



MLK DAY TOURNAMENT MADNESS

AHA TEAMS LOCALLY AND ACROSS THE USA MADE WAVES OVER
MLK DAY WEEKEND

Memories

friendship

NS 10U Major
Boston, MA
CCM MLK Invite



16A Comets Paprocki
Salt Lake City, UT
Grizz Cup
3rd Place



12U Comet Girls
Fairbanks, AK
Fairbanks Fest
2nd Place

Nothing like seeing a Bruins game from a Private Suite! YOLO!

January started out hot with a variety of AHA teams representing our Comet and North Star programs participating in tournaments in and out of Alaska over the MLK Day Weekend.

Locally - the All Stars hosted the Polar Bear Invitational for teams that chose to stay in Alaska. The Tournament featured a 10 Minor semi-final battle between the AHA North Star Wettin and Weidner teams, with the Weidner team coming out with the hard-fought victory.

Ready to Coach!



All together, AHA had 11 other teams traveling over the holiday weekend with teams playing all over the country. From Florida to California, Utah to Boston, and Minnesota in between - AHA players, coaches and families packed their bags and enjoyed a myriad of experiences both on and off the ice.

These trips take a massive amount of coordination, patience, planning and resources for our families and for our organization.



12U Majors
Botson, MA
CCM MLK Invite
2nd Place

We could not be more proud of the way our teams represent both AHA and Alaska as a whole when traveling outside to experience the world through team travel and hockey.

Many thanks to all the parents and coaches who are helping to make these lifelong memories possible for the amazing athletes who call AHA home.



Players in Boston got to meet Alaskas own, Jeremy Swayman



NS 14T2 Minneapolis, MN | ONE Hockey Tournament 2nd Place



14A Comets Salt Lake City, UT
Grizz Cup
2nd Place



NBD - that's just the legendary Zdeno Chara!!!





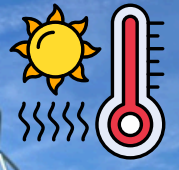
2026 Polar Bear Invitational

10U Minor Weidner NS | 2nd Place

Swingin' the Sticks in Utah



NS 12 Minor Stecyk Anaheim, CA | MLK Classic 3rd Place



NS-19 Girls
West Palm Beach, FL
Florida Rush Showcase



10U Major Northstars
Intermission Skate
Boston University



AHA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

HELPING EVERY KID PLAY THE GREATEST GAME ON ICE

As we return to the ice for the second half of the season, we want to take a moment to recognize the heartbeat of the Anchorage Hockey Association – our *Volunteers*.

Every practice, every game, and every tournament depends on the dedication, time, and spirit of parents, grandparents, and community members who step up to make this all possible.

From coaching to keeping score and running the game clock or helping at tournaments, organizing rosters, and coordinating everything our teams need, our volunteers are the quiet heroes behind every great hockey moment. Their strength and willingness to give their time and energy is what allows our players to thrive – learning teamwork, resilience, and love for the game in a supportive community.

Simply put, none of what we do for our kids could happen without you. Your contributions don't just keep our programs running – they help build the sense of belonging and purpose that defines AHA. You create the environment where young players can grow not just as athletes, but as teammates, leaders, and friends.

To all who lend a hand – whether at the rink, behind the scenes, or cheering from the stands – we thank you. Your generosity fuels our mission and keeps hockey strong in Anchorage.

If you'd like to learn more about volunteer opportunities or get involved, reach out to our Volunteer Coordinator, Phil Hayes, at volunteer@anchoragehockey.com. There's always a place for new helping hands and hearts within our AHA family.

Here's to the continued teamwork, dedication, and community spirit that make AHA such a special place for our kids to play, grow, and belong.

With Gratitude,
Your AHA Staff & Board of Directors





**ANCHORAGE HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION**

Director | Kirk Kullberg
Asst. Director | Vince Haag



AHA TEAM SPOTLIGHT

WHERE IT ALL BEGINS

LEARNING | CONFIDENCE | GROWTH

AHA 'MITE' PROGRAM



"This is just the beginning. I know it doesn't always feel that way. We are here to help guide you and your player in this process for the long haul."

-Kirk Kullberg, Mite Program Director



The Mite Program is the entry point into AHA hockey and, for many players, their first experience with organized ice sports. The program is designed to be fun, engaging, and development-focused while introducing the fundamentals of hockey in a positive and supportive environment.

On-Ice Development

At the mite level, development always comes first. Practices are fast-paced and age-appropriate, with a focus on skating, puck control, and basic game concepts. Coaches emphasize equal participation and creating an atmosphere where every player is involved, learning, and enjoying the game.

Competition within the Mite Program is used as a tool for development. The program plays games in a 4v4 cross-ice format, with goalies rotating in and sharing gear for the Blue and White programs—a setup that increases puck touches, encourages decision-making, and helps players learn the game naturally without an early focus on scores or standings. The Red program (the highest level) typically features regular and specific goalies who have trained at the Blue and White levels.

As players move through the Mite Program—from 6U to 8U Blue, then to 8U White and 8U Red—there is a gradual increase in structure, discipline, and competitive expectations. With each step, players take on more responsibility and learn what it means to be a good teammate. Coaches work intentionally to introduce these elements in age-appropriate ways, making sure that increased competitiveness goes hand in hand with continued development and enjoyment of the game.

This progression helps prepare players for the transition to 10U hockey by building strong fundamentals, confidence, and an understanding of team play—without losing sight of why kids play the game in the first place.

"Confidence is key," explains Vince Haag, Assistant Mite Director and Mite Red Coach. "A kid in the bottom 10% of Red, but who would be performing in the top 20% on White will have a monumentally different experience in success and growth."

Finding the Right Fit

To determine the proper placement for the season or session, AHA holds Mite evaluations in August during North Star Tryouts. These on-ice sessions are held the second Tuesday of August—August 11th in 2026—and are valuable opportunities for our staff to evaluate and place each player at the proper level (Blue, White, or Red) while also getting jersey sizing and ordering completed for new players to our program. Evaluation dates are always published to our website and Facebook pages well in advance.

"When a player comes to evals, our staff is there to see where the kid is at," says Coach Haag. "We want, more than anything, to make sure they are at a level where they can be the most successful in their own development."

Schedule and Opportunities

The regular schedule at the Mite level includes three days per week on ice for most weeks, as well as a dryland offering at the AHA Training and Development Center (Hockey House). In addition, the Mite program participates in a variety of local tournaments such as the Sully Showdown hosted by AHA, the I Heart Hockey in Palmer, and the Toys for Tots in South Anchorage. We play games against our fellow AHA teams and also against Mite programs from other organizations throughout Alaska.





AHA TEAM SPOTLIGHT

WHERE IT ALL BEGINS

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AHA 'MITE' PROGRAM



Perspective for Parents

Assistant Director and Coach, Vince Haag knows, in the end, why we are here. "At the end of the day it's all about the kids having fun. When the kids are having fun, playing games, and learning, they don't even know it but they are getting better at hockey."

Coach Kirk wanted to make sure parents were aware of keeping things in perspective. "This is just the beginning of your kiddos hockey journey. The very beginning. I know it doesn't feel that way sometimes and can feel like every minute is time lost. I look at it as experience gained. We, as a staff and program, are here to help guide you and your player through this process for the long haul."

He adds, "Make sure you take the time to sit back and enjoy it. Enjoy the ball games, the catch the coach, the torpedo with Coach Vince and our staff. Even though you are looking ahead and wondering what 'might be' for my kids success on the ice and in life—these moments are ones you'll look back on with fond memories more than any wins, losses, goals or struggles. These kids are making friends they'll 'skate with' through life on and off the ice."

The Foundation

Beyond the ice, the Mite Program lays the foundation for families and for AHA as a whole. It builds community, establishes expectations, and helps create a positive culture that carries through every level of the association.

A strong association starts with a strong Mite Program—and everything at AHA begins here.

The Little Dippers and Seapups programs represent the future of the Anchorage Hockey Association. By focusing on fun, development, and community, these programs ensure that hockey in Anchorage continues to grow strong — one smile, one stride, and one puck touch at a time.

For questions about current or upcoming programs, or our Mite Program overall please feel free to reach out to Kirk or Vince directly at the following emails below:

Kirk Kullberg | Mite Director | kkullberg@anchoragehockey.com
Vince Haag | Asst. Director | vhaag@anchoragehockey.com

2026 AHA BOARD ELECTIONS

DO YOU WANT TO BE A BOARD MEMBER?

DO YOU WANT TO SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY AND HELP MAKE A BIG IMPACT ON YOUTH HOCKEY?

We are excited to announce to our Members that 5 AHA Board Positions are up for Election this spring.

We are accepting applications for the 5 open AHA Board of Directors positions vacated due to expiring terms. Electronic election voting for the Board of Directors will begin on February 17th and end on March 17th.

Anyone interested in running should first send an email indicating interest to our AHA Office Manager, Laura Higgins, at anchoragehockeyoffice@gmail.com.

Interested candidates will be contacted via email by our election committee and asked to submit candidate bios and a headshot by the end of the day on February 12, 2026 to form the ballot.

AHA is looking for members who are passionate about helping to continue to build the foundations for a successful, mission driven youth hockey non-profit to run for the board. Board positions are a 2-year term that start and end the end of June this year. We ask that newly elected Directors attend the 3 monthly remaining Board meetings for this season before taking office in order to become familiar with the operation of the AHA Board and the Association.

Questions about areas of responsibilities, time commitment and generally what-to-expect would be best addressed by speaking directly with an AHA board member or by contacting our Executive Director, Rob Forbes at rforbes@anchoragehockey.com.

Board of Director positions and the work performed are an integral part of the successful oversight and direction of the Anchorage Hockey Association.

The results of the election will be announced at our Annual Membership Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, March 18, 2026.

(Election voting will be electronic. Members will receive their ballots in an email and a cell text invitation using the contact information you provided in your child's 2025/26 PLAYER REGISTRATION. Contact Laura Higgins if you want to confirm that information or change it.)



WHAT'S COMING UP

IMPORTANT EVENTS FOR AHA FAMILIES

February brings the biggest tournament of the season for the State of Alaska to Anchorage as AHA hosts the President's Day Invitational over two consecutive weekends. AHA will also host the 'Mite Transition' meeting to assist families in understanding the next step as their players move to the 10U level next season.

AHA MITE TRANSITION MEETING

February 17, 2026 | 7:00 PM

Romig Middle School Auditorium

We've all been there. If you are new to the hockey community - the transition from 8U to 10U can be scary, and confusing.

We are here to help.

AHA will host our annual Mite Transition Meeting to help families better understand the next step in their players' hockey journey from the Little Dippers Mite Program into 10U hockey.

This meeting introduces families to all the directors and gives an in depth look at all the 10U options available to players moving up. AHA offers the 'Comp' North Star Program, as well as the Rec A Comets and Rec B teams.

Directors and staff will be on hand to discuss the differences between the programs and to highlight the unique benefits each one offers depending on a player's development and goals. This meeting serves as a great opportunity to ask questions, ease concerns, and for AHA to share success stories from players who have thrived in each pathway.

Pizza and Drinks will be on hand for all who attend.



2026 PRESIDENTS DAY INVITATIONAL

February 6-8 & 13-16, 2026

Ben Boeke, Dempsey Anderson, UAA and O'Malley

112 teams will compete across 10 Divisions over two weekends in February to see who takes home the 2026 President's Day Championship. This tournament takes an extraordinary amount of volunteer work and dedication and we are incredibly thankful to all who help make it happen!

Best of luck to all the teams in this years tournament!



STATE TOURNAMENTS

2025/26 ALASKA STATE HOCKEY TOURNAMENTS

The end of the season is fast approaching and Alaska is a BIG state with tournaments for each division and age group held in a variety of locations. You will find a link below to each ASHA State Tournament Schedule for your reference and planning!

CLICK THE DIVISION LINK BELOW FOR A PDF OF THE CORRESPONDING ASHA STATE TOURNAMENT SCHEDULES

REC DIVISIONS



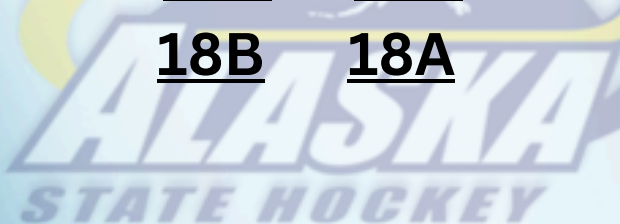
[10B](#) [10A](#)

[12B](#) [12A](#)

[14B](#) [14A](#)

[16B](#) [16A](#)

[18B](#) [18A](#)



OFFICIAL HOME OF ALASKA STATE HOCKEY ASSOCIATION



COMP DIVISIONS

[10 Minor](#) [10 Major](#)

[12 Minor](#) [12Major](#)

[14T2](#) [16T2](#)

[18T2](#)



MARK YOUR CALENDARS



UPCOMING EVENTS

GIRLS 10 AND UNDER FUN SKATE
MARCH 8, 2026 @ 12:15 PM - DA2

VALENTINES DAY PARENTS DATE NIGHT
FEBRUARY 14, 2026 @ 6-9 PM - AHA TRAINING CENTER

AK GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL STATE TOURNAMENT
FEBRUARY 13-16, 2026 | BEN BOEKE

MITE TRANSITION MEETING
FEBRUARY 17, 2026 | 7:00 PM
ROMIG MIDDLE SCHOOL

PRESIDENTS DAY INVITATIONAL WEEK 1
FEBRUARY 6-8, 2026
BEN BOEKE, DEMPSEY, UAA, & O'MALLEY ICE RINKS

PRESIDENTS DAY INVITATIONAL WEEK 2
FEBRUARY 13-16, 2026
BEN BOEKE, DEMPSEY, UAA, & O'MALLEY ICE RINKS

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS!

PLEASE HELP SUPPORT THE BUSINESSES THAT SUPPORT AHA!



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