

Tornados on the ice with limited play

At least they are on the ice.

The TNT Tornados Minor Hockey Association have started house league play with four-on-four style hockey at local arenas.

There won't be any rep teams this year as travel restrictions have made it next to impossible to manage a rep division league due to the logistics and safety measures required to take team to different towns.

House league games were taking place over the weekend in both Alliston and Tottenham, although games were more like practice sessions as a regular schedule has not yet been posted.

Players are excited to be playing the game and teams and coaches are working with the safety protocols in place to ensure that social distancing measures are adhered to.

Teams are required to show up and meet outside of the arena 15 minutes prior to game time. Once they are grouped together they are allowed into the arena to designated areas.

Since players are encouraged to arrive at the arena already dressed in their hockey gear, getting ready to play is just a matter of putting on skates and helmets.

In the spectator area, only one parent per child is allowed to be in the stands. Spectators are also required to maintain social distancing while watching practices or games.

The game itself has also changed, at least for the time being.

There are no face-offs. Instead of the puck drop, once team takes the puck and advances.

There are also limits on contact on the ice.

An off-side call no longer results in a face off. In the event of an offside, the attacking team must return to the red line and the defending team takes control of the puck.

The same situation occurs if one of the goalies freezes the puck and stops the action.

Players are adapting to the new way of playing.

While we have ice locally, there are several municipalities in the province who have not yet put ice into their arenas or have decided not to fire up the ice plant this season.

For TNT players, they are just glad to be out there.

By Brian Lockhart