

Milton Youth Hockey Tryouts Policies and Procedures for Travel Teams

1. Mission Statement of this policy: Our objective in constituting teams is to act in the best interests of the children and the Milton Youth Hockey (MYH) Program. Team composition is an inherently imprecise and subjective exercise. It is the responsibility of the Board of Directors (the "Board") of MYH to make the process as fair and transparent as possible, while protecting the confidentiality of individual players' evaluative scores and coaches' selections. These Policies and Procedures were developed by the Evaluation Committee of MYH to :

1. Achieve the most accurate player placement
2. Provide players and parents of MYH transparency in the process
3. Provide guidance to evaluators in order to create a more consistent process
4. Provide a known set of standards upon which players are measured to assure the highest possible degree of fairness and objectivity in the process
5. Provide an opportunity for all children to play at the appropriate level

Board members, Evaluators, and Coaches are volunteers putting in a huge amount of time and personal commitment to ensure that the process is carried out in a consistent manner. The Board recognizes that tryouts inherently cause a great deal of anxiety among the participants. It is the hope of the Board to allay some of this anxiety by improving transparency and clarifying how the process works. Any MYH player or parent who has further questions should feel free to contact the age-level appropriate Co-Chair of the Evaluation Committee. Of course, we strongly discourage any contact with either the Evaluation Committee or the Evaluators by parents during the tryout process as it presents a clear conflict of interest. We ask that you respect the process.

2. Registration:

Registration details will be communicated in mid-March to all current members of MYH, advertised in the local newspaper and on social media sites. It is the expectation that all new and returning players register on time. Late registrations will not be granted unless approved by the MYH Board for extraordinary circumstances (new relocation to the Town, etc). Players who register late may be placed on the lowest team of their age level.

3. Scheduling:

The Board will determine, no later than at its March meeting, the weeks during which tryouts will be conducted in the Spring prior to the next hockey season. Every effort is taken to avoid conflicts with school vacations, tournaments and game/playoff schedules. Conflicts are inevitable no matter the level of planning. The Evaluation Committee will use their best efforts, with the information and input available to them, to appropriately place players who have conflicts with the tryout schedule.

4. Attendance and Player Commitment:

It is the policy that a player must attend at least one session of the tryouts in order to be placed on a team for the subsequent year. It is strongly encouraged that players attend all of their scheduled sessions. Obviously players who are on the ice have the best chance to demonstrate their ability. In the event that a player is unable to make one or more of the tryout sessions to which he or she is assigned, the player or his/her parent(s) should promptly contact the appro-

appropriate level Co-Chair and explain the reason for the absence. The Co-Chairs shall review this explanation with the Evaluation Committee. If the Evaluation Committee excuses the absence, the player shall be placed on a team by the Level Selection Committee based on all available information about such player, including the level of the player's current team, his/her coach's view and placement of comparable players. Absences due to physician documented injury or illness and family emergencies shall generally be excused. If the Evaluation Committee declines to excuse the absence, the player or parent may petition the Board. Unexcused absences may result in the player not being placed on any team or placed on the lowest team at that level.

Should a player "register" and elect not to participate in the tryout sessions (as opposed to missing tryouts due to different circumstances) he or she will be "automatically" placed on the last team of their age group, provided that there are available roster spots on that team. This decision should be explicitly discussed with the Board of Directors so that the circumstances are understood and the possible placement ramifications are also clear.

5. Personnel:

Evaluation Committee

Co-Chairs: Patrick Lovett (Mite,Squirt, Pee Wee), Dave Skillin (Girls, Bantam, Midget)

Members: Bill Bennett, Kevin Keating, Peter Mullen, Mollie Naughton, Mike Vaughan

The Evaluation Committee is responsible for creating the guidelines for the tryout process, organizing the tryout sessions, choosing the Evaluators for each level, determining which players will report to which session, signing players into tryouts, obtaining and assigning tryout pinneys, ensuring that accurate and timely communication regarding the overall process and session assignments are posted on the website, local newspapers and social media, ensuring sufficient volunteer help is available on and off the ice, securing room and table availability and other tryout process related activities.

Evaluators:

There will be 4 to 7 evaluators per level that will evaluate the players and participate in the Team Selection meeting. Evaluators are chosen based on several components including their playing experience, coaching experience, knowledge of players, and ability to fairly and independently evaluate players. The evaluation committee per level will consist of at least one evaluator who coached and/or was on the ice (either at the head or assistant coach level) at the age level that players played at from the most recent season. The goal is to provide first-hand knowledge of the players from the most recent 7 month season. The Board recognizes that this policy on occasion may result in a parent/coach serving as a member of committee evaluating their own children. The Board understands the conflict of interest this might represent, but has determined that the benefits of including a coach with knowledge of the most recent season outweigh the potential conflict of interest. The Board will look to minimize involvement of a parent as an evaluator, but on occasion when it happens the parent will remove themselves from all discussions involving their children and/or will leave the room when their children are being ranked.

6. Team Numbers and Roster Size:

The goal is to limit roster size to a maximum of 15 skaters and 1 goaltender. U16, U19 and Midget rosters are larger because we find the high school players often have conflicts and not all the players make every game. We strive to achieve USA Hockey's American Development Model (ADM) guidelines when determining roster size, which recommends our Mite, U8, U10 and Squirt teams will have no more than 13 players on their roster (12 skaters plus a goalie). U12, U14 and Pee Wee to have a maximum of 15 plus 2 goalies. But, overall registration numbers may impact the program's ability to achieve these goals.

7. Player Assessment:

Players will be assessed during at least two sessions of on-ice skills as well as evaluated by their current year coach. Midget level players are the exception and will only have one evaluation session.

A. On-Ice Skills:

Players:

Players will be provided with numbered/colored pinneys during tryout check-in that will be used for the duration of their tryout sessions. Different birth years will have different colored pinneys. Pinneys will need to be returned at the conclusion of each player's last tryout session. Evaluators will be responsible for filling out evaluation forms and rating players based on the demonstrated skills below.

O'Sullivan Hockey, who operate our Skills Sessions, will run the tryouts from the ice. Players will be asked to exhibit the following in a series of drills, small area games, and scrimmages:

1. Skating - Stride, Edges, Speed, Crossovers, Forwards & Backward Skating
2. Puck Skills - Puck Handling, Shooting, Passing, Control
3. Game Sense - Playing Position, Getting Open, Play Making
4. Effort – Small Battles, Forecheck, Backcheck, Tenacity

1st Session(s) – During the 1st session the players will be split into four to five separate stations on the ice. These stations will consist of a predetermined mix of skill based drills and small area games.

* Note that Mite, Squirt, Pee Wees typically will have two 1st session time slots where players will be split evenly and alphabetically by last name into one slot. Each player will only attend one 1st session. The purpose for this split is because these age groups typically have a large number of players on the ice at once. To provide the evaluators a better opportunity to view each players' skill set for this first evaluation, they will be split into two time slots.

2nd Sessions – Players will be split and participate in a variety of small area games and scrimmages, including but not limited to 2 vs. 2, 3 vs. 3, 4 vs. 4, or full ice 5 vs. 5. Small area games allow evaluators to see many skills including: skating ability, edges, puck control, passing, shooting, speed, stops, starts, turns, tenacity, and effort.

Goalies:

At each level's tryout, each goalie will be evaluated and provided a score. At the team selection meeting, the default is that the scores will determine placement. The Evaluation Committee, by simple majority, may supersede the default placement. In deciding to supersede the default placement, the Evaluation Committee should consider the input from the goalies' current coaches, the difference between the players' evaluative scores and the goalies' status as first or second year player.

B. Coach Evaluation: Team Rank, Effort, Attendance, & Coaches' Comments
Coaches are asked twice a year to complete evaluations on each player on their current team. These Evaluations will be kept confidential and only viewed by members of the Coaching Committee.

Coaches' Evaluations will be shared with Evaluators when distinguishing between equally ranked players or to reconcile inconsistencies in the player rankings. Please note that coaches evaluations may not be needed for every player. In addition, dedication to MYH has always been, and will continue to be a priority. Commitment levels, as measured by attendance at practices as well as games, may influence team placement. Likewise, behavior, sportsmanship, and other relevant information from current coaches will be considered in the placement decision. The appropriate level Co-Chair shall be informed should any non on-ice factors result directly in the placement decision of a player. If 2 players are being considered for the last spot on the same team and both have been evaluated and determined to be of equal skill, the 2nd year player will be placed ahead of the younger player.

8. Team Selection.

After the On-Ice Sessions are held, all Evaluators per level will participate in a Team Selection Committee Meeting.

The Team Selection Committee will review all data and rank players 1 through X. Teams will be formed with the consent of the Evaluators voting on each player. The 1st team will be filled and each subsequent team will be filled in the same manner, with each Evaluator discussing and voting on each individual player. The Coach Evaluation information, as described above, will be taken into consideration when applicable.

All evaluative scores from any tryout session shall remain strictly confidential and shall be shared only with Evaluators. All hard copies shall be returned to the Evaluation Committee at the close of the Team Selection Meeting.

The player rankings will be provided to the Board of Directors for the sole purpose of checking for any instances where the Committee's ranking of a player, relative to other players from that player's most recent team, deviates substantially from the coaches' rankings of those same players. Although there will clearly be some changes in the relative positions of players from the previous season, this step will serve as a "check" for any serious anomalies that may indicate the need for review. Where significant discrepancies appear, the Board of Directors will take the matter up with the Team Selection Committee to make sure the ranking is appropriate.

We recognize that every player is unique and his or her development curve may jump ahead or lag behind his or her peers. With this in mind, the Evaluation Committee will try to acknowledge the forward progress of each skater for the next season, but player placement is not lockstep from year-to-year. No player is presumed to have this "spot" for any team next season regardless of whether they are returning to the same level or moving up because of his or her age.

Note that based on total numbers of players at a given age level, in addition to the player's skill set, some players may not be placed on a travel team, but instead directed to the MYH House League Program.

9. Coach Selection:

These notes are guidelines to help coaches and parents to understand the MYH coach's selection process. Coaches are chosen for the following season after the try-outs are held and the Team Selection Meetings have taken place. These are the guidelines we follow annually to choose coaches:

Applications:

All MYH House League and Travel members and current coaches are notified via email and website in mid to late March to submit coaching applications for the following season.

Coaches' applications are collected and reviewed by the Coaches Committee prior to the MYH Board meeting.

At the April Board Meeting, the Coaches Committee makes its recommendations for coaches for the upcoming season.

Notifications are sent out via email or telephone to all coaches who submitted an application in writing after the selection process has been completed.

*Note: Player Evaluations typically are conducted in the March /early April time frame so the coaching decisions are made after that.

Selection Guidelines and Criteria

We make every effort to accommodate all coaching requests but are unable to satisfy everyone noting that each team can only have one head coach. We take into account coaching experience, administrative abilities (communication, etc.), reputation, time to volunteer, and all around character.

Multi-year guidelines

If an individual coach has worked with a team for three consecutive years either as head coach or assistant, then they may be asked to step aside and take a year off so that the players on that team may be exposed to alternative coaching styles. We believe this is in the best interest of each player as they develop and move through the MYH Program.

Coaching Sons or Daughters:

MYH has no issues with coaches wanting to coach their sons or daughters – just as long as coaches understand that they need to treat every player absolutely equal. Also, coaches will be placed in a coaching position only after their child has been placed on a team.

10. Roster Movement.

The Board must approve all roster changes. In the event that a player is lost permanently from a team, the President of MYH and/or a member of the Evaluation Committee must be notified. If that loss results in such team having a roster that is 2 players less than the next lower team, the President of MYH and the Evaluation Committee shall authorize the head coach to choose a player from the lower team to take a permanent roster spot on the higher team. If the loss is not season-ending, the higher team shall not be expanded. Instead, the higher team may choose players game-by-game consistent with the conference rules governing the same.

If under extraordinary circumstances, the coaches of a team determine that one of his players is grossly misplaced, he may petition the Board to have that player elevated to a higher team, provided that doing so would not create a roster disparity of 2 or more between the two teams involved. The Board may approve a roster change by a simple majority vote.

11. Post Tryout Policy

Late registrations will not be granted unless approved by the MYH Board for extraordinary circumstances (new relocation to the Town, etc)

The Board of Directors will consider roster additions to the team determined appropriate given a player's skills and only if the existing roster size permits an addition. This may mean if you are a late registrant you will be placed on the lowest team at that level.

12. Parents

The Evaluation Committee has created what it believes to be a fair process that relies on good, thoughtful, and fair people doing the best they can. Please do not attempt to contact member of the Committee, Board, or Evaluators during the tryout process, as that type of communication undermines the integrity of the process. As is the case in most youth sports, what particular team level a player plays at as a 7 to 13 year old

rarely affects their later years. In fact, in most cases the relative ability ranking of players in a sport changes greatly over these years.

Parents are welcome to attend tryouts. Please help your player, especially the younger players, with registrations, obtaining their pinney and any help needed with equipment. We ask that if you are watching from inside the rink, you avoid trying to speak or signal to the players on the ice as this may be a distraction. Additionally, we ask that you refrain from communicating with any Evaluators during the tryout process as this represents a clear conflict of interest.

13. Board Oversight.

All matters set forth herein are subject to the oversight of the Board. The Board may exercise its authority to override any provision hereof.