

INTRODUCTION TO MITE HOCKEY

The Calumet Hockey Association (CHA) has put together this sheet with some basic information regarding the upcoming hockey season.

The season begins at the Calumet Coliseum for all hockey teams, including the Mites. The first day of hockey is usually the first Monday of October. There will be a schedule in the Daily Mining Gazette, the Calumet Coliseum bulletin board, and the CHA website – calumethockey.org.

All practices will be at the Calumet Coliseum at the start of the season. The Gipp Arena in Laurium usually has ice by the week of Thanksgiving. At that point, all Mite practices and games take place at the Gipp Arena until the season ends in mid-March.

Mites are divided into 3 groups:

1. Initiation Program (IP), or Skills Development Program
2. Mite House Teams
3. Mite Select Team

Participants are placed in the Initiation Program during their first two years in the program. Ages usually range from 4 – 7 years old. These participants will be identified on the schedule as Mites IP when practicing at the Coliseum. Once they begin practicing at the Gipp Arena, they will be identified as: Mites IP 1, Mites IP 2, or Mites IP 3.

IP scrimmages will consist of USA Hockey's "Cross-Ice" program, where 2 half-ice games will be played simultaneously on one sheet of ice. The intent is to increase the number of times during a scrimmage that a player handles the puck, changes directions, reacts to a situation, etc. The increased number of repetitions greatly enhances player development.

Players in their third and fourth years in the program (usually ages 7 and 8) will be identified on the schedule as Mites House Teams when practicing at the Coliseum. Before going to the Gipp Arena, the players will be drafted onto teams. After the draft, they will be identified on the schedule by their team sponsor name.

The Mite Select group is a team selected from the more competitive Mites who would like to challenge themselves by playing against local Squirt (9 – 10 years old) teams from Calumet and Houghton. They play about the same number of games as the Mite House Teams, but just against older kids. They will also have a team sponsor name to identify them on the schedule.

During the early season at the Armory, all Mite groups will get 1 to 2 practices per week. Once they move to the Gipp Arena, they will be scheduled for two practices per week and one scrimmage or game on the weekend, usually Saturday.

All parents in the CHA are required to volunteer time in the concession stands. The Mite parents will be scheduled to work approximately 5 – 6 hours in the Gipp Arena concession stand. Proceeds from Gipp Arena concessions go to the Village of Laurium Recreation Fund. These funds are spent on improvements at the Gipp Arena.

Parents are also needed as coaches/instructors for the Mite teams and as instructors in the Initiation Program. The Initiation Program is an effective "Fun and Skills" program developed by USA Hockey. All lessons throughout the year are prepared by USA Hockey and are outlined in books provided to the CHA by USA Hockey. USA Hockey also provides Mite team level practice guidebooks. Ideal instructor-to-player ratios are 5:1 or 6:1. This requires many volunteers. All instructors/coaches are required to attend a coaches' clinic. Level 1 clinics (for IP instructors) are usually held in Houghton during October. Level 2 clinics (mite teams) are usually held in Houghton during December. Exact dates and times will be posted.

Not all volunteer instructors need prior hockey experience – they haven't in the past and still contributed significantly to the success of our program. Being present at every practice is not necessary. The more coaches and instructors we have, the easier it is to accommodate the busy schedules of all volunteers. Please contact Glenn Patrick, CHA's Coaching Coordinator (337-4207) if you are interested in coaching at any level.

Again this year, we will continue our Parent's Auxiliary to help direct concession stand operations and many other CHA activities and fund raisers. If you are interested in participating, please contact Denise Spagnotti (337-4082), Chris Patrick (337-4207), Julie Carlson (337-4288), Dawn Stromer (337-3225), and Loriann Rogers (337-4131).