

Patriots Youth Hockey Association Tryout and Team Placement Process



Aspiration: Our hockey program believes in nurturing well-rounded skaters with emphasis on exceptional effort, competitive spirit, good skills, and a strong hockey IQ.

Purpose: This document outlines the tryout and placement approach used by the Patriots Youth Hockey Association (PYHA) for “A Team Tryouts”, “B/C Placements”, and “Goalie Evaluations.” Collectively, these processes are in place to achieve three goals:

- **First:** Provide transparency to our members on the respective processes and evaluation/placement criteria
- **Second:** Provide a fair and equitable approach to assessing overall hockey ability of our youth players
- **Third:** Provide consistency and integrity for the A team tryout and team placement process

Review and Amendments: This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its effectiveness in selecting teams. Any changes will be communicated to skaters, parents, and stakeholders.

A Team Tryouts

A team tryouts are different than B/C placements. For the A team, a selective team formation process is used instead of relying on a traditional ranking system or individual scoring. The skaters are assessed on effort, competitive attitude, and hockey intelligence rather than assigning scores or rankings to individual performance in specific drills. Further, the coach’s insights into a skater are factored into the decision-making process.

Details:

1. Evaluators:

- The team formation process will involve the person selected to coach the team and two independent evaluators with an understanding of hockey skills, strategies, and player development.
- The evaluators will be chosen based on their experience and impartiality, ensuring an unbiased assessment.

2. Core Evaluation Criteria:

- **Effort:** Evaluators will observe and consider each skater's determination, commitment, and willingness to push their limits during drills and game scenarios.
- **Compete:** The competitive spirit, willingness to engage in battles, and ability to consistently contribute to team success will be closely evaluated.
- **Skills:** The assessment will focus on proficiency in fundamental techniques, adeptness in executing plays, and the capacity to positively impact team performance through precise and effective actions.
- **Hockey IQ:** The understanding of game strategy, decision-making, anticipation of plays, and adaptability will play a crucial role in the assessment process.



3. Observation and Documentation:

- Evaluators will observe skaters during various practice sessions, small area games (SAGs), and full ice game simulations.
- While there won't be a formal scoring system, evaluators may take notes on specific instances that demonstrate the core evaluation criteria.
- The A team tryout can end with a full team being picked or a few open spots on the roster. If open spots remain, the B/C tryout process will be used to rank the remaining players and help the coach with their final selection(s).

4. Holistic Assessment:

- Rather than isolating individual skills, the evaluators will assess how a skater's effort, competitiveness, and hockey IQ come together to influence their overall performance.
- We aim to foster a team of well-rounded skaters who excel not only in individual skills but also in their commitment to the sport and their teammates.

5. Coach's Discretion:

- The head coach picks the kids they would like to have on the team considering the Core Evaluation Criteria as well as their insights into players' attitudes, teamwork, and character. The coach's list is reviewed by the evaluators, in conjunction with the evaluators' observations to ensure a comprehensive understanding of each player's potential contribution to the team. The coach's perspective will serve as a valuable complement to the evaluators' assessments, fostering a well-rounded team selection process.

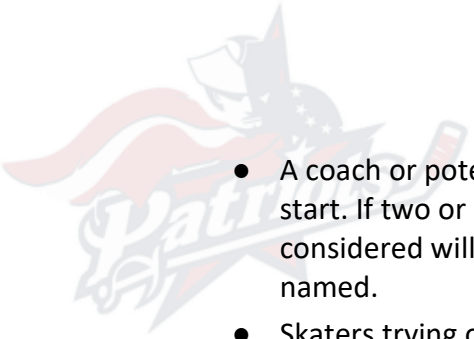
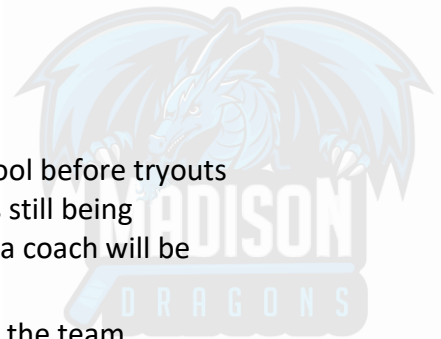
6. Transparency and Communication:

- Skaters and their parents/guardians will be informed in advance about the selective team formation process.
- Open communication will be maintained throughout the process, addressing any questions or concerns.

Results and Implementation: The skaters will be selected for the A team based on the coach's assessment, mindful of feedback from the other evaluators. The A team roster will be determined with the aim of creating a cohesive unit that embodies the principles of effort, competitiveness, and hockey intelligence. Total number of registered skaters at each level will play into the team size to ensure a competitive team is selected with an eye on equity throughout the age group.

Other A Team Tryout Notes:

- A team tryouts are only travel teams (Squirts, Peewees, and Bantams). Age levels with fewer than 3 teams may not hold an A team tryout.
- By identifying and selecting skaters for the A team ahead of B/C Placements there are fewer remaining skaters to assess. This makes it both easier to assess the remaining skaters and intends to improve the accuracy of the assessment.
- Coaching candidates for the A team must apply to be considered. Potential A team coaches will be interviewed by the selection committee.

- 
- 
- A coach or potential coaches will be selected from the applicant pool before tryouts start. If two or more coaches are still being considered, all coaches still being considered will attend the first tryout skate. After the first session a coach will be named.
 - Skaters trying out for the A team must pay a fee to tryout or be on the team.
 - Fees collected for the A team tryout process and rostering cover the associated expenses of holding the tryout. Any remaining A team tryout fee surplus is used for the benefit of the entire organization (e.g. further offset organizational fees, referee expenses, etc.); it is not uniquely used by the A team.

Players who do not make the A team are automatically placed in our B/C placements and must follow the same B/C placement rules as the rest of the skaters. This ensures that all players, regardless of their initial outcome, receive a chance to be evaluated alongside their peers.

B/C Team Placement

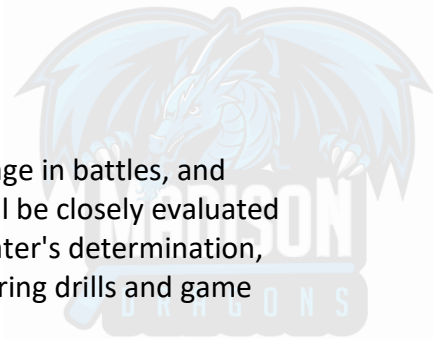
B/C Placements are different than A team tryouts. For B/C Placement a traditional ranking system is utilized where skaters (as anonymized as possible) are assessed by evaluators. The skaters are assessed on skating, puck control, hockey IQ, and competitiveness. Since the process, evaluators, and population being evaluated is different scores from A Team Tryout information cannot be used for B/C Placements.

1. Evaluators:

- A minimum of 4 evaluators without “ties or connections” to the age group being assessed (e.g. parent coach with a Squirt skater will not evaluate at the Squirt level). Evaluators may include members of the OIC, neighboring associations, or other capable / independent resources.
- The evaluators will be chosen based on their experience and impartiality, ensuring an unbiased assessment.

2. Core Evaluation Criteria:

- Each skater will receive a score of 1-10 in (2) two different skill categories for a maximum score of 20 from each evaluator. The skill categories are:
 - Skating: Will focus on the proficiency in fundamental techniques and capabilities regarding skating (such as forward and backward skating proficiency, transitions, edgework, balance and control).
 - Puck Control: Will focus on the proficiency in fundamental techniques and capabilities regarding puck control (such as stickhandling, passing, protecting, and shooting the puck).
- Each skater will receive a score of 1-10 in (3) three different competition categories for a maximum score of 30 from each evaluator. The competition categories are:
 - Hockey IQ: The understanding of game strategy, decision-making, anticipation of plays, and adaptability will play a crucial role in the assessment process.



- **Compete:** The competitive spirit, willingness to engage in battles, and ability to consistently contribute to team success will be closely evaluated
- **Effort:** Evaluators will observe and consider each skater's determination, commitment, and willingness to push their limits during drills and game scenarios.

3. Holistic Summary

- The total skill score and total competition score from each evaluator are totaled and then are weighted as follows:
 - Squirt — 40% Skill, 60% Competition
 - Peewee — 30% Skill, 70% Competition
 - Bantam — 20% Skill, 80% Competition

4. Team Assignment and Coach's List Placement

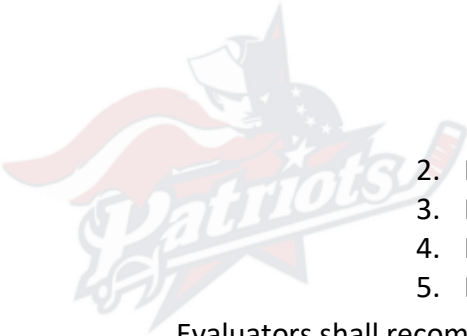
- Skaters will be ranked in anonymous order and by pinnie number based upon each evaluator's scores.
- The On Ice Committee (OIC) will recommend the size and composition of each travel level team to the Board of Directors based upon the evaluation process.
- Team size will be determined based on the number of players at an age level and by appropriate breaks in the skater rankings.
- Following determination of team size and initial player assignment, the head coach will be assigned.
- Prior to team selection, head coach candidates may submit a ranked list of players by pinnie number. The coach's list (the coach selected to be the head coach) will be used to finalize the last 25% of skaters for that team.
 1. For example, if the team is set to be 14 skaters, the top 10 are automatically selected from the evaluators' scores, then, the coach's list will be used to solidify the final 25% of skaters as long as his or her selections are within 5 places of the 14th evaluated position on this team. Note: It is possible, based on skater performance during evaluations, that the coach's list has no impact or cannot impact the team formed.
- This process shall be used at all travel levels for B/C placement.

Goalie Evaluations

It is preferred that the goalie positions at Bantam and Peewee be full time and will be filled during team placement. Team placement for Squirts shall be used to identify goalies who are committed to playing at least 50-80% of the team's games.

1. Core Evaluation Criteria:

- Each goalie shall receive a score from each evaluator based on the following evaluation criteria:
 1. Ability to stop the puck



2. Positioning
3. Movement
4. Reactions
5. Puck control



Evaluators shall recommend goalies at the Squirt level based on the team placement process; however, the top-ranked goalie during team placement will not necessarily be the Squirt A goalie.

A goalie who is placed on the Squirt A team shall be committed to playing at least 80% of the team's games. If two goalies are chosen for any Squirt team, both shall be committed to playing 50% of the team's games. The coach is not required to play the goalie(s) outside of the goal if playing time in the goal is split equally.

During team placement, potential Squirt goalies shall participate as goalies in the goalie only session and up to two other sessions. These sessions will be chosen by the Director of Hockey (DOH). The players shall participate as skaters in all other sessions and be evaluated as skaters.

Rink Access for Skaters

Players are allowed to enter the building 30 minutes prior to going on the ice for their tryout/placement session. Similarly, they are asked to leave as soon as they are done in the locker room following their tryout or placement session.

Observing Tryouts or Placements

For several important reasons we don't allow parents in the building while their skaters group is on the ice during tryouts. Our primary goal is to create the best possible environment for our young athletes to showcase their skills and for our evaluators to evaluate their abilities fairly and objectively.

- **Minimizing Distractions:** When parents are present, it can be distracting for the players. They may feel additional pressure to perform well in front of their parents, which can affect their focus and confidence.
- **Promoting Independence:** By having players attend tryouts without their parents, we encourage independence and self-reliance. It's an opportunity for them to demonstrate their commitment to the sport and take responsibility for their own performance.
- **Reducing Pressure:** Tryouts can be a stressful time for young athletes. Removing parents from the rink can help alleviate some of the pressure and anxiety that players may feel, allowing them to perform to the best of their abilities.

We believe that by creating a supportive and pressure-free atmosphere, we give our young athletes the best chance to showcase their talents and reach their full potential. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in helping us maintain the integrity of our tryout process.

Privacy and Respect

Evaluations will remain confidential and will be shared with OIC and PYHA Board to ensure impartiality.



Appeals Process

Any parent, coach, or OIC member who feels a player's placement is incorrect based on their performance relative to others in the placement process, can write a letter to the PYHA President and Director of Hockey within 10 days of the team announcement, asking for a review of their placement. Along with the parents, any coach or OIC member may also request a re-evaluation of a skater with the parent's permission.

If warranted, the DOH and the head coaches involved shall re-evaluate the player in practices for no more than two weeks and recommend to the PYHA Board if any changes should be made.

Missed Tryouts

Any skater who can't attend tryouts (e.g. gone on vacation, injury precluded them from skating, or joins association post tryouts/placements) will be evaluated upon their return to the ice within three (3) calendar weeks of returning and notifying the Director of Hockey (whichever date is later) to allow for enough time coordinate evaluator schedules and properly evaluate the skater who missed. Players start at the lowest level of their age group and get evaluated by the coach of that team, the Director of Hockey (DOH), and a member of the On-ice-Committee (OIC) to determine if they fit in with the other players on that team or should move up. Coaches can utilize a couple of ice sessions to make this determination, but this process will not take weeks. If a skater is selected to move up, the coach at the next level starts the same process. A skater does not have to move up one team at a time if all parties involved (coaches of all teams, DOH, and OIC member) agree on the final placement of the player.

High School Hockey Impact on Teams Formed in Tryouts/Placements

Post Tryouts/Placements some PYHA Bantam skaters have eligibility and therefore the option to try out for their high school team. The decision to do so is completely within the control of the skater/skater's family and may or may not be shared with PYHA. Similarly, while the PYHA DoH liaises with the local High School coaches the count and specific skaters who make the respective high school teams isn't known until well after PYHA tryouts/placements are complete and the impacted skaters find out. While each year is different (e.g. number of bantam skaters, number of high school eligible bantams, high school team needs, PYHA family member preferences, etc.) the PYHA Board with guidance from the OIC may adjust Bantam teams post tryouts/placements in the best possible manner for the remaining skaters. This could include moving a few skaters to different teams and or consolidating teams if need be.