

2025 Year-End Message from Mission Minor Hockey President Jeff Clarke

Dear Mission Minor Hockey Community,

Thank you for making this season a success and to those who attended our Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGM is more than a celebration of goals, wins, and championships—it's a time to honor the growth, resilience, and joy that hockey brings to our young athletes. At Mission Minor Hockey, we're not just building players; we're nurturing confident, determined, and connected kids who carry the lessons of the rink into life. This year showcased the power of sport to shape hearts and minds, and I'm thrilled to share our story of triumph, community, and mental strength.

Player Development: Growing Beyond the Ice

Player development was at the heart of our season, extending beyond skills to personal growth. We redirected funds to enhance coaching, training, and mentorship, fostering self-efficacy—the belief in one's ability to succeed. Our new pay-to-play development program, led by Chris Helm and Troy Stordy, was a resounding success, reducing the need for players to train outside Mission. Thank you to Nic Mosher, Todd Geddes, and Damon Matkovich for their dedication to helping our kids set goals, overcome setbacks, and thrive.

Coaching Excellence: Inspiring Resilience

A key highlight was welcoming Doug Bodner as Head Coach of our coaches. With 27 years as a facilitator for BC Hockey and Hockey Canada and an HP2 (Level 5) certification, Doug is a mentor of mentors. His leadership fosters a growth mindset, encouraging coaches to embrace learning and players to see mistakes as opportunities. Doug's guidance strengthens our program, inspiring coaches to stay longer and players to believe in themselves. Thank you, Doug, for volunteering your expertise and passion to our community.

NHL/NHLPA First Shift Program: A New Opportunity

We're thrilled to announce that Mission Minor Hockey has been accepted into the NHL/NHLPA First Shift program, sponsored by Bauer and Hockey Canada, for the 2025-26 season! A huge shout out to Doug Bodner for getting our application in and being accepted. This learn-to-play initiative is designed to introduce kids aged 6-10 who have never played hockey to the sport in an accessible, affordable, and fun way. For a \$299 registration fee, participants receive a full set of Bauer equipment (fitted by experts and theirs to keep), six on-ice sessions with fun drills, and Hockey Canada-provided insurance. The program kicks off with a Welcome Event, where families meet coaches, learn about equipment, and get fitted. On-ice sessions, held at the same time and rink each week, focus on fundamental skating and hockey skills in a supportive environment with a 1:4 instructor-to-skater ratio. The First Shift program aims to remove barriers like equipment costs and intimidation, fostering a love for hockey. After the six weeks, our Transition Program will offer a path

for continued participation. Stay tuned to our social media pages and website for more registration details.

Enhanced Operations: Clarity and Connection

We revamped our policies and procedures, making them easily accessible on our redesigned website, thanks to Theresa Burns' volunteer efforts. The sleek, user-friendly site now features engaging content and hyperlinks for quick navigation. We also introduced association email addresses (e.g., president@mmhahockey.ca) to improve communication and ensure smooth executive transitions. These changes make it easier for members to connect with us and stay informed.

Official Apparel Partnership: Team Pride

We're excited to partner with Sapphire Creative as our sole provider of Mission Minor Hockey apparel, launching in August. This collaboration ensures high-quality, affordable gear with quick delivery, fostering team unity through consistent branding. To maintain this standard, only approved apparel and logo designs will be permitted at sanctioned games and events.

Tournaments and Awards: Moments That Shine

Our tournaments, led by Randi Cebryk in her first year as organizer, were a masterclass in fun and teamwork. These events created "flow" moments—when players are fully immersed, challenged, and in control—fostering friendships and memories that fuel motivation. Financially successful and emotionally rewarding, they strengthened our community. By popular demand, we brought back our in-person awards night, celebrating effort and achievement. Seeing our youngest skaters beam with pride and our graduating stars reflect on their journey reminded us of the social bonds sports build.

Team Successes: Grit and Glory

Our teams' achievements reflect the mental toughness and teamwork we cultivate:

U13 A1: League champs in Flight 2, earning a spot at provincials.

U13 A2: Dominated Flight 7 as league winners.

U18 A1: Claimed their third consecutive provincial championship—congratulations to Coach Garnet for this dynasty!

U18 C1: Won their league with just one loss, showcasing focus and unity.

U11 C2: Skated to a league championship, embodying the joy of collective effort.

These victories highlight the grit, goal-setting, and resilience our players developed. Thank you to every player, coach, and family who cheered them on.

Gratitude: A Community Effort

None of this happens without our Executive team, coaches, and volunteers, who sacrifice personal time to create a supportive environment. Their dedication teaches our players about commitment and community, and I'm deeply grateful for their selflessness. A special shout-out to Chelsea Helm, whose stellar social media work kept us connected and inspired, celebrating effort and reinforcing the positive motivation that drives our kids.

Looking Ahead: Building the Three Cs

In youth sports, we focus on the three Cs: competence, confidence, and connection. This season, we faced challenges but grew stronger, showing our players that setbacks are opportunities for comebacks. As we prepare for 2025-26, let's keep nurturing their skills, self-belief, and bonds that last a lifetime. Together, we're raising strong, inspired young people who will carry these lessons into the world.

Get Involved!

Join us for our pre-season kickoff in August, volunteer for a role, or register early to secure your spot for next season, including the First Shift program. Visit mmhahockey.ca for updates and details. Thank you for making Mission Minor Hockey a place where kids thrive—here's to another year of growth, grit, and glory!

Sincerely,

Jeff Clarke

President, Mission Minor Hockey