



Greetings from the President

by Doug Holtan

Another season is whistling by, hopefully your player is having an enjoyable season. At a recent Rochester sponsored bantam tournament, I was reminded of the great arena set-up we have at Graham Arena. There were two Bantam games in process, as well as a local high school game. Given the staggered start times of each game, groups of fans would rotate from one rink to the other in-between periods of the primary game they were watching. The central lobby was bustling with activity as well. What a great atmosphere for the "regular fan" as well as families and friends who may be new to hockey or may be future hockey families. Invite those around you to come to the rink and see what a fun sport hockey can be for both player and fan alike.

As I spend time at rinks throughout Minnesota, as well as in Rochester, I witness the best and not so good side of watching youth sports. These reminders are not unique, but should be at the top of your mind in order to set a good example for your kids and those around you.

- Be positive in cheering at all times.....players need positive encouragement more than ever when something does not go their team's way.
- Never make negative comments about players or coaches....at the rink, or in the car on the way home.
- Let the coaches coach.....coaching your player from the stands only distracts them and most times your player cannot hear you, or better yet, does not want to hear you.
- Let the referees do their job, as they are motivated to do the best job possible.

I know these are reminders for most of you, but we do need to remember these basic points. Hockey is a great action sport to watch that can get a parent or casual fan pretty hyped up. Your son or daughters are playing a GAME.....and games should be fun. Placing pressure on your player, or coming across more interested in the "win" than your son or daughter, can take the fun out of the game for your child. Especially for the younger kids, by the time the horn goes off, they are thinking about what flavor sport drink they are going to get, while parents may be tossing and turning for the next night about their 8 or 9 year olds game. Keeping the game fun for your child, will allow them to develop and take hockey where they want to go with it.

I wish you the best for the balance of the season.

From the Treasurer

by Mary Foley

Please take a moment to think about RYHA and how much your family has benefitted from this organization. Now think about how you've helped make RYHA better. Maybe you have been a team manager, a picture or pizza parent, or a coach (to any degree). The commitment seems impossible when you first accept it. Next thing you know, the season is over and can't remember what you did with all your free time before.

RYHA is run on the energy and dedication of volunteers. A few of us have aged out of the association. This is your chance to step in and become a part of something unique to Rochester. RYHA has history in this city, and around the state. There are deep traditions and new ideas driving the program. Look over the list of open board positions for next season, and take the jump. You'll have a blast, help the program, and you won't remember what you did with your free time before.



Get Involved!!!

The following board positions are up for election in 2009:

President- Elect
Treasurer
Secretary

Minnesota Hockey Representative

The Annual Membership Meeting/Election will be held Thursday, April 9th, 2008.

If you are interested in any of these positions please contact the Secretary, Kathy Heightland, for more information.

The following Board Positions are up for appointment in 2009.

City Unit Director
Operations Director
Hockey Advisory Director

These positions will be appointed at the board meeting the 2nd Wednesday in May.

Rochester Mite Hockey

The mite program is well into another great year. The kids have made such progress already this year and their enthusiasm is showing on the ice. The program could not run without the many dedicated volunteers. The coaches, team parents, pizza parents and other volunteers continue to be very dedicated to the mite program. Many positive comments have been received on the skill and the compassion the coaches have shown to the skaters.

One piece of equipment we are seeing an issue with are the sticks. Too many beginning players are using "Curved" sticks. The curve dictates

which way the player will hold the stick. **Please consider purchasing a STRAIGHT STICK.** This will allow the player to decide how they want to hold the stick. The top hand on the stick is more important for puck control and should be the player's dominant hand. Too often players hold the stick with the wrong hand because their stick is curved the wrong way. A straight blade stick will allow the player to make their own decision. Imagine making a ball player throw with a predetermined hand because of the glove you give them. It is not too late in the season or their playing career to purchase a straight stick!!! Also, the height of the stick should be to the chin with skates on. Don't leave the stick long hoping to grow into it!!

The Rochester Mite Jamboree will be held on March 7th for Termites/Rookies and March 8th for Super-Mites. **Remember, all games will be held at the Graham Arena Complex at the Fairgrounds NOT THE REC CENTER.** Team parents will be recruiting announcers, time keepers, snack parents, etc. for this event. This is definitely an event to put on your calendars and call grandparents to make sure they attend.

The program is always looking for new volunteers to help with the Boosters or serve on the Board of Directors at various positions. Time commitments vary but are not overwhelming and are most gratifying. If interested please contact one of the Rochester Mite board members.

Thank you for all of the time and energy given to the Rochester Mite Program and especially to the kids! Have a great remainder of the season!!!





Let's Take Care of our Arena

Isn't it great to have a warm place to gather as we wait for our child's game or practice to start? The addition of our new arena and fabulous gathering space has been a huge benefit to all of us. Where did we go before it? We ran to our car and spent little time visiting with our hockey friends. Perhaps we sat in our warm vehicle as we waited for our player to come out after practice.

With the addition of this new space and arena we have seen upgrades throughout the Graham Complex. Unfortunately, we have also seen an increase in theft, misbehavior, and vandalism this year. As a hockey community we all have a stake in maintaining our facility. Coaches and parents, Have you walked by a group of kids who are "joyriding" in the elevator? Have you seen our youth jiggling a vending machine in the hopes that merchandise will fall out? Do you know that is stealing? Have you had to dodge balls or pucks that are being shot against the walls outside the designated shooting area? Have you entered a locker room to find graffiti written on the walls or the white boards? These are examples of what we have seen an increase in this season. This arena is everyone's arena and we must start taking care of what is ours.

A few simple things can be done to help prevent us from instituting yet more rules and regulations for our facility.

1. **Parents- Please do not use our facility as a day care service.** When little Johnny has practice, do not drop off other children to run around unattended. While we like to believe the hockey arena is a safe place for our children to roam, children need to be supervised at all time by an adult.
2. **Coaches and Parents- Do not allow children to use their sticks to shoot in the lobby or other areas.** The walls are being

damaged and marked up by pucks and balls. We have a shooting area in G1 designated for that purpose.

3. **Coach- Monitor the locker rooms.** Check the locker room at the end of a practice or game to see that it is picked up of trash and clean of writing on the walls and white boards. **It is the Coaches responsibility** to see that our locker rooms are free from damage/misbehavior while they are using a locker room. Violation of this will result in a forfeiture of locker room privileges.
4. **Everyone- If you see inappropriate behavior- speak up!** Let our kids know that we are all watching what they do. Dryland and warm ups should be done on the walking track in G4, not in the lobby area. Spitting on the floor anywhere inside the building is unacceptable!

The alternative will be signing in and out for use of a locker room (finding a staff member to get us a key is not always an easy task!), confiscation of sticks/balls by arena staff (Coach won't be happy if Johnny doesn't have a stick for practice), removal of the tape vending machine (isn't it great to have when little Susie forgets her mouth guard?) Vandalism brings a cost to clean and replace damaged items. Keeping our registration fees reasonable is important to us and these extra costs will have to be placed on all of us with an increase in fees to use the facility.

Let's all do our part to keep our arena in great shape and the envy of many other Associations! Speak with your children about respecting the rink and property of others. Be with your children when they are at the arena and know where they are at all times. Speak up when you see unacceptable behavior. What did we do before we had this great new space at our arena?



HOCKEY EDUCATION PROGRAM

Youth Hockey: Fair Play and a HEP Incentive to Keep Children Safe in a Wonderful but Potentially Dangerous game!

Aynsley Smith, RN, PhD, Doug Zmolek, Andy Link, Dave Krause, D.Sc, PT, Jon Finnoff, D.O., Don Roberts, and Michael Stuart, MD*

**Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine Hockey Center Team and
*Rochester Youth Hockey Director**

In 2004, Fair Play, a component of the Hockey Education Program (HEP) was introduced by MN Hockey to reduce violence among players, coaches, and parents. Unnecessary roughness, as occurs in a check from behind can result in serious concussions and even paralysis. This season, two young players in Ohio, are paralyzed as a result of checking from behind and several Rochester youth hockey players have sustained concussions, often from collisions. The STOP sign on the jerseys is there for a reason!

Let's Promote Fair Play (FP) and Reduce Injuries in Youth Players Now!

We ask Rochester coaches of all Squirt, Pee-Wee, Bantam, Junior Gold and corresponding girl's teams to inform their players of the opportunity to earn a FP point in every game. Players, coaches and parents (spectators) should know that 'major' or excessive penalties will result in the loss of that point. To promote safe hockey in Rochester, we are offering an incentive that begins RIGHT NOW! All players on all youth and Junior Gold teams who earn all their Fair Play points during the remaining Feb and March games will receive a HEP Sportsmanship certificate. Other prizes will be randomly selected such as the State of Hockey, Hockey Day in Minnesota winter hats, courtesy of MN Hockey.

A Reminder of How Fair Play Works and What Constitutes a Fair Play point?

1. All MN Hockey leagues, including Rochester, shall use FP rules including the FP point system: Win= 2 pts, Tie= 1 pt, Loss= 0 pt, plus 1 FP point.
2. When FP is used, teams start a game with a FP point which is lost if:
 - a. Total FP penalty minutes are exceeded (see Table 1 below).
 - b. If spectator conduct is abusive and in the referee(s)' opinion, it distracts or incites players, referee(s) may stop and request those individuals to leave.
 - c. Coach is assessed a Game Misconduct or Match Penalty



(Table 1)

Level of Participation	Penalty Minutes Allowed Before Forfeit of a Team's Fair Play Point
Squirts	10
Pee Wee	12
Bantam	14
Jr. Gold	16
Girls under 10	8
Girls under 12	10
Girls under 14	12
Girls under 19	12

We know many teams playing games are not aware of FP points. Please know that penalties are tracked on each game score sheet, are tallied, and can play a role in seeding for play-offs. Currently, one 'checking from behind' penalty costs a team a forfeiture of 12 penalty minutes (10 and two). During a '10 and two' the penalized player and a teammate go to the penalty box. The teammate serves the initial two minutes and the penalized team is a 'man short' for that time. After the two minutes expire, the teammate returns to the ice or bench, the team resumes "five on five play" but the penalized player sits out the remaining 10 minutes. Often a single 'check from behind' causes the team to lose their FP point.

At a recent Safety in Ice Hockey clinic for coaches, held in Rochester and hosted by the Rochester Hockey Foundation, discussion focused on adopting a Zero Tolerance for Violence and Checking From Behind and the following actions were proposed!

For the Remainder of this Season-2008-2009

- Rochester will track all FP points and post each team's standings (win/loss record and FP point) on the RYHA website and in the Graham Complex, throughout the rest of the season (example in Table 2).
- HEP manuals, describing all 3 components of HEP will be made available to Rochester Squirt, Pee-Wee, Bantam, Junior Gold and corresponding Girl's levels (parents, coaches, and players).



For Next Season -2009-2010.

- In Rochester Youth Hockey, a single Checking From Behind penalty will immediately forfeit the penalized teams Fair Play point for that game.
- Rochester will promote having all ‘Round Robin’ tournaments played by Fair Play rules. In the event of a tie (in score), the Fair Play point can be used to determine which team advances to the higher bracket.

An example of how drastically Fair Play Points can affect league standings (**Table 2**)

2007/2008 DISTRICT 8
PEEWEE A STANDINGS

Statistics provided by District 8

PEEWEE A

Thanks for using *STICKSTATS.COM*SM

	GAMES PLAYED	GAMES WON	GAMES LOST	GAMES TIED	FAIR PLAY	LEAGUE POINTS
n Eagan	16	13	1	2	16	44
n Woodbury	16	14	1	1	14	43
c Mankato	16	14	2	0	14	42
e Faribault	16	15	0	1	10	41
n Lakeville South	16	11	1	4	15	41

Incentives for Remaining Season

We ask all team managers or coaches of boys and girl’s teams to pick up the score sheets from all games played and deposit them as usual in the slot in the office of Graham 1. Coaches or managers should tally the penalty minutes and note if a player, coach, or spectator caused a forfeiture of the FP point. A Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine Center Hockey Research team member will review the score sheets, validate penalty minutes taken, and enter FP points into a spreadsheet as in Table 2. These will be sent to Doug Zmolek who will print off the teams’ standings, posting them on the RYHA website and in a central area of Graham Complex.

Hockey in Rochester is competitive and well organized. HEP, the Hockey Education Program (includes Fair Play) was developed by MN Hockey and the Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine Center after obtaining input from RYHA and Rochester Hockey Foundation. It is appropriate for RYHA to set a high standard of implementation of a program that aspires to make the game safe, fun and highly skilled. Emphasis on the Heads Up, Don’t Duck (HUDD) Program, HEP (including Fair Play), mechanisms of injury, concussion recognition, and a “Play it Cool” coaching education program, introduced at a recent Safety in Ice Hockey Clinic for coaches, are additional efforts taken this season to ensure hockey is played in a fun, fair manner.



Many Rochester coaches are committed to earning FP points and have no tolerance for costly “major” penalties. Last year, a specific Bantam A team earned all but one of their FP points and set a goal to earn every FP points this year. In addition, our Rochester Junior Gold earned 13 of 16 FP points last year. This year, they set a goal to earn all 16 points! Earning FP points takes effort from coaches, players, parents and spectators. If your child is taking “major” penalties, expect him or her to be on the bench, not the ice! Help your child change their behavior! Will adhering to FP produce a pleasant atmosphere in the rinks for all? -You Bet!

Talk to your team today and let’s get going!

Remember whose game it is. In youth hockey, the game belongs to the players!

**ELK RIVER HOCKEY TOURNAMENT
(Uses Fair Play Points)**

By Aynsley M. Smith, RN, PhD, Andy Link and Don Roberts

The 13th Annual John M. Twaddle Tournament took place January 31-February 1, 2009 in Elk River, MN. The tournament has been held in Elk River since 1997 in memory of John M. Twaddle, a member of the 1996 B1 Bantam team who was killed in a traffic accident in October 1996. The tournament organizers cite Twaddle's competitive spirit and sense of good sportsmanship as ideals for the participant. So it is no wonder that the tournament was governed by Fair Play (FP) rules. The tournament hosted Bantam and Pee-Wee B teams from Elk River, St. Francis, Hastings, Mahtomedi, Stillwater, Blaine, Forest Lake and Rochester. As of Sunday am all teams had earned their FP Points. Since 51% of concussions are caused by illegal infractions such as “checking from behind,” it makes sense to run ‘round robin’ tournaments under fair play rules, to be used as a tie breaker for advancement to a medal round.

The atmosphere among players, coaches and parents was very cordial and on ice play was quick and firm, with emphasis on skill. Pee-Wee teams were allowed 12 penalty minutes before forfeiting their FP point. According to the MN Hockey HEP Implementation Director, approximately 25% of youth hockey tournaments are currently being played by FP rules.

The Tournament director, Lyle Slawson is to be congratulated. The standings for each team were posted in the Elk River Ice Arena.

TEAM	WIN	LOSS	TIE	FP POINT	TOTAL
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An idea for how you could run your round robin tournament under FP point rules...

Randomly divide teams into two brackets. Let’s use the example of 8 teams, therefore four teams in each bracket. Each team in each bracket plays each team once (win=2 points, tie=1 points, loss=0 points). The team from each bracket with the most points would advance to the Championship game, the team with the second most amount of points advances to the third place game, etc. Now to the role of the FP point...In the event that two (or more) teams are tied for the most points in their bracket and you need a tie breaker, you can first look at head-to-head competition, but if there is still a tie you can use the FP points earned as the second tie breaker. As was the case in Elk River, this can be the difference to going home early and leaving with some hardware.



Concussion in Ice Hockey Players can't safely "shake off" a concussion!

Mayo Clinic Hockey Center Research Team

Mike Stuart, Aynsley Smith, Dave Krause, Jon Finnoff, Joe Eischen, Andy Link, Don Roberts

Concussion, a transient form of neurotrauma, affects more than 300,000 athletes in the United States annually, occurring most often in high impact sports, such as boys and girls hockey. Historically, concussed players were said to 'have had their bell rung' – when observed staggering off the ice. Now, healthcare providers, coaches, players and parents are extremely concerned, particularly when concussions affect youth hockey players. You might ask "why?" Investigators are concerned that the 'developing brains of youth players' are at risk for more serious outcomes of concussions, than occurs in mature players. Perhaps this is because of the larger head to body ratio and the fact that children have not yet developed the mind/body connections or templates necessary for optimal cognitive and physical functioning. Repeated concussions cause pre-mature changes in the brain, similar to what occurs to boxers, referred to as 'punch drunk'.

When youth hockey players experience a severe blow to the head, make sure a prompt diagnosis is made. In a study of 22,400 youth hockey players, most concussions resulted from illegal player to player contact (51%) such as checking from behind. Other concussions occurred accidentally when a players' head strikes the boards, ice or another player. A correct diagnosis will decrease the likelihood of second impact or post concussion syndrome. Many sport medicine centers, such as at the Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine Center, have a protocol to evaluate head trauma. Wherever you receive healthcare, call your provider and ensure a concussion evaluation is part of the services provided.

This article will, (1) provide an overview of concussion screening, (2) describe research on concussion being conducted by the Mayo Clinic (SMC) Hockey Center team and (3) emphasize important consideration in prevention and care of concussion.

- 1) For the past two seasons junior varsity and varsity men and women's high school hockey teams have been screened to obtain baseline data using the web-based neuropsychological test (ImPACT), a balance test, and a concussion symptom test. During the season, if head trauma occurs, the school's athletic trainer will evaluate and arrange follow up testing. Discrepancies between scores from baseline and at the time of neurotrauma are noted. Most players are seen by a SMC physician and a strict protocol is followed in concussed players. Often players are out of both hockey and school until symptoms resolve. Returning to vigorous cognitive or physical activity too early is dangerous and should be avoided. Hockey players such as Eric Lindros and Pat LaFontaine experienced post concussion syndrome and are working diligently to educate and prevent youth hockey players from a similar premature departure from hockey.
- 2) To learn more about the frequency of concussion and symptoms experienced by hockey players in Rochester, MN several studies are planned for youth, high school, and Junior A hockey players.
 - a. Initially the Mayo SMC hockey research team hopes to survey youth players of both genders – in all age groups this season after all parents are informed.
 - b. High school players, of both genders, will likely be surveyed during the 2009-2010 season.



c. An in-depth study is planned for a level of hockey participation beyond high school including the survey and HIT system. When the HIT system is used, all players wear helmets, fitted with accelerometers that measure g forces during collisions and other on-ice impact. Investigators at three universities (Lakehead, Dartmouth and North Carolina) have studied HITS during hockey recording high g forces at the time of impact.

3) How can we prevent concussions in youth hockey?

Off-Ice Training (Conditioning):

- a. Make sure helmet straps are adjusted properly so they cannot come off during a collision.
- b. Wear a fitted mouthpiece at all times.
- c. Strengthen neck muscles as is age appropriate.
- d. Provide individualized programs to increase core stability, strength and proper balance. By developing a strong, stable base, players are less likely to be knocked off balance when pushed, shoved or checked.

On-Ice Training:

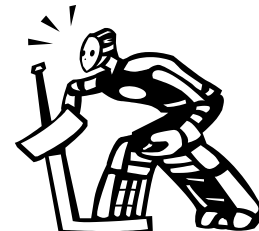
- a. Coaches can remind players to bend their legs when skating and push their butts back to increase both glide and stability.
- b. Coaches constantly ask players to skate with their heads up – not looking down at the puck. It is essential to see your way through traffic and avoid being boarded or blind sided.
- c. When possible try to position yourself closer than five feet from the boards and never face the boards; avoid setting yourself up to be hit from behind.
- d. If you are checked or are sliding into the boards always practice HUDD – **“Heads Up, Don’t Duck”**.

While these interventions are important, it is also necessary to **address the culture of** youth hockey.

To create a safer, skilled culture for youth hockey:

- Remind players, coaches, and parents to enforce HEP and its component Fair Play.
- Fair Play rules penalize teams that take a heading or ‘checking from behind’ penalty by causing a forfeiture of a Fair Play point. Encourage having Fair Play rules enforced for league games and during tournaments. Fewer injuries, fewer major penalties, better sportsmanship and more fun result from implementing Fair Play into all on-ice activities.

Thank you to Doug Zmolek, Joe Eischen, Dave Krause, Michael Stuart and Andy Link who collectively worked on the Safety in Hockey Clinic, on the “Play it Cool” coaching education program and on the HEP – Fair Play Incentive Program to decrease risk of concussions.





Concussion Management Program

Safe and quick return from a concussion

A concussion is an injury to an athlete's brain. Early diagnosis and treatment of a concussion can prevent serious consequences. Prior to the sports season, the Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine Center staff can perform baseline tests that assess balance, coordination, thought process, and memory, including a computer based neuropsychological test called ImPACT®. These baseline results can be compared to tests performed after an athlete sustains a concussion. The information is valuable for treatment and return to play decisions.

What happens after a concussion?

- Make an appointment at the Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine Center
- Undergo an evaluation and repeat testing by a sports medicine physician and certified athletic trainer.
- Discuss the test results and diagnosis with your physician.
- Begin an individualized treatment plan.
- Participate in additional testing, if necessary.
- Return to play

The Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine Concussion Program will provide the highest quality care that allows safe return to your sport. If you have questions about our program, please contact Chad Eickhoff at (507) 266-3461.

Any athlete above the age of 12 can have an appointment at the Sports Medicine Center for testing by calling (507) 266-9384. There will be a small fee for baseline testing.



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Helmet Changes Coming to RYHA!

At the December 2008 meeting it was decided that RYHA will implement a change in the color of helmets required at the travel level.

A motion was passed to phase in the use of black helmets at level 1 and 2 (A and B levels).

This will be phased in over a period of 3 years with the required change date of the 2011-2012 season. Either black or red is acceptable until this time. Please be aware of this as you make future helmet purchases for your player. This will apply to A and B level only and will not affect the Mite Hockey Association and our Rookies, Termites, and Supermites.

Money Well Spent

A big thank you goes out to all who participated in the 1st annual RYHA Golf Tournament. With proceeds from this year's tournament we were able to tile the floor of the lobby and all would agree it has made an incredible difference in the look of our space!

Be watching the website for information about the 2nd Annual RYHA Golf Tournament which is scheduled for Monday, August 24th, 2009!

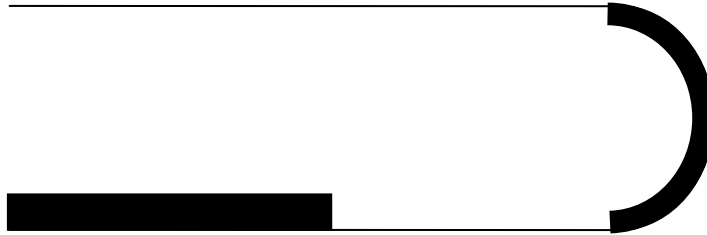
Hey RYHA!

Register now for a Peak Performance Hockey Camp session and save \$100 off of the registration fee! Simply register on line at www.peakhockey.com and enter the promo code **ROCHESTER** for your great savings!

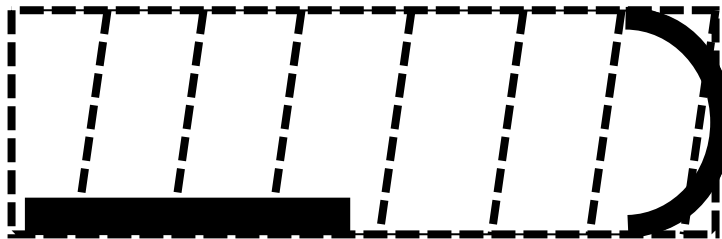


Extend the Life of Your Composite Stick

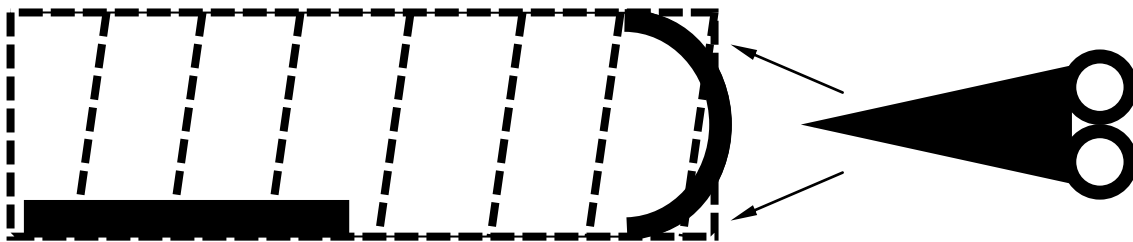
I bought two composite sticks (peewee aged player) from Shoot-n-Save Sports this fall and they have made it through the season quite well so far. I believe this is due to the fact that we tape these sticks a bit differently than we did in the past. This method takes more time, but has worked in terms of extending the blade life of these sticks. To start the process, rip and place two small strips of tape (as shown below) on the heel and toe of the stick blade.



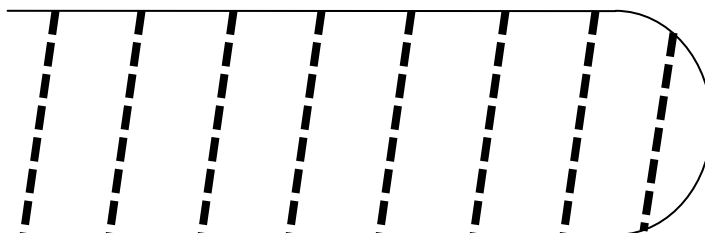
The next step is to start taping your stick. As you approach the end (toe) of the stick, you need to pinch the tape together (as the blade rounds at the toe) thus keeping a rectangular look through the entire blade of your stick (as shown below).



The final step is to take a small scissors and trim off (as shown below) the excess tape on the toe. There are areas of storage in hockey bags now where they can keep their tape, small scissors, etc...



The finished product is a clean looking taped blade with a nice layer of protection (strip of tape) on the heel and the toe. The big difference is the entire blade is protected by tape. The toe is no longer exposed and therefore less likely to be damaged during a puck battle in practice or game.



Placing some pressure (with your fingers / hands) will help these trimmed areas stick together if you have some hangers. Hope this helps extend the life of your stick. GOOD LUCK the remainder of the season!



Rochester Spring Hockey League

R.S.H.L.
Graham Arena Complex



*** Mites * Squirts * PeeWees * Bantams**
*** High School * Boys * Girls * Men * Women**
April - May - June

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- ★ **11 Age Levels To Choose From!**
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NOW**

Register On-Line At www.grahamarena.com