SPORTTIME™

SUPERSTAR

ICE HOCKEY

Designed by Ed Ringler

MINDSCAPE

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WHAT YOU NEED
LOADING INSTRUCTIONS
HOW TO SAVE A TEAM
HOW TO MAKE MENU SELECTIONS
HOW TO CONTROL YOUR CENTER AND GOALIE
SOME TIPS AND HINTS

Dear SHL Franchise Applicant,

The SportTime Hockey League is honored that you are interested in becoming a new member of our successful family. As you know, for the past nine years, the 16 hockey teams of the SHL have cross-checked, slap-shot, and skated with now-legendary ferocity in quest of the most prestigious award in professional hockey—the SportTime Cup. Now, for the first time in the league's history, the owners of the 16 original teams have agreed to expand. Four new franchises have been designated, with one new team in each of the four existing divisions.

The SportTime Hockey League is delighted to inform you that your application for the new SHL franchise in the West Conference, Division 2 has been approved by the League Office.

While congratulations are in order, we also must emphasize that the task of procuring talent for your new franchise will be difficult, at best. The original 16 teams have a nine-year head start in putting together their organizations. Undoubtedly, it will take you several years before all of the pieces fall together. However, we're confident that with your superior abilities as an owner/general manager, head coach, and player, your new organization will flourish.

Congratulations,

Office of the Commissioner

OVERVIEW

SuperStar Ice Hockey is an extraordinary sports simulation. Within this program, you'll find a superb, on-ice hockey simulator with sharp graphics and crunchingly realistic play that put you into the middle of the action. You'll also find plenty of options to tailor the game to your liking, such as the ability to play either two-on-two, four-on-four, or even regulation six-on-six. Compete in regular league play, division championships, conference championships and, ultimately, the coveted SportTime Cup series.

But SuperStar Ice Hockey doesn't stop on the ice. You also have the opportunity to act as your team's owner/general manager and head coach. You make the trades, recruit players from the minors, conduct training camps, make line changes, and call strategies. Play against another player or a computer-controlled team, or have the computer play against itself. SuperStar Ice Hockey puts you in complete control of the sport of hockey.

Your Options as a Player

Put on the pads, lace up the skates, and let's play hockey! Choose to be either the center or goalie of your team from the game setup menu that appears after you select **PLAY NEXT GAME** from the Main Menu. Choose the computer as your opponent, play against a friend, or enlist a friend to play with you against the computer. (You also can elect to have the computer play against itself.) Decide whether to play two-on-two, four-on-four, or regulation six-on-six.

As your team's center, lift shots into the air, slide shots along the ice, pass, check, block shots, and fake shots or passes while your computer-controlled teammates try to work the puck to you. When you play as the goalie, make glove saves, stick saves, and slide across the front of the goal while your computer-controlled teammates try to keep the puck away from the crease and mount an offensive charge.

Read the section entitled "HOW TO CONTROL YOUR CENTER AND GOALIE" on the reference card for details about player control and techniques.

Your Options as an Owner/ General Manager

As owner and general manager of a new franchise, you are responsible for improving your club to make it more competitive with established league members. Should you go with a team of established but aging veterans, or replace the older players and start to rebuild? If you don't acquire better players and develop the players you have, you stand very little chance of winning the SportTime Cup. Your team probably will slump and gain a reputation as the league's "doormat." Three methods to improve your team are available to you. You can trade players, recruit (create) new players, and send your team to special training camps that improve their overall skills.

You also can name your team, change the division in which it plays, set the length of the season, and decide how many games to play in division, conference, and SportTime Cup playoffs.

Select **IMPROVE TEAM** from the Main Menu to reach menu options for player trades, recruiting, and training camp. See the section entitled "IMPROVING A TEAM THROUGH TRAINING CAMPS, RECRUITMENT, AND TRADES" for details. To name

your team, choose your division, and set season and playoff lengths, select **RESET THE LEAGUE** from the Main Menu. See "Reset the League" in "THE MAIN MENU" section of the manual for more information.

Your Options as a Coach

As head coach, you can establish your offensive and defensive lines, decide when to change lines during the course of the game, and select the best offensive and defensive strategies to use against your opponent. Or, at your option, the computer can handle line changes and strategy selection for you.

Select **SET UP NEW LINES** from the Main Menu before a game to make lineup changes in your offensive and defensive lines. During a game, you can send in fresh lines and change strategies from the split "Coaching" screen that appears during any break in the action. See "Set Up New Lines" in the section entitled "THE MAIN MENU" for details. Also, see the section entitled "COACHING: LINE SUBSTITUTION AND STRATEGY SELECTION." To get the big picture from start to finish, begin by reading the next section.

THE MAIN MENU

MAIN MENU (After an 11-game season)

The Main Menu offers several choices, all of which are discussed individually below. You also can save a team from the Main Menu. See the enclosed reference card for specifics about saving a team and about how to make selections from the Main Menu, as well as the other menus in the game, if you need help.

The current league standings, which show the won, loss, and tie records for every team in each of the four divisions, also appear on the Main Menu screen. Your expansion franchise, the Mindscape team, is in the West Conference, Division 2. However, you can enter your own team name and change to a different division when you choose **RESET THE LEAGUE** from the Main Menu.

View League History

Select this option to view the cumulative won-loss-tie records of each team since your franchise entered the league. The SHL statisticians display overall team records for up to nine seasons at a time. In addition, the total number of seasons played since your enfranchisement is displayed.

To exit **VIEW LEAGUE HISTORY** and return to the Main Menu, follow the on-screen instructions.

View a Team History

If you choose **VIEW A TEAM HISTORY**, you'll see a variety of statistics tabulated by season for an individual team. The statistics for each team are tracked for up to nine years at a time. The statistical categories tracked by SHL statisticians include won-loss-tie records; point totals (two points for each win, one point for each tie); goals for and against; standing in the division; conference and SportTime Cup playoffs won (indicated by a "+"); and overall rating relative to all of the other teams in the league. In addition, the cumulative total for each statistical category is displayed, with the exception of the division standings and league rating, which are averaged for you rather than totaled.

You can change the display to a different team's history by following the instructions on the enclosed reference card. To exit **VIEW A TEAM HISTORY** and return to the Main Menu, follow the on-screen instructions.

Improve Team

Select **IMPROVE TEAM** if you want to send your team to training camp, recruit players from the minor leagues, or trade players. The section of the manual entitled "IMPROVING A TEAM THROUGH TRAINING CAMPS, RECRUITMENT, AND TRADES" describes the specific steps you need to take to train, recruit or trade after selecting **IMPROVE TEAM** from the Main Menu.

Select **RETURN** from the **IMPROVE TEAM** sub-menu to return to the Main Menu.

Reset the League

When you select **RESET THE LEAGUE**, you'll be given a chance to give your team a new name, change the division that your team competes in, decide how many games constitute a season, and choose how many games to play in division, conference, and SportTime Cup playoffs. Be forewarned, however, that whenever you select **RESET THE LEAGUE**, all team records, accumulated player skills, and team rosters are reset to their default settings (the way they were when you first loaded the program). After you select **RESET LEAGUE** from the Main Menu, you will be given a warning and a chance to change your mind before the accumulated records are reset.

Select **CANCEL** to return to the Main Menu from the warning screen without resetting the league. To reset the league, select **OK** on the warning screen. Then, type in the name of your team (up to 10 characters) and press the Return (Enter) key. Next, select the division in which you want your team to compete. (See the reference card if you need help with the mechanics of making selections.) Now, set the number of games to be played in a season to either four, seven, or eleven. Then, set the length of the division, conference, and SportTime Cup playoffs to best of one, best of three, or best of five. A display appears that reviews your choices. Select **OK** to return to the Main Menu if your choices are satisfactory. To make changes in any of your choices, select **CANCEL** to start the process over.

Set Up New Lines

In hockey, an offensive (forward) line consists of a left wing, a center, and a right wing. A defensive line consists of left and right defensemen. During play, it's necessary for you (or the computer, if you choose) to substitute new offensive and defensive lines frequently to replace tiring lines or to put lines on the ice that are best suited to handle a given situation (such as penalty killing, for example). The **SET UP NEW LINES** option allows you to choose the players who will make up each of your three offensive lines and three defensive lines.

When you select **SET UP NEW LINES**, you'll see the default lineup of your team and the offensive (under the heading "OF"), defensive (under the heading "DE") and overall (under the heading "TP" for total points) skill ratings for each player as well as the combined ratings for each line. The higher the rating, the better the player or line.

To get the most out of the talent on your team, select **SET UP NEW LINES** before a game to change your lineup and to see your opponent's lineup. Look at the other team's strengths and weaknesses, then rearrange your lineup to create the best matchups. Creation of good matchups can give you a strategic edge and sometimes can help you make up for a lack of talent.

To see another team's lineup, select **VIEW OTHER TEAMS** and follow the instructions on the reference card. To change your own lineup, first select **CHANGE LINEUPS** at the bottom of the screen. In response to the on-screen prompts, select the first player you wish to change, and then choose the player you wish to place into the first player's lineup spot. As soon as you choose the second player, the two players will swap lineup positions, and the new skill ratings for the affected lines will be displayed. You can change lineups as many times as you want, but keep in mind that you can only switch players of like position. Wings can change lineup spots only with other wings, centers can change only with other centers, and defensemen can change only with other defensemen. Also, keep in mind that you can't change lineups after a game starts (you can send one entire line in to replace another line, but you can't change the individual makeup of the lines). Select **RETURN** at the bottom of the screen when you are ready to go back to the Main Menu.

Play Next Game

When you choose **PLAY NEXT GAME**, the game setup menu appears. From the game setup menu, you can establish some rules and conditions under which the game will be played. Each choice is described below. (See the reference card for instructions about how to make menu selections.) Note that when you play a LEAGUE GAME, several of the choices listed below are set automatically and can't be altered, including six men on the ice for each team, computer control of the opposing team's center, goalie, and coach, and offside rule "ON." In a PRACTICE game, all choices are available to you.

MINUTES PER PERIOD: The length of each period can be set from 5 minutes to 20 minutes (regulation).

MEN ON ICE PER TEAM: Choose to play with two players (center and goalie), four players (center, two wings and goalie), or six players (regulation) on the ice at a time for each team.

YOUR/OPPONENT TEAM COLOR: Several uniform colors for each team are available to you. The centers of each team appear in a lighter shade of the color that you select so that you can tell them apart easily from the other position players.

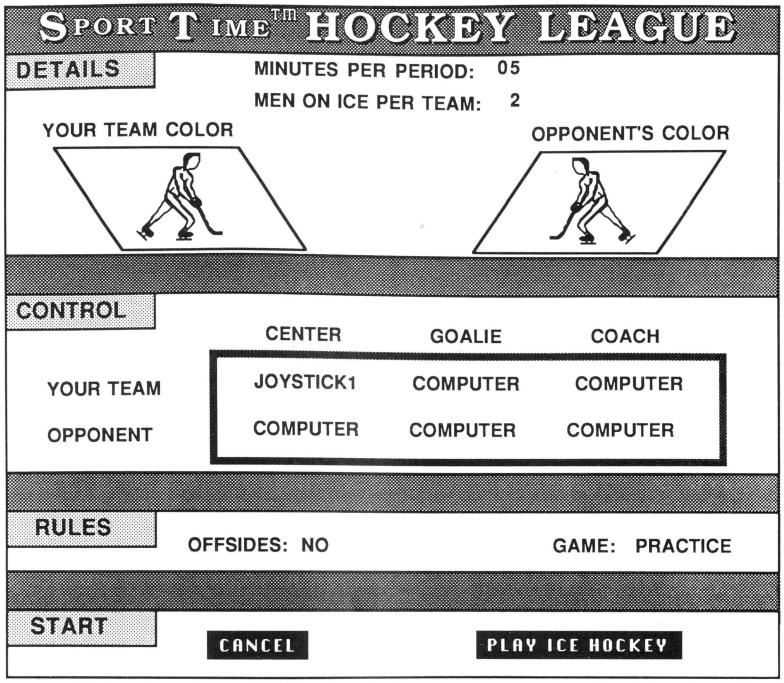
YOUR/OPPONENT TEAM CONTROL: You can play a one-player game against a computer-controlled opponent, a two-player game against a friend, a two-player game in which you and a friend play against the computer, or have the computer control both teams. Decide whether player one, player two or the computer controls each team's center and goalie or acts as each team's coach. Each player can choose to play as either the center or the goalie (but not both center and goalie) for their respective teams. If you and a friend are playing against the computer, one of you controls the center, the other the goalie. Otherwise, the computer controls your team's goalie when you choose to play center and vice versa. If you select the computer to be your coach, you will have no input about line changes and offensive or defensive strategies. To have the computer control an entire team, make sure that **COMPUTER** is selected as the team's **CENTER**, **GOALIE** and **COACH**.

OFFSIDE: Choose **YES** if you want the offside rule in effect or **NO** if you don't. For all league games, however, the offside rule will be in effect. Offside occurs when a player who does not have the puck crosses the blue line (across the team's offensive end of the ice) ahead of the teammate who controls the puck. When offside is whistled by the referee, play is halted for a faceoff.

GAME: Select **PRACTICE** if you want to familiarize yourself with the game without the game results or statistics counted toward your team's league standing. (You should also select PRACTICE if you want to play against a friend rather than the computer.) In practice games, both teams are made up of identical players. Players are assigned the total skill rating of 90. To play a regular league game in which game results and statistics are counted toward your team's league standing, select **LEAGUE**.

CANCEL: To return to the Main Menu from the game setup menu, select **CANCEL**.

PLAY ICE HOCKEY: When you have made all of your choices from the game setup menu and have double-checked to make sure everything is the way you want it, select **PLAY ICE HOCKEY** to begin the game.



GAME SETUP SCREEN

IMPROVING A TEAM THROUGH TRAINING CAMPS, RECRUITMENT, AND TRADES

The SHL administrators and the owners of the existing franchises recognize the need to maintain a competitive league. Toward this end, the League Office has worked out a system of trading points used by all franchises to improve their teams. Trading points are of great value to you, because every time you send your team to training camp, recruit a player, or attempt to trade for a player, it costs you trading points.

Initially, new franchises are allotted 250 trading points. At the end of a season, additional trading points are awarded to each team on a proportional basis according to the team's overall rating for that season. (A team's overall rating after a season can be seen when you select **VIEW A TEAM HISTORY** from the Main Menu.) The better a team's rating at season's end, the fewer trading points the team receives. For example, the team with the poorest rating receives 1000 trading points while the winner of the SportTime Cup receives 50 trading points.

To see how many trading points your team has, select **IMPROVE TEAM** from the Main Menu. Then, select **TRY PLAYER TRADE** from the **IMPROVE TEAM** sub menu. Now, select **TRY TRADE** from the Player Trade screen. Your trading point total appears at the bottom of the screen. At this point, be sure to select **CANCEL**, unless you want to go ahead with a trade offer (which will cost you 150 trading points).

Use your trading points wisely. You'll need to take a close look at your own players' skills to decide where you need the most help before making player transactions that cost you precious trading points. A good starting point for the evaluation of players is the Player Trade screen that appears when you select **TRY PLAYER TRADE** from the **IMPROVE TEAM** sub menu. Every player has offensive and defensive skill ratings between 0 and 49 and a total point rating that combines the offensive and defensive ratings. The ratings appear next to the player's name on the Player Trade screen under the headings "OF," "DE," and "T." The higher the rating, the greater the player's skill. The ratings incorporate several factors, such as a player's ability to skate, control the puck, shoot, pass, check, and think quickly. Offensive ratings most noticeably affect a player's ability to accelerate to top speed and shoot accurately. Defensive ratings affect the player's ability to check and change direction. The higher a player's defensive rating, the shorter period of time the player will stay down on the ice (out of play) after being checked. When a player reverses direction, a high defensive rating means that the player will skid less, stop faster, and start faster in the new direction. All player ratings improve each season as players develop through training camps. However, a player's effectiveness declines as he nears the end of his career even if his skill ratings are high.

Keep a player's age in mind when you assess your team. During a game, older players fatigue much faster and recuperate more slowly than their younger teammates. To display a player's age on the Player Trade screen, select **VIEW A TEAM** and follow the instructions on the reference card. The number of years a player has competed in the

league is considered to be his "age." So, for example, a nine-year SHL veteran has a "9" in the "A" column next to his name on the Player Trade screen, whereas a rookie has a "0." Nine years is the maximum age tracked in SHL hockey. As general manager, you must make the tough decisions to trade an older player, or retire him from your roster.

Now that you have an awareness of trading points and player skill ratings, check out the three methods to improve your team.

General Improvement: Sending a Team to Training Camp

Through general improvement, you can improve your entire team by sending them to training camp. At training camp, the offensive and defensive skills of each player on your roster will improve. The degree to which each player improves depends on how much you, as owner of the team, spend on the quality and duration of the camp. You can send your players to training camp only once each season, and you can spend a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 1000 trading points for each camp. (To leave the screen without having to go through training camp, enter "0" trading points.) Remember, as a new franchise owner you have only 250 trading points to work with, and your other team improvement options, trades and player recruiting, don't come cheaply. Consider all of your options before you spend.

There are pros and cons to using general improvement. On the positive side, all players improve somewhat at training camp, even if you do not see an immediate improvement in their skill ratings. Also, general improvement involves no risk. All trading points allocated for improvement are guaranteed to produce good results. On the negative side, it will take many seasons and lots of trading points to build up your weakest players. Trading may get you better players right away. Also, only a slight priority is given at training camp to improving your weakest players. For the most part, strong and weak players improve equally at camp.

When you select **GENERAL IMPROVEMENT** from the Main Menu, you'll be asked how many trading points that you want to allocate to your team's improvement. Type the number of trading points that you want to spend (1-1000) and press the Return (or Enter) key. The message "TRAINING CAMP COMPLETE" appears on the screen when the team breaks camp. Follow the instructions on the reference card to return to the IMPROVE TEAM sub menu when training camp is over.

Recruit a Player: Getting Help from the Minors

You can call up as many young players from the minor leagues as you can afford or fit on your roster. Minor leaguers cost you trading points and, in addition, come at the expense of players who are currently on your roster. All players brought up from the minors are rookies (age "0"). A minor league player costs four times his total skill rating in trading points. Because of his inexperience, a minor leaguer's maximum skill rating is 24. Perhaps the hardest decision to make when bringing up a minor leaguer is whose place he will take on the roster. Rosters have a fixed number of players, so when a new one comes, an old one must go. Sometimes, youth must be served, and as general manager you have to push an aging veteran or a player who hasn't shown much development off the roster to make room. It's a tough business.

When you select **RECRUIT A PLAYER** from the Main Menu, your team's current roster appears along with a prompt to choose the player who will be removed from the roster to make room for the new player. As you move the highlighter from one player to the next, the highlighted player's position changes to the player's age to help you decide who to cut. Select the player to release, then type in the

name that you want to give the new player (up to 8 characters) and press Return (or Enter). Next, follow the instructions on the reference card to adjust the offensive and defensive skill bars that set the player's skill ratings. Remember that the combined offensive and defensive skill points that you assign to the new player can't exceed 24, and that you must pay four times the player's total skill rating in trading points. After you set the skill points, select **EXIT**. Your roster reappears on the screen with the new player in the old player's spot along with the prompts OK and CANCEL. Select **OK** to return to the IMPROVE TEAM sub menu if you're sure about the move. The cost of your new player will be deducted automatically from your trading point total. However, if you have second thoughts and want to get the old player back, select **CANCEL**. The IMPROVE TEAM sub menu will reappear and your original player will be restored automatically to the roster without any cost to you.

Try Player Trade: Wheeling and Dealing With Other Teams

Trading is a great way to improve your team in a hurry, but it's quite costly and comes with no guarantees. The SHL administration wants to ensure that the league maintains competitive balance among its members to keep fans interested. As a result, the SHL arbitrates all trade offers. You can't make a trade without league approval. In addition, the League Office charges an arbitration fee of 150 trading points every time you make a trade offer to another team. The fee is non-refundable, even if the trade is denied by the league.

To initiate a trade, select **TRY PLAYER TRADE** from the **IMPROVE TEAM** sub menu. The Player Trade screen appears, which gives you the options to **TRY TRADE**, **VIEW TEAMS** or **RETURN**. The Player Trade screen shows your team roster on the left half of the screen and the roster of your next opponent on the right half of the screen. In addition, the offensive, defensive, and total skill ratings appear next to each player's name, along with the player's position. The cumulative offensive, defensive, and total skill ratings for each team are shown under the last player's name on each roster. The cumulative numbers give you a good idea of how well your team stacks up with the rest of the league.

Decide who to trade from your roster and whom you want in return. Keep in mind that you can trade only players of like position (wings for wings, centers for centers, defensemen for defensemen, and goalies for goalies). You can view the rosters of all of the other teams in the league to find a player who interests you. To do so, select **VIEW TEAMS** from the Player Trade screen and follow the directions on the reference card to change the display from one team to another. Also, when you select **VIEW TEAMS**, player's ages are displayed in place of their positions.

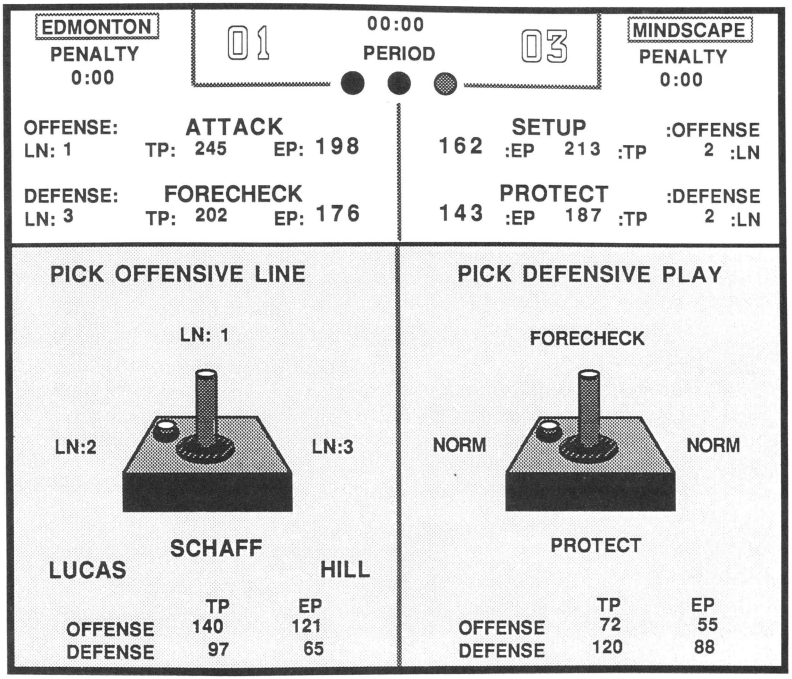
When you are ready to trade, make sure that the roster of the team that you want to trade with appears on the right side of your screen. Select **TRY TRADE** from the Player Trade screen. Your total number of trading points appears, along with **OK** and **CANCEL** prompts. Select **CANCEL** if you change your mind about the trade and don't want to spend the 150 trading points. To proceed with the trade offer, select **OK**. The League Office will deduct 150 trading points automatically to cover its arbitration costs when you select **OK**. Now, select the player from your roster that you wish to trade. Remember that when you move the highlighter from one player to another, the highlighted player's age appears where his position normally does. Next, select the player that you want from the other team. Now, type in the number of additional trading points that you wish to add as an enticement and press Return (or Enter). You can enter "0" if you don't think additional trading points are necessary to make the trade more acceptable to the league

and to the other team. However, the more you offer, the more likely it is that the trade will go through. The trick is to offer enough without offering too much.

The SHL administration will consider your offer. The administration takes into account the age and skill ratings of the two players, and any extra trading points that you have offered. All trades are possible. The SHL monitors your offer carefully, and "serious" offers have a better chance to go through. Remember, the 150 trading points are deducted whether the trade is approved or not. If the trade is allowed, a message to that effect appears on the screen and the two players switch teams. Any trading points included in your offer will be deducted from your total and given to the other team, which will use the points for general improvement (training camp). If the trade is not allowed, an on-screen message informs you that the offer has been rejected. After a trade attempt, follow the instructions on the reference card to continue the program.

Select **RETURN** from the Player Trade screen when you're ready to go back to the **IMPROVE TEAM** sub menu.

COACHING:
LINE SUBSTITUTION AND STRATEGY SELECTION



COACHING SCREEN

To put yourself in the coach's seat, make sure before the game starts that you make the appropriate COACH CONTROL selection from the game setup menu (see "Play Next Game" in "THE MAIN MENU" section for details). Before a game starts and whenever there is a break in the action during a game, you are given the opportunity to take over the coaching reins of your team, unless you have selected the computer to act as your team's coach (in which case the computer handles line substitution and strategy selection for you). Play stops when a goal is scored, a penalty occurs, the puck leaves the rink, an offside is whistled, the goalie holds the puck, a timeout is taken, or the period ends. When play stops, the referee blows his whistle and comes to you, the coach, to tell you why. Then, the Coaching screen appears.

From the Coaching screen, you can substitute offensive (forward) and defensive lines to replace tiring lines or to put in your best lines for a given situation (such as penalty killing). In addition, you can select your offensive and defensive strategies.

When the Coaching screen appears, first select the offensive (forward) line (1, 2, or 3) that you want on the ice. As you cycle through the choices, the players who make up the highlighted line appear on the screen along with the line's offensive and defensive skill ratings and "effective power" or "EP" ratings. After you select the forward line, you need to select a strategy for your offense (except in a two-on-two game). The strategy options are discussed under "Strategy Selection" in this section. Next, select your defensive line (six-on-six game only), and then your defensive strategy. At this point, the game will resume. **Note:** When playing four-on-four or two-on-two, you don't select a defensive line since no defensemen are used. Also, in a two-on-two game, you don't select an offensive strategy, since your center is the only offensive player on the ice for your team.

Line Substitution

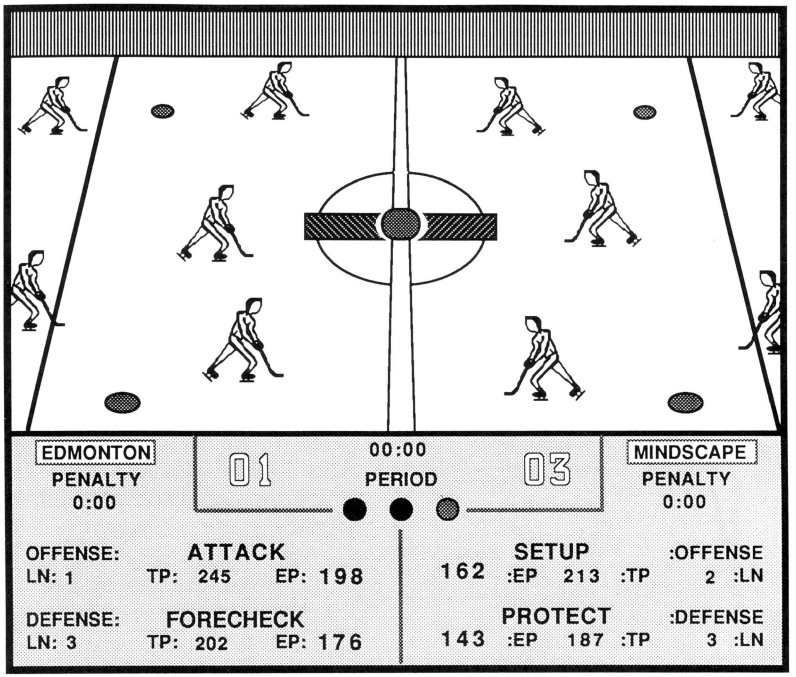
As head coach, you should constantly monitor your team's fatigue on the game screen. Each line on the ice is made up of individuals of varying abilities and ages. The longer a line stays on the ice, the more leg tired and demoralized the players are likely to get (especially older players). You can tell how tired your line gets by checking the "EP" (Effective Power) rating on your team's side of the bottom half of the game screen. The lower half of the game screen also tells you which offensive and defensive line numbers ("LN") that each team has on the ice and the total skill rating ("TP") of both the offensive and defensive lines. The first time a line hits the ice, its "EP" rating equals its "TP" rating. But as the line tires, the "EP" rating drops. The longer a line rests on the bench after coming out of a game, the more the line recuperates. In addition, lines recuperate between periods. They also get an extra burst of energy after scoring a goal. Check the other team's "EP" rating as well to see if either team has a big advantage. Your best bet is to keep fresh lines on the ice as much as possible.

Strategy Selection

Choose among three offensive strategies:

ATTACK: All teammates tend to take shots when they can. Makes a good choice when your team is behind or if you prefer an aggressive offense. Wings will get off a lot of shots from the point and up close, and also will shoot from center ice. Good rebound possibilities are created for your center. Also, this offense can take some offensive responsibilities away from a weak center. A good strategy to get off many shots in a short span of time.

NORMAL: Teammates exhibit characteristics of both ATTACK and SETUP. Since the wings can pass or shoot, the opponent is kept off-balance.



GAME SCREEN

SETUP: All teammates try to feed passes to your center. This offense slows the pace of the game and allows your center to take more control of the offense. Makes a good choice when you have a highly talented center. Also, an offense that can be used to protect a lead and kill the clock.

You also have your choice among three defensive strategies:

FORECHECK: Aggressive man-to-man coverage. Makes a good choice if your team falls behind. Your teammates take more risks in pursuit of the puck. They "shadow" the men they cover. Also, more checking and bumping take place. The drawback to this aggressive defense is that the overplay of your players can result in offensive breakaways by the opposition.

NORMAL: Teammates exhibit characteristics of both FORECHECK and PROTECT. This defense helps to keep the opponent guessing.

PROTECT: Teammates play conservatively and try to protect the goalie. Makes a good choice if you have a lead and want to kill the clock. Also, this strategy is advisable when your team has been penalized and finds itself a man short. Your players will stay back and avoid over-committing themselves on defense.

ABOUT THE LEAGUE SEASON AND THE PLAYOFFS

The league schedule that your team plays is controlled by the computer and is determined by the number of games you select to play in a single season. (See "Reset the League" in "THE MAIN MENU" section for information about how to set the length of the season.) If you select a four-game season, your team plays each of the four other teams in your division once. In a seven-game season, you play each team in your division once, and you also play the team in each of the other three divisions whose current place in the division standings corresponds to your team's standing. If you select an eleven-game season, you play each team in your division twice, along with the team in each of the other three divisions whose division standing corresponds to your own.

You'll notice that some teams have already played a game when you first see the Main Menu and anytime you start a new season. Because there are an odd number of teams (five) in each division and the league schedule begins with all teams playing opponents from their own division, it's impossible for every team in a division to play another team in the same division during one "round" of games. As a result, your team sits out the first round and, if you have chosen an 11-game season, the eighth round as well. Don't worry, all teams play the same total number of games. You're not missing anything.

After a full season of play, the top two teams from each division continue their quest for the SportTime Cup in the post-season playoffs. (See "Reset the League" in "THE MAIN MENU" section for details about how to set the length of each playoff series before your franchise begins to play.) If your team makes it to the playoffs, a "Playoff Tree" appears after your last regular season game and again after each playoff game to show you the playoff results of all the playoff teams to that point. In addition, the **PLAY NEXT GAME** option on the Main Menu changes to **PLAY PLAYOFFS. Note:** There are no ties in the playoffs. If a game is tied at the end of regulation play, "sudden death" overtime periods begin and the first team to score wins the game.

If you don't make it to the playoffs or lose a playoff series, the Playoff Tree displays the final playoff results and the winner of the SportTime Cup. Follow the instructions on the reference card to start a new season.

If you win the SportTime Cup, all records of your victory and season of play are recorded. Your team returns intact for the next season. You may have the beginnings of a hockey dynasty in the making. But it will be a rough road ahead. Has your team already peaked? Did you build your team with the intent of just one big winning season or do you really think you can win the Cup in back-to-back years? You won't get many trading points to help you in the coming season. And, of course your players are constantly aging! Good luck!

ABOUT YOUR PLAYERS

You establish control of the center and goalie from the game setup screen. Follow the instructions given under the heading "YOUR/OPPONENT TEAM CONTROL" in the "Play Next Game" section. Step-by-step instructions that tell you how to control your center or goalie are given on the reference card, but there are a few things you should be aware of first that have to do with the responsiveness of your players.

The offensive and defensive skill ratings, age, and, in the case of centers, wings, and defensemen, effective power ("EP") rating (found on the game and Coaching screen) each affect your player's effectiveness on the ice. For example, a highly rated, young center who isn't tired accelerates, stops, and changes direction much more quickly and shoots more accurately than a lowly rated, older center who has been on the ice for too long a period. When you play center, you may notice that your player is extremely sluggish and simply can't keep up with the action. This player is either tired, not very skilled, or both. The importance of building up your team, establishing your lineup, and line substitution during a league game is never more plainly demonstrated than when your player moves at a snail's pace up and down the ice.

One final note about ratings that hasn't been discussed elsewhere. A player's defensive ratings affect not only his ability to recover after he has been checked to the ice by an opponent, but also his ability to block shots that have been lifted off the ice by the opponent. The higher his defensive rating, the higher a player can go to stop a lift shot. In addition, you'll find that the goalie embodies the team's morale and emotional tone. While a goalie has his own skill ratings, his performance also reflects the overall skill of the team. When surrounded by incompetence, the skills of a good goalie will deteriorate along with his spirit.

Note: When one of your players reaches "age" 9, he remains on your roster in subsequent seasons and his age continues to be given as "9." You must replace the player, through a trade or recruitment of a rookie, in order to drop the veteran from your roster. By contrast, opposing team's 9-year veterans are "retired" automatically after their ninth season.

GAME OPTIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

The following paragraphs offer information about pausing a game, taking timeouts during a game, penalties that may be assessed during a game (including delay of the game), forfeiture of games, as well as other information that may answer some questions that arise.

PAUSE GAME: See the reference card for the active key that pauses the game. When you pause the game, a screen appears that offers you the opportunity either to take a timeout or resume the game. You may not be eligible to call a timeout (see the next paragraph entitled "TIMEOUTS" for details). To resume the game without a timeout, follow the on-screen instructions. You'll rejoin the action on the ice where you left it without going to the Coaching screen.

TIMEOUTS: Each team is allowed a fixed number of timeouts for each period of play based on the length that has been set for the periods. A team is allotted one timeout each period for periods of 5-9 minutes duration, two timeouts each period for periods of 10-14 minutes duration, and three timeouts each period for periods of 15-20 minutes duration. In addition, the team that wants to call a timeout must be in possession of the puck and the player in control of the puck must be in center ice (between the two blue lines). To call a timeout, first press the pause key (see the reference card) to pause the game. On the pause screen, if the number that indicates the total timeouts left for a team flashes, then that team is eligible to take a timeout. To proceed with the timeout when a team is eligible, follow the on-screen instructions. You'll be given an opportunity to make changes from the Coaching screen during a timeout.

PENALTIES: Penalties for infractions such as cross-checking; slashing, and roughing, are assessed during a game. When a player is penalized he must leave the ice for the duration of the penalty, leaving his team one man short. The length of the penalty is proportional to the length that you set for each period. For example, in regulation periods of 20 minutes duration, a penalty lasts for two minutes. In a ten-minute period, a penalty lasts one minute. In a five-minute period, a penalty lasts for 30 seconds, and so on. When you play center and are whistled for a penalty, your center leaves the ice for the length of the penalty and you won't resume joystick control until he reappears at center ice. A penalty clock for each team appears on the game screen. When the penalty clock counts down to "0:00", the player returns to the ice.

DELAY OF GAME: When a team controls the puck for 30 seconds without bringing the puck out of their defensive end of the rink, a delay of game penalty is assessed. The offending team's center goes to the penalty box for the infraction.

FORFEITURE: If you abort the program during a league game, you forfeit the game and it counts as a loss for your team in the league standings. Your opponent is credited with a victory. In addition, you'll lose trading points for each game that you forfeit from the total trading points that your team receives at the end of the season in progress. In other words, you can't deliberately forfeit game after game just to build up trading points. There is no way to escape a game once it has started short

of turning off your computer, so be careful, especially before a league contest, to double-check your choices on the game setup screen before you select **PLAY ICE HOCKEY** to start the game.

OFFSIDE: If you choose to have the offside rule in effect (it's automatically in effect for all league games), a team will be called offside when a player from that team crosses the blue line across the team's offensive end of the ice ahead of the puck. When an offside occurs, the referee stops play and a faceoff occurs (no player penalty is assessed however). The offside won't be whistled until the offending player or one of his teammates touches the puck before it leaves the offensive zone. As a result, you may experience "delayed whistles" where the offside isn't called right away.

DEFAULT CONDITIONS: The game comes with certain default conditions established, all of which you can change if you want. For your information, a list of the default conditions follows; your team name is Mindscape; your team is in the West Conference, Division 2; seasons are four games long; division playoff is best of one; conference playoff is best of three; SportTime Cup series is best of five; a practice game is selected rather than a league game; the offside rule is off or not in effect; you control your team's center and the computer controls all other control selections including coaching; two players appear on the ice for each team; period length is set for five minutes. Remember, you can change any of these options.

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