

Benefits of Cross Ice Hockey

Hockey Canada – Long Term Player Development Model

Parents and coaches need to think long term and not worry too much about children being the best player on the ice at the age of 5 or 6 years old. Putting young players into a competitive environment too early will compromise the child’s development. Children should only be placed into competitive situations that suit their abilities. Parents and coaches must be realistic about what children should be able to do at all age levels.

This Hockey Canada Long Term Player Development strategy is crucial part of an overall development strategy for an MHA.

It is important to fully understand and appreciate the benefits of cross ice hockey and why Hockey Canada has a national policy ensuring all Initiation

level hockey is played in smaller, modified spaces.

- » Increased emphasis on skating skills including agility, balance, coordination and quickness.
- » The number of puck battles increases significantly.
- » Puck control and puck protection skills are enhanced resulting in more confidence with the puck.
- » The fundamentals of skating, puck control, passing, and shooting are reinforced.
- » Less time and space increases the frequency and speed of making hockey decisions.
- » Offers a more challenging environment to improve ice awareness and elevate hockey sense.
- » Increased intensity of competition results through the progressive skill improvement of players.
- » The increase in incidental body contact requires players to play with their heads up.
- » Players improve in the areas of contact confidence and body contact.

An illustration of very simple statistics highlights the advantages of the smaller surface games model.



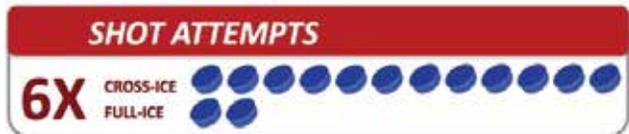
Small spaces equal more players engaged in the play:

All players are close to the play at all times and have many more chances for puck touches. Regardless of the skill level or the ability of each player, their opportunities to be engaged in the play increase by **2X** when the playing area is smaller.





Benefits of Cross Ice Hockey cont.



The biggest difference between full ice and small areas:

- There are 6 times as many shots on goal or at goal in a cross-ice or half ice game.
- Players are closer to the puck at all times and the puck finds its way to the net much more often



Shrinking the playing surface increases offence:

Players are much closer to the nets, skate shorter distance from goal to goal, and have increased opportunities for offensive play.



More of a team game is apparent:

In the smaller area games, players are observed passing and attempting to pass the puck more often. This happens for two reasons:

- All players are close enough to pressure the puck more frequently
- Teammates are in close support of the puck carry at all times



Short quick passes find their mark:

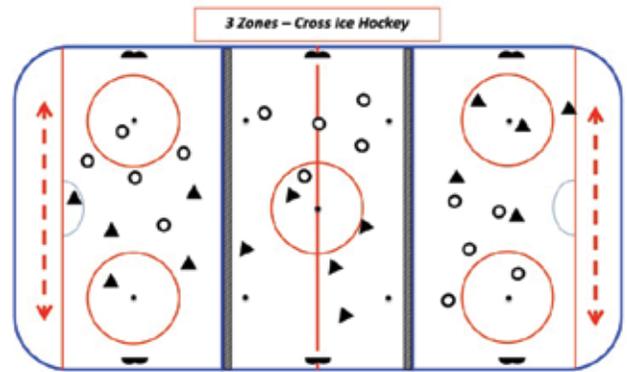
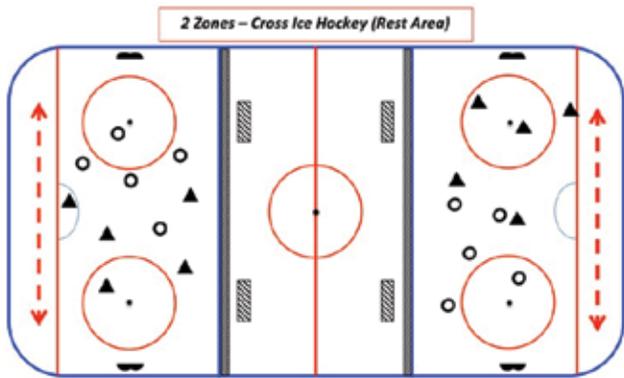
In smaller spaces, more passes are attempted and most of these passes are 5 to 10 feet in length. When passes are shorter, accuracy improves and players tend to have more success receiving the pass. Players also start to understand the important of team puck possession.



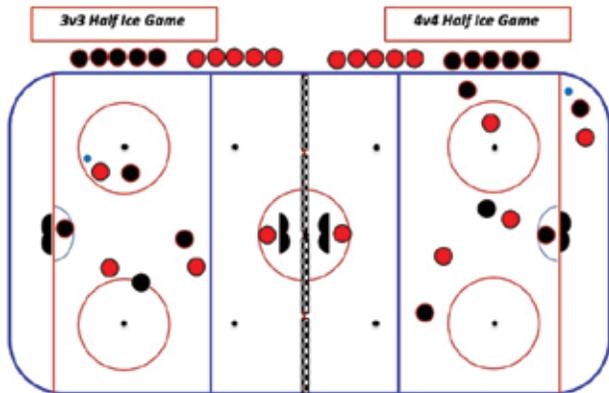


Benefits of Cross Ice Hockey cont.

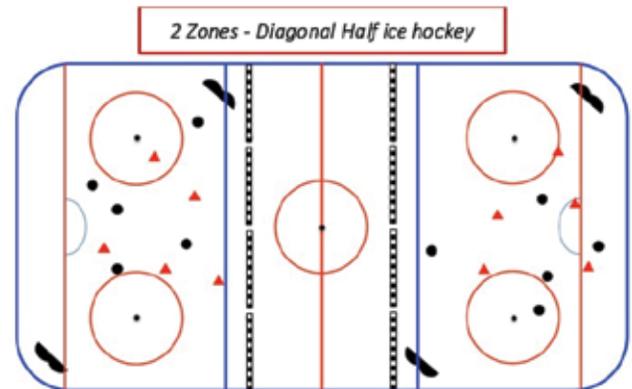
What does cross-ice and half-ice hockey look like?



The full IP Program allows you the opportunity to make your training unique to your association. There are no rules as to how you use the ice surface, as long as it is within the cross-ice - half-ice mandate of areas for development and games.



4v4 Half Ice Game



2 Zones - Diagonal Half ice hockey



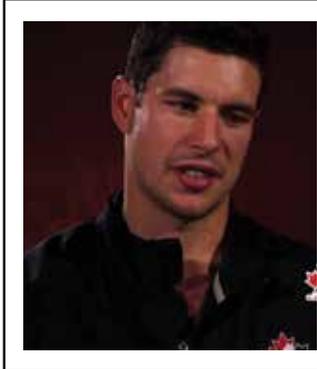
CANADIAN PLAYER PATHWAY - INITIATION

What Do the Pros say?:



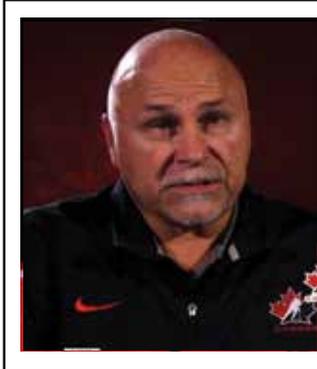
“ There are a lot of situations where you are battling in the corner, being able to make those quick passes is important...”

brianne JENNER
Olympic Gold Medallist



“ You have to learn how to make plays in pretty small areas, the more you practice that, the better off you are.”

sidney CROSBY
2X Olympic Gold Medallist



“ It's a tremendous tool for all coaches at all levels. Coaches at every level use small area games.”

barry TROTZ
HC-Washington Capitals

