



Mid Season Review and Coaching Tips

Here we are at the midway point of the season and each coach should perhaps assess their team in relation to their district rivals and determine if the team is on track to meet the goals set at the beginning of the season. For many the reality of where their team stacks up versus the competition can be disappointing. For other coaches they may be pleased with the progress the team has made and are excited about the prospects for the end of the season District and Regional Tournaments. Here are five suggestions to help you evaluate and prepare for the last half of the season:

- 1) Regardless of your league standings be sure to be positive and optimistic with your players. In some cases winning may not be a realistic goal but a creative and caring coach can find a way to keep the team focused on improvement. Often times teams that got beat by wide margins in the early season compete very well in the second game against the stronger opponent later in the season. That is reason for enough to forge ahead.
- 2) Take a hard look at where your team needs the most work. Usually it is with basic fundamentals like skating and passing. Continue to work hard on skating, passing and puck handling skills because without those skills the systems will not work. Your District Coach in Chief has skills DVDs that are available to you free of charge. The CICs are listed on the first page. The recommendation for practice is that 75% of the time be spent on skills.

- 3) Meet with the parents of your team and give them a mid season report of how you feel the team is progressing and what you anticipate as the regular season ends in early February and play offs begin. Be honest with them and set realistic expectations. It is also a good time for some questions and answers. As long as you have been true to your values and beliefs as outlined in the parent meeting at the beginning of the year this should be easy and valuable for your team.

- 4) Be sure that practice continues to be fun and that you include some small area games and competition drills to keep the players energized and enthusiastic about coming to the rink.

- 5) Be sure to have fun yourself. We all want to win but that is not always possible. Be sure to stay connected with your players and guide them along with positive reinforcement and optimistic messages. If you stay upbeat so will they.

Have a great second half of the season because every day is a great day to play hockey!

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