



2024-2025 Minor Hockey Season U9 Report

Overall the U9 division had a great season, start to finish!

- We held **evaluations** early to start the season as soon as possible and maximize player ice time. We added to the NSST evaluation criteria by incorporating battle drill evaluations to further ensure groupings were appropriate.
- We had strong **volunteers** at all levels and teams formed easily.
- We changed the **division configuration** from 2 advancing teams and 1 intermediate to 1 advancing and 2 intermediate. This proved to be the correct decision as all teams reported being competitive and similarly skilled to other same level teams in our league and at tournaments.
- We had very **full teams**, with 20 players per team (100 registration total), this is absolutely maximum and smaller teams should be considered if division registration is >100 players.
- All teams reported to have a great year, with tournament attendance, exhibition games, off-ice training, team building and lots of Chebucto branded swag.
- Volunteer engagement, especially head coaches and managers, is key to success at this level. Coaches knowing they have support from our Technical Director and managers knowing they have support from the VP and other board members gives them peace of mind and confidence to step up and take on roles.
- Paul Hunt, our **Technical Director**, supported all teams with practice plans and attended games to observe and help as needed, this took a lot of pressure off coaches and made them feel supported and empowered.
- The Technical Director role is new this season and very well received and appreciated within the U9 division.
- One thing we did notice in U9 this season is that player skill is advancing faster than ever before, and the game is very rough, especially at the advancing and intermediate levels. This observation has not been solely Chebucto, other organisations have brought it up as well. HNS should consider a change in this regard, and it was raised to them for consideration.

In conclusion, the Chebucto U9 division had a successful 2024-2025 hockey season: great player development, fun, friendships and heightened love for the sport were achieved at all levels.

Stacy Forgeron, VP U9