

Sackville Minor Hockey Association Competitive Tryout Policy

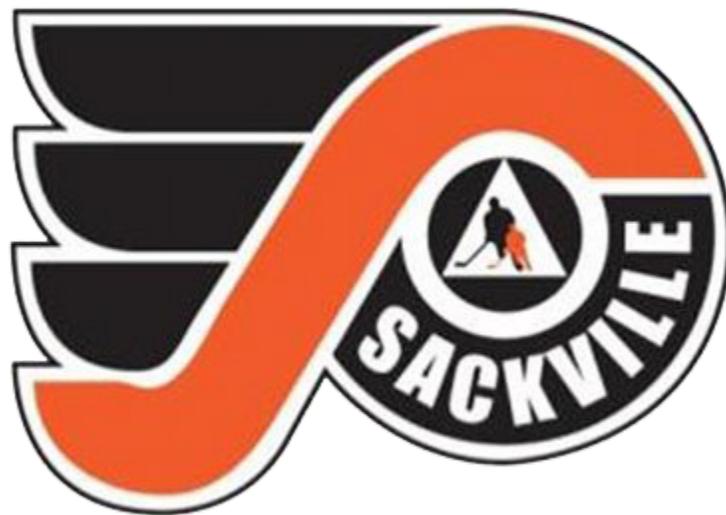
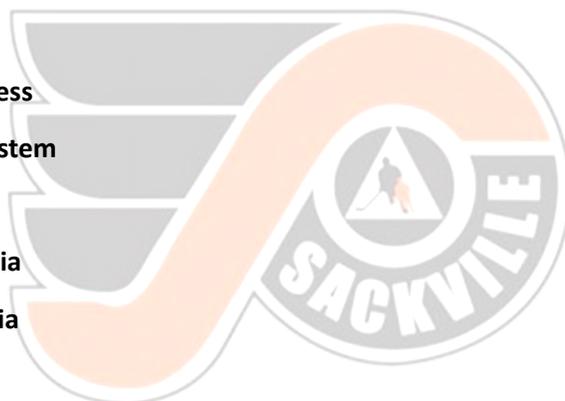


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Mission Statement: Purpose and Philosophy of Player Evaluations

This document outlines the Sackville Minor Hockey Association (SMHA) Competitive Tryout Process. This tryout and evaluation process is aligned with Hockey Canada's [Minor Hockey Development Guide for Player Evaluation and Selection](#)¹. SMHA's Mission for this Competitive Tryout Process is twofold:

1. Provide players the opportunity to grow both as hockey players and as individuals
2. Collect data that can be used as a developmental tool

SMHA understands that Competitive Tryouts can be very stressful and frustrating for players and their families. It is SMHA's intention to make the process as transparent as possible.

Evaluation Software

SMHA will use the [Team Genius Evaluation Software](#)². The main purpose of competitive tryouts and evaluations is to place players on teams appropriate to their skill level. Most often that information is stored away and isn't used for anything. The Team Genius software will allow us to use the information we collect through the tryout and evaluation process. We can provide that information to coaches once teams are formed. Coaches can then use the software to do mid-season and or end of season evaluations on their players. That information can then be provided to the players with feedback. Multiple Minor Hockey Associations across Nova Scotia are now using the TeamGenius Platform. It has been a "Game Changer" for them in both expediting the process and the overall management of it.

Objectives of Player Evaluation

- To provide fair and impartial assessment of a player's total hockey skills during skating, scrimmage, and/or exhibition game sessions
- Ensure players have a reasonable opportunity of being selected to a team appropriate to their skill levels as determined during the on-ice evaluations of the current year.
- To provide coaches with the opportunity and flexibility to build a team based in part on their own coaching philosophy and knowledge of players 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 the association's programs.
- 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. This will be facilitated through the Team Genius platform as previously discussed.

¹ Hockey Canada Minor Hockey Association Player Evaluation Guide, <https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Hockey-Programs/MHA/downloads/mha-player-evaluation-guide-e.pdf>

² Team Genius, <https://teamgenius.com>

Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of SMHA Support Staff for Competitive Tryouts are outlined below.

SMHA VP Competitive

Responsible for the planning and running of all competitive tryouts. Will have full administrative access to the Team Genius App.

SMHA Vice President

Responsible for work in coordination with the VP of Competitive and overall administration and management of the tryout and evaluation process. Will have full administrative access to the Team Genius App

SMHA President

Will provide support and oversight to the tryout and evaluations ensuring all processes are followed as laid out here in this policy.

Division Coordinators

Act as Liaisons between, VP Competitive, Vice President, and Evaluators. Manages the Off-ice Helpers. Will be involved in the Selection Committee. Will have view-only access to the Team Genius App (will not be able to affect scores).

SMHA Registrar

Responsible for ensuring all player participants are registered within Sackville Minor Hockey. Assist with administration of any applicable player transfers or those attending tryouts from outside of SMHA. Responsible for uploading registration lists to the TeamGenius Evaluation program prior to the beginning of tryouts.

SMHA Webmaster & SMHA Director of Communications

Responsible for posting updated groups and ice times on SMHA's Website, and sharing the link on Social Media.

On-Ice Coaches/Helpers

For the Skill/Technical sessions there shall be a lead coach and 3-4 assistant coaches. Coaches are responsible to:

- Ensure all drills finish within the allotted time.
- Drills should be kept in the same order for each session.
- Ensure players understand the drill.
- Should a player have their performance affected by items outside of their control, it is the coach's discretion to allow the player to perform the skill again.
- Coaches can encourage players to perform to the best of their ability.
- Coaches cannot share any personal insight with parents/players/other observers that may appear to bias or alter the process.

Off-ice Help

Check-in / Safety – Responsible for checking in players and assigning jerseys. These individuals require access to the Team Genius App. However, they will not have access to see or affect evaluation scores.

Dressing Room Monitors – These individuals can be parents of players being evaluated at the request of Division Coordinators. They will not have access to the Team Genius App.

Evaluators

Evaluators are composed of both independent evaluators and in-house SMHA evaluators. The SMHA Evaluators can be Non-Parent coaches who have already been named to a particular level or Parent Coaches who have not yet been named to a team. A named, non-parent coach may evaluate the age group they will coach. A parent coach cannot evaluate the age group that their child plays in. SMHA will strive to be as consistent as possible with evaluators for each division. This continuity ensures players are being observed by evaluators with a solid benchmark for the overall ability of the group being observed.

In general, Evaluators should:

- Review all drills and skills to be observed so understand the on-ice process.
- Review evaluation criteria to ensure they are evaluating with the same intent.
- Stay separate from other evaluators as well as spectators during the on-ice process.
- Confirm they have the correct group/jersey #'s to evaluate. This will be assigned through the Team Genius App.
- Not share comments or opinions with parents / players or other interested observers.
- Refer questions, comments or complaints to the Division Coordinator or SMHA Executive, without comment or complaint

Selection Committee

- SMHA VP Competitive
- SMHA Vice President
- SMHA President (Process Oversight)
- SMHA Division Coordinator(s)
- Evaluators
- Named Non-Parent Coaches³

Critical Path / Timeline

August

- Release / Post Tryout Process Document to Website & Social Media
- Team Genius Sign Up Prep
- Post Tryout Volunteer Sign Up list
- Try out Drill Selection & Posted on SMHA Website
- Coach Selection Interviews

³ Named Non-Parent Coaches may act as evaluators in their team's age group.

September

- Coach Selection Interviews (continued, if necessary)
- Tryouts Ramp up - Pre-Season Skates/Camps can start
- Name Non-Parent Coaches - Post to Website
- Tryout Process Review (Evaluators, DC's, On-ice Coaches, Exec. Members, etc.)
- Post initial groups
- Tryout Jersey Assignment Handout
- Sep 15 - U13AAA & U15 AA Tryouts
- Team Selection
- Tryout Process Review (Evaluators, DC's, On-ice Coaches, Exec. Members, etc.)
- Post initial groups
- Tryout Jersey Assignment Handout

October

- Oct 1 - Competitive Tryouts & Evaluations
- Team Selection & Naming of parent coaches

Notification Process and Player Placement

Players will be notified of their initial groupings and their standing throughout the tryout and evaluation process via postings on the SMHA website. We recommend that players and parents regularly check SMHA's website and social media sites for updates.

After each session, groups will be re-assessed based on scoring from the evaluators. Some key questions also have to be asked. Is anyone out of place? Has anyone stood out that perhaps should be moved to another group? Groups will be posted as quickly as possible so players and parents can prepare for their next session(s). Using the TeamGenius evaluation software/app will help expedite this process. We understand how stressful this is and will work to have the groups updated and posted as quickly as possible. It is important to know that a player moved into a higher group does not guarantee the player a spot on a particular team. Player's will be placed on teams primarily by score. There are other factors to be considered such as, but not limited to; attitude, work ethic, compete level. Keep in mind, that coaches have to have some leeway to select players they feel best suit their coaching philosophy and vision for their teams

For team selection, once teams are finalized, team lists will again be posted to the SMHA website. Players will then be contacted by their head coach.

Group Formation

Groups for Session 1 – Technical Skills: Initial groups 1,2 and 3, will each be formed by players from all levels of play via snake draft. The snake draft will start from the highest level of play and work down to the lowest level of play. On ice, players will be placed into station groups by the on ice coaches. Scores will not be weighted for Session 1 groups. Each player will be given 100% of their score. This is to ensure each player is given an equal opportunity.

Plan for 4 groups of 24 skaters at each age group (this is dependent on registration numbers). In Previous years, groups have been scheduled in order 1-3 for each session. This is typically not an issue for the skill based, station sessions. However, it can become problematic as the tryouts progress into scrimmage and or exhibition games. To avoid issues where evaluators have left before the end of all the sessions have completed, at minimum, SMHA will run the Scrimmage games in reverse order. This will help keep evaluators there and engaged fully for the entirety of each session.

Player Check-in & Jersey Assignment

Jersey handout nights will be held prior to the start of tryouts. Players will have the opportunity to find a jersey that fits and will be assigned their number for the duration of the tryouts. When Tryouts begin, volunteers will be at the main entrance to the arena to check in players for each session. Jerseys will be available for players who were not able to attend the jersey handout time. Jersey numbers can be added to the TeamGenius app at that time. Otherwise, Jersey numbers will have been pre-assigned to each player. Once players receive their jersey either before or at the first session, they are to hold on to them until tryouts have completed and they can then be returned.

It is very important to keep the following in mind:

- This can be a slow process. Especially the first session. Please come early enough to ensure the players have enough time to get ready and be on the ice on time. Patience is required.
- Although we will strive to ensure each player has a jersey that fits properly, inevitably there will be instances where jerseys will either be too big or too small. Please keep in mind, we cannot have people coming back to check in, returning the issued jersey and grabbing a new jersey on their own. Again, your patience is required. We need to be able to make any number changes accurately in the Team Genius app. If/when there is an issue with a jersey, bring it back to check in and wait to speak to one of the volunteers about it. We will make every effort to fix a sizing issue.
- Requests for a favorite or even just a different number will not be entertained.

Player Selection Process

Drill Selection and Process

Players will be evaluated in both a skill and game environment. At the younger age levels, a greater emphasis will be placed on skills. As the players get older, the scrimmage or game sessions will have a greater overall impact on the players evaluation score/placement.

U13AAA & U15AA Tryout & Evaluations⁴

Age Level	Total Ice Sessions	Technical Skill Sessions	Weight	Tactics Sessions	Weight	Scrimmage/ Exhibition	Weight
U13	4	1	25%	1	25%	2	50%
U15	4	1	15%	1	25%	2	60%

U11B-AA, U13B-AA, U15B-A Tryout & Evaluations

Age Level	Total Ice Sessions	Technical Skill Sessions	Weight	Tactics Sessions	Weight	Scrimmage/ Exhibition	Weight
U11	5	3	60%	N/A	N/A	2	40%
U13	5	1	25%	1	25%	3	50%
U15	5	1	15%	1	25%	3	60%

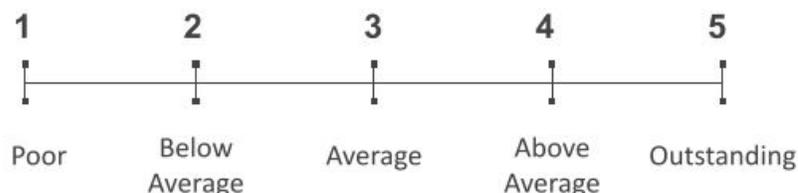
U18 Tryouts and Evaluations

Age Level	Total Ice Sessions	Technical Skill Sessions	Weight	Tactics Sessions	Weight	Scrimmage/ Exhibition	Weight
U18	4	1	10%	1	20%	2	70%

⁴ These teams normally play 90min games, therefore scrimmages and potential exhibition games will be 90 minutes.

Scoring & Evaluation System

All players and goalies will be scored in each session using a 1-5 scale. **Only whole numbers are used. Fractions such as .25 or .5 points are not permitted.**



This range gives the evaluator more latitude in differentiating the players from top to bottom. The 1-5 scale should be used fully within each session. Evaluators will be trained to understand within each session the top player in that session is a 5 and the bottom player is a 1 for any particular skill or tactic. The goal of these sessions is to be able to rank the players on the ice from top to bottom. For most evaluators and MHA's it is virtually impossible to attempt to rank a player in session 1 against a player from session 3 – it is therefore imperative to have an accurate ranking of players from each session.

Weighted Scores

Each session or phase of the tryout process carries a different level of importance to the overall process. This varies with each age group. For example, at U11, individual skill carries the highest priority. At U15 individual skill is still important but we all also need to consider individual and team tactics. So for those players, scrimmage or exhibition games will carry more weight. Whereas in U11, individual skill counts for 60% of the total score. At U15, individual skill counts for 15% of each player's total score.

Following Session 1, groups will be formed based on score. Players in every group are still scored on a scale of 1-5, however we now have to weigh the score for each group differently. Without doing so, you would have players in all 3 groups scoring the same, which is not possible. So assigning a different weight to each group helps us differentiate the players while allowing for player movement. Weight by group will be:

- Group 1: 100%
- Group 2: 80%
- Group 3: 60%

Goalie Evaluation Criteria

Session 1 Goalie Technical Skill Session (U11, U13, U15, U18)

Depending on the level of play and the age and development of the goaltender the evaluation process for goaltenders should incorporate these 6 basic areas. The table below summarizes what should be evaluated for the Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced goaltender:

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

The table below summarizes what should be evaluated for the Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced goaltender:

Beginner - U 11	Intermediate - U13 /U15	Advanced -U13AAA/ U15AA /U18
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Basic Skating 2. Lateral Movement 3. Forward/Backward Movement 4. Net Movement 5. Angle Positioning 6. Depth Positioning 7. Lower Body Save Movement 8. Upper Body Save Movement 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Net Movement 2. Positioning & Save Movement 3. Net Play 4. Rebound Control 5. Basic Tactics 6. Intermediate Positioning 7. Basic Transition 8. Movement While Down 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intermediate Position Specific Movement 2. Basic Movement 3. First Save Control 4. Shot Preparation 5. Advanced Positioning while Up 6. Positioning & Movement while Down 7. Intermediate Tactics 8. Intermediate Transition

Player Evaluation Criteria

Technical Skill Session(s)

- Skating
- Passing
- Shooting
- Puck Control

Tactics & Scrimmage Sessions

- Skating
- Hockey Skills (Passing, Puck Control, Shooting)
- Positional Play (Hockey Sense/IQ)
- Compete Level
- Attitude & Coach-ability

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

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

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

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

Positional Play/Hockey Sense or IQ: 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 they 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 force another player off the puck?
- Does the player force the play or do they wait too long?

Compete Level: Does the player work to be first on the puck? Do they battle hard in the corners, on the wall and in front of the net? How hard does the player back check and forecheck? Do they attack with speed or slow down

Attitude & Coach-ability: How well does the player react when they make mistakes? How is their body language? Do they shrug it off and keep moving forward or do they react poorly, bang sticks, slam doors, etc. How well do they take feedback from the coaches?

Appeals Process

Should a family wish to appeal the level their child is placed, it can be based only on process. If proper process was not followed, for example, a player was listed wearing #4 on the evaluation sheet but was wearing #5. Should an appeal be granted a committee will be created, led by the Vice President and two others who would not be in conflict of interest to investigate. Ideally, a Division Coordinator would be included. Findings will be binding.

Appeals based on whether one player is better than another will not be entertained.

Who can Participate

Only players who have registered with SMHA and are considered to be in good standing can participate in Competitive Tryouts. Also looking to try out for competitive teams at the U15 and U18 age group MUST have completed an HNS Certified Checking Clinic, prior to the start of tryouts.

- ***Out of Zone Transfers***

- If a player wishes to try out from outside SMHA they must first register with their home association and if a team is not offered at their local association then they can be considered. This must be approved by Hockey Nova Scotia's Minor Council Regional Director.
- In order to make a SMHA Team, out of zone player(s) must meet the following ranking criteria:
 - Top Goaltender
 - Top 2 Defensemen
 - Top 3 Forward
- Where extenuating circumstances arise, such as but not limited to, a goalie shortage at a particular level, SMHA can opt to allow exceptions to ranking criteria for out of zone players. Any placement for out of zone players must be approved by Hockey Nova Scotia's Minor Council, Regional Director.

- **Exceptions for missed sessions - Injured Player / Absence Policy.**

In the event that a player is unable to attend a session or tryouts all together (injury, illness, Family Emergency, etc.) the Division Coordinator and or VP of Competitive must be notified as soon as possible. This is necessary so we can ensure proper steps are taken with regards to the player's evaluation.

- Players who are injured prior to or during tryouts require a medical note before they can continue in the tryout process.
- Players who are injured during tryouts and have had a scoring session, will have their scores prorated based on scores/sessions completed.
- For any players who are unable to attend <50% of the tryout sessions, or none at all due to extenuating circumstances (Injury, Illness, Family Emergency, etc.) the following steps will be taken:

- Research will be done by Div. Coordinator for the player's age group - talk with past coaches to compare the player in question with other players who are taking part in the process
- The VP Competitive will assist in gathering past history and medical documents (if required)
- The Vice President or President, VP of Competitive, will render a decision of the player placement. All information will be taken into consideration. The player will be placed compared to a similarly-skilled player at the level in question.

*All Players - Skaters and Goalies must wear full gear to be allowed to participate on ice. Helmets, Full Cage/Shield and Neck Guards must be CSA approved.

Team Selection Process

Team selection will begin as tryouts are concluding on the last day of evaluations. A committee will be formed to place players on their prospective teams. SMHA will begin the process of placing parent coaches where possible, following the five evaluation sessions. This will help speed up the team selection process and will help coaches develop better insight when it comes to selecting their teams as well as speed up the team selection process. Individuals forming the committee will be, VP of Competitive, Vice President, Division Coordinator(s) and Head Coaches. The President of Sackville Minor Hockey will be present and will have oversight to ensure processes are followed as described.

An important piece to a team's success is the coach's ability to select players they believe fit within their coaching philosophy and vision. Coaches will have a broader pool to select players from. There is no more .25 point "Bubble" for the coaches to choose from. That said, the primary purpose of tryouts and evaluations is to place players at an appropriate level where they can be challenged and have the opportunity to find success. Players will be placed on teams primarily by score (Top 7F, Top 4D, Top G). Coaches will have the ability to choose the remaining players. However, which players a coach can choose are again dictated by score and position (F - Next Top 6 Scores, D- Next Top 4 Scores, G - Next Top 2 Scores). Coaches also have the option to switch a player to a different position as well (Forward to Defense or vice versa). There are limits to this rule. This move has to be agreed to by the player and parents, coach and the team selection committee. This player would also have to fall within the same criteria described for coach picks. This gives much more weight to things like attitude, work ethic, commitment level, etc.

Number of Teams and Levels of Play

SMHA's 2021-2022 Season had the following structure in each division:

- U11: AA, A (x2), B
- U13: AAA, AA, A, B
- U15: AA, A, B
- U18: AA, A

Team Structures for the 2022-2023 Season will be determined by registration numbers for each division, as well as assessment throughout the Competitive Tryout process. Ultimately, it is SMHA's responsibility to ensure our players will be challenged while having the opportunity to find success over the course of the season.