



FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we start to get ready for the hockey season, let's remember it is about the development of all! Please read the following article.

Todd Huyber
RYHA President

BIRTHDAY BIAS: Understanding relative age effect in youth hockey

By Michael Rand

Malcolm Gladwell's 2008 book "Outliers" brought widespread attention to a phenomenon known as "relative age effect," used to describe a bias toward members of a cohort or team born earlier than peers in the same group. Gladwell emphasized his point by using examples from Canadian junior hockey.

But if that was the first time you had heard about relative age effect, or at least the bias that it describes, you probably haven't spent much time in youth hockey. Recognizing – and trying to counteract – relative age effect in hockey and other youth sports has been going on far longer than just the past decade or so.

Studying it within USA Hockey has led to conclusions on how to combat it, said Ken Martel, technical director for USA Hockey's American Development Model. As with many things in youth sports, though, there are no perfect one-size-fits-all answers.

The impact

In the USA Hockey system, youth players are classified by their year of birth. But an 8U player born in, say, January 2009 is several months older than peers born toward the end of that year.

At that age, being almost a full year older than other players on your team can be a huge advantage in both size and current skill. And that early age advantage can unfairly separate players.

"Historically with youth sports, the kids who make the 'A' team are the ones that are maybe a little older – 6 months more than the one born in December," Martel said. "When you group teams that way, that 'A' team gets the best coach and the best ice time. It starts to become a self-fulfilling prophecy that those are the best players."

Keeping kids in hockey

The flip side is that youth hockey players born in later months might get short-changed simply because they aren't as big or haven't had the extra months to catch up skill-wise. As a result, they might get placed on a lower-priority team or be under-coached and – in the worst-case scenario – lose interest in hockey and quit because they don't think they will succeed.

That's the danger of clubs operating with a compete-to-win, "peak-by-the-weekend" mindset, particularly when that mentality is allowed to permeate their 8U, 10U, 12U and 14U structure. It rewards early-maturing players who may not have the long-term ceiling to be elite performers in their late teens and beyond (when it actually begins



to matter). At the same time, late-developing players are excluded and cut, consequently leaving the sport or being segregated to a lesser training program that limits their development opportunities. These late developers may have huge long-term potential, but in this “peak-by-the-weekend” club, they are eliminated from the system before they’ve even had a chance to develop their potential.

So what can hockey clubs do about it? Again, there's no perfect answer. But a good start is being aware of the inherent bias, accounting for it when evaluating players, and maintaining a long-term development focus within a club, rather than chasing trophies. After all, the *true* prize should be developing every player within the club to their full long-term potential.

“If a club treats all kids the same and gives them equal opportunity, ice time and coaching, at the end of the day, that’s going to keep kids in the sport and continuing to develop,” said Martel. “And it will avoid a scenario where certain kids are at a disadvantage.”

USA Hockey is educating its coaches on this subject.

“A youth coach being able to distinguish between power and strength advantages vs. a skill advantage is big. Sometimes the kid who is bigger and stronger and older looks pretty good, even though the weaker kid might have a better skill set,” Martel said. “Coaches should be spending more of their time at a young age looking for motivational edges than talent edges.”

Sorting itself out

Age differences tend to matter less as players get older. The relative age effect is most noticeable at younger ages and maybe again at 12U or 14U if the kids born early in the year happen to hit their growth spurt sooner than younger peers.

“The interesting thing is it all shakes out in the wash when everyone goes through puberty,” Martel added. “So it’s critical to keep kids involved in the sport as long as possible and not have them quit early because of what may have transpired. At a young age, it’s impossible to predict who is going to be a great player. The Sidney Crosbys of the world who are really good who turn out to be superstars, they’re an aberration. That’s not the norm. What’s a lot more common is the 10-year-old who didn’t look like much at age 10, but through patient coaching and a good development environment, turned out to be among the best players on the team the age 18.”

Change the cut-off date?

Martel said USA Hockey has considered its age categories and wondered “would we be better served with different breakdowns.” Some youth sports, he noted, put athletes into a new age class on their birthdays, in effect meaning they’re “the oldest and youngest in their group all in the same year.”

Regardless of the cut-off or breakdown, though, there is going to be some sort of relative age effect. Minnesota Hockey, for instance, uses July 1 as its birthday cut-off date for age groups to align more closely with its rich high school hockey tradition. But



that just gives the kids with July and August birthdates an early edge – if coaches aren't careful – over their May and June birthday peers.

The solution that spans all cut-off dates, Martel reiterates, is simple but fair.

“The biggest thing comes down to how clubs treat kids,” Martel says. “If they give them equal opportunities, then they all have a chance.”

RYHA TOM KONAKOWITZ MEMORIAL GOLF SCRAMBLE

The 2018 RYHA Golf Scramble was held on Friday, August 10th at Northern Hills Golf Course. It was a great day and we had a nice turnout! Congrats to the winning foursome that shot a 58 on the round and took home the Cup: Adam Palen, Scott Romens, Chris Hus, and Ben Blood. Thanks to all who participated, volunteered, and the many sponsors who donated to the event. Special thanks to the following sponsors and their donations:

- River Valley Power & Sport for sponsoring the Hole-in-One Contest for a chance to win a Yamaha jet ski,
- Local Union #6 Plumbers & Pipefitters for their \$1,000 donation
- Schott Distributing for donating all the signage
- Heidi Novak with Remax Results – putter donation and hole sponsorship
- North Star Bar - putter donation and hole sponsorship
- MN97.5 FM – donated Valley Fair and Renaissance Festival tickets
- Shoot-n-Save – donated a True hockey stick and gift card

- Sports Headquarters – donated Golf Simulator and Run & Gun Paintball passes
- OMC SMAP – various program gift certificates
- Rec Center & Graham Arena – ice donation gift certificates

TEAM SPONSORSHIPS AND GRAHAM ARENA ADVERTISING

Please let us know if you or your employer are interested in supporting your child's team this upcoming season. Team sponsorships are needed for the 2018-19 season. Advertising opportunities are also available. Advertising space is available for the banner signs on the arena walls of Graham 1, as well as the dasher board signs in Graham 1 & 4. All advertising proceeds support RYHA. Thank You to those that continually support the program.

Contact Dan Moblely at rochestermnyouthhockey@gmail.com with any questions or requests regarding sponsorships or advertising.

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Search “Rochester Youth Hockey Association”





SQUIRT BEGINNING OF SEASON INFORMATION

New for the 2018-2019 season is an online sign up for squirt tryouts. All squirts will need to go to the squirt tryout sign up on the RYHA squirt tryout page and select Squirt A, Squirt B, or No Tryout. If a player selects Squirt A tryout and does not make an A team they will automatically be enrolled in the Squirt B tryout. For those not wishing to tryout they will select No Tryout. The player will be automatically be placed on a roster at the same level they played the previous season or if the player played supermites last year they will be placed on a Squirt C roster. There will be a deadline to sign up for squirt tryouts. Please see the squirt tryout page for more information.

Squirt A tryouts will be approximately the 2nd or 3rd week of October, Squirt B tryouts will be approximately the 3rd or 4th week of October. The specific dates for the tryout will be posted soon. Your specific time and rink for the first day of tryouts will be posted to the website **one day prior**. Your subsequent dates, times will be posted after each tryout day. An email will also be sent.

Squirt Development will start the first week of October. It is an opportunity for squirt aged kids to start skating prior to tryouts and forming teams. The focus is to get the kids ready for the hockey season through skill development and small area games. The Development groups are generally formed based on where players played the previous hockey season. Teams are formed solely based on tryout results and have no

correlation with Squirt Development groups. You will be contacted by your assigned development coach after RYHA registration is closed, coaches are identified and groups are formed. Your coach will provide dates, times, and locations for the practices when they contact you.

GIRLS PROGRAM

We are excited and looking forward to the upcoming hockey season. This is an outlook to what the 2018-19 season will look like for the Girls' Program.

Girls Termites: Will continue to have an all-girls termite group/team. Players range in age 4-7.

Girls Supermites: Girls Supermites will remain with the Girls City League [GCL], allowing 10U eligible girls to play 'house' hockey rather than traveling. Supermite eligible girls should register under Supermites and select the Team Preference "Girls". 10U eligible players will register under Girls 10U.

GCL will be an in-house Girls Development League (no traveling), consisting of players ranging in age from 7-10 that have similar abilities. There will be 4 teams within the level comprising a hybrid structure of Supermite & Squirt C. Players will be scheduled on the ice each week on Saturdays & Sundays, and at OMC Sports Medical & Athletic Performance Facility during the week on either Tuesday or Wednesday. Our GCL players will only be utilizing the



Hockey Training Room at OMC SMAP each week. Ice sessions will include station based practices, cross-ice or half-ice games, and 6-8 full ice games throughout the season. The emphasis will be on skill development, touching the puck, game fundamentals, and fostering a love for hockey. In addition, this season GCL will be part of the Rochester 'Shannon Cup' Tournament with our own GCL Shannon Cup Scramble. The end of the season will conclude with a Girls City League jamboree.

Girls 10U: This level is primarily for 4th & 5th grade girls, with birthdates between (July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2009). Girls unit has decided to have two 10UB teams this season. There will not be an "A" team this year playing a SE Metro district schedule. Both 10UB teams will be traveling teams playing a district schedule in SE MN, including tournament(s).

Note: Tryouts are optional, but all 10U players are encouraged to tryout. Tryouts are required for placement on a 10U traveling team. If your child would rather play "house" league in the Girls City League, forward that request to the Girls Director. Any Supermite (U8) eligible players interested in trying out for 10U traveling should email your request to the Girls Director at RYHAgirls@gmail.com.

Girls 12U: This level is primarily for 6th & 7th grade girls, with birthdates between (July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2007). This level will have an A and a B team. All players within this age

level will be traveling. There is no 'house' team option for this age group.

All players should be registered at the appropriate level based on your daughter's date of birth. Level ups need to be requested and will be considered – email the Girls Director. Payment adjustments will be made if or after a player is placed on a team.

Start of the season timeline

- Saturday 10/6 Girls Cross-Ice Kickoff and our Girls Try Hockey for Free Event
- 12U tryouts will be the week of 10/8. - an email with tryout dates & times will be sent out and posted online approximately a week prior
- 10U tryouts will be the week of 10/22 following MEA break. - an email with tryout dates & times will be sent out and posted online approximately a week prior
- Girls Supermite (8U)/GCL will start at OMC SMAP on either Tuesday 10/23 or Wednesday 10/24 with ice starting Saturday 10/27. - an email providing what OMC session your daughter will attend will be sent out approximately a week prior to inform you of which OMC session she should attend

Note: All teams 10U and GCL teams will be formed after the conclusion of 10U tryouts. Girls Supermites/GCL will not participate in the Supermite Draft party as we need to form teams after 10U tryouts. We will kick off our girls program with the Cross-Ice Kickoff on 10/6.



MITES

RYHA MITE SEASON HAS EXCITING NEW PROGRAMS THIS YEAR!

Our Mite season is upon us and there are new exciting programs being offered in addition to all our favorite activities!

Our Termites will kick off the season on September 28th with an open house at OMC Sports Medicine and Athletic Performance Center. Termites will pick up jerseys, meet their coach, and learn about the programs and facilities at OMC. Our SuperMites will attend the annual SuperMite draft party on Saturday, October 6th at the Rochester International Event Center.

This should be another exciting year for both groups as we look for ways to balance fun and skill development. Our off ice season at OMC will start October 6th for Termites and October 10th for SuperMites at OMC. These off ice sessions will run throughout the season.

The Mite program will once again be hosting an outdoor hockey day, January 19th, which is also Hockey Day in Minnesota. Look for more information on this event as we approach the new year.

****NEW**** RYHA will be expanding the Try Hockey for Free program and will be held four times throughout the year. If your child has a friend who is interested in trying hockey, encourage them to sign up. Sessions will be held in August, September, November, and February. Look for more information on the [RYHA Try Hockey for Free webpage](#).

****NEW**** The Rochester Grizzlies NAHL Tier III have partnered with RYHA and Scheels to start a new program call, "**Little Grizzlies**". This program is intended for new skaters age 5-8 to register for hockey equipment at a reduced price. The first 40 skaters registered who have not played in an association will receive hockey equipment from Scheels for \$100 (plus processing fees), which is valued at \$300. Each skater will receive a game ticket to a Rochester Grizzlies home game and be invited to a private meet and greet with Grizzly players. Look for more information on the [RYHA Mite facebook page](#).

****UPDATED**** Check out the updated [RYHA Mite website](#), where you can find information about Try Hockey, upcoming season schedules (rough draft), calendar of events, and an update FAQ.

Finally, we cannot make a season of events and activities run smoothly without the help of Mite parents! Many of these activities require only an hour or two but make the program fun and memorable for our skaters. If you would like to volunteer with the Mite SuperMoms or Mite Committee, please email rochmitechockey@gmail.com.

Signup Genius forms have been created for [All Star Hockey Day](#), [Outdoor Hockey Day](#), [SuperMite Draft](#), and [Try Hockey for Free](#). These will be distributed to all our Mite parents once registration is complete. We welcome all new, returning, or former Mite parents!

I look forward to seeing you all at the rink!

Robb Wiedrich
RYHA Mite Hockey Coordinator



BOOSTERS

There will be no team fitting this season as there has been in the past seasons. All clothing will be available for purchase during novelty sales. We will be at registration both nights, we will have new items for the season and discounted items from last season. Bring your booster bucks. Bauer coats are available at Shoot and Save and your booster bucks can be used towards the purchase.

Pizza Sales:

Pizza Parent Meeting will be held Monday, November 12th, 2018 time and location TBD. Pizza Sales will start on Friday, November 16th, 2018.

Picture Updates:

RYHA has contracted with Sportsline Photography for this upcoming season for team pictures

If you are interested in Volunteering for Novelty Sales throughout the season please contact Kara Kleinschmidt @ klk5861@hotmail.com.



WILD TICKETS

A limited amount of Minnesota Wild group tickets are again available for sale to RYHA families on a first come, first served basis. Stay tuned to our Facebook page for the latest info! They tend to sell out fast!

GRAHAM ARENA COMPLEX

The Graham Arena Complex ice is back! After a short break from ice events to allow the Fair to run their programs in the arena complex, we once again have ice in Graham Arena Four. The arena will host youth and high school open hockey sessions starting in September. Check out the RYHA website and look under the "open hockey" tab to see the schedule for your age level. The cost for open hockey is just \$4 per session. Full equipment is required and don't forget to bring a puck. The arena is also host to fall hockey camps with programs specifically for defenseman (The Complete Defenseman Camp), goal scoring tips for players (Shoot To Score Camp), and a prep camp for the upcoming fall tryouts (Tryout Skills and Drills Prep Camp). Information on the camps held at Graham Arena can be found at www.peakhockey.com This is also a great time to remind coaches, players, and parents that the Graham Arena Complex is your rink! Please help us keep your rink in great condition by eliminating activities that mark up the walls or create damage in the facility. The more we all do to help keep our kids under control will help to keep our rink in great shape and looking good.



GOALIES

As summer winds down and we approach fall, now is a great time to reflect on how you did in reaching your off-season goals. Did you get stronger? Did you get quicker? Did you improve an area of weakness? Did you challenge yourself to get better? Did you become a better student of the game and your position? As you move into fall I hope all of you have a clear idea of what you want to accomplish this season in hockey. Start thinking about your in-season goals now. Start thinking about your practice routines, your pre-game routines now. Have a plan in place for those moving into the season. Go into this season knowing how you want to help your team and how you are going to be the best possible teammate this year. This time of year is also difficult because you want to try and be involved in fall hockey training, but also may be involved in a fall sport. Then you also have school starting, how do you juggle it all? Well you need to always put school first. Make sure you have that squared away first. Then if you are in a fall sport you have made a commitment to that team and you need to give 100% to that team. You owe your teammates no less than that. Then fall hockey. Training is important and you want to be ready this winter, so do what you can, with the time you have. Lastly, I hope you get to spend time being a kid. Go swimming, play with your friends, do something fun, hang out with your family, and relax a little. You will be in full swing before you know it. Good luck this fall and see you on the ice this winter.

Rob Cothorn
RYHA Goalies



The Shannon O'Hara Foundation is looking forward to another great hockey season. If you are interested in applying for the 2019 Shannon O'Hara Foundation memorial scholarship, please visit our website: www.shannonoharafoundation.org. The scholarship amount is increasing to \$2,500 starting this year.

Upcoming events at Graham Arena:

Thur. Jan. 1, 2019: SOF night at HS Girls Hockey - Mayo vs. Century & JM vs. Northfield

Fri. - Sun., Jan. 25-27: Shannon Cup Girls Youth Tournaments - 12A, 12B, 10B

Sat. Feb. 2: SOF Scholarship Night - Mayo vs. Century boys hockey

Good luck to all during the 2018-19 season!

RYHA TOURNAMENTS

We will have another full year of Rochester Tournaments this year. As always numerous volunteer spots will be needed to be filled during the Tournament season. EACH RYHA FAMILY IS RESPONSIBLE FOR VOLUNTEERING AT LEAST 5 HOURS DURING YOUR HOME TOURNAMENT. NO EXCEPTIONS!!!!

Tournaments aren't successful without parent's helping. 2018-2019 TOURNAMENTS:

SQUIRT A – Nov. 30-Dec. 2

PEEWEE B – Dec. 7-9

SQUIRT B – Dec. 14-16

PEEWEE A/AA(Founders Cup)–Jan. 4-6 (put on by Youth Hockey Hub)

BANTAM A/AA–Jan. 11-13

BANTAM B1 & BANTAM B2 –Jan. 18-20

12A, 12B, 10B(Shannon Cup)–Jan. 25-27



BECOMING A HOCKEY OFFICIAL

There are opportunities abound as players, coaches, and officials. Just seek proper advice and work hard to reach your goals!

Have you considered developing your hockey knowledge as an official? The younger you start, the more opportunities you open for yourself in the officiating ranks!

What are the steps involved in becoming an official?

Answer:

There are four main steps to becoming a USA Hockey Official:

1. Registration with USA Hockey and a local officiating seminar (typically run August – October) www.usahockey.com will be your primary source for information. The earlier you take a seminar the sooner you can officiate as a level 1 official
2. Local Seminar Attendance
3. Testing and online learning modules
4. Make contact with local officiating supervisor once you have received your USA Hockey officiating crest

All USA Hockey officials must complete an open book rules test. Level 1 officials will have an on ice lesson along with the classroom seminar (be prepared with your full officiating uniform). In addition, Levels 2, 3, and 4 officials must complete a closed book test administered at the seminar. Level 4 officials must also pass a skating test.

For the 2018 season, Rochester officiating seminars are scheduled for:

October 20th for levels 1 – 3 and additional seminars are offered throughout the state.

All district and national registration fees must be paid, as appropriate for your registration level. Many times the association you work for will reimburse the USA Hockey registration fee as long as you work 6 games for the association; this has been the case in Winona, Kasson, and many other MN associations. This is currently the policy for RYHA!

Being an official is a great way to earn extra cash throughout high school, college, and, if you're lucky, later in life (maybe even turning it into a career at the professional levels of hockey). With your hockey skills building, you are completely capable of doing this, if you have the drive and interest in doing so! Current pay rates for officials covered under USA Hockey in the Rochester area can range from \$25 - \$130 per game!

The supervisor of officials, Rochester, MN:
Keegan Hakala
rochrefs@gmail.com - Please direct all initial questions to Keegan!

District 9 Supervisor of Officials:
Ryan Swafford
rss10@hotmail.com



**OLMSTED
MEDICAL
CENTER**

We hope everyone is having a great summer. Our summer programs were very busy and we are extremely proud of the hard work and the great testing results from all of our athletes.

Summer hockey training programs at OMC focused on a combination of weight training, SAQ (speed, agility, quickness), yoga, synthetic ice and the Blade Skating Treadmill to focus improvement on skating mechanics, stride efficiency and puck skills.

As fall approaches it is time to shift the focus of our training from power, strength and skating mechanics to aerobic conditioning utilizing the Blade Treadmill and circuit training in the weight room. Because ice hockey has such unique demands, its training program must be carefully designed. The off-season should focus on strength training, while the preseason should focus on aerobic conditioning, developing skating muscles, and injury prevention.

The program is designed to acclimate the athletes to the demands of skating and at the same time avoid muscle strains. In preseason ice hockey conditioning, groin and adductor strains are a frequent problem. This is most likely due to a sharp increase in the use of the hip flexors and adductors in the recovery portion of the skating stride. The combination of the Blade Treadmill along with circuit training in the weight room will reduce injuries and prepare athletes for the start of hockey season.

For more information about our Pre Season Programs please feel free to contact Olmsted Medical Center at 535-1977, or follow the link to our scheduling page https://clients.mindbodyonline.com/help?st_uid=42872.



Starting STRONG!

Hockey is a highly skilled sport performed at top speeds. Those skills combined with a long and grueling season make it very difficult to feel the same at the end of the season as you do at the beginning. Because of this, it is important to head into the season feeling both physically and mentally prepared.

Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine has programs to help you maximize your skating potential, stay strong heading into tryouts, and keep your strength throughout the long hockey season. Being prepared for the upcoming season not only can help you gain confidence in your game but also help you reduce your risk of injury throughout the season.

For questions about our fall and winter hockey programs, please call: 507-266-9100 or visit our website for additional information: [Mayo Clinic Sports Medicine Hockey Programs](#)

