility Warm-Up
  Skating No. 14
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