

Opening Protocols
2021-2022 Season

Manitowoc Breakers

Taskforce Members

Betsy Wernli, MD

Lisa Dimitris, MSN, RN

Jason Sweney, EMT-P/CC

Introduction

As hockey season approaches, our organization is seeking to be not only prepared for a safe, successful season, but transparent with athletes, parents, and fans. This season's protocol has been based on scientific studies with the intent to promote a safe season and athlete development. Multiple scientific studies have been evaluated and the risk profile of each decision considered. If the health status of our organization or community changes, we will reevaluate protocols as necessary, always basing decisions on scientific evidence-based studies. Thus far, local conferences have not published COVID restrictions in athletics, nor has WAHA or USA Hockey.



The following are developed by healthcare volunteers of our organization to ensure a safe season. This healthcare team was put together by the president and head of coaching with board agreement.

Virus Prevention

 2021-2022 Season

Vaccinations

The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is available for individuals 12 years and older. Proof of vaccination will not be required of athletes, coaches, students or volunteers to attend hockey activities.

Discuss the decision to vaccinate with your healthcare professional. Manitowoc hockey will not require vaccination for participants or volunteers.

Face Coverings

Masks are known to protect against viral spread, only if worn with strict compliance, and constructed of a certain material. In children, mask compliance is not followed, especially during a heavy cardiovascular activity. Furthermore, the mask studies showing prevention of spread are in adults. Cloth masks, and shields worn over helmets are not preventing spread and instead only inhibiting athletic performance in kids during cardiovascular studies. Our surrounding sports conferences also have opted to not require masks. Several studies have been evaluated and can be provided for concerned parents. And, if any parent believes that their child will be protected wearing a mask during hockey, we fully support their child masking. Mask shaming will not be tolerated. If someone opts to wear a mask, our association will support this family decision. At this time, Manitowoc Hockey will be mask-optional for both players and spectators. Scientific studies have shown that the only masks sufficient to prevent spread of COVID (delta variant specifically) are N95 masks which are not practical for children. See the appendix for studies supporting decision.

Cleaning

High-touch surfaces such as door handles and bathrooms will be disinfected, regularly. Hand sanitizer will be available. Drinking fountains will be open for water bottle fills only.

COVID-19 Contact

Reporting of Symptoms and Exposures

Email: Breakerscovidteam@yahoo.com to report COVID exposures or symptoms, ask a question, or communicate any COVID-related concerns to the taskforce. Relevant symptoms include:

Persistent cough

New or atypical headaches

Recent, sudden loss of sense of smell or taste

Shortness of breath

Chills

Gastrointestinal symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, or nausea

Difficulty breathing

New unexplained muscle pain

Congestion or runny nose

Fever (greater than 100.4)

Sore throat

Positive Test

Individuals who are positive will be required to do the 10 day quarantine from the first day of symptom onset.

Exposure

If you have been in close contact with a known COVID-19 positive case, including a positive household member, follow one of the following from last contact with positive case:

1. If asymptomatic and choose not to get tested, quarantine for 10 days and return to sports on day 11 of quarantine if still no symptoms, or

2. If fully vaccinated and asymptomatic, no need to quarantine unless choose to do so.
3. If not fully vaccinated, may quarantine for 5 days and test. If negative test and asymptomatic, can return to play.

Contact Tracing

We will not require quarantine of positive teammates unless the athlete or coach is symptomatic. If however, over 10% of the Manitowoc Breakers Hockey Association Athletes test positive for COVID-19, all participating athletes will wear masks until outbreak involves less than 5%.

Practice and Game Protocols

Locker Rooms

Athletes can utilize locker rooms; please do not arrive more than 30 minutes prior to practice start.

Strength and Conditioning

We will be offering strength and conditioning for all interested at the Expo Center on Monday evening from 6-6:45 p.m. We will follow the same protocols as listed herein. There has never been a more important time to be healthy, lose weight, and develop a strong cardiovascular system on and off the ice. Aerobic activity has been shown to ward off obesity, hypertension and lipid disorders. Isolation and lack of activity has been associated not only with obesity, but increase in anxiety disorders in children. On and off-ice cardiovascular activity wards off greater complications of COVID-19 in not only children but adults. Of the listed risk factors for complications of COVID-19, see the below statistics from the CDC.

https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2021/21_0123.htm Among 4,899,447 hospitalized adults in PHD-SR, 540,667 (11.0%) were patients with COVID-19, of whom 94.9% had at least 1 underlying medical condition. Essential hypertension (50.4%), disorders of lipid metabolism (49.4%), and obesity (33.0%) were the most common. The strongest risk factors for death were obesity (adjusted risk ratio [aRR] = 1.30; 95% CI, 1.27–1.33), anxiety and fear-related disorders (aRR = 1.28; 95% CI, 1.25–1.31)

Fans and Visitors

Fans will be allowed without restrictions for games. Because of the large amount of athletes and the practice setup, we ask that parents drop children off for practices and do not stay in the building during a practice unless volunteering for a set DIBS item. Parents of mite level and below can help their child dress for practice and then we ask you leave the building.

Cleaning Volunteer Positions

For each practice and game, there will be 2 open DIBS positions to spray down and wipe doorhandles and common surface areas, one individual cleaning locker rooms and one cleaning lobby and open high touch areas. For game days, there will be 2 open DIBS positions with the same protocols, but the lobby cleaning position will spray down and wipe the fan bleacher areas post game.

Concessions

Concessions will be open and cleaning protocols above will be the responsibility of the concession volunteer for the concession area only.

Appendix: Scientific Studies & Helpful Articles for Parents to Support Protocols

Several studies and articles have been included in the footnotes of these protocols that may be helpful to parents and children. Several mask studies have demonstrated that efficacy of mask is dictated on the user compliance (low in children especially during cardiovascular activity) and mask quality, along with age and immune system of person being masked. See below for helpful studies and links supporting task force protocols.

Walsh NP, Gleeson M, Shephard RJ, et al. Position statement. Part one: Immune function and exercise. *Exerc Immunol Rev.* 2011;17:6–63.[PubMed] [Google Scholar]

Andreato LV, Coimbra DR, Andrade A. Challenges to athletes during the home confinement caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. *Strength Cond J.* 2020;10.1519/SSC.0000000000000563.

Martin SA, Pence BD, Woods JA. Exercise and respiratory tract viral infections. *Exerc Sport Sci Rev.* 2009;37(4):157–164. doi: 10.1097/JES.0b013e3181b7b57b.[PMC free article] [PubMed] [CrossRef] [Google Scholar]

<https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m4586/rr-6>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/zakringelstein/2021/08/18/school-mask-mandates-mean-trauma-for-millions-of-children-especially-those-from-low-income-families/>

<https://www.pbs.org/wnet/amanpour-and-company/video/do-masks-provide-much-protection-we-think-bglhwy/>

https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/26/5/19-0994_article

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/cdc-covid-19-coronavirus-vaccine-side-effects-hospitalization-kids-11626706868>