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MDRA Player Assessment Guidelines for Competitive Teams



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Introduction

All information is subject to change due to the ongoing and evolving rules and regulations arising from COVID-19 at the Federal, Provincial and Municipal levels of government and the guidance provided by Ringette Ontario.

Player assessment guidelines provide all involved with the tryouts, a consistent, transparent way of assessing players at the competitive level. These guidelines will be followed unless an exception to the guidelines is approved by a vote of the MDRA board of directors.

A selection process occurs each year so that players can play on a team with players of similar age and playing ability. The tryout schedules will be available on the MDRA website www.mdra.ca. Please check the website during tryouts for schedule changes.

The Director of Competitive will coordinate the tryout process. The Director of Competitive is referenced throughout this guideline; however, if they are in conflict of interest, the board of directors will appoint another board member that is not in conflict to oversee the tryout process.

The Player and Parent Code of Conduct must be signed by all participants prior to participating in player assessments.

Eligibility

Any player registered with MDRA or registered with another association and able to present a properly completed player release form at the time of the first tryout session, can attend the tryout sessions. (Note: this may be updated based on what ERRA decides at their board meeting)

Out of Association Players (OOA)

Please refer to the OOA policy on the policies page of the MDRA website

Underage Players

Please refer to the Underage Player policy found on the policies page of the MDRA website.

Expectations

As an association, we encourage players to play at the highest level they are comfortable with and capable of playing, however, players have to approach the competitive team tryouts with realistic goals in mind. As a rule of thumb, a realistic goal would be to move up one skill level in the second year of an age group, and drop one skill level when moving up an age group. This is just a guideline as player skill development rates differ and player numbers vary at each level. While teams are never pre-selected and no spots are reserved on a team, there is often a core group of athletes who consistently earn a position at the elite level. This is a reality in all sports.

Assessment Attendance

Players must attend their home association tryouts and are required to attend every assessment session. Failure to do so will jeopardize the player's ability to make the team. Should there be a conflict with tryouts or illness players must contact and advise the MDRA's Director of Competitive prior to the tryout. OOA players must attend a minimum of 2 tryout sessions with one of those being one of the 2 skill evaluation sessions prior to any exhibition games.

Players who are injured during tryouts or who are seriously ill and who are unable to complete tryouts will be given a provisional spot on the team if the assessors feel that this is merited based on the performance to that point. If this cannot be determined and the player cannot return to tryouts, the Director of Competitive will meet with the VP of Player Development and they will decide how to proceed on a case-by-case basis. After the completion of tryouts, once the player is healthy the assessment will be completed and the player will be added to the team if the assessors feel that the addition is merited.

In all cases where a player is added to a team after tryouts the following conditions need to be met:

- the player must be measurably better than the players who were cut,
- space is available on the team,
- no players previously selected may be displaced,
- The addition must meet with the approval of the age group Convener and the Registrar.

Provision of a Trainer

For all sessions a trainer will be identified and will be available to assist as needed.

Team size and composition

The number of players selected for any team may vary and will be determined based upon the caliber of players attending the tryouts, and by the head coach's desired team composition. The MDRA strives to have a minimum of 12 players (11 skaters and 1 goalie) per team.

If there is only 2 goalies within a division but multiple teams, the first team will sign one goalie to the roster with an option of completing an RO Two Team Player Agreement for the second goalie.

At the discretion of the team coach RO Two Team Player Agreements may be used to complete the roster.

Assessment Cost

There is a tryout fee that is assessed every year. For details on the assessment fee, please see the registration page on the MDRA website.

Assessors

The Director of Competitive, the VP-Coaching and/or the VP-Player Development will arrange for independent evaluators to provide qualified assessors for each tryout session. For the purposes of determining “caliber” alternate assessors that have been involved in ringette at higher competitive levels with no affiliation to MDRA may be used along with the recommendations of assessors in order to render a decision with regards to viability of the team going forward. Qualified assessors may only participate if they have no family members on the ice. Assessors select a minimum of eight (8) skaters for competitive teams and finalize the remaining players for the team with the head coach.

The Role of the Head Coach

Before tryouts start, MDRA seeks applications for the head coach position for each team. Applications are reviewed by the coaching committee; who make a recommendation to the Executive. Non-parent coaches may be confirmed immediately. Parent coaches are accepted as the provisional head coach until their child is selected for the team by the independent assessors.

The assessment drills will be selected and provided by the independent evaluators who will also include 1 on ice instructor to coordinate the skills sessions. Alternate on ice help will be coordinated through the Director of Competitive & VP of Coaching should it be required.

Before the first tryout, the Director of Competitive & VP of Player Development will meet with the provisional head coach to discuss team composition by position. For instance a provisional head coach may indicate a desire for a team that is a 7-5 team (i.e. 7 forwards and 5 defense) or may have a target size in mind, e.g. 11 skaters.

The provisional head coach will work with the independent evaluators, the Director of Competitive and the VP of Player Development to divide the remaining players into teams for scrimmages or exhibition games during tryouts. Wherever possible, each team will include two line ups – one for the first half of the game/scrimmage and one for the second half. The goal is to give players different line mates during the game/scrimmage.

Head coaches can also participate in assessment meetings – please see Assessment Meetings.

Registration and Tryout Organization

Parents should register, decide which team tryout session to attend, and continually check the web site for tryout schedule/location changes. Tryouts are held in descending order from the most competitive level to the least competitive level. All players will be informed of the outcome of their tryout by the Director of Competitive (see section Communication with Players).

At the tryout session, volunteers approved by the Board of Directors will take attendance and hand out jerseys. Once players are on the ice, the Director of Competitive, VP-Coaching and (Acting) Convener will hold a short parent information meeting outlining the process for evaluations and expectations for those successful in making the team. Tryout session formats are outlined below.

Format for Tryout 1 & 2

Our goal is to assess all players on individual skills and basic game skills by the end of tryout 2. Every effort will be made to assess all players against all criteria by assigning a score in each category. Assessors will use an assessment template to record the scores.

For U14 tryouts, individual will include drills focused on skating, passing, stabbing and skating. Game skills will focus on assertive play, positional play and effectiveness in their position using game drills involving 1- on-1, 2-on-1, 3- on-2, and so forth. Every effort will be made to incorporate a scrimmage into tryouts 1 and 2 provided there are enough competitors.

For U16 and U19 tryouts, the focus will be on game skills with scrimmaging being the may focus of the tryouts in Day 1 and Day 2.

Format for Tryouts 3 & 4

An exhibition game will be arranged for tryouts 3 & 4. Bench helpers will use the rosters provided and will play the players in their designated positions. Ideally there will be at least 2 helpers on each bench plus one trainer for the game. Family members (e.g. a parent and their player) cannot be on the same bench.

Scrimmages

Where an exhibition game is not organized, two teams will be formed and the players will be playing in the positions where they have asked to be assessed. Bench helpers will use the rosters provided and will play the players in their designated positions. Ideally there will be at least 2 helpers on each bench plus one trainer for the game. Family members (e.g. a parent and their player) cannot be on the same bench.

Assessment during Tryouts

Assessors will be responsible for assessing players using the criteria provided below in “Assessment Criteria”. Assessors will also be able to provide general written comments on as many competitors as possible.

Positions Played During Tryouts

Players will have an opportunity to play in the positions they identified as their preferred positions at sign up at Tryout 1. Players may be asked to play other positions during tryouts. If we request that a player play an alternate position, we will contact the family ahead of the tryout so that the player will be prepared for the change.

Please note that preferred positions indicated at tryouts are not guaranteed if a player is offered a position on the team. The head coach and bench staff will determine the best positions for all players.

Assessment Meetings

The assessors shall undertake assessments during Tryout 1 and 2 in order to independently assess all players in attendance. The Director of Competitive will make best efforts to record all scores into a single document that will complete the numeric component of the assessment. The assessors will use this numeric summary and their own notes to rank players and determine releases after Tryout 2. There may be between 16 and 20 players moving into Tryout 3.

Once the provisional head coach's player is selected to the team, they are confirmed as the head coach and may participate in the tryout assessments and meetings following Tryouts 1 and 2. The head coach should take their own notes using the assessment criteria and has one vote as does each assessor.

The head coach may select players ranked nine through the team target size for team composition. The head coach will have an equal vote in the selection of goalie(s). The final selections are subject to review by the VP of Player Development and Director of Competitive who can bring it to a sub-group of the board of directors for review if the choices are inconsistent with the assessor's data. The President or an executive member selected by the President must be present for the head coaches' selections.

Non-parent head coaches may participate in all assessments and meetings and have one vote.

Players on the Bubble

After the initial assessment sessions there are usually a handful of players who are 'on the bubble' or those for whom it is very difficult to decide who should make the team.

- IF your child is 'on the bubble' and makes the team, this will be an opportunity to play with some players who are more skilled. This may result in added pressure of trying to perform to the same level as the rest of the team.
- IF your child is 'on the bubble' and doesn't make the team, this will be an opportunity to play with players who have slightly less skill and to be a leader on the team with the rest of the players.

Communication with Players

After Tryout 2

Usually decisions/releases will be made after Tryout 2.

Director of Competitive will contact each player within 24 hours to explain the selection process and whether the player will be attending the next session

Should a parent or player be interested in feedback they should contact the Director of Competitive (contact info included in the email).

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Some players deemed to have already made the team might be asked not to participate in Tryout 3 and/or 4 so that evaluators may better assess the skills of the remaining players.

After Tryout 3

Usually further decisions/releases will be made.

Director of Competitive or head coach will contact each player within 24 hours to explain the selection process and whether the player will be attending the next session

After Tryout 4

Final decisions/releases will be made after Tryout 4.

The Director of Competitive or the head coach will contact each player within 24 hours to explain the selection process and whether the player will be on the team.

Assessment Criteria

The skills that are assessed during the tryouts are listed below.

- **Skating**- agility; quick feet; balance; pivots; acceleration/deceleration; full ice-speed; power; stop/starts GAME: applies skating skills consistently in game; support with timing; drive to net; fighting through checks; back checking; change of pace to gain ice and/or closing gap.
- **Passing stabbing and pass receiving**-forehand and backhand - accuracy, strength, quickness of ring movement; presents target; opens to pass (body positioning and timing) GAME: decision making to pass; willingness to pass; support option; done @ game speed
- **Ring Handling and protection**- use of fakes/dekes; move to space; head up; feet moving; use of body to protect ring; confidence and composure in small space and/or under pressure
- **Shooting**- power, accuracy, quick release, shot in stride, variety of shots (location); variety of shot (type); always a threat to shoot; shot for rebounds; shot for resets; scoring and/or scoring opportunities; awareness
- **Checking and Channeling**- angling inside - out; body position/stick position to take away options; control of body and stick; goal side; aggressive; pin/close gap "move it or lose it"; transitions/change of directions; awareness to be aggressive/conservative; discipline
- **1 VS 1 Defensive skills**- backward mobility/transition to Def.; gap control; positioning in triangle; coverage (tight; eyes on ring; goal side; inside); owning your blue line; break out 1st; support to D/C on Break out
- **1 vs 1 Offensive skills**- acceleration/deceleration; pursuit to ring; create space on breakout; ring reception in neutral zone; creativity in offensive zone vs predictability; support in offensive zone (play away from ring); coverage creates turnovers - into attack;

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- **Game play** -anticipation; vision; versatility (both sides of ring); support and transition; decision making (timing; composure; confidence; aptitude); discipline; knowledge of systems (mental game, knows where to play, knows when to change, communicates with team mates, skates to open spaces, executes free passes well) (executes breakout, plays defensive triangle effectively, fakes and shoots well when in attacking zone)
- **Intangibles**- Passion (wants to compete); Fitness(able to play at level under pressure); Drive/work ethic (constant desire to excel); Mental Toughness(rebounds well, distraction control); Discipline (temper, follows rules and game plan)

The assessment of the skills will be based on a 3 or 5 point system as well as comments provided by the evaluators. The evaluators will group each player into top, middle and bottom OR top, top-middle, middle, bottom-middle and bottom groupings based on their own comments and evaluation numbers. After the tryout session the evaluators will discuss their rankings for the day to place the athletes into a ranking for that session, and/or for the entire tryout sessions to date.

Concerns / Questions

All concerns and questions should be directed to the Director of Competitive.