

SMHA Fair Ice Time Policy

We Believe in Fair Ice Time for Everyone

It is SMHA's policy that all players on a team, regardless of age or skill level, should be given fair Ice time. However, this does not necessarily mean equal ice time for every player during each and every game. There are many situations that make it impossible to ensure exactly equal ice time for all players in each individual game but in the over-all season each player should have equal ice time.

As an association, our goal is for each player to continue to improve and to give them exposure to every possible situation on the ice. Every player should have the chance to be on the ice at the end of the game, trying to score the game winner, or preventing the tying goal. Every player should have the chance to play on the power play or on the penalty kill.

Player Discipline

We do expect the head coach to have some latitude in their coaching technique and team discipline. It is acceptable and appropriate to sit a player for discipline issues such as a disrespectful attitude, unfair play or for breaking team rules. The length of time a player should sit will be dependent on the age group and severity of the issue. The rules and expectations should be communicated to the players and the parents at the beginning of the season and the parents should be notified if their son/daughter misses ice time due to discipline issues. "Team Rules" should be reasonable and respect the varying needs of all players.

Guidelines

- A regular rotation of players should be strived for at their playing position throughout a game.
- A regular rotation for goalies should be strived for throughout the hockey season. They have the option of splitting each game or rotating every other game but at the end of the season it should result in an equal number of games played by each goalie. The rotation is subject to changes in the event of injuries or sickness.
- The coaching staff should not shorten their bench on a regular basis, especially if preference is given to the same players every time. Coaches are still able to adjust their lines on a game by game basis, reacting to the situations that the game presents and reacting to how individual players are doing in terms of effort and effectiveness.

Enforcement

A parent or player who feels the fair ice time policy for their team is not being followed is encouraged to discuss their concerns with the coach on a private basis. Should the concerns not be addressed at that level the issue should be escalated using the SMHA Grievance Process documented on the association website and in our constitution.