

U11C COORDINATOR YEAR IN REVIEW

SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

For the 2022-23 season we had four U11C teams representing CMHA. This was my first year as the U11C coordinator, and second year in a coordinator role with CMHA.

The year started with the recruitment of four fabulous head coaches who, despite a little friendly banter, supported each other throughout the season with any issues that arose. They truly made my role as coordinator an easy one and I'm very grateful for this great group of coaches!

For the players, the year was full of highlights and not without its challenges. For the first year U11s, this was the first year of full ice, first year of rep cuts, and for many players, the first year with new coaches and teammates that they haven't known since H1! Many of the U11 players are still trying new positions, and determining whether they are forwards, defense, or goalies. We also had some players who have been playing hockey since H1, and some players just starting their first ice hockey experience this year! It takes for a very diverse group of players on the ice!

Our U11C3 and U11C4 won their league banners in their respective tiers, and U11C3 made it all the way to the final game of the final 4, placing second overall. Huge congratulations to both teams.

One of the greatest successes at this level of hockey is the development that happens over the course of the year. From the evaluation sessions to the end of the season, all players showed a marked improvement in their skill development.

A huge thank you to all of the coaches and team officials and parents who volunteered their time to make this a fun and successful season!

CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT YEAR

In my role as coordinator, I'm responsible for managing the team creation. This is never an easy task. It is important to me to ensure transparency in the process, and that families understand the tremendous undertaking making teams is for the age group coordinators. go through with team creation.

I want to share a bit of the "behind the scenes" process on how teams in U11C are created to provide transparency on the process:

First, we go through the evaluations process which includes 3 on ice sessions with a minimum of two evaluators per session. It is incredibly important for players to attend these sessions in order for proper balancing of the teams.

Second, in what is truly a labour of love and painstaking process, we take all of the evaluation scores, conflicts and requests, and create balanced teams. I cannot even begin to tell you the amount of effort and time that goes into this; we do our very best to accommodate as many of the conflicts as possible, with a mind to having as many of the players able to play, develop, and enjoy the sport. It is not easy as many of the kids have conflicts that restrict the teams they are able to play on with their schedules. **It is so important that families put in their requests (schedule conflicts being the priority, followed by**

requests to be with other friends and carpooling accommodations) ahead of evaluations in order to create the teams.

Also, in U11C player join the evaluations throughout the evaluation process after leaving the U11A tryouts. These players are often added in during various stages of the U11C evaluations and aren't evaluated for the whole process, and we will have to search out appropriate evaluations for these players to ensure a fair placement happens.

Teams are then all balanced within five points of each other. We also ensure that there is a balance of different levels of players across all the teams (e.g., each team will have a higher ranked player as well as a 1/5 player, usually a player who is brand new to hockey). Again, this is no small feat! It's also important to recognize that we have players sign up or withdraw after the evaluations, which leaves little room to rebalance.

Next, we review the teams with the coaches and ensure that they are all in agreement with their rosters, which often also requires a rebalancing. The coaches are looking for things like even numbers of assistant coaches, on ice helpers, etc. They also know the players better than I do and can ensure that they are balanced. As I mentioned above players at this level are still learning the game as well as the positions they want to play. The best opportunity for this is to create balanced teams with development and fun in mind!

I am excited to note that a committee has been working on the updating the process of creating teams. Two of the most important things we can do is to have our team practice dates established earlier so there are fewer conflicts, and have all families provide conflicts prior to evaluations. This will go a long way in helping the coordinators create teams.

I do hope this helps provide clarity, and some understanding. Our house players make up the biggest percentage of players in CMHA and their development, enjoyment, and love of the game will continue to be our biggest goal! Thank you all for a great year of hockey – I look forward to seeing you at the rink next season!

Warm regards,
Ashleigh Turner
U11C Coordinator

