

TWEED BORDER HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

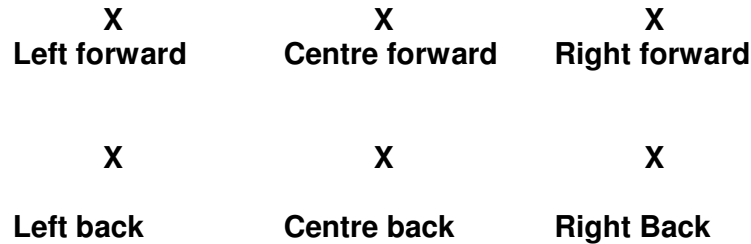
**RULES OF MINKEY AND MODIFIED HOCKEY**

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Introduction

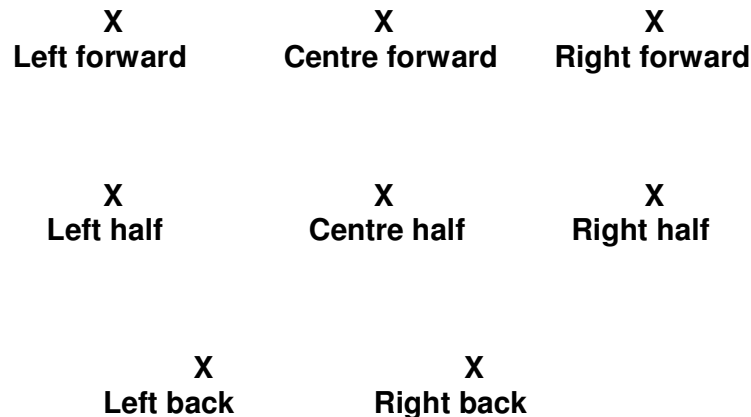
Minkey hockey is played with **6 players** per team and is normally the player's first experience of organized sport. It is a whole new world for players, parents and coaches. One of my first lessons as a coach for this young age group was when I called out to one of my team to tackle an opposition player and take the ball off him. He turned around to me and gave me the strangest look. It implied "Why would I want to take the ball of him – he seems to be having a great time". Some of the younger players have come from a world where everyone shares and it is wrong to take something off someone else. The message here is not to expect players to understand the concept of competition immediately.

Positions



Modified hockey is played with **8 players** per team and should be played at a higher level than minkey. Coaches who simply throw eight players on the field and say "go for it" (don't laugh-it's happened on more than one occasion) can only expect a game of hockey similar to minkey but on a bigger field. This is a very important level as it serves as a transition stage for players before they have to play full field hockey.

Positions



## Arm-bands

Armbands are compulsory. They are not an optional extra. The system will only work if every team uses them. The armband must be visible, either on the wrist or over the sleeve of the shirt.

Forwards wear blue armbands. Backs wear red armbands. In modified, halves wear yellow armbands. Only forwards (or players wearing blue arm-bands) can score goals. At half time all players should change the colour of their armbands. This gives all players an opportunity to play all positions.

Please be flexible with the armbands. If a team is struggling to score a goal and one of their backs (wearing a red arm-band) happens to score, for the purpose of everyone having a good time, please allow the goal.

## Scoring

In minkey, as there is mostly no goal-circles marked on the small fields, it is up to the umpire/coaches discretion. As a general rule, the ball must be hit or pushed within 5 metres from the goal. Any ball hit or pushed outside 5 metres is no goal. In modified hockey the normal goal-circle can be used.

It is great to acknowledge when a team scores a goal. Try to discourage players from counting goals. At this level, it should be about the process not the result. As a coach/umpire, we have the power to make sure every team participating in our minkey/modified competition scores a goal. In fact, we have the power to make sure every game is evenly matched. Lets make sure we keep the fun factor!

## Rules

It would be a ridiculous exercise to overload an under 7 player or under 9 player with all the rules in the rulebook. So the rules are modified.

If the player uses his/her feet or the back of the stick accidentally, play on.

If a player purposefully infringes using this example, a free hit should be given to the other team and the rule should be explained. Obviously in modified hockey we need to be stricter with this rule. It will only become a more advanced level of hockey if we treat it that way.

If the ball goes over the back line, the backs should take the hit from about 5 metres from the back-line in line where it went out

## Umpire/Coach

The role of this person is more of a coach than an umpire. The whistle should not be blown frequently in minkey or modified hockey. As the umpire is also allowed to coach, it is important that rules are explained as the whistle is blown. At least twice throughout each half of the game, the umpire/coach should stop the game and remind the players to spread out and move back to their original positions. Talk to them about positioning (especially in modified). For example, ask where the right back is - tell him/her to move back and explain why. They will learn the language of positions if umpire/coaches constantly use the language.

**3 Safety Rules** should be emphasized at the start of every game especially modified:-

1. Only one person from each team on the ball at once.

This rule encourages players to run create space rather than reduce it.

2. Don't swing at the ball when other players are around you. Keep your stick on the ball and push.

This rule discourages dangerous swinging and encourages keeping their stick on the ball.

3. Always tackle at the oppositions stick side. Never tackle from the non-stick side.

This rule helps players to tackle safely without obstructing.

### Coaching hints

All players at this level (or any level for that matter) want to have fun and improve their skills. We need to create the environment for this to happen. Always use praise when a player performs a skill well and use encouraging language when a player makes a mistake. Encourage teammates to do the same.

At training, make the drill sessions fun and short (a sample coaching session is available at the TBHA clubhouse). Always finish with a game and use armbands in this game.

At the game, get players into the habit of turning up early to warm-up. Go through positioning before they take the field. It is very tempting to throw all your players on the field at once. Only play with the set amount – the field is chaotic enough and we are trying to teach players positions.

### Conclusion

It is important we don't make minkey and modified hockey an "anything goes" exercise. Apart from the safety issue, children learning require some structure. The above explanation of rules should help you provide that structure.

For further assistance with any of the above, ring me on 0413 622950.