



# **PLAYER EVALUATION & SELECTION RESOURCE GUIDE**

## **OBJECTIVES OF PLAYER EVALUATION**

- ◆ To provide a fair and impartial assessment of a player's hockey skills during practice and scrimmage sessions.
- ◆ To ensure that players are evaluated in the current year to have a reasonable opportunity of being selected to a team appropriate for their skill level.
- ◆ To form teams to maintain balanced and competitive play where the athletes can develop and participate equitably and have fun playing hockey during the season.
- ◆ To provide transparency, uniformity and consistency in the evaluation process such that player and parent expectations are consistent from year to year as players move through the various levels of the association's programs.

## **PLAYER EVALUATION PROCESS STANDARDS**

As a Minor Hockey Association, your organization needs to be prepared to provide the following information to players, parents, on-ice officials, evaluators and other administrators. The information referenced below should be shared publicly (posted on your website) with your membership/ customers to ensure transparency within the evaluation and team selection process.

### **I. What is the evaluation format, how many sessions will there be, and what types of sessions?**

Every parent and player should be informed prior to evaluations of the number of opportunities that the player will have to be assessed, what type of sessions will be used and how evaluation decisions will be made. It is recommended that each player participates in a minimum of 2-3 evaluation sessions before any decisions are made to remove a player from a given program.

A common misconception with player 'evaluations' is that a player/ family may believe they will receive a comprehensive, written or verbal, evaluation. Ensure your MHA clearly outlines to players and parents whether this is part of your process or not. Time and resources do not generally allow for comprehensive evaluations so don't be afraid to address it prior to the start of the process if you are not offering formal feedback to players.

To give each player a fair opportunity to exhibit the range of skills that they possess they should be evaluated in a game environment and in a skill session environment. At the younger age levels a greater emphasis will be placed on the evaluation of skills - as the players get older the game or scrimmage sessions will have a greater overall impact on the player's placement within the minor hockey program.

### **II. When are the player evaluation sessions?**

MHAs must set a schedule for evaluations and inform parents and players of when the ice times are, as well as when any 'cut-downs' will take place and when the process is to be complete.

Also identify and communicate to players and parents what happens if a player misses a session(s). Knowing that everyone has busy lives, a best practice would be to require players to attend at least half or two-thirds of the sessions to be eligible to be selected to the top team.

### **III. What is being evaluated? How will the decisions be made?**

The focus of each session should be posted for parents and players so that they are clear on what is being evaluated each session. Be clear about all the factors that will be considered in the evaluations, including on-ice skills, attitude, work ethic, etc.

Also identify and communicate in advance how players will be distributed amongst the Teams, and how goaltenders will be evaluated and placed on teams. The total number of Teams within an MHA and the total number of players and goaltenders within each age division of the MHA can drastically alter the placement on Teams. Be aware of your MHA's situation and account for it when setting out your process.

For example, if you have three goaltenders and will be building two Teams, determining how to best use affiliates to always ensure each Team has a goaltender may help determine if two goaltenders are placed on the top team or the lower-level Team.

#### **IV. Who will evaluate?**

Whether using independent evaluators, your MHA coaches, or a mixture of the two, there are many key roles to involve people in to ensure a thorough evaluation process:

- ◆ On-ice coaches/ instructors to lead players through the sessions;
- ◆ Off-ice evaluators who are responsible to evaluate every player on the ice during the time allotted (these can be independent evaluators and/ or the team coaches) and provide their written feedback;
- ◆ On-ice evaluators (not those running the sessions), to obtain a different view of the sessions and evaluate every player and provide their written feedback;
- ◆ Off-ice Administrators (Board Members, Division Directors, Coaches, etc.) who will be responsible for scheduling sessions, setting up evaluation forms, receiving/ tracking evaluations, and communicating with parents and players.

#### **V. Who is making the decisions?**

The information provided to players and parents prior to the evaluation process starting should also identify the decision-making process and who is helping to make those decisions. Once again, be as transparent as possible about your process and then adhere to it.

If you are using independent evaluators, identify what role their feedback will play in the decisions versus the feedback of the on-ice evaluators, instructors, and/ or the Team Coaches (if they have been appointed prior to the evaluation process). Communicate if certain roles are going to help identify groups of players (Top, Middle, Bottom), or if certain roles have the authority to select a certain number of players for Teams.

If Team Coaches are part of the process, clearly communicate when they join the evaluation process and what role/ authority they have. It is common for evaluation processes to use independent evaluators to identify the top group of players and the lower group of players, and then to use the MHA's Team Coaches to make final decisions on the middle group of players, making the final appointments to each Team. If you plan to use this type of process, clearly identify this at the start, adhere to the process, and then own the process afterwards. If you are questioned about the process, refer to the transparent information provided prior to starting.

#### **VI. How are the players notified of their standing within the process?**

Prior to starting the process, communicate to players and parents about how they will be informed about the player's progression through the evaluation process, and by whom. Communicating with players and parents that have not made the highest level team needs to be done with compassion and empathy, so ensure that a knowledgeable and unbiased individual takes on this role for the MHA.

#### **VII. What happens after the evaluation sessions?**

Upon completion of evaluations players should be contacted by their team to outline:

- ◆ Practice schedule
- ◆ Game schedule
- ◆ Introduction of coaches
- ◆ Setting of first meeting with parents and players

## **SAMPLE PLAYER SELECTION CRITERIA**

**Skating** Acceleration, speed, mobility, agility, balance, stride, crossovers, pivots, acceleration out of turns, quick feet, controlled skating, change of pace.

- ◆ Can the players perform the basic forward and backward stride?
- ◆ Are the players knees well bent with the back slightly forward and the head up, or is the player hunched over, bending at the waist with little knee bend?
- ◆ Good skaters will use long strides with a complete recovery of the stride leg before striding with the other leg. Their strides will look very smooth and appear not to require much effort to move around the ice?
- ◆ Does the player look smooth when they skate or do they appear off balance?
- ◆ Can the player turn in both directions with little trouble or do they struggle to turn in one or both directions?
- ◆ Can the player stop in both directions? Younger players will often have trouble stopping in one direction?
- ◆ Can the player keep up with the play or do they struggle to stay with the other players on the ice?

**Passing** Passing, receiving, passing choices, on backhand, unselfish with the puck, presents a good target, receives and retains with control, touch passing.

- ◆ Can the player pass the puck to its intended target with minimal effort?
- ◆ Can the player make an accurate pass to a moving target?
- ◆ Can the player receive a pass on their backhand or do they tend to shift their body to receive the pass on the forehand?
- ◆ Can the player pass the puck off of the backhand with some speed and accuracy?
- ◆ Does the player call for the puck vs. banging their stick on the ice or saying nothing at all?
- ◆ Does the player passing the puck make eye contact with the intended receiver or do they just pass the puck blindly?
- ◆ Can the player execute a saucer pass over sticks and other obstacles?
- ◆ Can the player pass the puck off of the boards to another player?

**Puck Skills** Head ups, smooth and quiet, good hands, protection, in small spaces, in traffic.

- ◆ Does the player have the basic skills to execute a forehand pass?
- ◆ When the player passes the puck do they slap at it or is the motion smooth with the player following through to the intended target?
- ◆ Does the player appear to be comfortable handling the puck while skating or do they appear to fight the puck and have trouble skating with some speed while handling it?
- ◆ Can the player keep his/her head up while carrying the puck?
- ◆ Can they execute dekes and fakes with the puck?
- ◆ Can't they stop quickly or change directions while handling the puck?
- ◆ Can the player continue to handle the puck while in traffic and under pressure?
- ◆ Does the player get pushed or checked off the puck easily?

**Shooting** Power, accuracy, quick release, can shoot in motion, scoring, rebound control, variety of shots.

- ◆ Can the player execute the technique of a wrist shot and backhand?
- ◆ Does the player follow through to the target on all shots?
- ◆ Can the player raise the puck?
- ◆ Is the puck shot with some velocity?
- ◆ Does the puck sit flat in the air or does it wobble?
- ◆ Can the player execute a one-time shot?
- ◆ Is the player accurate when shooting?

**Positional Play** Ability to see the play developing both offensively and defensively and moves to support, judgment, anticipation, understands systems, disciplined.

- ◆ Does the player seem to understand where he/she are to play on the ice?
- ◆ Do they support the puck in defensive and offensive situations?
- ◆ Does the player show patience, or do they tend to panic when pressured?
- ◆ Do they protect the mid lane and force opposing players inside out?
- ◆ Can the player angle another player off of the puck?
- ◆ Does the player force the play or do they wait too long?

**Checking Concept** of angling, good body position with balance and control, defensive side position, aggressive checker, strength, taking checks.

- ◆ Can the player execute basic stick and body checks?
- ◆ Does the player check properly with their hands down or do they get their arms up to give a check?
- ◆ Can the player receive a check properly, not turning their back and staying close to the boards?
- ◆ Can the player check and opposing player and pin them on the boards?
- ◆ Does the player shy away from other players?

## PLAYER SELECTION CRITERIA EVALUATOR CUE CARD

### **Skating – speed, quickness, technique**

- ◆ Forward and Backward
- ◆ Turn both directions
- ◆ Stop both directions
- ◆ Are they in a good position for stability and strength

### **Passing – technique, control, vision**

- ◆ Forehand and Backhand
- ◆ To moving and stationary target
- ◆ Vision – do they take a look and select best option
- ◆ Advanced – board passes, chips, saucer passes

### **Puck Skills – technique, open ice, confined space**

- ◆ Open carry with speed
- ◆ Execute dekes and fakes on the 1 on 1
- ◆ Can they handle the puck in traffic and tight space
- ◆ Ability to maintain control while being checked

### **Shooting – technique, accuracy, velocity**

- ◆ Forehand and backhand
- ◆ Wrist shot, snap shot, slap shot
- ◆ Velocity
- ◆ Accuracy
- ◆ Shot Selection – do they select the best shot for the opportunity?

### **Game Understanding – Principles of Offence and Defence**

- ◆ Player understands positional play
- ◆ Player supports the puck on the defensive and offensive side of puck
- ◆ Player communicates with teammates
- ◆ Player has the ability to read and react.

## **SAMPLE GOALIE SELECTION CRITERIA**

### **Skating Movements**

- ◆ Speed
- ◆ Quickness/Powerful Strides
- ◆ Pivots
- ◆ Control
- ◆ Lateral Movement
- ◆ Knee Bend
- ◆ Edgework
- ◆ Agility
- ◆ Mobility/Balance
- ◆ Down Movement
- ◆ Good Stance
- ◆ Smoothness/Coordination

### **Positioning**

- ◆ Square to shots
- ◆ Set for shots
- ◆ Maximizes net coverage in all areas
- ◆ Makes good decisions on whether to be on feet or down

### **Puck Tracking & Control**

- ◆ Can catch pucks
- ◆ Gets stick on shots
- ◆ Tracks pucks off body into rebounds
- ◆ Knows where puck is
- ◆ Sees pucks through traffic
- ◆ Can control rebounds in chest
- ◆ Tracks pucks into body/hands
- ◆ Finds rebounds immediately
- ◆ Effectively follows passes
- ◆ Visual lead before movement

### **Goaltender Sense**

- ◆ Athletic ability
- ◆ Positioning & movement
- ◆ Mental Toughness
- ◆ Stops pucks
- ◆ Communicates
- ◆ Coachability
- ◆ Skills evident
- ◆ Style/Size

### **Battle & Compete Level**

- ◆ Battles for pucks
- ◆ Covers pucks
- ◆ Mentally prepared
- ◆ Body language
- ◆ Scrambles to make saves when necessary
- ◆ Set for shots

## **GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT STAFF**

### **On-ice Coaches**

During the ice sessions there should be a minimum of one lead instructor/ coach and 2 support staff. The responsibilities of the on-ice staff include:

- ◆ Keep up the pace and flow of the drills to finish within the allotted period. In order to accomplish this, it is imperative the lead is aware of the time for each drill and the order that the drills occur.
- ◆ Drills should be kept in the same order for each session.
- ◆ If possible, pre-ice the players prior to the session so that they are aware of the drills and the order which they will go through them.
- ◆ Ensure the players understand the drill - it is the lead coach's responsibility to put the players in a situation where they can show their skill and not struggle with understanding the drill.
- ◆ If a player has their performance affected by items out of their control it is the coach's discretion to allow the player to perform the skill a 2<sup>nd</sup> time.
- ◆ Check that all players have the proper protective equipment.
- ◆ Encourage the players to perform to the best of their ability.
- ◆ Do not share any of your personal insight with parents/players/other observers that may appear to bias or alter the process.
- ◆ Ensure evaluators have ample time and opportunity to review players in the given drill.

### **Evaluator Guidelines**

As much as possible there should be a consistency of evaluators for a given age group or division. This continuity ensures that the players are being observed by a group of evaluators who have a benchmark for performance and knowledge of the overall ability of the group that they are observing. Generally, the evaluators should:

- ◆ Review all of the drills and skills to be observed so that you are clear on the on-ice process.
- ◆ Review the evaluation criteria prior to the process to ensure that all evaluators are evaluating the same skill with the same intent.
- ◆ Stay separate from the other evaluators and the spectators during the entire on-ice process.
- ◆ Make sure that all evaluators have the same evaluation page with the same piney numbers and colours.
- ◆ Review your marks at the end of the session to ensure you have not made any entry errors.
- ◆ Evaluation documents should be gathered by an Administrator at the completion of each ice session.
- ◆ Do not share your comments or opinions with any players/ parents or other interested observers.
- ◆ Refer questions, comments or complaints that you may receive to the Administrator, without offering comment on the question or complaint.

### **Administrator Guidelines**

The success of the evaluation sessions from an administrative perspective will often be measured on the preparation that is done for the ice sessions to keep players well organized and in order. Generally, this role should:

- ◆ Ensure that each player has a jersey or piney with the correct number corresponding to their tryout number.
- ◆ Ensure that all equipment including pucks, pylons and other ice time equipment are present for the beginning of the session.
- ◆ Deal with any late arriving registrations or players who have attended the incorrect ice session.
- ◆ Coordinate dressing room supervision since often there are no coaches assigned to the teams prior to the completion of evaluation.



### **Guidelines for Contacting Players and Parents**

As soon as you are aware of evaluation locations and times the parents and players must be informed. It is essential for the process to be effective to have a strong communication structure to avoid missed selection times and player absenteeism. Here are a few guidelines to keep stakeholders in the loop:

- ◆ Begin emailing as soon as you receive the list so that players and parents receive as much notice as possible.
- ◆ Identify yourself and the reason for emailing.
- ◆ Advise players of the date, time, location of their scheduled selection session.
- ◆ Advise players to arrive a minimum of 30 minutes prior to the tryout in order to register and assign the proper jersey.

## **SAMPLE EVALUATION FORMS**

### **FIVE POINT RATING GUIDE**

#### **5. Outstanding / Dominate**

An excellent elite-level performance. Player executes effectively all aspects being evaluated and clearly outperforms counterparts. This player had a lasting dominant effect throughout the session. Player can definitely play and have an impact.

#### **4. Above Average**

An above average performance. Good plays and decisions clearly outnumber the poor ones. Factors not allowing the performance to be a (5) might include:

- slight skill deficiency compared to a (5)
- slight inconsistency in terms of effort, grittiness, lapse in discipline or emotional control

#### **3. Average**

An average performance; requires more observation. Player made their share of mistakes / poor decisions, but they were countered by an equal number of good plays / decisions.

#### **2. Below Average**

A below average performance. Bad plays / decisions outnumber the good ones. Player may have lacked effort and hustle and made costly errors.

#### **1. Poor**

Unacceptable performance. Well below acceptable standards. Not approaching levels of contribution required or expected. Significant, deficiencies in all areas.

## SKILLS SESSION EVALUATION FORM



Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

Skills # \_\_\_\_\_

**5 - Outstanding/Dominate**  
**4 - Above Average**  
**3 - Average**  
**2 - Below Average**  
**1 - Poor**

Pos	#	Jersey Colour	Skating	Positioning	Puck Tracking	Goaltender Sense	Battle / Compete	Overall
G								
G								
G								
G								
Pos	#	Jersey Colour	Skating	Passing	Puck Skills	Shooting	Battle / Compete	Overall
D								
D								
D								
D								
D								
D								
D								
D								
F								
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F								

## GAME EVALUATION FORM



Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_

Game # \_\_\_\_\_

Jersey Colour: \_\_\_\_\_

**5 - Outstanding/Dominate**  
**4 - Above Average**  
**3 - Average**  
**2 - Below Average**  
**1 - Poor**

Pos	#	Rank 1,2,3,4,5	Comments
G			
G			
G			
D			
D			
D			
D			
D			
D			
D			
F			
F			
F			
F			
F			
F			
F			
F			
F			
F			
F			
F			
F			

### **SOME MORE HELPFUL HINTS**

1. Follow the play away from the puck as well.
2. Try not to get caught up in the game. Watch the players, not the game!!
3. Follow all the players, without being influenced by the winning or losing team.
4. Stay with your criteria.
5. When filling out evaluation forms, if you put a number ranking in the overall ranking please put a couple of comments as to why that player has been given the number (write notes all over the form if necessary).
6. You cannot use half points in (i.e. 1.5, 2.5).
7. Do not compare notes with other people. Some will know what you are doing and pump you for information.
8. Be at the arena early enough in order to familiarize yourself with the players.
9. Game Considerations:
  - a. 1st period - Get line combinations and Defense pairings, watch Defense first, then forwards
  - b. 2nd period - Watch forwards, then Defense
  - c. 3rd period - You can move closer to the middle now, watch any missing players
  - d. All periods - Watch Goaltenders
  - e. The more notes the better, especially for goalies. Don't worry about terminology.
10. Rate what you see today, forget what you know from the past and be accurate, no fudged ratings.



## PLAYER SELECTION - EVALUATION ROOM TEMPLATE

		RED	BLACK	YELLOW	BLUE	GREEN	WHITE
5	F						
	D						
	G						
4	F						
	D						
	G						
3	F						
	D						
	G						
2	F						
	D						
	G						
1	F						
	D						
	G						

Along the top columns is the colour of jerseys you are using and then along the left rows is the ranking number 1 to 5 that aligns with the 5-point ranking scale and the position of the player. Under each jersey colour column you place the players number in the appropriate row based on what ranking your evaluators give them. Consensus or an average can be used to determine ranking.

You will continue with this process until you have all players placed on the document. Once completed it will give you a good picture of where all players are ranked and the numbers you are working with. If all goes well you will have your top team made up of the players ranked in the 5 and 4 boxes, middle team comprised of the players in the 3 box and bottom teams comprised of players in the 2 and 1 boxes.

This document can be used on a computer, in paper or on a large white board in your evaluation room. Be sure to keep it confidential and move players accordingly after each evaluation skate. Players can be moved up or down based on their performance after each skate. Ex. a player may be a 4 in the first skate and then not show as well in the second skate, so you would consider moving him down to a 3.

		RED
5	F	18
	D	3
	G	31
4	F	7, 16
	D	12, 5
	G	1