

## OAHE HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

### PEEWEE AND BANTAM TRYOUT/SPLIT POLICY

The South Dakota Amateur Hockey Association (SDAHA) requires all local hockey associations to maintain "B" level Bantam and PeeWee teams for League play. When there are enough players registered with the Oahe Hockey Association (OHA) at either, or both of these team levels to justify it, the players may be split up into two or more teams comprised of at least one "B" level team, and also one or more "C" level teams. The OHA Board of Directors will determine the actual number of "B" and "C" teams if a team level can be split into 3 or more teams. SDAHA rules specify that 20 players are the maximum number that may be rostered for League games at the Bantam and PeeWee levels, the splitting of players into "B" and "C" teams will only occur when the team split results in greater than half that number of players per team, minimum. However, under special circumstances or situations, the OHA Board of Directors reserves the right to grant team splits that result in fewer than that number of players per team.

#### **Player Evaluation Process**

The OHA has developed a player evaluation process involving a Player Evaluation Committee, consisting of the OHA Coaching Director, OHA Director of League Play and designated team coaches at the team level being split, to collectively evaluate players during team splits. The entities comprising the process are described as follows:

1. The Player Evaluation Committee will be made up of OHA Lead Coaches from the PeeWee, Bantam, and Boys Varsity/JV teams, as well as the OHA Coaching Director and OHA Director of League Play. If the Lead Coach of the PeeWee or Bantam team being evaluated has any family member playing on the team, that coach will be excluded from the Player Evaluation Committee and a replacement may be designated by the OHA Board of Directors. The Player Evaluation Committee is responsible for assessing players' skills during the evaluation process.
2. The OHA Coaching Director will act as a delegate of the OHA Board of Directors serving as an independent arbitrator, coordinator, and counselor during the evaluation process. In order to maintain objective viewpoints, the Coaching Director will not have any family members associated with the team undergoing the evaluation.
3. The team coaches are the Lead Coach and designated Assistant Coaches of the team undergoing the player evaluations. The team coaches will be responsible for scheduling, preparing, and conducting the drills for the players' skills evaluation. However, if the Lead Coach of a team being split is also on the Coaches Committee, that person will be excused from said responsibilities and the Assistant Coaches will perform all of these functions. Additionally, all of the team coaches will compile player rankings based on past and present knowledge of individual players' hockey aptitudes and capabilities.

## Skills Evaluation Process

All players from the team level being split will participate in skill evaluations. In the event of player injury, illness, or other serious conflict during tryouts an exception may be granted by the OHA Board of Directors based upon receipt of a formal request by the player and subsequent review to determine the seriousness of the player's situation. The Board, in consultation with the Player Evaluation Committee, will determine an alternative method of player evaluation and then accordingly assign the player to either the "B" or "C" level, whichever is deemed most appropriate.

All players undergoing skill evaluations will participate in tryout sessions consisting of technical drills, speed drills, and controlled scrimmages. Goalies will participate in the same tryout sessions as all other players.

The members of the Player Evaluation Committee will perform skill evaluations using a 10-point scoring system to grade players. Apparel or gear that distinguishes players should not be worn during tryouts. Each player will be assigned a numbered jersey that will be worn at all tryout sessions. Since all skill evaluations by the Player Evaluation Committee will be based on the assigned jersey numbers, the team coaches will need to develop a list of the jersey numbers that reflects the same order the players will appear during the tryout drills. Also, no player names should appear anywhere on the list developed by the team coaches.

The technical and speed drill portions of the skill evaluations may consist of the following:

1. Two iterations per player of a forward speed drill that is straight-line, half-rink in length, and timed by stopwatch.
2. Two iterations per player of a back-skating speed drill that is straight-line, half-rink in length, and timed by stopwatch.
3. Two iterations per player of a figure 8 around the face-off circles, forward speed drill while carrying a puck, and timed by stopwatch.
4. Two iterations per player of a figure 8 around the face-off circles, backward speed drill (no puck), and timed by stopwatch.
5. Two iterations per player of a forward speed drill while carrying a puck from the blue line, around the net, and back to the blue line, timed by stopwatch.
6. Two iterations per player of forward speed straight line, half rink in length to a stop and return with puck and timed by a stopwatch.

The Player Evaluation Committee will use the list of player numbers previously developed by the team coaches to record skill evaluation scores. The operation of the stopwatch for timed drills will be the responsibility of the OHA Coaching Director and OHA Director of League Play during the skill evaluations and times will also be recorded according to player jersey number by an on-ice assistant to the Coaching Director. Upon completion of the drills, the Coaching Director will distribute the list with the recorded times to the rest of the Player Evaluation Committee. Each

Member of the Player Evaluation Committee will use the best time recorded by each player and for each drill, and throw out the worst times for each player, per drill. These will be combined with the skills evaluation scores on each Player Evaluation Committee member's score sheet to reflect a cumulative score, by drill, for each player.

During the scrimmage portion of the tryouts independent qualified coaches selected by the OHA Coaching Director and OHA Director of League play will assess each player based on his/her overall effectiveness. For the scrimmage, team coaches must ensure that players are at the position (defenseman, center, wing, and goalie) they anticipate playing during the upcoming season. The independent coaches will again score players on a 10-point system during the scrimmage. Primary categories for the scrimmage evaluation will include players' skills and abilities in playmaking, passing, shooting, back checking, fore-checking, team play, and individual hustle. Goalies will be assessed and scores scored on effective goaltending techniques.

Upon completion of the skill evaluations, individual members of the Player Evaluation Committee will total scores by jersey number and then rank them accordingly. Subsequently, all members of the Player Evaluation Committee will meet, compare score sheets, scrutinize any rankings that cannot be clearly defined as an upper or lower-level player category, and adjust accordingly. The ultimate result of the meeting will be a single, cumulative ranking of players by jersey number. The Board Member delegate will collect the Player Evaluation Committee ranking no less than 1 day after the completion of the skill evaluations. The Player Evaluation Committee score sheets are to remain confidential and may only be reviewed by someone other than the Coaching Director and OHA Director of League Play as the OHA Board of Directors deems necessary.

### **Team Coaches Evaluations**

The coaches of the team being evaluated will also rank all of the players involved in the tryout. However, when a coach has any family member being ranked, that coach will exclude those family members from their ranking. Each of the team coaches may use an individual set of criteria to perform the ranking. The team coaches will have some unique perspectives on players' hockey proficiency that go beyond basic skill evaluations. Their perspectives could be based on first-hand knowledge of the players, discussions with other coaches who have coached players in previous years, review of player statistics, review of previous years' game tapes, etc. The team coaches' evaluation criteria may include, but not limited to the following:

1. Statistics from previous years.
2. General aptitude for hockey.
3. Dedication to the team and willingness to make sacrifices for the sake of the team.
4. Penalties-in-minutes (PIM) served in the previous year.
5. Team leadership abilities.
6. Conduct during games and practices.
7. Sportsmanship.

The team coaches will perform player rankings individually, but the rankings will be performed simultaneously, at a neutral location, and without discussion among one another. The OHA Coaching Director will be present at this session and collect the player ranking of each coach when done. However, any team coach may be excused from the player ranking process, particularly if he/she is new to a team and may not necessarily be very familiar with all the players at that team level. The team coaches will perform their rankings after the tryouts and upon completion of the ranking process, the Coaching Director will then review the results and compute a cumulative average ranking based on the combined score sheets from the team coaches. Also, the coaches' score sheets are to remain confidential and may only be reviewed by someone other than the Coaching Director as the OHA Board of Directors deems necessary.

### **Assignment of Players**

Once the cumulative ranking of the Player Evaluation Committee and the cumulative ranking of the team coaches are completed, the two rankings can be compared side-by-side. If the two rankings are identical, a collaborative determination by the Lead Coach and the OHA Coaches Subcommittee will finalize exactly where the team split will occur and assignments to respective teams can then proceed accordingly. The teams do not have to be split evenly, number-wise, so long as any team is at, or above the minimum requirements as determined by the OHA Coaches Committee.

If discrepancies do exist between the Player Evaluation Committee ranking and the team coaches ranking, the Lead Coach, in consultation with the OHA Coaches Subcommittee, will resolve final player assignments. It is assumed that the evaluation process to this point will produce a clearly defined group of "B level" players, as well as a clearly defined group of "C-level" players. Therefore, resolution of final team assignments should only involve a minimal number of players somewhere in-between that are not easily assigned one way or the other. The Lead Coach and the OHA Coaches Subcommittee may use the following options when making final evaluations and player selections:

1. Meet with players and/or parents to present the facts whereby certain players cannot be easily assigned to either team level, receive input from the players (as well as the player's parents), and give feedback so that they will be prepared for a decision that "could go either way".
2. The need for players at any team level due to position-related deficiencies could have an impact on player assignment decisions. (i.e., If 6 defenseman are already clearly defined as "C" team players, and only 2 defenseman are clearly defined as "B" team players, then a defenseman "on the bubble" may obviously need to be assigned to the "B" team.)
3. Preference might be given to a second-year player over a first year player if both are vying for a spot at the same team level. The experience factor, as well as the fact that the older player may be more deserving of at least one year's play at a higher level would be considerations.

Other criteria could certainly come into play for the Lead Coach during the finalization of player assignments.

When there are enough players for 2 or more PeeWee "C" teams, the "C" teams will be evenly split. The team split will occur by assigning players that end up with an even-numbered player ranking to one "C" team, and those with an odd-numbered player ranking to the other "C" team. However, it should be recognized that final player swaps or team adjustments may be necessary if there are too many, or too few players at any particular position (i.e., defensemen, wings, centers) that ultimately appear on either team.

When 2 or more PeeWee "B" teams are defined, the "B" teams will be split as "B-1" and "B-2". All higher-ranked players will be assigned to the "B-1" team, and all lower-ranked players will be assigned to the "B-2" team. Again, it is recognized that some final adjustments may need to be performed according to criteria such as that described in 1-4 above.

When there are enough players for 2 or more Bantam "C" teams, the "C" teams will be split as "C-1" and "C-2". All higher-ranked players will be assigned to the "C-1" team, and all lower-ranked players will be assigned to the "C-2" team, again recognizing that final player swaps may be necessary.

#### **Player Assignments Performed by a Lead Coach Having a Family Member on the Team**

If the Lead Coach of the team being split has a family member on the team, the process described above will require an additional component. In essence, the OHA Coaching Director will need to be involved with the Lead Coach in resolving the final player assignments. Even though the Lead Coach may take a totally objective approach during his/her decision-making course, it would still allow players and parents to generate perceptions that the Lead Coach is somehow showing preference to the family member, or the family member's friends on the team. Full involvement by the Coaching Director provides for an arbitration process on the tougher cases, ensures that objective reviews are indeed committed, and instills a venue for an independent reporting process to the Board if special situations arise.

#### **Player Assignments are Final Decisions**

Once players are notified of their team assignments, the decisions will be considered final. Appeals to the OHA Board of Directors will not be accepted due to the possible team distress when a single player is perceived to gain special treatment. However, the OHA Board of Directors does encourage player and parent input regarding the OHA Tryout Policy. The Board will continually seek to improve the process through constructive feedback and, as the Board deems appropriate, act to incorporate improvements to the policy in any succeeding year.

OHA Board Amended: March 16, 2015