

ST. JUDE MITE A2 PROGRAM



This is an overview of the St. Jude Mite A2 Program. Hopefully it can help answer some of your questions concerning the program.

Q1: What is A2?

Q1 Answer: A2 is a program organized by the Northern Illinois Hockey League (NIHL) to further the development of Mite-age players. The key word here is *development*. A2 players receive additional instruction and play a limited number of games to further their progress at a young age. The emphasis is on development. There is not a huge push to win games. The main idea is to expose players to a higher, more competitive level to make it easier to determine if the player can play at a travel level.

Q2: How can a player qualify to play A2?

Q2 Answer: To qualify for A2, players must:

- Be born 1/1/2002 or later and
- Never have played travel hockey

There are no exceptions allowed for either of these qualifications

Q3: What are the rules for A2?

Q3 Answer: In order to make A2 a complete level playing field, NIHL places the below listed rules upon Club's:

- A2 teams can not practice as a team prior to December 1st
- A2 teams are limited to 20 times on the ice (excluding playoffs)

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Q4: What if my child is already on a team?

Q4 Answer: Almost all players on an A2 squad are playing on another team. Last years team had St. Jude, Oak Lawn and Homewood Flossmoor Mite House players as well as some skaters out of Pre-Hockey. We try as much as possible to schedule our games and practices so that they do not conflict with any other games/practices. Sometimes a player might have a house game and an A2 game on the same day.

Q5: What will my player get if he makes the St. Jude A2 Team?

Q5 Answer:

- All players will receive one jersey (# Only) and game socks.
- Any player from any club can play on St. Jude's team. It is not restricted to only St. Jude players.
- Previous years A2 players who meet age requirements that are still playing House Mite hockey are eligible.
- A minimum of 13 ice slots

Q6: What about practices?

Q6 Answer: All efforts will be made to work around existing game/practice schedules.

Q7: What about Games?

Q7 Answer: A2 plays 10 games. 5 are home games at Southwest Ice Arena (5505 W. 127th Street, Crestwood) or Oak Lawn Ice Arena; 5 are away games that are determined by our schedule. Weekday games can not be scheduled to start prior to 6:00pm. Games begin in January; end in February; and possible playoffs conclude in early March.

Q8: Is my child ready for Travel?

Q8 Answer: It is really difficult to determine if your child is ready or not. Mite hockey has a wide range of ages and abilities. A2 levels the playing field to make it easier for you and your child to make that decision.

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Q9: Do I have to play travel hockey if I choose to play A2? I like house hockey and want to stay there.

Q9 Answer: That is fine. Some of the players from last year's team are still playing House Mite Hockey. Yes, St. Jude would definitely like you to experience our Travel Program but you do not have to commit to travel hockey in order to play A2.

Q10: If I play A2 for St. Jude can I go somewhere else?

Q10 Answer: Yes! A2 does not count as a "pick." Throughout their youth hockey career (Mite-Midget) travel players are allowed by NIHL 2 club choices or "picks." A2 does not count as a "pick." In order to play at the travel level, NIHL requires you to fill out a Tier 2 declaration that basically means that the player is "picking" that club. You can not use a "pick" without knowing about it.

Q11: My child has never played before is he able to play?

Q11 Answer: If your child is currently in Pre-Hockey and is age-eligible, bring them out to the evaluation. Because A2 is an advanced program, the on-ice instructors can determine if your child is ready for A2.

Q12: What is the cost?

Q12 Answer: There is no cost for the initial evaluation. The fee for last year's A2 team was \$200.00 with a \$75.00 credit for 2009/2010 St. Jude Fall Travel Fees.