

Westmoreland
Hockey
Association

PLAYER EVALUATION MANUAL



Westmoreland Hockey Association
Evaluation and Selection Manual
Adopted 2/13/2020



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INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO PARENTS



WESTMORELAND EAGLES

HOCKEY ASSOCIATION
PROUD MEMBER OF THE PAHL



ANNUAL EVALUATION LETTER SAMPLE

DATE

Dear WHA Player,

Thank you for your interest in playing for the Westmoreland Hockey Association next season. Registration will be available on our website by early April. Please remember that you must obtain a new USA Hockey number beginning April 1 in order to register your player for tryouts. You will also be required to pay a nonrefundable registration fee. We ask that your player bring both a white and black jersey to the tryout sessions. Please be aware, 8U players do not have a formal tryout process as detailed in the evaluation manual.

Teams for next season will be formed as a result of performance at a tryout and evaluation session scheduled between April 8 and April 18. For 10U players, the evaluation process will consist of 2 practice sessions and 1 scrimmage session. For players 12U and older, the process will consist of 1 practice session and 2 scrimmage sessions. The events will be conducted by volunteers of our association including the Coaching Coordinator, coaching staff members, and a team of outside evaluators. Goaltender evaluations will be performed by an outside agency.

The respective head coaches, using input from evaluation staff, will make the final decision regarding the team selections. The head coach will have some latitude to select players who are evaluated outside of the top group but cannot select more than 33% of the team roster. For example, if the team is composed of 15 skaters, the coach shall take the top 10 ranked skaters and will have discretion over the final five remaining openings. Players will be told of their team placement by Thursday of the week after evaluations conclude.

Please refer to the '[Criteria for Player Selection](#)' in the WHA Player Evaluation Manual. All evaluation staff will be instructed to evaluate players based on these criteria.

Good luck in your preparation. We look forward to seeing you in April!

Yours truly,

Mary LeBlanc
President, Westmoreland Hockey Association

Denny Zeravica
WHA Coaching Coordinator

PLAYER EVALUATION AND SELECTION

The Purpose of this Document

Each year a vast majority of minor hockey associations undertake the task of placing players on teams. The ultimate goal of the process is to provide players with the best possible experience in an environment where they can grow as hockey players and young people. For many minor hockey executives, evaluators, coaches, parents and players this can be a tension filled, laborious and frustrating experience – the goal of this document is to make it a more fulfilling and positive experience for all. The contents of this document have been adapted from a variety of resources with an emphasis on the Hockey Canada evaluation model.¹

The purpose of this document is to provide a conceptual framework for Westmoreland Hockey Association (“WHA”) supported by a number of practical evaluation tools and resources.

The level of success that an association enjoys from the player evaluation process is based on several factors. Associations must ensure that they are managing the local situation to make the process as transparent as possible. Evaluator objectivity, clear and concise lines of communication, effectively run ice sessions, definitive roles and a succinct reflection and feedback mechanism will all play a vital role in developing and building an effective player evaluation process.

It is often said that “the best coaches are the best thieves.” Therefore, we have adapted this evaluation manual from the Hockey Canada version. It will be used to effectively manage the entirety of the WHA tryout procedure and ensure that players are progressing through our program with proper feedback and guidance. Player evaluation and placement, like player development, is a process - effective management of the process will make a young players’ experience in hockey a more positive one.

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE OF PLAYER EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Player evaluation can be one of the most difficult tasks for a minor hockey association to deal with. It can also be the foundation for which an association is built upon. In most cases player evaluation is used to place players onto teams. An important aspect that is missing in many cases is that most minor hockey associations do not use player evaluations as a tool for coaches to develop players based on their individual strengths and weaknesses. Placing players on teams is one thing, but what you do with those players once the teams are formed is another. WHA will use this manual to not only guide the tryout process, but to provide additional tools which will enhance coach and player development in our organization.

Having a solid player evaluation process in place can help make the process much easier. Not only will it give our association a reference point in dealing with parents and players, it will also give our organization and coaches a starting point to determine where our players are at skill wise. Thus, beginning the process of utilizing the various USA Hockey and Hockey Canada programs to educate parents, and coaches, on the importance of developing skills.

For WHA, we will utilize two types of evaluations. We will hold tryout evaluations each April in order to select the teams for the subsequent hockey season. Furthermore, to assist in the evaluation process, we

¹ Hockey Canada. Minor Hockey Development Guide - Player Evaluation and Selection.
http://www.hockeyeasternontario.ca/docs/HC_Player_Eval_Selection.pdf

will also require coaches to complete written evaluations at the end of the season as a [post season report card](#).

Both are considered important. But what is done with the information is what really matters the most. Obviously, the evaluations done at the end of the season will place the kids on to teams, but all of the evaluation information will also be given to coaches so that they can see what the strengths and weaknesses of those players are.

WHA shall implement, with the assistance of this manual, the adoption and posting of criteria which the evaluators are looking for, so that parents can see what the players are being judged on. The criteria shall be clearly defined, objectively assessed and justifiable.

OBJECTIVES OF PLAYER EVALUATION

- To provide a fair and impartial assessment of a player's total hockey skills during the skating and scrimmage sessions.
- To ensure that players have a reasonable opportunity of being selected to a team appropriate to their skill levels as determined during the on-ice evaluations.
- To provide coaches with the opportunity and flexibility to build a team based in part on their own coaching philosophy and knowledge of player skills and attitude.
- To provide uniformity and consistency in the evaluation process such that a player and parent expectations are consistent from year to year as players move through the various levels of our program.
- 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 feedback in order to develop players.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

All of the information below shall set a tone for the evaluation process and increase the transparent nature of the process.

- I. **When are the player evaluation sessions?**
WHA shall set the tryout schedule in January of each calendar year. Parents and players shall be informed of when the initial ice sessions are and when further ice sessions may occur pending the results of initial assessments.
- II. **How many evaluation sessions will there be?**
Every parent and player will be made aware of the number of opportunities that the player will have to be assessed. WHA will attempt to give each player a minimum of 2 evaluation sessions.
- III. **What is being evaluated?**
Refer to the section on [Player Selection Criteria](#) for more information on specific skills, tactics and behaviors that are being evaluated. It is recommended that the focus of each session be posted for parents and players so that they are clear on what is being evaluated each session.
- IV. **Who will do the evaluations?**
There are 3 key groups involved in the evaluations:

- On-ice coaches to take players through the session
- Off-ice evaluators who will be responsible to evaluate every player on the ice during the time allotted. There may also be on-ice evaluators if deemed necessary.
- Off-ice administrators who will be responsible for coordinating the tryout process, tracking evaluations, overseeing team selection, contacting parents and players and scheduling sessions.

V. **What should my son/daughter wear to the evaluation?**

Full equipment is always mandatory. This includes:

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| • Protective cup | • Skates |
| • Shin pads | • Hockey gloves |
| • Hockey pants | • Hockey stick |
| • Shoulder pads | • Neck guard and mouth guard |
| • Elbow pads | • Helmet and full shield |

Players may be assigned a piney or other jersey upon their arrival at the rink. The evaluators will only know the players piney number - not their name. It is also highly recommended to not allow young players to wear “elite team” jerseys or socks.

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

Players will be informed by the off-ice administrators who are responsible for tracking evaluations, contacting parents and players and scheduling sessions. Players will not be informed at the rink but by an off-ice administrator via email with a 24-hour acceptance window.

VII. **Will the player be evaluated in a skill and game environment?**

In order to give each and every player a fair opportunity to exhibit the range of skills that they possess they will be evaluated in a game and skill 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 WHA. Refer to the evaluation guidelines for a full breakdown of the skill versus scrimmage evaluation ratio.

VIII. **How will the evaluation information be used?**

WHA will use the player evaluation information as a starting point for a season of development. Coaches shall understand why he or she has the team that they have been given, so that they will be better able to work on the skills required for that player to become more proficient.

GUIDELINES FOR THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Overall WHA Structure

The overall structure of WHA team creation will include the entire age group being ranked from top to bottom - players ranked from 1 to X and the teams are tiered. For example, the top 12-16 players will make up Team 1, the next 12-16 Team 2, etc.

For 14U and older age groups, players shall declare their intention to play offense or defense in tryouts. Players shall also indicate whether they would be willing to accept a team opening at a different position.

Team Selection Process

Independent evaluators and volunteer coaches from WHA, collectively the “evaluation panel,” shall conduct the evaluation scoring on the forms provided. The results will be compiled and examined by the Coaching Coordinator and two (2) WHA board members (“evaluation committee”). The projected head coach, in conjunction with the evaluation committee, shall finalize the selection of their roster.

There are several components to consider during the selection of a roster or when there are 2-3 teams in a single age group. The evaluation committee, through discussion with the head coach, shall work to determine the appropriate number of teams in the age group. Additionally, they will determine the appropriate number of players on each team. Several factors will dictate the outcome of this decision, including the number of players registered, the results of the evaluation process, the collective ability of the players within the age group and any other relevant matters which may present themselves during the examination process.

The goal of this process is to give the head coach the ability to dictate the roster size and direction of their team. Unless the evaluation committee unanimously disagrees with the head coach, the decisions of the head coach regarding roster size and selection shall be honored. Their collective recommendations regarding roster sizes and team selection shall be subject to approval by the board of directors, who shall give great consideration to the knowledge, information and expertise contained within the evaluation committee recommendation.

In the event that additional potential play-ups need to be added to a roster, the Evaluation Committee and head coach shall contact the player/family to determine if the player is interested in possibly playing-up in order to fill a roster at the higher age-level.

Player Selection Process

There are 9 key steps that WHA and the Evaluation Committee will tackle while going through the player selection process. The key steps are listed below and will be addressed throughout this document:

1. A decision on the categories, number of teams and make up of particular teams will be addressed on a case-by-case basis and approved by the Board of Directors. There are a variety of factors that will impact this decision including questions like: Will there be a AA team? Will there be a B team? How many players will be on a team? How many goaltenders per team? Who will be the head coach or assistant coach?
2. Policy on who is eligible for selection (i.e. playing in lower or higher age categories).
3. The components of the selection process including: meetings, practice sessions, off-ice sessions, exhibition games, etc.
4. A defined timeline for team selection. This would include when teams have to be finalized and movement of players during the season.
5. The selection criteria for the teams.
6. The allocation of authority on team selection (i.e. who makes the final decisions? Are there any steps necessary to avoid bias?).

7. The resources required for team selection. This item includes human resources (evaluation committee), facilities and equipment (everything from pucks to evaluation sheets).
8. A standard communication method for staff, players and parents.
9. A feedback and questioning process.

Evaluation Process

The evaluation process shall primarily involve:

- Objective criteria for selection;
- A panel of evaluators;
- An evaluation committee comprised of the Coaching Coordinator and designated Board Members; and
- An opportunity for unsuccessful candidates to generate a better understanding of why.

Furthermore, any changes to this process shall be established well in advance of when selection decisions are to be made. It will be communicated to all players following approval of the WHA Board of Directors.

Since all criteria may not be objective, steps will be taken to incorporate basic principles to guide the evaluation committee. For example, one criterion for selection to a team might be 'attitude'. Rather than leaving it up to a coach, panel of evaluators or evaluation committee to assess the attitude of an athlete during the evaluation process, the evaluation committee shall review the player's post-season report card which is a more structured measure or indicator of attitude. This [post-season report card](#) may contain information such as:

- Willingness of the athlete to take instruction and direction.
- Leadership qualities demonstrated by the athlete.
- Ability of the athlete to handle criticism and learn from mistakes.
- Respect exhibited by the athlete towards coaches, officials, spectators, opponents, etc.

Due to this subjective element in the selection criteria, and thus a certain amount of discretion, it is imperative that the evaluation committee be able to give reasons for their decision. As such, if a parent/player WHA will require the evaluation committee to put all decisions in writing, stating the reasons thereof. However, the organization should be careful that the reasons do not simply restate the criteria.

Coach Selection Process

Coaches are encouraged to submit applications for the upcoming season. A "projected" head coach may be assigned to various age groups and teams prior to the evaluation and tryout process. After tryout results are compiled by the Evaluation Committee, a final determination will be made regarding selection of the head coach which may be impacted by player evaluation scores.

There are occasions in which multiple coaches may apply for the "head coach" position in the same age group. Should this occur, the Coaching Coordinator shall make a recommendation to the Board for the appointment of a head coach. The Board of Directors shall have final authority to approve the appointment of each head coach and all coaching staff members.

Method for Notifying Parents and Finalizing Rosters following Tryouts

After completion of the evaluation process, the head coach will offer a roster spot to all players who were deemed to have made the team. This initial notification will be in the form of an email.

If there are multiple teams at an age-level, the players on the top team will be notified first. Within 48 hours after notification of the top team players, the second team will be notified, and so-on.

Upon receiving the notification, the player will have 24 hours to respond by e-mail as to whether they are accepting or rejecting the offer. The commitment fee will be returned if the player rejects the offer within the 24-hour requirement. Furthermore, your tryout does not guarantee you a spot on a team. Unfortunately, there are instances where we simply do not have a large enough enrollment to field teams at specific age groups or occasions where a player's skill does not match the team skill level.

Tryout Feedback

The evaluation committee has implemented a new policy designed to provide families with feedback regarding the placement of their player. If you wish to learn more about why your player was placed on a specific team, please reach out to the Coaching Coordinator with any questions. Upon receipt of this request, an evaluation committee member will work to prepare an email with responsive feedback to your inquiry.

In future years, we hope to conduct in-season and end of season reviews by your current coaching staff. The goals of these periodic reviews are to allow players to learn what they are doing well, what areas they need to work on and what coaches may be looking for during the current and future seasons.

Player Selection Appeal Process

An internal appeal mechanism is hereby established for the limited purpose of whether player selection was not made according to the rules or process, if the Evaluation Committee or coach were improperly biased or if the decision was grossly unfair or unreasonable. Any other reason including dissatisfaction with the player selection results, player placement, evaluation score, player report card, or appointment of head coach or assistant coach are not grounds for appeal.

Any appeal shall be made within 24 hours via email to the association President. The President shall evaluate whether the appellant has valid grounds for appeal. If no valid grounds for appeal exist, the President shall notify the appellant in writing that the appeal will not be heard. If valid grounds for appeal exist, the President shall then convene an appeal hearing before the Board of Directors within 60 days. The appellant shall present evidence and testimony to the Board. Following testimony, the Board of Directors shall close the hearing, begin deliberations and render a written decision via email within 24 hours.

Players Missing the Spring Tryout

Any player who misses the Spring tryouts will be given a separate tryout session at a later date. Historically a supplemental tryout has occurred in June of each year at a neighboring ice facility. For more information on this process, please reach out to the Board of Directors.

Parental Involvement

To ensure that we are able to provide a fair evaluation and minimize stress during the evaluation process we ask that parents refrain from distracting any skaters or evaluation personnel during the sessions. Please be guided by the following:

- Please keep away from the glass, benches and boxes during evaluation sessions.
- Parents shall only be seated in the stands during the evaluation sessions.
- Parents may not contact evaluators at any time before, during or after evaluations to discuss any part of the process or results.
- Please refrain from yelling, cheering and catcalling from the stands during the sessions. Players should be ready to remain focused on the on-ice proceedings without external influences.
- Evaluations can be a very stressful time for skaters and goaltenders. Please remember to provide a supporting environment for your children and keep the focus on having fun.

We appreciate your support in providing a fair, comprehensive and balanced evaluation process that will lead to a fun and successful upcoming WHA season.

ESTIMATED TIMELINE FOR PLAYER EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Task	Time	Responsibility
Schedule WHA tryout dates	January 20	Board of Directors
Distribute selection criteria and parameters to coaching staff	February 1	Coaching Coordinator
Identify required support staff	February 1	Board of Directors
Circulate selection criteria and parameters to parents and players	February 15	Coaching Coordinator
Communicate criteria and parameters to all decision makers	February 15	Coaching Coordinator
Prepare all materials and practice plans; Distribute to on-ice coaches	February 15 – February 25	Coaching Coordinator Evaluation Staff
Prepare evaluation equipment	March 20 – March 30	Coaching Coordinator Evaluation Staff
Conduct evaluation events	April 1 – April 20	Coaching Coordinator Coaching Staff Evaluation Staff
Collect evaluation materials; conduct evaluation meetings	During evaluations	Coaching Coordinator Head Coach Evaluation Staff
Select Players	Sunday through Thursday after evaluations	Head Coach Evaluation Committee
Interview players/parents, if necessary	Sunday through Thursday after evaluations	Coaching Coordinator Head Coach
Release information to public	Thursday following evaluations	Board of Directors

PLAYER SELECTION CRITERIA

The following general overview of the skills is a reference that will be provided to evaluators prior to the player selection process. An age specific skill list can be found on the following pages.

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 Control

Head up, 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 their head up while carrying the puck?
- Can they execute dekes and fakes with the puck?
- Can 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, goal scorer, 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 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?

Evaluators will be provided a copy of the summary cue card on the following page for easy reference during the evaluation sessions.

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 Control – 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, snapshot, slap shot
- Velocity
- Accuracy
- Shot Selection – do they select the best shot for the opportunity?

Game Understanding – Principles of Offence and Defense

- 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

GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT STAFF

On-ice Coaches

During the ice sessions there should be a minimum of one lead coach and 2 assistants for the duration of the session. 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.
- The warm-up should be controlled by the coaches to ensure a brisk and adequate stretch.
- 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 2nd 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 or other observers which may appear to bias or alter the process.
- Verify with evaluators that they have had ample time and opportunity to review players in the given drill.

Evaluator Guidelines

As much as possible there shall 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 shall:

- Make sure that all evaluators have the same evaluation page with the same piney numbers and colors.
- Review your marks at the end of the session to ensure you have not made any entry errors.
- Evaluation documents should be gathered by the Coaching Coordinator, or designated representative, 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 Coaching Coordinator or another WHA representative without offering comment on the question or complaint.

Coordinator 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, the Coaching Coordinator, or designated representative, 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 to have a strong communication structure to avoid missed selection times and player absenteeism. Here are a few guidelines that WHA shall adopt to keep stakeholders in the loop:

- Advise players and parents of the date, time, and location of their scheduled tryout date as soon as possible.
- Advise players to arrive a minimum of 30 minutes prior to the tryout in order to register and assign the proper jersey.
- If you leave a voice message provide all details for the scheduled tryout date and ensure you leave a call back number for the parent to confirm the time. Try to make contact directly even if a voice message has been left.

EVALUATION SESSION OUTLINE

Age Level	Total Ice Sessions	Tech. Skills Sessions	Weight	Scrimmage	Weight
Mite (8U)	N/A	N/A		N/A	
Squirt (10U)	3	2	66%	1	33%
Peewee (12U)	3	1	33%	2	66%
Bantam (14U)	3	1	33%	2	66%
Midget (16U)	3	1	33%	2	66%
Midget (18U)	3	1	33%	2	66%

EVALUATION FORMS AND SCORING

On the following pages are a [player report card](#) and [evaluation forms](#) that WHA will utilize. The player report card will be completed by the player’s current coaching staff. It will help to provide feedback to the player and parents. It may also be used by the evaluation committee and head coach to assist during the team selection process.

Evaluation forms will use a 1-5 scale (1 = POOR, 2 = BELOW AVERAGE, 3 = AVERAGE, 4 = ABOVE AVERAGE, 5 = OUTSTANDING). Evaluators will be instructed to use whole numbers (.5 or .25 are not permitted). The 1-5 scale has several purposes. It will allow evaluators to group players into similar categories.

For example, two skaters may be all-around AVERAGE caliber players. They may perform very similarly throughout the evaluation process. They likely performed very comparably throughout the season as well. All coaches and parents may agree that these skaters should be seen as equal to one another. Through the 1-5 scale, our goal is that one player would likely not stand out over the other skater

because it maintains consistency in the scoring system. We want to ensure that the evaluation scores accurately reflect the comparability of players and believe the 1-5 scale accomplishes that goal.

Evaluation scores will be compiled as follows. Each evaluator will fill out a new evaluation form during each night of evaluations. During the scrimmage(s), players will receive a 1-5 ranking on each night. During the skill evaluation, players will receive a 1-5 ranking for each station that they participate in. The sum of those scores will be averaged to give the player a total skill evaluation score from 1-5. See the example below.

Sample Evaluator Score Card for Player #215.

Scrimmage #1

#	POS	RANK 1,2,3,4,5	Comments
215	F	3	Good skater, hard shot. Quick starts. Struggles to see the ice and make accurate passes.

Scrimmage #2

#	POS	RANK 1,2,3,4,5	Comments
215	F	4	Smooth skater with sharp turning. Quality shot. Great effort backchecking and smart defensive player.

Skill Evaluation #1

Piney #	Drill 1	Drill 2	Drill 3	Drill 4	Drill 5	Drill 6	Player Average
215	2	4	3	3	3	4	3.16

Total Evaluation Score: 3 + 4 + 3.16 = 10.16

GOALTENDER EVALUATIONS

Overview

The evaluation of goaltenders requires specific attention outside of the regular player evaluation sessions. WHA will include the goaltenders in all sessions but also book separate goaltender specific evaluations. The goaltender specific evaluations shall include the following basic progression of skills:

1. Basic Skating Skill
2. Position-Specific movement skills
3. Positional/Save movement skills
4. Rebound – Control/Recovery/Tactical
5. Transitional Play
6. Advanced Positioning

Depending on the level of play and the age and development of the goaltender, the evaluation process for goaltenders may incorporate all 6 of these basic areas. For the coming season, WHA intends to use an outside organization to conduct goaltender specific evaluations to assess these various skills.

DETAILED PLAYER EVALUATION BY CURRENT COACH – Player Report Card

Player Name:		Position:				
1 = Poor; 2 = Below Average; 3 = Average; 4 = Above Average; 5 = Outstanding						
Skating	Acceleration, speed, mobility, agility, balance, stride, crossovers, pivots, acceleration out of turns, quick feet, controlled skating, change of pace.					
	1	2	3	4	5	
Comments						
Passing	Passing, receiving, passing choices, on backhand, unselfish with the puck, presents a good target, receives and retains with control, touch passing.					
	1	2	3	4	5	
Comments						
Puckhandling	Head up, smooth and quiet, good hands, protection, in small spaces, in traffic.					
	1	2	3	4	5	
Comments						
Shooting	Power, accuracy, quick release, shoot in motion, goal scorer, rebounder, variety of shots.					
	1	2	3	4	5	
Comments						
Body Position Skills	Concept of angling, good body position with balance and control, defensive side position, aggressive checker, strength, taking checks.					
	1	2	3	4	5	
Comments						
Thinking Skills	Ability to see the play developing both offensively and defensively and moves to support, judgment, anticipation, understands systems, disciplined.					
	1	2	3	4	5	
Comments						
1 v 1 Offensive	Deception, change of pace, creativity, determination, going to the net, filling gaps.					
	1	2	3	4	5	
Comments						
1 v 1 Defensive	Gap control, angling, finishing checks, positioning, play at offensive blue line, play at defensive blue line, front of the net, in small spaces.					
	1	2	3	4	5	
Comments						
Faceoffs	Win-lose draw, ability to tie up, takes charge, breaks through picks, know responsibilities.					
	1	2	3	4	5	
Comments						

Completed By: _____

Date: _____

Player Name:			Position:		
1 = Poor; 2 = Below Average; 3 = Average; 4 = Above Average; 5 = Outstanding					
Fitness Level	Physically fit, physically tough, not prone to injuries.				
	1	2	3	4	5
Determination/ Drive/Intensity/ Work Ethic	Constant desire to excel in all situations, constant work ethic in practices and games, never gives up, fire in their eyes.				
	1	2	3	4	5
Coachability	Listens to instructions and executes to the best of their ability, takes tips and advice, asks questions, admits errors, show that they want to learn.				
	1	2	3	4	5
Concentration	Ability to remain focused on the task at hand, not distracted by fans, referees, external circumstances.				
	1	2	3	4	5
Mental Toughness	Not easily discouraged, rebounds from errors, performs well under pressure.				
	1	2	3	4	5
Discipline	Controls temper, follows team rules, sticks to game plan.				
	1	2	3	4	5
Positive Team Player	Unselfish, puts team before self, remains positive, will accept role.				
	1	2	3	4	5
Leadership	Leads by example, encourages others, respected by teammates.				
	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

Completed By:

Date:

GENERAL FORM FOR EVALUATION OF ALL PLAYERS – Scrimmage

Evaluator Name:	Date:	5 – Outstanding/Dominant 4 – Above Average 3 – Average 2 – Below Average 1 – Poor
Session No.:		

#	POS	RANK 1,2,3,4,5	Comments
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GENERAL FORM FOR EVALUATION OF ALL PLAYERS – Skills (100)

Evaluator Name:		5 – Outstanding/Dominant 4 – Above Average 3 – Average 2 – Below Average 1 – Poor					
Session No.:		Date:					
Piney #	Drill 1	Drill 2	Drill 3	Drill 4	Drill 5	Drill 6	Player Average
Please list any comments on the back of this page next to player piney #. Thank you							
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GENERAL FORM FOR EVALUATION OF ALL PLAYERS – Skills (100)

Evaluator Name:					5 – Outstanding/Dominant 4 – Above Average 3 – Average 2 – Below Average 1 – Poor		
Session No.:			Date:				
Piney #	Drill 1	Drill 2	Drill 3	Drill 4	Drill 5	Drill 6	Player Average
Please list any comments on the back of this page next to player piney #. Thank you							
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GENERAL FORM FOR EVALUATION OF ALL PLAYERS – Skills (200)

Evaluator Name:		5 – Outstanding/Dominant 4 – Above Average 3 – Average 2 – Below Average 1 – Poor					
Session No.:		Date:					
Piney #	Drill 1	Drill 2	Drill 3	Drill 4	Drill 5	Drill 6	Player Average
Please list any comments on the back of this page next to player piney #. Thank you							
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GENERAL FORM FOR EVALUATION OF ALL PLAYERS – Skills (200)

Evaluator Name:					5 – Outstanding/Dominant			
Session No.:					Date:			4 – Above Average
								3 – Average
					2 – Below Average			
					1 – Poor			
Piney #	Drill 1	Drill 2	Drill 3	Drill 4	Drill 5	Drill 6	Player Average	
Please list any comments on the back of this page next to player piney #. Thank you								
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FEEDBACK & REFLECTION FORMS

It is important as an association to consistently be looking for ways to improve our system of player evaluation. In order to gather appropriate feedback, we are providing players, parents, and administrators an opportunity to reflect on their experience in the process. This Feedback & Reflection Form shall be distributed to parents after the evaluation process has been completed. *This survey shall remain confidential. Please be sure to fill out a survey for each child if you have more than one child as part of the association.*

Please identify your player by age, experience and hockey level:		
Age:	Years Playing:	Current level:
Do you feel your child was assessed fairly through the player report card?	Yes	No
Comments:		
Do you feel the initial communication from the association regarding the player evaluation process was clearly defined?	Yes	No
Comments:		
Do you think there were enough sessions set up for fair evaluation of the players?	Yes	No
Comments:		
Were the timelines for progression through the evaluation process and the skills and drills phases, well organized and well communicated?	Yes	No
Comments:		
Were the on-ice assessments explained and well run while the players were on the ice?	Yes	No
Comments:		
Was the communication to your son or daughter to inform them of their standing within the program appropriate?	Yes	No
Comments:		
Were you and your child satisfied with team that the player was placed on?	Yes	No
Comments:		
Do you think it would be valuable to have an assessment of “skills for the player to work on” as part of the evaluation follow-up?	Yes	No
Comments:		
Other Feedback:		

EVALUATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS AGE 7 -10

(Participative, Instructional, FUNdamental Stage)

Skills	Strategy and Tactics	Game/Activity Modifications	Degree of Competition	Other Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present skills that are simple, large motor skills and not harmful to the growing body • Include activities that involve aerobic fitness, flexibility, body awareness and movement patterns • Emphasize the development of self-esteem, confidence, peer interaction and cooperation • Emphasize fun, effort, enthusiasm and putting winning and losing in perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement simple strategies that encourage the players to take part in the activity and practice their skills • Emphasize the learning of skills not the learning of tactics and strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play simple modified versions of the game to emphasize the individual skills of the game • Use modified, scaled down equipment • Base success on progress and multiple incentives not just winning and losing • Avoid specialization in position or event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use low key competition, balance the degree of competition • Allow boys and girls to compete together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage participants to participate in other sports and recommend sports that compliment hockey well • Remind young players of the importance of nutrition and its role in keeping the body healthy and active.

Generally during this stage of development players will:

- Acquire the physical, cognitive and social skills necessary for proficiency in games
- Start to understand the idea, function and arbitrary nature of rules within the games
- Improve their perceptual motor skills, such as hand eye coordination
- Learn to interact with peers
- Start formulating a self-concept
- Develop a system of conscience morality and value judgments.

Note: Most of the sessions are stationed oriented. For the best results 3 evaluators should be assigned to evaluate each station and only that station. This ensures continuity and consistency on the evaluation of a particular skill.

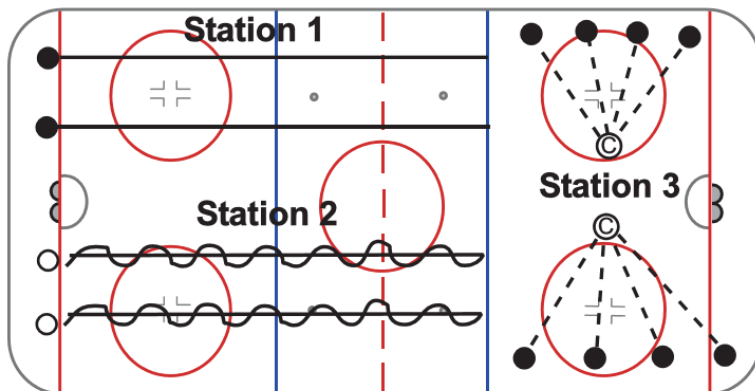
10U EVALUATION SESSION

10U Ice Session 1

General Objective:	Skating and Puck Control Skill Evaluation	
Specific Skills Being Evaluated:	Forward Skating Backward Skating Stationary Passing and Pass Receiving Skating with Puck Stopping	Tight Turns Agility/Acceleration with puck Passing and Pass Receiving Skating with puck

Overview

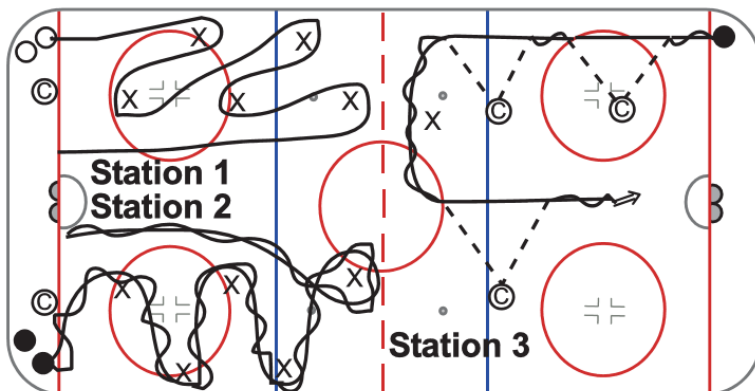
Warm-up	Stretch and Skate <i>Explanation/Drill Set Up</i>	5 minutes
	<i>Break Into Stations</i>	2 minutes
Three (3) Stations	1 Forward and Backward Skating 2 Skating with Puck 3 Passing and Receiving – Stationary	30 minutes (10 minutes per station)
	<i>Explanation/Drill Set Up/Cool Down</i>	5 minutes
Three (3) Stations	1 Tight Turns, Crossover 2 Agility Skate with Puck 3 Passing and Receiving in Motion	30 minutes (10 minutes per station)
	<i>Finish/Drill Tear Down</i>	3 minutes
		75 minutes



Station 1
Forward and Backward Striding - down and back

Station 2
Skating with the Puck forward - down and back

Station 3
Stationary Passing and Receiving with Coaches



Station 1
Forward skating without a puck, tight turns around the pylons

Station 2
Skating with the Puck forward - around the pylons, full 360 around last pylon

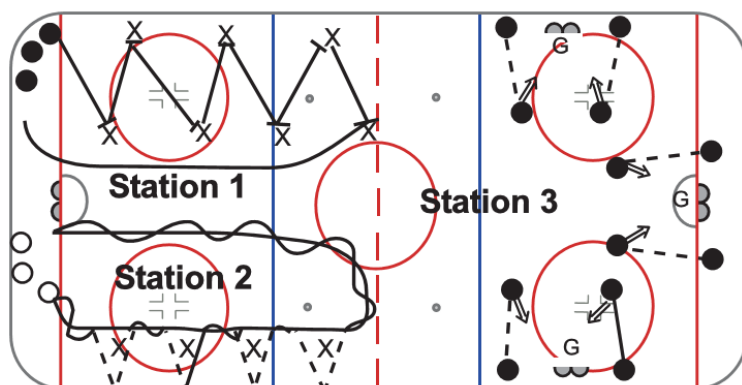
Station 3
Passing and Receiving in motion with Coaches - finish with shot

10U Ice Session 2

General Objective:	Skating and Puck Control Skill Evaluation	
Specific Skills Being Evaluated:	Starts and Stops Forehand Shooting Backhand Shooting Skating with Puck Bank pass and angles Edge Control	Tight Turns Agility/Acceleration with puck Passing and Pass Receiving Skating with puck

Overview

Warm-up	Stretch and Skate <i>Explanation/Drill Set Up</i>	5 minutes
	<i>Break into Stations</i>	2 minutes
Three (3) Stations	1 Stops and Starts – Edge Control 2 Forehand and Backhand Shooting 3 Skating with Puck and Bank Pass	30 minutes (10 minutes per station)
	<i>Explanation/Drill Set Up/Cool Down</i>	5 minutes
Three (3) Stations	1 Tight Turns, Crossover 2 Agility Skate with Puck 3 Passing and Receiving in Motion	30 minutes (10 minutes per station)
	<i>Finish/Drill Tear Down</i>	3 minutes
		75 minutes



Station 1

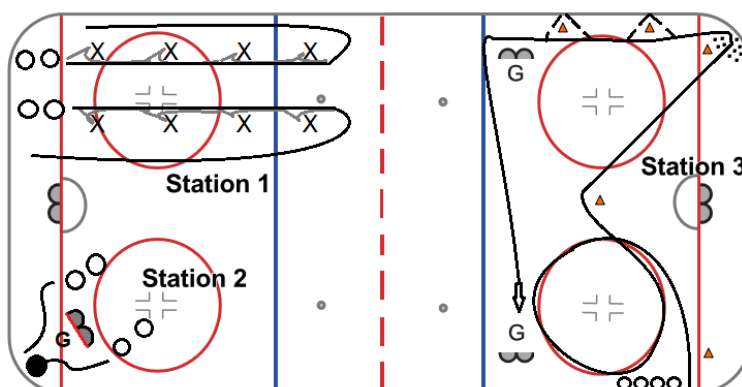
Stop at each pylon, accelerate to the next pylon and stop. Feet should always face the far end when stopping

Station 2

Forward skating with the puck, player will bank the puck off the boards before each pylon and pick it up on the other side

Station 3

Player receives a pass from behind the net and shoots. 5 shots on forehand, 5 on backhand and then switch passers and shooters



Station 1

Players set up in two lines. Players skate along one side of cones and display puck handling ability and control by doing stickhandling/toe drags.

Station 2 Players will compete in small area puck battle. Coach will put puck off wall and allow opportunity for players to showcase offensive/defensive capability.

Station 3 Players will line up along wall. Full circle crossovers. At cone, transition backwards to corner. Transition forward with puck. Bank off wall, around net and take shot. Switch sides after 5 minutes.

10U Ice Session 3

Scrimmage – Full or Half Ice	75 Minutes
Objectives	General Game Understanding Participation in on-ice activity – Does the player participate in and influence the outcome? Evaluation – evaluators should be able to identify top 1/3, middle 1/3 and bottom 1/3

Ranking Criteria

Skating	Can the player play with and without the puck? How does the player skate in the game situation?
Passing and Receiving	Does the player share the puck? What is the quality of the passes? Does the player support the puck carrier?
Work Ethic	What is the player's attitude toward the scrimmage? Does the player have a willingness to work? Does the player demonstrate team play or individual play?
General Feelings	Does the player rate in the top, middle or bottom?

EVALUATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS AGE 11-14

(TRANSITIONAL DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE)

Skills	Strategy and Tactics	Game/Activity Modifications	Degree of Competition	Other Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to see refinement in the technical skills • Include activities that involve aerobic fitness, flexibility, body awareness and movement patterns • Emphasize the development of self-esteem, confidence, peer interaction and cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce more intricate tactics and strategies • Utilize the understanding of tactics and strategy as an indicator of a players' ability to utilize their skills in the game environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play simple modified versions of the game to emphasize the individual skills of the game and build toward full games and activities at the end of evaluation phase • Base success on progress and multiple incentives not just winning and losing • Do not promote specialization in position or event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize well-structured competitive experiences • Separate boys and girls in competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize that hockey is a game that promotes and develops life skills, not just hockey skills • Remind young players of the importance of nutrition and its role in keeping the body healthy and active.

Generally during this stage of development players will:

- Develop the social, cognitive, language and motor skills necessary for individual and group participation Adapt to the physical and physiological changes affecting their body
- Establish senses of independence and identification
- Acquire the moral concepts, values and attitudes that make it possible to relate meaningfully to society
- Participate in competitive sport. Note that intense competition is not recommended until the latter part of this age group.

12U/14U EVALUATION SESSION

12U/14U Ice Session 1

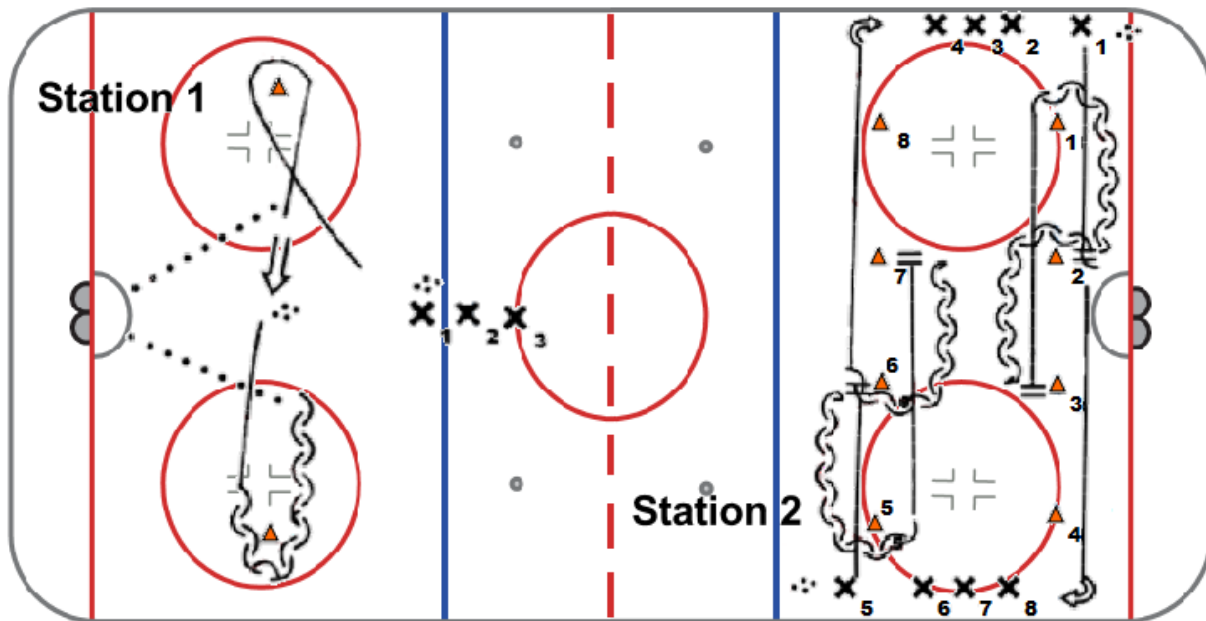
General Objective:	Skating and Puck Control Skill Evaluation Individual Tactics	
Specific Skills Being Evaluated:	Forward/Backward Skating Transitions Skating with Puck Shooting in Motion	
	Defense Pressure/Contain Gap Control Positioning Body Contact/Checking	Forwards Walkouts Skating Fakes Net Drive Protecting the Puck

Overview

Warm-up	Stretch and Skate <i>Explanation/Drill Set Up</i>	5 minutes
	<i>Break into Stations</i>	<i>2 minutes</i>
Two (2) Stations	1. Shooting in Motion 2. Transition Skating	20 minutes (10 minutes per station)
	<i>Explanation/Drill Set Up/Cool Down</i>	<i>3 minutes</i>
Two (2) Stations	3. Skating with Puck 4. Passing and Shooting in Motion	20 minutes (10 minutes per station)
	<i>Explanation/Drill Set Up/Cool Down</i>	<i>3 minutes</i>
Two (2) Stations	5. Walkouts, Pressure, Contain 6. 1 on 1 attacks, Gap Control, Net Drive	20 minutes (10 minutes per station)
	<i>Finish/Drill Tear Down</i>	<i>2 minutes</i>
		75 minutes

Drills listed on next page

12U/14U Ice Session 1 (Continued)



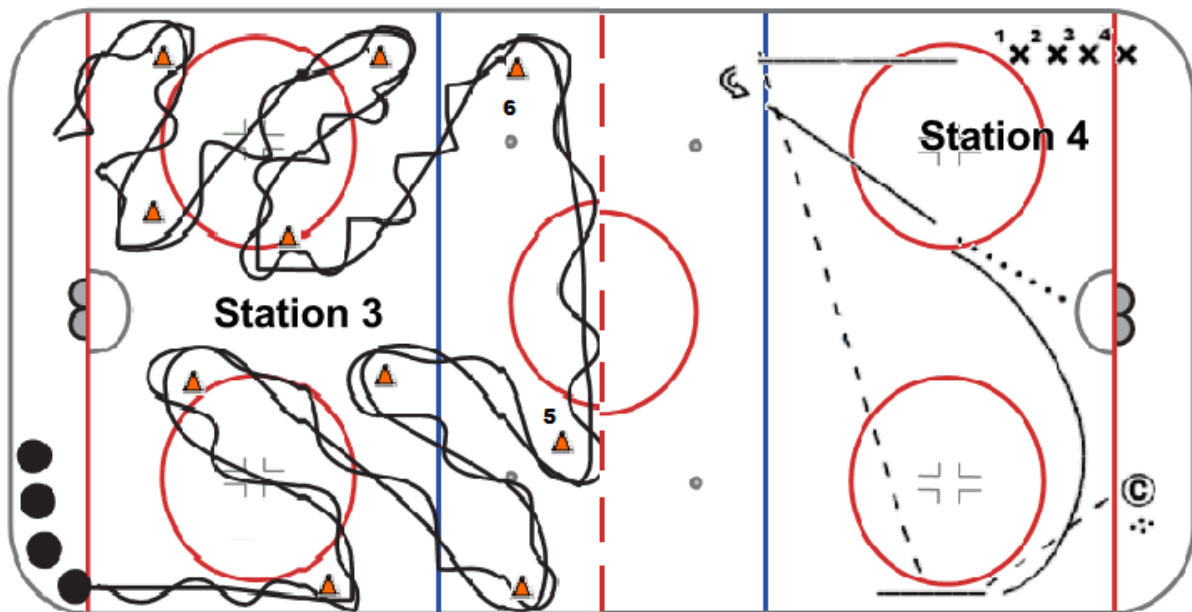
Station 1

Player 1 starts with a puck and skates toward the first cone. Player completes a tight turn around cone and shoots forehand shot. Player will then skate towards other cone and pick up puck. Player will transition backwards before the cone and skate around the cone backwards. Player will continue to skate backwards with the puck and shoot a forehand shot. Next player in line will start as soon as the player in front of them shoots their second shot. **Right handed player will transition backwards at first cone and skate forwards at second cone. All shots shall occur on the forehand.

Station 2

Player 1 starts with the puck and skates to cone 2. Player stops facing the cone and transitions into skating backwards around cone 1. Player transitions to forward and skates to cone 3. Player stops facing cone 3 and transitions backwards around cone 2. Player transitions forward past cone 4 and into the corresponding line. Player 5 starts the same time as player 1 and completes the same drill.

Next player in each line starts when the player in front of them transitions backwards around cone 2 and is skating towards cone 4.



Station 3

Forward skating with the puck, player performs tight turns around the pylons. At cone 5, player will skate backwards to the end. Evaluators should be watching for acceleration out of the turn and ability to control the puck on the forehand and backhand.

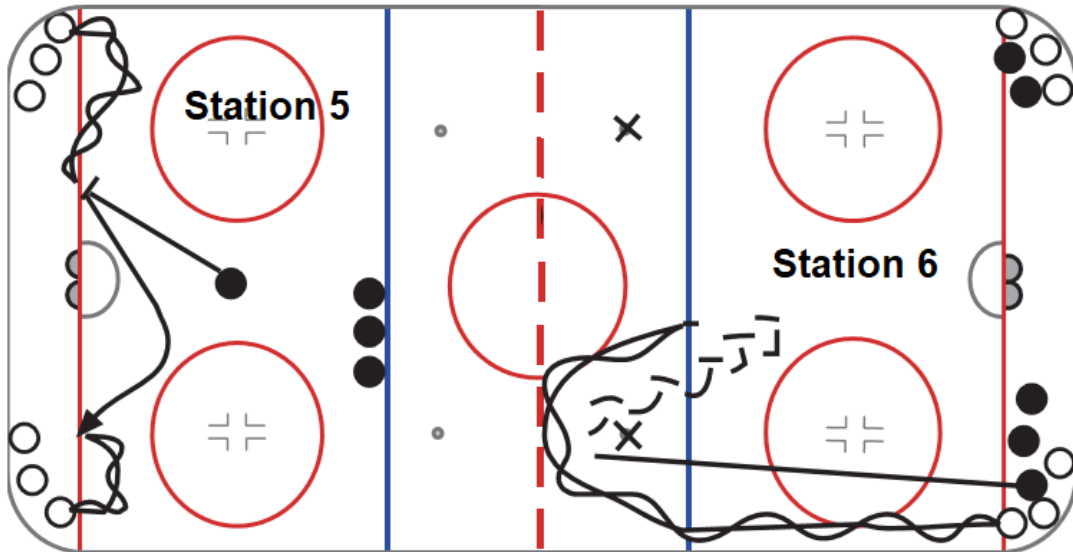
Station 4

Player 1 starts drill with a puck. Player skates toward red line and curls back towards the goal. Player shoots before the hash marks. After shot, player continues skating towards the boards and opens up for a breakout pass from coach. After receiving pass, player skates with puck and makes pass to Player 2. Player 2 catches cross ice pass and curls before red line. Repeats drill above.

Player 2 starts skating towards red line when Player 1 catches break out pass from the coach.

After Player completes cross ice pass, the player should skate across the ice to get back in line.

12U/14U Ice Session 1 (Continued)



Station 5

Out of both ends. On the whistle one of the two forwards walkouts of the corner. The D-man net front reads and moves to play the 1 on 1. On second whistle D returns to net front and plays one on one out of other corner. After rep on each side, D and F change. Add a 2nd F out of corner to make it a 2 on 1

Station 6

Out of opposite corners on the whistle the puck carrying forward drives out toward centre ice red line and attacks back on net. D mirrors F, pivots around the pylon and plays the 1 on 1 coming back. D must maintain tight gap. F must read gap. Add a second forward out of the corner to make it a 2 on 1 attack.

12U/14U Ice Session 2 and 3

Scrimmage – Full or Half Ice	75 Minutes
Objectives	General Game Understanding Participation in on-ice activity – Does the player participate in and influence the outcome? Evaluation – evaluators should be able to identify top 1/3, middle 1/3 and bottom 1/3

Ranking Criteria

Skating	Can the player play with and without the puck? How does the player skate in the game situation?
Passing and Receiving	Does the player share the puck? What is the quality of the passes? Does the player support the puck carrier?
Work Ethic	What is the player's attitude toward the scrimmage? Does the player have a willingness to work? Does the player demonstrate team play or individual play?
General Feelings	Does the player rate in the top, middle or bottom?

EVALUATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS AGE 15-17

(TRANSITIONAL DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE)

Skills	Strategy and Tactics	Game/Activity Modifications	Degree of Competition	Other Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach and refine all skills of the sport • Train both the aerobic and anaerobic systems • Follow a strength-training program • Practice flexibility skills • Foster athlete responsibility • Practice and refine coping strategies • Continue to refine pre-competitive and competitive strategies • Practice and refine concentration abilities • Continue to build the participant's confidence and self-esteem • Continue to emphasize 100% effort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach and refine all the strategies and tactics of the sport • Continue to use individual and group goal setting • Use multiple incentives to motivate participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play the full game or activity rather than a modified version • Emphasize specialization in position or event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in demanding, high-level competition • Use league standings and playoff where appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop lifelong skills outside sport • Continue to participate in lifetime sports and sports that complement the main sport(s) • Continue to develop healthy diet habits

Generally during this stage of development players will:

- Reach full skeletal maturity and their final height.
- Improve their communication and social skills.
- Become more independent.

16U/18U EVALUATION SESSION

16U/18U Ice Session 1

General Objective:	Skating and Puck Control Skill Evaluation Individual Tactics	
Specific Skills Being Evaluated:	Forward/Backward Skating Transitions Skating with Puck Shooting in Motion	
	Defense Pressure/Contain Gap Control Positioning Body Contact/Checking	Forwards Walkouts Skating Fakes Net Drive Protecting the Puck

Overview

Warm-up	Stretch and Skate <i>Explanation/Drill Set Up</i>	5 minutes
	<i>Break into Stations</i>	<i>2 minutes</i>
Two (2) Stations	1. Shooting in Motion 2. Transition Skating	20 minutes (10 minutes per station)
	<i>Explanation/Drill Set Up/Cool Down</i>	<i>3 minutes</i>
Two (2) Stations	3. Skating with Puck 4. Passing and Shooting in Motion	20 minutes (10 minutes per station)
	<i>Explanation/Drill Set Up/Cool Down</i>	<i>3 minutes</i>
Two (2) Stations	5. Walkouts, Pressure, Contain 6. 1 on 1 attacks, Gap Control, Net Drive	20 minutes (10 minutes per station)
	<i>Finish/Drill Tear Down</i>	<i>2 minutes</i>
		75 minutes

Drills listed on next page

16U/18U Ice Session 1 (Continued)



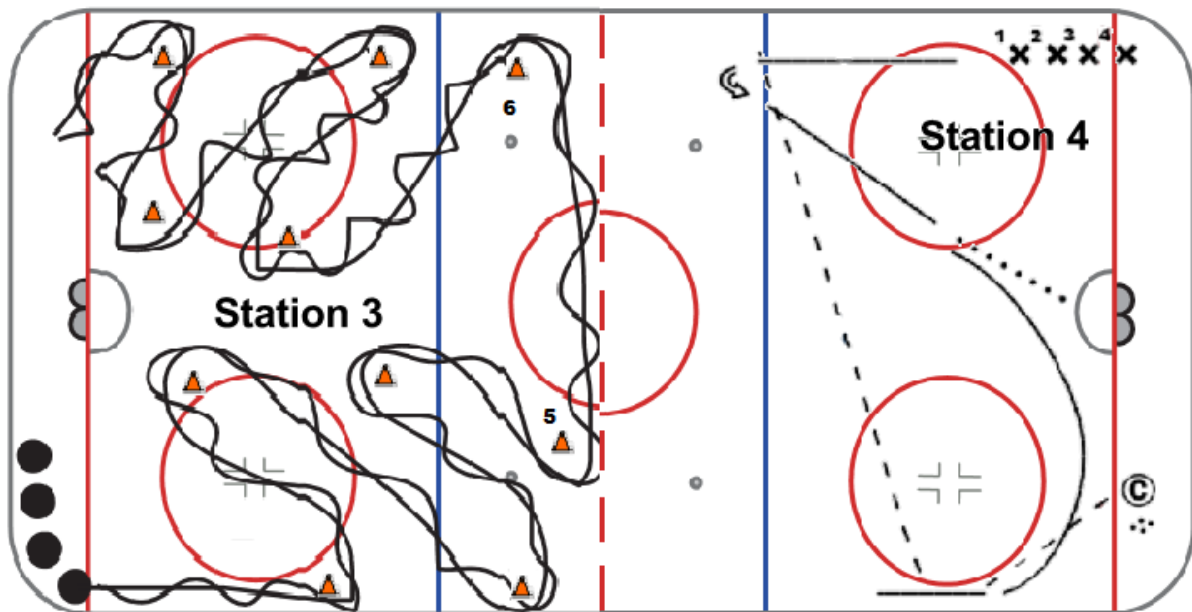
Station 1

Player 1 starts with a puck and skates toward the first cone. Player completes a tight turn around cone and shoots forehand shot. Player will then skate towards other cone and pick up puck. Player will transition backwards before the cone and skate around the cone backwards. Player will continue to skate backwards with the puck and shoot a forehand shot. Next player in line will start as soon as the player in front of them shoots their second shot. **Right handed player will transition backwards at first cone and skate forwards at second cone. All shots shall occur on the forehand.

Station 2

Player 1 starts with the puck and skates to cone 2. Player stops facing the cone and transitions into skating backwards around cone 1. Player transitions to forward and skates to cone 3. Player stops facing cone 3 and transitions backwards around cone 2. Player transitions forward past cone 4 and into the corresponding line. Player 5 starts the same time as player 1 and completes the same drill.

Next player in each line starts when the player in front of them transitions backwards around cone 2 and is skating towards cone 4.



Station 3

Forward skating with the puck, player performs tight turns around the pylons. At cone 5, player will skate backwards to the end. Evaluators should be watching for acceleration out of the turn and ability to control the puck on the forehand and backhand.

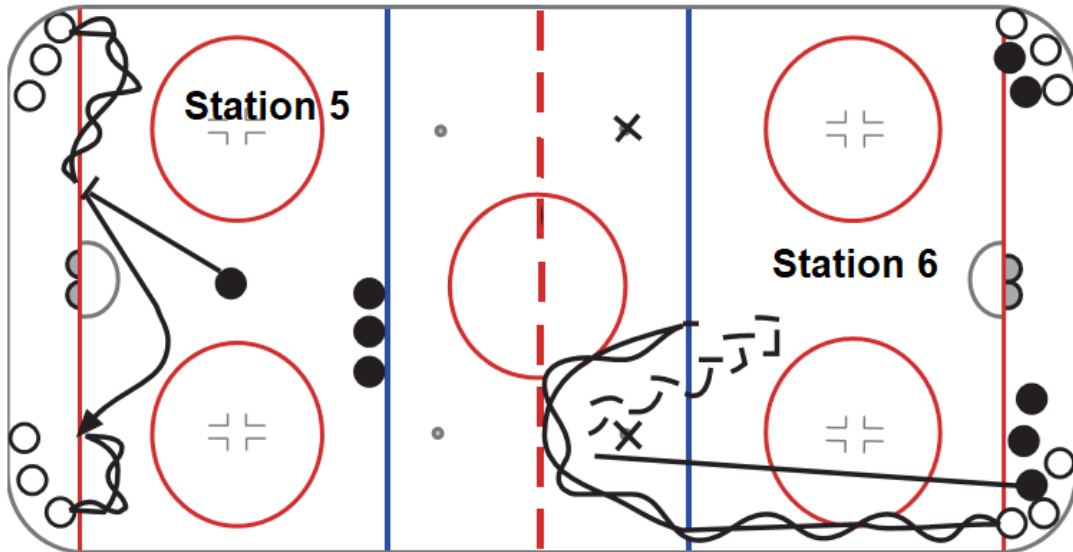
Station 4

Player 1 starts drill with a puck. Player skates toward red line and curls back towards the goal. Player shoots before the hash marks. After shot, player continues skating towards the boards and opens up for a breakout pass from coach. After receiving pass, player skates with puck and makes pass to Player 2. Player 2 catches cross ice pass and curls before red line. Repeats drill above.

Player 2 starts skating towards red line when Player 1 catches break out pass from the coach.

After Player completes cross ice pass, the player should skate across the ice to get back in line.

16U/18U Ice Session 1 (Continued)



Station 5

Out of both ends. On the whistle one of the two forwards walkouts of the corner. The D-man net front reads and moves to play the 1 on 1. On second whistle D returns to net front and plays one on one out of other corner. After rep on each side, D and F change. Add a 2nd F out of corner to make it a 2 on 1

Station 6

Out of opposite corners on the whistle the puck carrying forward drives out toward centre ice red line and attacks back on net. D mirrors F, pivots around the pylon and plays the 1 on 1 coming back. D must maintain tight gap. F must read gap. Add a second forward out of the corner to make it a 2 on 1 attack.

16U/18U Ice Session 2 and 3

Scrimmage – Full or Half Ice	75 Minutes
Objectives	General Game Understanding Participation in on-ice activity – Does the player participate in and influence the outcome? Evaluation – evaluators should be able to identify top 1/3, middle 1/3 and bottom 1/3

Ranking Criteria

Skating	Can the player play with and without the puck? How does the player skate in the game situation?
Passing and Receiving	Does the player share the puck? What is the quality of the passes? Does the player support the puck carrier?
Work Ethic	What is the player's attitude toward the scrimmage? Does the player have a willingness to work? Does the player demonstrate team play or individual play?
General Feelings	Does the player rate in the top, middle or bottom?

APPENDICES

Positional Specialization

One question that will often be raised during the evaluation process is – When should a player declare the position that they want to play? There is a tremendous amount of research that supports the belief that a child should not specialize early. In fact, the longer an athlete avoids specialization (especially in an open-ended dynamic game like hockey) potentially the greater skill they will gain to play all positions.

In 'The Parents' Guide to Minor Hockey' a current AHL player claims: "I only ever played defense, and then one day my coach put me on right wing. It was so hard at first to make the transition. My whole game was thrown off. There I was in the middle of everything and I just couldn't read the ice as well. I started to watch the forwards on video, on ice and I asked the coaches and forwards lots of questions. I can't believe that a few years later I am still playing forward. I know now how important it is to be able to play different positions when the coach needs you to. I just wish I had been more versatile when I was younger."²

"Skills and overall athletic conditioning in young hockey players which would normally provide for the entertainment aspect of the game are absent. To compensate for this, coaches use other tactics. One of these is the so-called position approach that dominates the game. According to this the child is required to strictly play his own position. If he happens to take control of the puck, he must either shoot or pass it to another member of the team as quickly as possible. The use of this position approach in the game between children who lack even the basic skills results in the sadly-famous "bump in, bump out" tactics; right after getting the puck, the child flings it, often in no particular direction. This leaves the impression that he is afraid of the puck and wants to get rid of it as fast as possible. Most of the time, the kids are not playing with the puck, but are chasing it."³

With this type of information in mind it is highly recommended that positional specialization for players does not exist until 12U-14U at the earliest (10U for goaltenders). At minimum, players trying out at the squirt level and below should not pre-select a position. The selection of players at these levels should be on their overall hockey skills and ability to "play" the game.

² K. Hartwig O'Connor, *The Parents' Guide to Minor Hockey: Stickhandling Through Your Son's First 15 Years of Hockey in Canada and the U.S.*, (Hillside Printing, 2001).

³ Dr. Yasha Smushkin, *Mastering Hockey Agility*, (Canadian Ice Skating Institute Inc., 1998).

Releasing Players

One of the toughest tasks a coach faces is telling players they did not make the team. Although difficult, releasing players must be approached with planning and sensitivity to ensure try-outs are a growth experience, not one which damages players' self-esteem.

The first step is effective planning of your try-out sessions. Develop a clear player selection plan, taking into consideration the number of players, the qualities you are looking for, how to evaluate these qualities, and the ice-time available.

Once your plan is in place, inform players and parents of all details. Outline your player selection plan, including evaluation criteria, objectives of drills and scrimmages and timelines for selection. Clear communication here will prevent misunderstandings later.

Before you make decisions to release players, develop a clear plan to inform them. Never post a list or read the names of players to be released in front of the team. Endeavor to meet with each player individually. Here are suggestions for these meetings:

- Be honest and straightforward.
- Tell players why they did not make the team, identify strengths and weaknesses.
- Invite questions and provide players with constructive feedback to guide further improvement.
- Don't make future promises.
- Direct players to other teams, thank them for their efforts, and encourage them to work hard and improve.

After releasing players, be prepared to answer questions from parents. Be honest and straightforward with parents and avoid confrontations.

Remember, try-outs are a vehicle to place players on teams where they will benefit most. Releasing players is never easy, however, it's really important to meet with players one-on-one!