



U8 MAJOR BUNNY GUIDE TO SUCCESS For Associations

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- To continue to develop the components of physical literacy: fundamental movement and motor skills
- To introduce fundamental Ringette skills in a fun and safe environment that promotes self-confidence
- To increase awareness of Ringette and create a welcoming environment for all participants
- To introduce structured, sport-specific programming and modified game situations

COMPLIANCE INFORMATION FOR U8 MAJOR BUNNY

- Focus on FUN!
- 100% Development – Team Activity Logs must be maintained and submitted to the Regional Sport Development Coordinator by April 30th
- Teams are selected vertically using the Skills Matrix
- Team Composite Scores will be recorded on each team's TRF
- Athletes are evaluated using the Skills Matrix by October 20th and again by February 28th
- One or more coaches on the ice at all times
- No scores posted
- Start learning positional play, switching positions throughout the year (no pads on goalies, but goalie sticks may be used)
- Emphasis on skating skills, developing ring skills
- Two minute buzzer should be utilized to introduce line changes
- May play full-ice scrimmages with basic Ringette rules to be observed
- A maximum of 3 events per year, including any year-end event (events may have off-ice activities and any awards will be identical participation awards for everyone)

WHAT SKILLS DO WE FOCUS ON AT U8?

- Basic Skating Skills:
 - Basic stance, falling and getting up, edges, balance on skates, start, stop, walking all directions, forward/backward stride and glide
- Basic Ring Skills:
 - Basic skills, grip, carrying the ring, passing, receiving, checking, shooting – all within a controlled environment
- Introduce Goalkeeping Skills:
 - Introduce concept, basic grip, stance, stick on ice, use only a goalie stick in regular player's equipment

STARTING THE SEASON

- Associations must ensure all U8 athletes are evaluated using the ORA Skills Matrix
 - Associations must organize and facilitate the evaluations, independently of any coaches' evaluations
 - The ORA Skills Video is a valuable tool to assist evaluators with this process
 - Athletes are divided into teams vertically (balanced teams, not tiered)
 - Associations must ensure each team is able to meet the deadlines for submitting the completed Skills Matrix – by October 20th and again by February 28th – to the Regional Sport Development Coordinator
 - Each U8 team's Team Composite Score must appear on their TRF
- Associations are responsible for ensuring that all teams understand and utilize the Team Activity Log throughout the season
 - Associations must ensure each team submits a completed Team Activity Log to the Regional Sport Development Coordinator by the April 30th deadline
 - Associations should help the team identify a volunteer from their team to complete this document throughout the season
- Associations should help identify objectives for the U8 team(s) based on the skill competencies of the athletes on the team(s)
- Associations should assist the U8 coach(es) in developing a Long Range Plan for the season
 - This should be an on-going process throughout the season

I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH U8 ATHLETES, WHAT DO I DO NOW?!

- When this situation occurs, the Association Executive should be in contact with the Region's Sport Development and Membership Services Coordinators in order to ensure that the resulting team is registered in the best possible category
 - E.g. If you have 6 U8 players and 7 U9 players, but your U9 players score relatively low on the Skills Matrix, then the best place for this team **MIGHT** be U8

ADDITIONAL ON-ICE COACHING CLINICS

- If you have someone with a strength in a particular skill area within your Association, invite them on the ice to coach your coaches on a specific skill – how to break it down and instruct it, common errors in execution, etc.
- These experts can then be additional resources throughout the season

EVENTS

In addition to hosting your regular annual tournament you could host an event with modified game structures (e.g. multiple games on one surface, 3-on-3 format, etc.)

- Athletes could register as individual players, and teams for the event could be formed with players from various Associations
- Could include Skills Exhibitions
- Could include off-ice activities as well

- Face-painting, colouring, crafts, clowns, balloon art, magic show, etc.
- Participation awards
- Pizza party
- Candy jar table

ATHLETE VOLUNTEERS

- Early in the season in your Association form a pool of athlete volunteers who have various areas of expertise (e.g. skating, shooting, passing, goal-tending, etc.)
- This is a great way to involve your athletes who don't have the time to commit to being a full-time coach
 - Contact information for these athletes should be distributed to coaches at the start of the season and athletes can be contacted to come out to practices for any team who can use them
 - Some of the athlete volunteers may be able to make the commitment to be at every on-ice session for a particular team
- Athlete volunteers should always be under the supervision of an adult coach
 - Many of these athletes may be in high school and looking to complete their requisite Community Involvement volunteer hours, so may ask the coach to sign their volunteer hours sheets when they come out to help
- These athletes can be used on-ice to:
 - Assist with less-skilled players and to provide one-on-one instruction (one athlete volunteer could work with the same younger athlete all the time)
 - Demonstrate and correct skills/drills
 - Provide feedback to coaches/recommend drills
 - Set up/clear up drills
- These volunteers can be encouraged to run drills on their own
- Ask them for suggestions and really listen to what they have to say
- Coaches should give feedback to these athlete volunteers to let them know how they are appreciated and how they could improve
- Consider an interview process for selecting appropriate volunteers to help out on the ice
- Track success – identify those who take on more – expand to the next job
- Consider offering an award to be given annually to an older athlete who has made a difference with the younger athletes by volunteering their time with practices, at games, and also at special events

PLEASE SEE THE ACCOMPANYING GUIDE TO SUCCESS FOR U8 MAJOR BUNNY COACHES