

Fair Play Policy

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Cape Breton Count Minor Hockey Association (CBCMHA) supports Fair Play. Fair Play comprises and embodies a number of fundamental values that are not only integral to sport but relevant in everyday life. Fair competition, respect, friendship, team spirit, inclusion, sport without doping, respect for written and unwritten rules such as integrity, ethics, solidarity, tolerance, healthy physical and mental play, excellence, and joy, are the building blocks of fair play that can be experienced and learnt both on and off the field.

For Fair Play to occur, the members of our community need to know, understand, and accept the policies, rules, procedures, and decision-making criteria used by CBCMHA (as outlined in the Code of Conduct and the Fair Play Policy).

- 1.2 All players, regardless of skill level, deserve the opportunity to play in all situations to maximize their development. This policy applies to all AAA, AA, A, B and C Hockey teams.

All players should receive equal ice-time, unless otherwise defined within this policy. Equal is defined as equal ice-time in every game. There must be a variable due to the uncertainty in the frequency in stoppages of play.

It is not acceptable for a coach or assistant coach to remove a player from a regular rotation on the bench to gain an advantage over their opponent. We ask that all coaches embrace the spirit of the Fair Play Policy and encourage the development of all players to succeed in all game situations. Designated power play and penalty kill lines will not generally be accepted and goaltenders will start and play every second game or 50% of each game.

2.0 Key Principles

- 2.1 We need to inspire and support coaches to continue to develop all players' strengths and weaknesses. A focus on development for strong players while neglecting those deemed to be weaker is unacceptable.
- 2.2 CBCMHA follows the Hockey Canada Development Model as well as endorses the Hockey Canada Fair Play Code for Players and Coaches. The Hockey Canada Fair Play Code for Coaches states: "I will ensure that all players get equal instruction, support and playing time."
- 2.3 Development of players comes from playing and experiencing all game situations.

2.4 Player development is more valuable than game scores.

3.0 Coaches Discretion

3.1 CBCMHA recognizes that minute for minute playing time is NOT a reality due to the complex nature of the game of hockey and that situations will arise where it may be necessary for a coach to make difficult decisions involving their players that may result in unequal playing times. We present the following guidelines to assist coaches in these situations. These guidelines are not exhaustive and are presented for illustrative purposes only:

i. The safety of a player is being compromised i.e.: a possible injury has occurred, or the player has become a target by opponent(s) etc.

ii. If a player intentionally displays poor conduct towards his teammates or opponents or is in breach of the principles of Respect in Sport, the coach has the authority to use playing time as a discipline tool. If a player is being kept from playing for a disciplinary reason(s) the coach must discuss the matter and the repercussions with the player and/or guardian if needed. Based on the severity of the incident coaches should use their best judgment as to the amount of shifts a player should miss.

iii. A player is not confident in certain game situations. When this instance occurs, it is imperative that the player be communicated to directly and coached through the issues.

iv. The player continually misses practices without notifying the team personnel.

v. The team has an uneven number of players and needs to rotate players through positions. Examples could include 8 forwards and rotating 2 centres. Should this example occur multiple times, it's expected that the same players not be used at centre every game.

vi. CBCMHA does not expect any of these instances to become chronic. We believe that most issues can be solved through open lines of communication and the display of mutual respect.

3.2 Flexibility on Fair Play Policy for Specific Divisions and Situations

CBCMHA recognizes that certain game situations require coaching discretion. The intent of Section 3.2 is to give coaches flexibility to field the most competitive team when needed, while still ensuring fair rotation. This flexibility is intended to reward growth and progression, while also maintaining a focus on player development throughout the season.

This does not mean relying on the same players in every situation. For example, PP1 can start a power play, followed by PP2 or PP3. PP1 should not play the entire power play unless an offensive goal is scored, promoting balanced opportunities for all players

The Fair Play Policy allows for flexibility in the following divisions and scenarios:

3.2.1 Division: U11B, A, AA; U13B, A; U15B; U18B

Regular Season

From January 1st until commencement of playoffs in the final three (3) minutes of any game, regardless of the situation (5v5, power play, penalty kill, or extra attacker), coaches have discretion to field players they believe best suit the situation.

Tournament Play

In the final three (3) minutes of any game, regardless of the situation (5v5, power play, penalty kill, or extra attacker), coaches have discretion to field players they believe best suit the situation.

Play-offs

During the third period or overtime, coaches may use specialized lines (e.g., power play or penalty kill units).

3.2.2 Division: U13AAA; U15A, AA; U18AA

Regular Season

In the final three (3) minutes of any game, regardless of the situation (5v5, power play, penalty kill, or extra attacker), coaches have discretion to field players they believe best suit the situation.

Tournament Play

At any point in a game, regardless of the situation (5v5, power play, penalty kill, or extra attacker), coaches have discretion to field players they believe best suit the situation.

Play-offs

At any point in a game, regardless of the situation (5v5, power play, penalty kill, or extra attacker), coaches have discretion to field players they believe best suit the situation.

4.0 Accountability and Management

- 4.1 Cape Breton County Minor Hockey relies on the coaches to use their best judgment relative to the Fair Play Policy. Based on the complexity of the game of hockey and the countless scenarios that arise we trust our coaches, players and parents to work together and communicate as often and openly as possible.
- 4.2 As a coach, you have the responsibility to encourage all players to be the best they can be and provide equal opportunities for them to develop self-esteem and sport skills. When you play your talented athletes more often, you make other players feel less important and deny them the chance to improve their skills.
- 4.3 As a parent, you have the responsibility to understand the challenges of fair play time and speak up if you feel it is abused. Give our coaches some latitude and consider your position over at least 2 games. Please don't bring your stopwatch to the game. We respectfully ask parents to realize that it is impossible for all players to receive the exact same number of shifts or minutes of play time in a single game. Many times, the shift length depends on whistles or what end the puck is in. We should strive to have equal and Fair Play time over multiple games.

5.0 Implementation

- 5.1 Cape Breton County Minor Hockey believes that coaches are our most powerful leaders. They can set the tone for the season. We expect our coaches to be stewards of this policy and support the implementation of it going forward.
- 5.2 Coach Selection Process - During the coach selection process, it is recommended that Cape Breton County Minor Hockey provides coaching candidates with this policy and highlight the associated expectations.
- 5.3 Coaches/Manager's Meeting – It is recommended that Cape Breton County Minor Hockey has pre-season meetings with all coaches and managers. During this meeting the policy should be presented and clarification surrounding the policy can be given.
- 5.4 Parent Meeting – The team Manager and/or Coaching Staff should go through the policy with parents during the Parent Meeting held at the beginning of the season.
- 5.5 Continuing Education and Monitoring - Throughout the season Cape Breton County Minor Hockey will continue to educate our coaches, players, and parents on the guiding principles behind the Fair Play Policy

6.0 Process for grievances

6.1 As a parent or guardian, if after at least 2 games have passed and you have waited out the 24-hour rule from the last incident of concern, if you believe your child has not experienced Fair Play, Cape Breton County Minor Hockey asks that you follow the following process:

- Email to be submitted to Team Representative (after 24 hours)
- Bench Staff and Manager to discuss issue
- Team Representative to respond to Parent/Guardian
- If issue is not resolved an email is to be forwarded to the Cape Breton County Minor Hockey Discipline Committee
- Issue will be reviewed by the Discipline Committee. The committee will determine if an additional meeting is warranted with parent/guardian and/or Bench Staff. Disciplinary action will be taken if determined that policy and procedure have not been followed
- If issue is still unresolved to parent/guardian's satisfaction, the parent/guardian can contact the Hockey Nova Scotia Regional Director

6.2 If it is found that the Fair Play Policy is not adhered to, an investigation may follow by the Discipline Committee in accordance with the Discipline Policy.