

# **East Hants Minor Hockey Association**

## **Evaluation Policy**

*Approved: September 2011*

*Amended: September 2024*

Welcome to the hockey season and the evaluation process. This can be a stressful time for players and families so please do your part in making this as positive an experience as possible for everyone involved.

### **GENERAL**

The East Hants Minor Hockey Association (EHMHA) is a large and very competitive association; therefore, it is imperative you prepare for all possible outcomes. Building unrealistic expectations prior to the process can have devastating effects and spoil what could be a positive year for the player. To ensure the process runs as smoothly as possible, the following procedures **MUST** be adhered to:

- Any inquiries during and after the tryouts must be addressed to the division coordinator only.
- If you make a formal request in writing to the division coordinator, summary of the player's evaluation will be provided in writing once the evaluation process has been completed.
- No other coach, evaluator, assistant or executive member any issues relating to individual players.
- No issues or questions will be accepted until 24 hours has passed. Should you contact regarding placement of your child within the 24hour period, your inquiry will not be heard.

### **DIVISION COORDINATORS:**

U11: [u11@ehpenguins.org](mailto:u11@ehpenguins.org)

U13: [u13@ehpenguins.org](mailto:u13@ehpenguins.org)

U15: [u15@ehpenguins.org](mailto:u15@ehpenguins.org)

U18: [u18@ehpenguins.org](mailto:u18@ehpenguins.org)

If the division coordinator feels the matter needs further review, they will then consult with the VP Hockey Operations and the Development Coordinator. In extreme cases, the matter may be referred to other members of the EHMHA Executive for final decision.

Harassing or threatening calls/e-mails will not be tolerated. They will be reported to the EHMHA disciplinary committee and action will be taken immediately (including possible ejection).

Lots of hours have been dedicated by the volunteers to provide a fair process to choose the EHMHA teams. Please respect their time and feel free to thank them for providing the opportunity to ice competitive teams and develop young athletes.

It is the player's responsibility to check the web site for their next tryout scheduled session. All information will be posted on the website in an attempt to provide all players at least 24 hours advance notice of their next ice session.

## **OUR TRYOUT OBJECTIVES**

The Association tryout process shall strive for the highest level of independence and competence in selecting and training coaches and evaluators. It recognizes that the responsibility to effectively evaluate players for placement on competitive teams is challenging. It is difficult to satisfy the expectations of all stakeholders in the evaluation process. Evaluation, by its very nature, is subjective because it is based upon the opinions of those evaluating. The intention of the Association is to bring as much quality, consistency, fairness and transparency to the process as reasonably possible.

The Association shall strive to meet the following outcomes when conducting player evaluations:

- To create an environment where each player has an opportunity to be selected for the level appropriate to their skill, maturity and ability where they may continue to grow and develop as a player;
- To establish an evaluation and selection process that provides consistent and comprehensive evaluation based upon the demonstrated skills and ability of each player;
- To ensure that all players and parents understand the expectations upon which players will be evaluated;
- To ensure all evaluators are objective, unbiased, free of conflict of interest, and trained in player evaluation; and
- To provide ongoing review and improvement of the player evaluation and team selection process, ensuring that the process continues to meet the demands placed upon the Association.

## **ABOUT PLAYING COMPETITIVE HOCKEY**

Being a member of a competitive team is a privilege and being selected to a team is just the starting point. It is important for players and families to understand what playing 'competitive hockey' means in terms of commitment and expectations.

In the competitive team environment, in addition to working to develop the child as a player/athlete, our association believes that making a commitment and keeping it is a very important life lesson. As a member of a competitive team, there is an expectation that players will fully participate in all team activities including practices, games, tournaments and other related events. In addition, competitive teams have a busy schedule with at least two games per week and one practice at a minimum. Participants should also be prepared to attend additional practices that specific teams may acquire in addition to periodic off-ice training or class sessions. These 'team' activities are critical to success and buy in from all team members is crucial.

We expect players to attend all practices and team sanctioned events. Of course there will be situations that will lead to missed practices or missed

events. Please understand that players who regularly miss practices will also miss out on development opportunities which could lead to the potential for reduced playing time during games, particularly at the U11 level and above.

Another aspect of participation on a competitive team is that of fundraising. While this will vary from team to team depending on what additional programming each may pursue, there is a need to supplement the registration fee over the course of the season. The coaching staff for each team holds a parent/player meeting to kick off the season and information related to schedule and costs are discussed at this early meeting.

If you and or your child are not prepared to commit to the above, please advise your division coordinator immediately in order to allow another child the opportunity.

## **SCHEDULE and SELECTION PROCESS**

All schedules and information on the selection process are posted on the EHMHA website. If a player is successful in the tryout process and is chosen to play on a team then the expectation is that they will play on the team that they were chosen to play on. If the player, for some reason, does not want to play on that team then EHMHA reserves the right to determine where the player will be placed. This could result in the player being placed in REC but will be determined on an individual basis.

## **ABSENT FROM TRYOUT SESSIONS**

The success of our annual tryout process is based upon the premise that our independent evaluators are able to observe and fully evaluate all participating players during the various stages of the process. This is necessary to enable our evaluators to suitably rate each.

As players grow and develop at varying rates, it is not unusual to see changes in a player's ability over the course of the summer or from season to season. For this reason, it is very important to have the opportunity to compare players in a common forum to ensure we place each at the most appropriate level. For this reason, our expectation is that all players will attend all tryout sessions.

We also understand that from time to time, there are valid circumstances that preclude participants from attending. For this reason, we have established this policy to guide our actions in these situations.

## **SCHEDULING CONFLICTS DUE TO TRY-OUTS WITH ANOTHER ASSOCIATION**

Because this is a competitive process, players who want the opportunity to play on one of our representative teams **MUST** be evaluated as part of the process within the EHMHA. This is to ensure transparency of the process and minimize disappointment on the part of another player who potentially may get displaced. It is difficult to promote a player to a higher level when they are unable to display the skills against other players at that level.

Any player who wants to have an opportunity to be part of our highest level team must attend at least one of the first three sessions within that division in order to be evaluated properly. They must also communicate their intention in writing to the respective division representative which sessions they will be available to attend and which sessions they cannot attend because of scheduling conflicts due to try-outs with another association prior to the start of the EHMHA try-outs. The player shall be ranked for the sessions in which they participate and their score shall be pro-rated for the sessions they miss. In addition, the evaluation team will attempt to determine additional background information evaluators can access such as past performance with prior teams, coaching reports from those teams, and any other pertinent information available to them to assist in making an appropriate ranking.

## **OUT OF AREA PLAYERS**

The EHMHA Evaluation Policy is guided first by the following Hockey Nova Scotia Regulations:

2.30. A Minor player at the U11 AA, U13 AAA, U15AA, or U18 AA classification of competition but whose MHA does not provide that classification, may try out for those teams in that division from another Association in his/her Region. A player may try out for up to two of these teams per year. A U11 player may tryout for only one AA team per year.

A U13, U15 or U18 age player whose Association does not provide U13 AA, A, U15 A or U18 A may try out for one team at these levels in another Association in their Region.

Any player requesting to move from one MHA/Region to another shall be referred by the Regional Director to the Minor Council Executive through the Conference Coordinator.

2.31. Subsequent to Regulation 2.29, all U13 AAA, U15 AA and U18 AA teams within the initial two-week try out period at the start of season, must sign a minimum of 11 players and one goaltender. Players and goaltender not signed as part of this 12 may be permitted to try out for another U13, U15 or U18 team with permission from the Regional Director, to a maximum of two teams.

2.32. If, in the application of Regulation 2.29 and 2.31 players from more than three Minor Hockey Associations contribute to the makeup of any team, the minimum categorization of the team shall be no lower than AA.  
East Hants Minor Hockey Association

The EHMHA objective is to balance our obligations to our members with the opportunity to make a more competitive rep team. The EHMHA policy is as follows:

- The player trying out must be either from: the same regions as EHMHA (specifically: Cole Harbour, Dartmouth or Eastern Shore) or from another HNS region but must have obtained written permission from HNS Regional Director
- Only one of the top two goalies shall be an out of area player. EHMHA reserves the right to not accept out of area players if it means that EHMHA players will be displaced. For example, if there is only one team in a division and we have two EHMHA goalies already than we will not accept out of area goalies in that division
- EHMHA will accept a maximum of four out of area players (including goalies) per team. EHMHA reserves the right, under exceptional circumstances, to approve additional out of area players.
- The limitation of four excludes any approved under age players from the EHMHA.

- EXCEPTION 2024-25 SEASON FOR U13AAA ONLY: EHMHA's limit of 4 out of area players and one goalie will NOT be enforced for the 2024-25 season for U13AAA only. EHMHA's is new in the AAA provincial league, and we want as many of our players as possible to have this opportunity. However, the team must be competitive and for this season, we will be accepting players from other areas to compete for placement on the team.

## **SICKNESS OR INJURY**

This often leads to disappointment on the part of the injured player if they thought their development was greater; or disappointment on the part of another player who gets displaced for the injured player. It's very difficult to promote an injured player to a higher level when they are unable to display their skills against other players at that level.

If any participant becomes sick or injured and cannot attend one session: *The player shall be ranked for the sessions in which they participate and their score shall be prorated for the session they are unable to attend.*

If a player becomes sick or injured and is unable to attend multiple sessions but will be able to attend a majority portion of the tryouts: *The player shall be ranked for the sessions in which they participate and their score shall be pro-rated for the sessions they miss. In addition, the evaluation team will attempt to determine additional background information (i.e. past performance) to assist in making an appropriate ranking.*

If the player becomes sick or injured and is unable attend any portion of the tryout process: A medical certificate must be provided along with a note from the attending physician approving the player's return to play PRIOR to November 15th. *The player will be ranked based upon any background information that the evaluators can access such as past performance with prior teams, coaching reports from those teams, and any other pertinent information available to them. In cases where injuries eliminate participation for a lengthy period of time and if a player has been assigned to a specific level based upon the ranking of the independent evaluators, a roster spot will be held open until such time that player is able to return.*

## **COMPASSIONATE REASONS**

In addition to sickness or injury, we recognize that there are specific activities that are significant to our players in addition to family matters that may arise and which take precedence. The following situations shall be considered for compassionate reasons:

- A family tragedy;
  
- Attendance at a regional or national event (i.e. sporting championship) that arises from the player's participation in an activity over the summer where the activity necessitates the player to attend as part of their commitment to that activity; or
  
- Specific religious holidays.

In all cases, it is critical that the parent/guardian notify the respective Division Representative as soon as they become aware that the player will be absent and when the player is expected to return. Failing this may have an adverse impact upon the player's overall evaluation.

It is also important to note that while we will make every effort to properly evaluate players who encounter these situations, there are significant challenges associated with evaluating and ranking players who are absent and, as such, every effort should be made to attend sessions.



## **SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING FORWARDS and DEFENCE**

Competitive teams will be picked based on the best skills sets offered to a specific level plus two goalies. In other words, if necessary for the betterment of the team, we may ask a forward to play defence (or vice versa).

## **TIPS FOR PLAYERS DURING TRYOUTS**

The East Hants Penguins start each season with excitement as we work to establish our teams and find it rewarding to see our young players grow as athletes and people from season to season. While we appreciate that not everyone will be selected for the team they aspire to, we do have some helpful hints for players in preparation for and during tryouts:

- Preparation - Ensure your equipment has been inspected and is ready to go. You want to be at your best when you hit the ice and don't need an equipment problem to take you off your game.

- Focus - Give your best at each session and take things one session at a time. Don't dwell on things that you feel you may not have done as well as you could have but instead focus on what you are doing at the time so you give it your full attention. Also don't look too far into the future as this will only serve to reduce your concentration. Use the Win (What's Important NOW) philosophy and you will give yourself the best chance.

- Fuel - Get your proper rest, nutrition and hydration. Typically, the tryout process offers several sessions within a short period of time. If you don't get your rest and eat properly, you will be tired and unable to give your best. Take care of yourself in the days leading up to tryouts as well as during the process so that you feel on top of your game and can compete at your best. Bring your water bottle to the rink so that you can get the water intake needed. Make sure you have your name clearly marked on your bottle.

- Effort - Give your best. Preparing for and giving your best at each session will assure you of a better result. Try to be consistent throughout the entire session. Don't take breaks or lapses during the session and stay on your toes and ready to compete at all times.

- Be Yourself - do what you do best and play to your strengths. Don't try to change how you play to become something else. It is not all about goals and assists. Things such as back checking, hustling all the time, and other key aspects of the game are equally important.

- Get ahead of your school work so that you can focus on the tryout session. If you have a presentation or homework, get it completed early.

## **TIPS FOR PARENTS DURING TRYOUTS**

The tryouts are often a very busy time for the volunteers involved and can be stressful for all. Here are a few tips for families that may help during the process:

- Families should familiarize themselves with the process and the various aspects that their child will be involved in. Gaining a sound understanding of the overall process will answer most questions.
- Be supportive of and encouraging the player throughout the process. This assists the child in maintaining confidence about their efforts. Stress and anxiety may lead to poor performance so encourage a fun and relaxed approach.
- At the end of tryouts, regardless of what team your child plays for, be sure to let them know that they did their best and that they should be proud of themselves.
- When questions arise, the first point of contact for all questions should be the Divisional Coordinator for the division in which your child is involved in.
- If your child becomes injured from session to session, even if injury is not one that is serious and perhaps may not have been noticed during the session, report this to the division representative. The evaluation team would like to know and those charged with dealing with any on-ice injury situations will want to be aware as well.