



Ice Hockey Australia

(Trading name of the Australian Ice Hockey Federation)

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John McCrae-Williamson (JMW) Jamboree FAQ

What is the IHA's 2011 JMW Jamboree?

The IHA JMW Jamboree has replaced the previous JMW National Championship. The Jamboree is a 4-day event where the primary focus is on ensuring all players are provided with an opportunity to improve their playing skills and ice hockey knowledge in a non-competitive environment, play small area games to enhance their playing skills, meet new friends and most importantly have a "FUN" experience!

When/Where is the Jamboree?

The Jamboree will be held in the Adelaide Ice Arena from the 10th - 13th June 2011.

Who can attend the Jamboree?

Any IHA member player born in 2000 to 2004 (11-7 years old) is eligible to attend the Jamboree. Players must be a current active registered member with IHA.

My son/daughter has only played for a short period – can he/she attend?

Absolutely, in some cases players will be split into groups based on their skill level to ensure a fair and safe participation environment.

Does my son/daughter still get to represent their state?

This has been left to the state for their decision. IHA encourages full participation.

Some states may want to send their players as a "State" representative group in state jerseys while others may elect to have the players bring their own jersey. All players are required to bring a jersey.

Why did the format change?

In order for Australia to develop a greater number of skilled and knowledgeable players, and most importantly retaining these players in the sport, it is important the primary focus is to correctly develop players from an early age.

In comparison with other sports, do other sports ask their youngest athletes to play on a full sized football field, or use a full size rugby/AFL ball, or use full size soccer nets? Absolutely not! Smaller fields and equipment are used everywhere except in Australian ice hockey.

Age appropriate dimension playing surfaces assist in putting the game of ice hockey into perspective for the younger players, especially when the majority of players have only a few years of ice hockey experience. The adopted method will enhance the skill development for the benefit of all participants.

Most importantly it will ensure the sport is much more enjoyable for the youngest and less skilled players!! Removing the competitive element allows the players an opportunity to learn and make mistakes without having the consequences of losing a game, or getting reduced ice time, or worse – being embarrassed by his/her coach!

What is the new format?

Each Jamboree player will receive the following: (All of the components listed will be 2 x 1 hour sessions per day)



- a) On-ice Sessions
 - All on ice activities will be Cross-ice
 - Players will play 60-minutes of continuous games with an expected 40-minute of active movement during the session (much more than they would get in a normal game!)
- b) Off-ice Sessions
 - An off-ice area will be set-up for players to shoot pucks, play games and practice their skills under the supervision of coaches and current AIHL and National Team players.
- c) Workshops
 - A classroom environment where the players will learn about the game of hockey in a “FUN” and active way with games, quizzes with tons of prizes up for grabs!

Upon arrival, all players will be split into three groups from different states in order to meet new players, make new friends, and have the opportunity to play with players they have never met previously!

Why play Cross-ice?

The smaller playing area (cross-ice) dramatically increases player participation by allowing each player to be more involved in the play - more puck touches, more passes, and more shots!! It also eliminates whistles (time killers!) from the playing time. Each player will be challenged to adapt to the different game situations more often which leads to enhancing each player’s personal skill development.

Full Size vs. Cross-ice – what’s the difference?

A recent study for full ice games between 7 to 9 years olds over a 60-minute game produced the following statistics:

- Average puck possession over 60 minutes: 20.7 seconds
- Average playing time per 60 minutes: 20.39 minutes
- Average shots per player: 0.5 shots per game

Many players didn’t even touch the puck! In close competitive games, some players didn’t even play! It is not uncommon for coaches who want that coveted trophy to only play their best skilled players in the final period of a tournament even though all players have paid the same amount for their participation. Not much “FUN” for a lesser skilled player to sit on a bench watching others having the majority of the ice time!!

A 2009 USA Hockey study on Cross-ice games for 7-9 years olds over a 60-minute period had these statistics:

- Average puck possession over 60 minutes: 2.4 minutes
- Average playing time per 60 minutes: 35.6 minutes
- Average shots per player: 8.3 shots

Based on the above figures each Cross-ice game is equivalent to over 12 to 14 full size area games with regards to puck possession and shots! Why wouldn’t one want their son/daughter to touch the puck more often?

Won’t it be too crowded on the ice?

The players will be split into three equal sized groups for their sessions. While one group is on the ice, the other two groups will be attending off-ice or classroom respectively.

Well planned out sessions with the right number of coaches to run each station will use the ice effectively without over-crowding.

All cross-ice games will be played with a 3-on-3 format rather than the standard 5-on-5 format to ensure maximising “puck touches”.

At the 2011 National Midget Development Camp – 55 midget aged players (18 – 16 years) played cross-ice games without any issues and loved every moment of the experience!



How does playing 3vs3 teach teamwork?

How much teamwork is involved with one skater taking the puck from one end of a full sheet of ice, skating all the way down, and then shooting on an inexperienced goaltender before most of his and the other team's players can catch up, or get involved in the play?

We have all seen this happen at the McCrae-Williamson Championship in past years - over and over again.

Cross-ice forces young players to work together in smaller areas to develop scoring opportunities and be creative. Each cross-ice game will have specialised rules to ensure players to use their teammates correctly in a team environment and creatively to succeed!

Will my son/daughter learn positioning in cross-ice games?

It won't matter if players know where to be if they can't skate properly, or if they don't enjoy the game!

It has been proven that teaching "positional play" too early in a player's development can stifle creativity and a player's ability to think on the fly.

Players learn more when they are older and are more knowledgeable about positioning, breakouts, and fore-checking systems without impeding their skill development in their early years.

How does my son/daughter benefit from this?

Cross-ice Games provide the following:

- Maximising skill acquisition – more puck touches and repetition are key to a player's development
- Allows players to learn the "time and space" concept – most important aspect in ice hockey
- Teaches "Mental Game Speed" – quick decision making without fear of repercussion
- Promotes creativity - without fear of repercussion
- Teaches players what to do when they don't have the puck
- Promotes repetitive games filled with "FUN"
- Teaches and promotes transition to multiple roles - offense to defense and back to offense continuously which enhances the players to learn at a faster rate

What are the impacts financially compared to a normal National Championship?

Absolutely none! In most cases, it will be cheaper to attend a Jamboree than a National Championship.

There are no state team practices, no jerseys to purchase (unless the state requests it). Players only need to make their way to Adelaide and look after their own accommodation.

From a value for money perspective – parents/guardians will get much more benefit for their dollar with regards to the overall playing time and ice time of their son/daughter.

Some say this is a step backwards for hockey – is this the case?

How can it be? Your son/daughter will touch the puck more often, have more time on the ice than in a championship, learn more and have more "FUN". There are no losers - everyone is a WINNER!

Parents should ask their son/daughter if they like to play games or stand around and watch others. They should also ask them if they like to carry the puck and score goals, and ask them if they like whistles and stoppages in play.

Young players of this age invariably have more "FUN" when they are actively engaged during games. High-energy games, a variety of games, games with pucks and small area games all help develop young players more rapidly while they are having loads of "FUN"! Also cross-ice games support these same ideals with more puck touches, more scoring opportunities, less stoppages and make for a more enjoyable game for everyone involved!

As a parent – what do I get out of this?

On top of watching their son/daughter have a great time on or off the ice, the Jamboree will also be hosting a Parent Seminar during the Jamboree on the following topics:

- How to build a positive parent community;
- How to ensure correct player development;



- Correct safety and equipment at all ages; and
- Other areas in the sport for future careers.

This session will have both a formal and informal component with an opportunity for parents to ask questions to all participating coaches, mingle with other parents, and learn more about the sport of ice hockey!

I'm a coach – what's in it for me?

The Jamboree provides the coaches with a unique opportunity to work with many players from different states while coaching them during the cross-ice games and "LEARN".

All interested coaches are welcome on the ice and at all sessions. Although they will not be behind a bench they will have the opportunity to coach during the small-area games to ensure all players understand the key concepts, including sharing their knowledge with the other coaches!

The Jamboree will also be hosting a Coaching Development Seminar during the Jamboree with the following topics:

- Development techniques for the young player;
- Using Small Area Games to maximise development; and
- Skill Analysis – how to correctly identify and correct player weaknesses.

The intent is for the coaches to return to their state and seek to adopt the same methods used at the Jamboree for the ongoing development of players in their state. This continuation will ensure players are provided with equal opportunity to enhance their playing skills, which in turn will raise the skill level of players across Australia.

Further Questions

Any questions which are not addressed in the above document, please feel free to contact Pier Martin, IHA National Player Development Director at development@iha.org.au.

