

## **MINI-TROOPERS**

The Mini-trooper Program is the next “level” up from our Hockey School program. Typically, younger players will start off in the Hockey School program and progress to Mini-troopers before moving on to the Recreational Hockey League or to the Representative or Select hockey programs. Participants in the Mini-trooper program will generally have better skating and puck handling skills than the players participating in the Hockey School program. The Mini-trooper Program is restricted to players who are 5 or 6 years of age.

At the beginning of the hockey season, players will be assigned to temporary teams for the first three or four weeks. During this period, players will be put through a number of drills, led by a combination of instructors and potential coaches. This will allow the league to assess the skill level of players in an effort to balance the teams so that no team becomes the dominant team. At the end of this three or four week period, teams will be selected and will remain the same for the remainder of the season. At this time, players will be given their team sweater and socks. Also, qualified players from Hockey School, as they progress during the season, may be moved to Mini-troopers.

Once the teams have been established, each team will play games against other Mini-trooper teams on a rotating basis at different times each Saturday morning. Each session will run for about 50 minutes. Of this time, the first 14 minutes will be used as a ½ ice practice session where coaches for each team will run their drills. This allows the coaches to work on specific aspects of the game with their players. After this practice session is complete, a 36 minute game will be played between the two teams. Each team will have two coaches remain on the ice to assist their players with face-off locations, positional play and provide encouragement throughout the game. Each line will be on the ice for three minutes of running time and on the 3 minute buzzer, the lines will be changed.

This program is designed to introduce children to the game environment with support from coaches on the ice directing the players. All players will be given the opportunity to play the goalie position at least once. The goalie equipment is provided for each game.