Novice families,

I would like to welcome you to an exciting new season of developmental hockey. I am Brent Campbell, your new Convenor for the upcoming season. We are looking forward to a great developmental season not only for our players, but our coaches, trainers, refs, and of course our families. I have been a coach at various levels of sports from instructional age to university level competition, am a teacher, and believe in the developmental model of hockey as it is being laid out by our organization. I am including in this post some very important seasonal information. Thank you to my fellow convener John Ritchie and development partner for allowing me to borrow heavily from him for this information.

The Minor Hockey Alliance of Ontario has mandated a new program this season. For any player family born 2004 through 2011 it has been mandated that one parent/guardian of every registered player within those birth years listed above take the online Respect in Sport (RiS) Parent Edition. This course costs $13.56 which is non-refundable. I will provide your Head Coach with a list of families that have taken the program and which families still have to take the course. SHA (Sarnia Hockey Association) has directed the Conveners that no child can participate in evaluations skates, practices, or games until this course has been taken by at least one parent or legal guardian. Our website sarniahockey.com had this posted on the front page for several months to prepare everyone. There is a link on our website that will direct you to the course and it only takes about an hour to complete the videos. Once you receive your Certificate of Completion **you must present it at the evaluation skate** or you will not be allowed to participate until proof of completion.

PrivIT is here! This season all SHA players, rep, house league, Instructional or tyke are required to register with PrivIT. PrivIT profile is a packaged solution designed to help schools and organizations manage their Pre-participation Physical Examination (PPE) process. The goal of a PPE is to promote the health and safety or athletes in training and competition for any sports organization. PrivIT profile is an online alternative to paper forms, specifically adapted to the PPE process which is used in most high schools, colleges, and universities throughout the United States and Canada. Please go to sarniahockey.com and on the main page there is a link to PrivIT where you would fill out your child’s information to assist our Trainers and Coaches in being proactive with your child. This information is private and confidential and there is only one coach/trainer per team that would have access to this information.

Scheduling this season has been a major challenge for our Association. With the closure of Germain Arena we have had difficulties in rectifying the program in a fair and respectful manner. I and the other conveners have been working tirelessly on our present ice allocations, and at present we have accommodated our growing numbers of participants but that has meant a change to our traditional practice and game schedule. Practices will be one of the following time slots; Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday with games on Sunday from 7 am -12 pm. Practice days and coaching will be set around the 19th of September. In order to accommodate Silverstick, and other arena based events all teams will have a series of Saturday practices throughout the year as well as some practice time changes to accommodate for holidays and to be fair to all teams. We will also have power skating opportunities and goalie development opportunities throughout the year. These will be posted and emailed to all for your participation at a reduced cost. The conveners know that doesn’t this is not ideal but we must be fair and make accommodations to make sure we all receive equal ice. This will be posted very shortly after the player allocation draft.

All program players must be in full hockey equipment with no exceptions. Full gear includes CSA approved hockey helmet and face mask, CSA approved neck guard, shoulder pads, elbow pads, gloves, jock/jill, hockey pants, shin pads, skates and a hockey stick. We at SHA supply the jerseys and socks for the season, but not for the assessment skate.

We are planning on continuing the tiered system with players playing against similar aged kids with some exceptions based on skill and the developmental stage of the player. Teams will be of mixed abilities and there will be some movement during the first weeks of the season. All teams will participate in the March Break tournament. This is paid for in your registration and is a great way to end the season with some outstanding hockey. Coaches will meet regularly with me and the rest of the coaches in our program to look at ways to improve practice plans, assess our players, and address any issues.

We have worked hard this year to allocate more goalie equipment to each team so that more kids may get a chance to practice and play in net. I have suggested to the coaches to allow players a week or two of practices before their first game in net, so that players may acquire some level of confidence before a game. We have several players who have identified as goalies, but all kids who would like the opportunity will be afforded the time and opportunity. Likewise, all kids who have identified as goalies will be encouraged to develop their player abilities as well outside of the net. Goalie development will be a key to the strengthening our organization this year as we have been struggling of late to field more goalie candidates in our rep programs.

All novice aged kids (2008/2007) must attend the Evaluation skates slated for September 12 in player equipment not in goalie gear, details (times, locations, breakdowns) will be posted this weekend. Please remember that **the RiS Parent Edition must be completed before this evaluation skate**. At this time we will evaluate all players based on criteria set forth by the Skills Development Committee. We will be asking the “top 16” players to move up into Atom House League to challenge their skills. The remaining players and one group of 2009 skaters will comprise 10 teams this season in the two tiers.

In the upcoming weeks you will be contacted by your respective Head Coach to know your schedules for starting the season. Feel free to contact me at any time via email at sarniasabers@gmail.com for any questions you may have before the season starts.

Sincerely

Brent Campbell