



Coach's Guide for Tryouts

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Guide: DRA Coach’s Guide for Tryouts

Contents

Congratulation Coach!	1
Western Region Tryout Process.....	2
Tryout Preparation.....	3
1. Parent Meeting.....	3
2. Activities & Planning for your first tryout.....	4
3. Evaluators	4
Evaluator Responsibilities:.....	5
4. Communication.....	5
Tryout Day.....	6
1. DRA Responsibilities A	6
2. Head Coach Responsibilities	6
3. Checklist for Day of the Tryout	6
4. Exhibition Game for Tryout.....	6
Forming the Team & Offering Spots on the Roster	7
1. Understand the limits of team formation.....	7
2. Not Offering Roster Spot to Player	7
(see letter template in WRRRA Declaration & Tryout Process Package).....	7
3. Offer to Play Letter for Successful Players.....	8
(see letter template in WRRRA Declaration & Tryout Process Package).....	8
Offering Spot to Underage Player.....	8
Offering Spot to Player who is owned by other association.....	8
Team is Formed: Preparing for the Season.....	9

Congratulation Coach!

Congratulations on being selected as a coach for the A/AA program!

This guide is meant to help outline the tryout process and role for the head coach to set the team up for a successful season.

Activities to start thinking about include:

- Understanding the tryout process
- Understanding the association matrix and team formation numbers to build your team
- Considering some best practices for running your team:

- Communication method and frequency (weekly communication)
- How to get parents involved and keep them informed
- Encouraging team building activities
- Encouraging healthy behaviours in the team such as off ice training, healthy eating and team bonding.

The DRA is here to help you throughout the entire process and the season. This includes answering questions, understanding policies/bylaws and assisting when team/player concerns are raised.

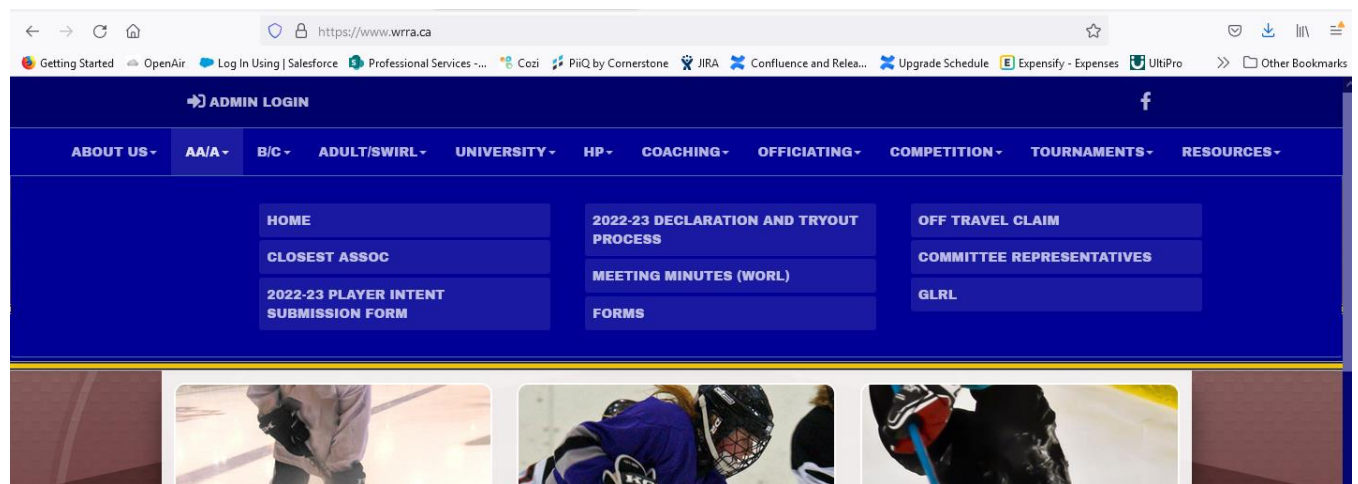
Western Region Tryout Process

The A/AA tryout process is governed by the Western Region. The Western Region distributes a guide to the Declaration and Tryout Process each year which includes:

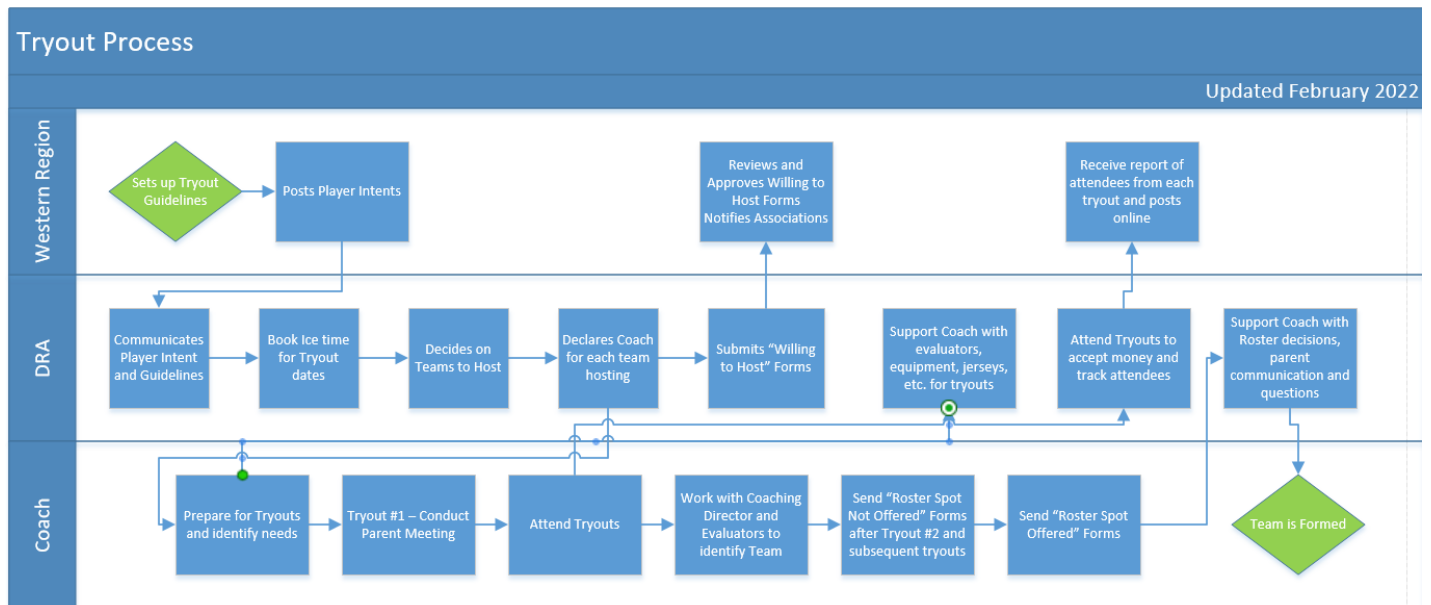
- Process for individual players to submit their intents
- Process for associations to submit team intents
- Date ranges for tryouts to be held including final dates to declare teams
- Process for declaring teams and offering players spots on the roster
- Rules on how not soliciting other players
- An Association Matrix showing which associations players must attend tryouts for in order

This guide should be reviewed by all associations and coaches to understand the details involved in the process.

<https://www.wrra.ca/>



The following is a high-level process workflow for how the process of tryouts works for Dorchester Ringette:



In addition, Dorchester Ringette has bylaws and policies in place and posted on their website for the following:

<https://dorchesterringette.com/>

- 4.0 Athlete Registration, Eligibility and Transfer Policy
- 17.0 Fairness in Player Tryouts and Evaluations

All policies should be reviewed prior to the tryouts.

Tryout Preparation

Teams usually have 4 tryouts in total with 3 being focused on skills/drills and the final tryout being an exhibition game. In the past, U12A has been restricted to only 3 tryouts and the Region will guide these expectations. U14, U16 and U19 age groups can have additional tryouts and these need to be planned with the Association to schedule Ice and notify the Region. The success of these tryouts depends on the planning. The Association is a key resource for support on these tryouts including but not limited to:

- Finding and scheduling Evaluators
- Providing equipment including rings and jerseys
- Re-scheduling Tryout dates/times within the regional guidelines
- On-Ice help for tryouts as needed
- Helping get contact information for other associations for exhibition game scheduling
- Getting Referees for exhibition games if required

Coaches should work closely with the DRA Coaching Coordinator during the tryout process.

1. Parent Meeting

A parent meeting is mandatory to have at the first tryout. When you facilitate this meeting is up to you. Either at the beginning of the tryout when kids are on the ice or following the tryout are often the approaches used; however, you need to advise the DRA support at the registration desk of when this

will be held so they can set the right expectations with parents to be there. The meeting agenda should include the following items:

- Introduce yourself as Coach
- Explain how many tryouts will take place
- Review the evaluation process including that impartial evaluator providing feedback on key skill areas
- Review the Team Commitment requirements including attendance to practices and games, expected travel, off ice training expectations, healthy eating habits for optimal team performance
- Review where the parents should be looking for communication (on website, via email, etc.)
- Explain when the team will be formed
- Discuss the need for players to be open to playing all positions

2. Activities & Planning for your first tryout

To run a successful tryout, you will need to ensure you have the following ready to go:

- Plan for running drills and skills that are age appropriate and level of play appropriate
- Plan for on-ice instructor to guide the players through the drills
- Equipment needed – rings, jerseys, pylons, etc.
- Request Jerseys from the Equipment Manager that can be used throughout your tryouts. This could include a gold set and navy set as needed.
- How will the group be split and identified on the ice?
- What should the evaluators focus on and split players, so each evaluator is not overwhelmed (ideally max. 5 players per evaluator where possible)

3. Evaluators

It is your responsibility as the Head Coach to get evaluators for tryouts however if you need support, please contact the DRA Coaching Coordinator for assistance. All Evaluators must meet the criteria below as per the DRA bylaw, be unbiased and you should plan for a 1:5 evaluator/player ratio at max based on intents.

Evaluator Selection

5. Evaluators must have an appropriate background to effectively evaluate player skills and performance. Preferable background characteristics can include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a. Experience with player evaluation
 - b. Suitable background in ringette either as a player or as a coach. If selecting coaches from previous year, bias may exist and should be eliminated wherever possible
 - c. Knowledgeable persons that are not stakeholders in the program
 - d. Players or coaches from the same or higher-level ringette programs
 - e. A willingness to evaluate players in categories in which they do not have a child registered
 - f. It is desirable to have a consistent group of Evaluators throughout the entire process. Preference shall be given to Evaluators that are able to commit to the entire evaluation process for one level

It is recommended to work with the Coaching Coordinator on the DRA to ensure there are enough evaluators at each tryout to meet the requirements.

Once your evaluators have been selected, you will need to plan who they will evaluate at each tryout. This would include:

- Having evaluation sheets ready at each tryout which lists the jersey numbers and colour to be evaluated (do not use names)
- Having a master list of which player gets which jersey colour and number to be handed out when player signs in
- Key Communication points to give to the evaluators on what you are looking for before the tryout begins and where they should sit
- Debrief meeting point after tryout is done to collect the evaluation forms and obtain further comments from the evaluators. This should be done in a location away from parents and players.

Evaluator Responsibilities:

- o Pick up evaluation form at registration desk
- o Meet with Head Coach if requested to review pre-tryout expectations
- o Evaluate players on the forms provided including rankings if requested
- o Hand in evaluation forms to Head Coach
- o Attend debrief meeting with Head Coach if requested

It is important to keep the evaluation forms intact and do not cut up into sections. Once the tryouts are complete and the team is formed, evaluation forms should be given to DRA coaching coordinator to be kept on file for the season.

4. Communication

The tryout process creates a lot of nervous players and parents involved so this is why it's critical to establish communication methods at the parent meeting and throughout the process.

Communication Methods include:

- How do parents contact you (email is preferred, do not have to provide direct line)?
- When will decisions be communicated and how (check your email, check the website)
- Who should the parents contact if they have escalation or additional questions you cannot answer (DRA President, Region)?

Further, the DRA is required to report certain information to the Region directly so keeping the DRA President and Coaching Coordinator involved at a minimum will help make the process go more smoothly.

Tryout Day

1. DRA Responsibilities

The DRA will be present at the tryouts to help support getting organized. The DRA will help by coordinating the following activities:

- Ensure ice time is booked and dressing rooms are available
- Set-up Welcome/Registration tables at the entrance point
- Collect tryout fees as necessary (this will be done via RAMP in future and may no further be needed to collect cash)
- Ensure players/parents fill out information forms so contact details are tracked for the coach
- Ensure player is listed on the Regional Intent Summary Sheet in order to step on the ice and is registered with an association for insurance purposes
- Handout jerseys based on Coach's recommendations and lists provided
- Track attendance and report attendance to the region

2. Head Coach Responsibilities

The Head Coach should arrive early to allow for extra time if any hiccups are encountered with players not arriving, evaluators not arriving or equipment issues. The Head Coach can and should request help at any time.

- Arrive at least 30 minutes in advance
- Communicate any instructions that need to be relayed to the parents to the DRA registration table volunteers including parent meeting details and meeting spots
- Hand out Jerseys to players as they register or give instructions to the DRA working at the registration table on how you would like to see this done. If using the DRA to distribute jerseys, check-in before going on ice to ensure all jerseys were issued and if any unexpected players were added.
- Confirm Evaluators arrive and distribute evaluations sheets and pens if arranged with Coach in advance
- Obtain Rings, pylons and any other equipment needed to run the tryout.
- Obtain a copy of the registration details including player names and contact information such as emails so communication can be sent out.

3. Checklist for Day of the Tryout

- ✓ Jerseys available to give to each player and numbers documented
- ✓ Equipment is ready including rings, etc.
- ✓ On-Ice Instructor is present
- ✓ Evaluators are aware of expectations and have been given evaluation forms
- ✓ Evaluators are aware of where to meet after the tryout for debrief
- ✓ Parents are aware of where to stand/watch tryout
- ✓ Parent Meeting communicated and completed if tryout #1

4. Exhibition Game for Tryout

Often the last tryout is an exhibition game to see the players in game play scenarios. If a game is desired, the Coach is responsible to schedule the opponent and notify the Association to ensure ice time and referees are available. Evaluators should be in attendance of the game as well to provide further points of view on players performance.

To start this process of scheduling a game, the Coach should look at the WRRRA website to see which associations are hosting teams in the same age group and level and use the association website to find contact information.

Forming the Team & Offering Spots on the Roster

1. Understand the limits of team formation

When forming team, the Region has guidelines in place around the # of players that are required to be home players and how to approach out of association players.

The following charts show how many home/current players are required based on age and level of play in order to form a valid team. If an exception is needed in the case of goalies or other reasons, the DRA President should be made aware BEFORE any letters to play are distributed.

Team Composition Chart – A Teams

	U12A	U14A	U16A	U19A
Roster Size	Home or Current Players	Home or Current Players	Home or Current Players	Home or Current Players
10	8*	7*	6*	5*
11	9	8	6	5
12	10	8	7	6
13	11	9	8	6
14	12	10	8	7
15	12	10	9	7
16	13	11	9	8
17	14	12	10	8
18	15	12	10	9

*Minimum number unless approved by Evaluation Committee

Team Composition Chart – AA Teams

	U14AA	U16AA	U19AA
Roster Size	Home or Current Players	Home or Current Players	Home or Current Players
10	6*	5*	5*
11	7	5	5
12	8	6	5
13	8	6	5
14	8	7	5
15	9	7	6
16	9	8	6
17	10	8	6
18	10	9	7

*Minimum number unless approved by Evaluation Committee

Home or Current Players are players who belong to the association as an eligible play by residency (Home) or the player played for an association which player was previously released to play at in the previous year (Current).

2. Not Offering Roster Spot to Player

(see letter template in WRRRA Declaration & Tryout Process Package)

Usually, two tryouts are completed before the “Roster Spot Not Offered” Letter is provided. The reason for this is to ensure players have been given a fair chance for evaluations and did not just have an “off day”. When emailing the “Roster Spot Not Offered” letter, be sensitive to how this will be received while also being quick and concise in the email.

Example:

I’d like to thank you for trying out for XX team. At this time, we are not able to offer you a spot on the team. Please see letter attached. Good luck with your development this year and hope you have a great season.

If a parent requests further information, a players evaluation forms can be shared with parents as long as the form only shows information for that particular player. **Parents cannot see evaluations for other players.** If further conversations are required, its suggested to include the Coaching Coordinator or DRA President to help support those conversations as an additional witness.

3. Offer to Play Letter for Successful Players

(see letter template in WRRRA Declaration & Tryout Process Package)

In order to offer a roster spot, the official form called “Offer to Play Letter” must be used as provided from the Region. The form needs to be completed by the Coach and sent to the parent/player for review. The parent/player is required to sign the form and return within 48 hours or the spot is considered declined and can be offered to another player.

Please confirm your acceptance with the understanding of our expectations as listed above with a return email within the next **48** hours.

If I do not receive a written reply (email is accepted) to this offer letter within the timeline indicated above it will be considered a

DECLINE of this Offer to Play.

If you have any other questions or concerns, please contact me.

Players who refuse a roster spot on an AA team or A team, must return to their home association and play on the lower-level team. This means if a player tries out for AA at another center, is offered a spot and then refuses and their home association only offers regional, their only option is to play regional.

Offering Spot to Underage Player

Offering spots to underage players requires additional approval from the Association and Region and may require further evidence from evaluations and coach letters to understand the decision for this. The general recommendation is to offer spots to those players who are of eligible age and skill level in order to develop the players in the correct age groups for future viable teams. This is for both the team success and overall sport success in growing more players. However, there are circumstances and exceptional players that may require a review.

If a Coach wishes to offer a spot to an underage player, they should contact the DRA President and Coaching Coordinator BEFORE the Offer to Play Letter is provided to the player/parent. This will allow for proper reviews and approval with the Region.

Offering Spot to Player who is owned by other association

If a player who does not belong to Dorchester is being given an Offer to Play Letter, the regional tracking sheet should be reviewed prior to the letter being sent to confirm the player was not given offers by their own association.

In addition, there is a “Closest Association” matrix that is used to guide players through which the associations they must tryout at prior to accepting an offer. The matrix can be viewed on the WRRRA webpage using the link below:

<https://www.wrra.ca/content/worl--closest-association>

If you are unsure how to approach this, talk to the President and/or Coaching Coordinator.

If an Offer to Play Letter is given to a player outside the association, a Ringette Ontario Release form should also be provided.

<https://cloud.rampinteractive.com/dorchestertringette/files/RO%20Player%20Release%20Form.pdf>

Team is Formed: Preparing for the Season

Congratulations, your team is now formed! You can now begin planning for the new season within Ringette Ontario guidelines. Here are some items that you can begin to work on:

- Assign your bench staff and communicate to the Association
 - Bench staff are bondable positions and can include Assistant Coaches (2), Manager, Treasurer and Equipment Manager
- Establish Team communication methods (Email lists, RAMP Team App)
- No fundraising or team events before Ringette Ontario approved date
- Review and plan for Tournaments – Ringette Ontario releases the sanctioned tournament list usually in July
- Begin Sponsorship request activities
 - Please reference the sponsorship policy on the www.dorchestertringette.com website
 - Determine what sponsorship incentives you would like to provide those that do sponsor such as recognition on a banner, website, etc.
- Organize Team Clothing Order
- Work with the Team Manager or Treasurer to establish a budget for the team and tracking as provincial teams must submit budgets to the DRA throughout the year
- Determine other positions needed on the team such as Food Planning, Team Event planner, etc. Although these positions are not bondable, they can help the team.

Good luck with your fun and challenging season!