

Evaluations:

Bantams, Peewees, and Squirts will be evaluated and placed on teams with other players of comparable ability (expect a roster announcement Saturday Oct. 12). We remind our Mite (U8) families: player evaluations occur over multiple weeks and therefore rosters will not be determined for some time until games start on November 2nd. For our U6 families, there are no tryouts and skaters will be placed on equally balanced teams.

We realize this is a process filled with emotion. We want to provide you with some information about the evaluation process, to increase transparency.

What is the purpose of team placements? MYHA is a member of USA hockey and follows its carefully researched principles. One of the most important principles is the grouping of players of like ability on the same team. This is a cornerstone of a player's development. It is important in both practice and games for players to be grouped by similar ability whenever possible. Skaters will get more puck touches, experience more puck battles, and will be more involved overall when playing with players of comparable ability. The goal is for skaters to thrive, enjoy the game, and improve. Skaters placed on A, B or C teams are not relegated to those teams for the rest of their playing careers; rather, they are placed on those teams to maximize their improvement and give them the best possibility of moving up to a higher level team in the subsequent year.

Why the black plastic sheeting - are you trying to hide something? The rink will look a little different during team placements. You'll find black plastic sheeting obscuring the windows and doors of the lobby into the rink area. Why do we do this? Because MYHA conducts what is known as a 'closed' evaluation. During player evaluation/team placement week, parents can help their skaters dress when appropriate for age level, and then are welcome to remain in the lobby but we ask them to exit the main rink area for the duration of the ice session. If you visit online discussion forums, there is a longstanding and spirited debate about the strengths and weaknesses of open and closed player evaluations. We believe closed evaluations provide additional benefit to our skaters that enables them to concentrate, recover quickly from mistakes, and be their best outside the watchful and sometimes judgmental eyes of spectators. Do you ever notice that the first thing your skater does when they take the ice for a game is find their family? They often glance over between faceoffs to ensure you're watching, and again after making a great play to ensure you've caught it. They're watching for your approval. They also know you're watching when they make mistakes, and this can sometimes impede their recovery from those mistakes. We realize watching your skaters participate in the game they love brings you great joy. But for this one specific week, we think it is easier on them, on you, and on our evaluators if evaluations are conducted privately. We want your skaters to perform their best. We

also want our evaluators to be free of distraction; to move around the rink as needed to concentrate on the evaluation process. The silence of a closed evaluation also enables our coaches to explain drills without outside noises. It makes the process more efficient.

What happens behind that black sheeting and who is in charge? We'd like to describe the evaluation process to demystify it. The coaching committee (an elected committee representing all three arms of our membership – Parents, Coaches and Board Members) met in August to develop and vote on the team placement process and the process will be conducted as planned.

During knock the rust off skates, players are introduced to the drills and small area games that are used in team placement week and given scrimmage time to learn and practice before evaluation.

During team placement week, players will initially be randomized in groups so they can complete station-based drills. A series of drills, small-sided games and scrimmages will be used to evaluate skating agility, technique, balance and speed, puck control, passing shooting, angling, positioning and game awareness. Group members may change after the first ice session to facilitate evaluation. Goalies will be evaluated separately and in combination with other players. We will also consider coachability as part of our placement process.

MYHA coaches and unaffiliated outside hockey experts will serve as evaluators. To minimize conflicts of interest, evaluators will not be allowed to evaluate their own family members. In fact, evaluators will not even be allowed to evaluate skaters at the same age levels as their family members.

For example, peewee players will be evaluated by non-related bantam, squirt and mite coaches. The peewee coaches will be on the ice during peewee evaluations, to set up and demonstrate drills, but not to score the peewee skaters. Players will be identified by pinny number, not by name, and scored on a 1-5 scale. Each player will be evaluated by at least four separate evaluators. For every drill observed, evaluators will record their numerical scores and report them anonymously to the age level directors, who will calculate mean scores to determine each player's preliminary rank.

Final decisions will be made by coaches at the player's age level, using evaluation scores as the major determinant of placement. When it comes time to place a coach's own skater on a team, the coach will be considered in conflict, leave the room, and the skater will be placed on a team by the remaining coaches. The conversation about a coach's own skater is confidential and not shared with the coach. A coach's committee representative, not affiliated with the age level under discussion and not related to any of the players in the discussion, will be present for final placements to ensure the

coach's committee rules are strictly followed. Player evaluation scores are confidential and are not shared beyond the coaches who place the skater on a team.

Goalie Placements When placing goalies the following things will be taken into consideration

- Percent of time wanting to play goalie
- Goalie tryout score
- Skater tryout score
- Best place to develop skills

Remember, we're all playing for McFarland. After we are divided into teams, most of our age level teams will practice together throughout the season. We want you to realize, and remind your players, they all play for the same team – the McFarland Spartans / Jr. Icebergs. We expect them to support each other, mentor each other, cheer for each other, fill each other's emotional buckets, and rise and fall together with each win and loss.

At the end of the day, we are here to have fun and play hockey! Per our bylaws, you can expect your skater to be treated equal to the fullest extent of our bylaws purpose:

Section 1.04 Purpose. The purpose of this organization is to provide the opportunity for our youth to engage in playing the sport of hockey. The Association shall promote the philosophy of team sportsmanship and fair play. All participants will be granted equal opportunity based on participation

Before you object, cool down! We will implement a 'cool down period' after the team placements email is sent out. We will not be taking any placement concerns (emails or otherwise), for 48 hours after the team placement email is released. The hope is that this will allow people to take a moment, consider the placement and "cool down", if needed, before they decide to contact coaches regarding the decision and so that any conversations that are had are focused on the skaters best interest and not done in the heat of the moment. After 48 hours if you still would like to discuss which team your skater made please email or call our President, Nick Trentadue.