



MDRA Player Assessment Guidelines for Competitive Teams

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Introduction

These guidelines ensure a consistent and transparent approach to evaluating players at the competitive level. They will be followed unless an exception is approved by a vote of the MDRA Board of Directors.

Tryouts are held each year to place players on teams with others of similar age and ability. Schedules will be posted on the MDRA website at www.mdra.ca; please check regularly during tryouts for updates.

We encourage players to compete at the highest level they feel comfortable with and are capable of. However, tryout goals should be realistic. A general benchmark is to move up one skill level in the second year of an age group and drop one level when advancing to a new age group. Player development rates and team needs may vary.

All parents, players, and coaches are encouraged to review these guidelines before each tryout season.

Eligibility

Any player registered with MDRA or another association may attend tryouts, provided they meet all registration requirements—such as payment of fees—set by MDRA, the Eastern Region Ringette Association, or other governing bodies.

Tryout Jerseys

All players trying out for MDRA will be required to wear a tryout jersey (with numbers on the front and back of the jersey) which can be purchased in advance and retained by the player for future year tryouts and team practices. Each player will be identified by a unique jersey number which helps to reduce confusion when assessing.

Out of Association Players (OOA)

Please refer to the following [MDRA Out of Association Policy document](#).

Underage Players

Please refer to the following [Underage Player Policy document](#).

Expectations and Competitive Contract

Competitive players will be asked to sign a Competitive Contract during tryouts, outlining the commitments expected throughout the season. This ensures players understand and accept their responsibilities from the start.

Players who do not sign the contract or submit the required letter may still try out, but assessors cannot place them on a team without coach approval. This ensures a mutual agreement on commitment between the player and coach.

Tryout Attendance

Players must attend their home association tryouts and are required to attend every session they are asked to participate in. Failure to do so will jeopardize the player's ability to make the team.

The Director of Competitive should be notified in advance if a player cannot attend any of the sessions.

Injured, ill or absent players

Players who are injured before tryouts, 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. This includes performance reported on by their Head Coach from their previous season, if they are unable to attend any tryouts due to a previous injury or illness.

If this cannot be determined and the player cannot return to tryouts, the Director of Competitive will meet with the Board of Directors 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.

Players attending tryouts are expected to be in good health. Those beginning tryouts at their target level must be prepared to attend all sessions they are asked to participate in. Players who are injured or seriously ill at the start should only participate once fully recovered.

If a player becomes ill or injured during tryouts, they must notify the Convenor. No performance allowances will be made for illness or injury during tryouts. All such cases will be reviewed individually by the MDRA Board of Directors.

Placement Scenarios:

1. **Clear and Obvious Placement:** The player may be placed on a team based on their tryout performance (partial if applicable), input from previous coaches, past statistics, and evaluations from experienced ringette individuals. If the player disagrees with this placement, they may choose outcome 2.
2. **No Clear Placement:** The player must complete an assessment once healthy and available.
 - **Spring Tryouts:** One practice with the target team, followed by evaluation in a fall exhibition game (if healthy).
 - **Fall Tryouts:** One practice with the target team, followed by evaluation in a fall exhibition or league game (if healthy).

Important Notes:

- Players returning from illness/injury must be fully recovered and will be assessed as such—no accommodations will be made.
- It is the player's responsibility to ensure readiness; no second-chance tryouts will be offered.
- Assessments will be conducted by original tryout assessors where possible, along with one or more MDRA Board members with coaching or assessment experience. The head coach

may provide input but cannot use a coach's pick for an injured player.

- The Convenor, Head Coach and MDRA Competitive Director will determine the target team's roster size and coordinate placement with the team one level down, if needed.

Provision of a Trainer

For all sessions a qualified 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 up-to-date registration numbers at each age level, by the caliber of players attending the tryouts and by the head coach's desired team composition. MDRA strives to have a minimum of 12 players (11 skaters and 1 goalie) per team.

If there are 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.

Tryout Cost

There is a tryout fee that is assessed every year. For details on the assessment fee, please see the following [registration information on the MDRA website](#).

Evaluators

The Director of Competitive will arrange for qualified assessors, including goalie evaluators, as needed from a list of qualified evaluators 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 evaluators may only participate if they have no family members on the ice. evaluators 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.

Before the first tryout, the Director of Competitive & VP of Coaching 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 Tryout Committee (voted on by the Board of Directors) 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 email (including when/where to go

for the next tryout session if necessary). Every effort will be made to distribute the email follow-up within 24 hours of a tryout session (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, President and 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 and 2

Our goal is to assess all players on individual and 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.

MDRA Tryout Plans and MDRA Tryout Drills will be made available to players prior to tryouts, and will be available on our [MDRA Competitive Webpage](#).

Format for Tryouts 3 and 4

Exhibition games for Tryouts 3 and 4 will be arranged by ERRRA.

Bench helpers will follow assigned rosters and ensure players are played in their designated positions. Ideally, each bench will have at least two helpers and one trainer. Family members should not be on the same bench (e.g., a father and daughter).

The goal is to evaluate all players in game situations and form a team that fits the desired composition for the level of play. Evaluators will score players across defined criteria using a standardized assessment template to ensure fair and consistent evaluations.

Intrasquad Scrimmages

Two teams will be formed, with players evaluated in their requested positions. Bench helpers will follow provided rosters and ensure players are played accordingly. When possible, lines will be adjusted midway through scrimmages. Buzzers may be used to help ensure equal ice time.

Convenors and the Director of Competitive will coordinate with the provisional coach to set line

combinations and shift lengths. A volunteer is needed for the game clock and shot clock. Ideally, each bench will have at least two helpers and one trainer. Family members may not be on the same bench (e.g., a father and daughter).

Evaluations during Tryouts

Evaluators will be responsible for assessing players and goalies using the criteria provided (please see [Assessment Criteria for Players](#) and [Assessment Criteria for Goalies](#)). Evaluators 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 and 2. Players may be asked to play other positions during tryouts.

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

All players attending Tryouts will be independently assessed by the evaluators. The Director of Competitive will record all scores into a single document that will complete the numeric component of the assessment. The evaluators 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.

If applicable: Once the provisional head coach's child is selected to the team, they are confirmed as the head coach and may participate in the tryout assessments and meetings following each tryout.

The head coach should take their own notes using the assessment criteria and will have 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 Tryout Committee who can bring it to the Board of

Directors for review if the choices are inconsistent with the evaluator'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 meetings 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

Usually decisions/releases will be made after **Tryout 2**. The division Convenor will contact each player within 24 hours to explain the selection process and whether the player will be attending the next session. 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** further decisions/releases will be made. The division Convenor 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** the final decisions/releases will be made. The division Convenor 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, who summarizes what the evaluators noted and will only be provided once all tryouts have been completed.

Assessment Criteria for Players

The **assessment of the skills** will be based on a 1 to 5 point system as well as comments

provided by the evaluators for **tryout #1 and tryout #2**. The evaluators will group each player into top, top-middle, middle, bottom-middle and bottom based on their own comments and the athletes performance of the skill criteria.

The **assessment of gameplay** will be based on a 1 to 3 point system as well as comments provided by the evaluators for **tryout #3 and #4**. The evaluators will group each player into top, middle and bottom based on their own comments and the players overall performance during gameplay.

After each tryout session the evaluators will discuss their rankings with the Tryout Committee, their scores and rankings for that session, and/or for the entire tryout sessions to date.

The Players skills that are assessed during the tryouts are the following:

1. **Skating:** Agility; quick feet; balance; pivots; acceleration/deceleration; full ice-speed; power; stop/starts, tight turns
 - **During Gameplay:** Applies skating skills consistently in game; support with timing; drive to net; change of pace to gain ice and/or closing gap.
2. **Passing, stabbing and pass receiving:** Forehand and backhand; accuracy; strength; quickness of ring movement; presents target; opens to pass (body positioning and timing)
 - **During Gameplay:** Decision making to pass; willingness to pass; support option; done at game speed
3. **Ring Handling and protection:** Use of fakes/dekes; move to open space; head up; feet moving; use of body to protect ring; confidence and composure in small space and/or under pressure
4. **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
5. **Checking and Channeling:** Angling inside - out; body position/stick position to take away options; control of body and stick; goal side; pin/close gap "move it or lose it"; transitions/change of directions; awareness to be aggressive/conservative; discipline
6. **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
7. **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;
8. **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)

9. **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); teamwork (communicates effectively with teammates, supports team strategies, collaborates well under pressure)

Assessment Criteria for Goalies

The **assessment of the skills** will be based on a 1 to 5 point system as well as comments provided by the evaluators for **tryout #1 and tryout #2**. The evaluators will group each player into top, top-middle, middle, bottom-middle and bottom based on their own comments and the athletes performance of the skill criteria.

The **assessment of gameplay** will be based on a 1 to 3 point system as well as comments provided by the evaluators for **tryout #3 and #4**. The evaluators will group each player into top, middle and bottom based on their own comments and the players overall performance during gameplay.

After each tryout session the evaluators will discuss their rankings with the Tryout Committee, their scores and rankings for that session, and/or for the entire tryout sessions to date.

The Goalie skills that are assessed during the tryouts are the following:

1. **Saves:** Makes many saves with blocker, catcher, pads, stick; stops most to all shots; does not let in "weak" goals due to poor readiness, reaction, or positioning.
2. **Ring Distribution:** Throws low and flat passes to safe zones on ice (goal line by side of net; not in front); makes stick passes with accuracy and timing; communicates with teammates to signal where and when to start to break out.
3. **Positioning:** Stays square to the shooter; pushes out to manage angles and reduce the amount of net showing to shooter; hugs post when ring is behind net and close to goal line; backs into net on breakaways.
4. **Mobility:** Basic stance: feet shoulder-width apart, weight on inside edges, hands out, head up, back arched, hips low (but not crouching too low); performs butterfly, sliding butterfly, and power push to move side to side; keeps stick flat on ice during movement; avoids bobbing up and down while moving laterally; can do T push and shuffle step
5. **Rebound Control:** Controls direction of rebounds with pads or stick; absorbs/cushions ring with stick on low shots.
6. **Recovery:** Returns to basic stance and proper positioning after being down on ice.
7. **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); teamwork (communicates effectively with teammates, supports team strategies, collaborates well under pressure)