



Ranking Procedure

2023-2024



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Philosophy & Objectives

Player ranking can be one of the most difficult tasks for a Minor Hockey Association to handle. However, it can also be the foundation for which an association is built. In most cases these rankings are used to place individual players onto teams of similar skill set base. An important factor that is missing in many cases is that Minor Hockey Associations do not use a player's rank as a tool for coaches to develop players based on their individual strength and weaknesses. The following are the Objectives of OMHA during our ranking and selection procedure.

- ☑ This procedure is put in place annually by the OMHA Board to create a fair, open, and impartial assessment of a player's total hockey ability compared to his peers during both the skill and scrimmage sessions.
- ☑ To ensure all players have a reasonable opportunity of being selected to a team appropriate to their skill levels as determined during on-ice rankings of the current year.
- ☑ To provide coaches with the opportunity and flexibility to build a team based in part on the ranking procedure and on their own coaching philosophy and knowledge of players skills and attitude.
- ☑ Provide consistency and uniformity in the ranking process so that both players and parent expectations are consistent from year to year.
- ☑ Form teams to maintain balanced and competitive play where athletes can develop and participate equitably in a fun environment throughout the season.
- ☑ We recognize that it is very difficult to satisfy the expectations of all stakeholders in the ranking process. Extraordinary / unusual circumstances will be dealt with by the OMHA Executive Committee.



Ranking Procedure

Participants

Please note that this policy primarily explains the procedure for all travel teams in the OMHA. All OMHA House and RHL team rankings are done by OMHA volunteers but with the same goals of ensuring our teams are developed with parity of skill in mind. The OMHA House and RHL These team include all U7, U9, U11 House, U13 House, and RHL U15-U18. OAAA Rankings are run separate from the OMHA ranking process, following their own policy and procedures.

***Players trying out for an OAAA team but have yet to be selected must attend OMHA Rankings if your ice time does not conflict. If they don't evaluate with the OMHA they will not be guaranteed a position. They will be put in a selection pool in their respective divisions.**

Ranking by Position

OMHA will rank players by position for U13, U15, & U18. Players will be ranked for the position they have indicated on their registration form. Players are not allowed to change position once the ranking process has begun.

In U7, U9 and U11 players will not be ranked by position except for U11, including U11 HADP goaltenders.

Grouping Players (U15 and U18)

Players will be grouped for rankings using their age category and division from the previous year as a guideline. Ranking group 1 will be the smallest for the first of 4 or 5 ranking sessions. Ranking group 2 will be a little bigger and so on for the remaining number of groups. This format promotes, and is more likely, to create a positive environment for the players by allowing players to move upward. It will not eliminate backward movement, but hopefully will minimize it. The objective is to have all the groups contain approximately the same number of players by the final ranking session. In cases of "New Players" and/or "Unique" player situations presented to OMHA, the collaboration effort between the divisional director, operations coordinator, and executive member(s) ensures the player is placed in an initial group to start the ranking process.

Grouping Players (U11 and U13) ****NEW in 2023-24****

Players will be grouped for rankings for the first 2 skates as evenly as they can be made, allowing an equal number of players from each level in each group. Each player will play 2 scrimmages and receive a ranking of 5 to 1 (5 being highest) by each evaluator. After these 2 skates the player's average score will determine where they are placed for their 3rd skate, with groupings from a top group to bottom group. For skates 3, 4, & 5, OMHA will follow the normal ranking procedure and players can still move up or down between groups until they receive their final ranking. Movement to house can still occur any time after skate 3 as well. Because of this pilot we will be eliminating the skills session for the 2023-24 season and will explore it again after this season. With this pilot we hope this will give everyone a chance to earn their spot in which group they will start the process.



Player Movement

Players will be moved according to their rankings following scrimmage sessions and put into groups of players with similar ability. As the players progress through the scrimmages their rankings will be combined and will see players placed accordingly. This will allow for player movement based on performance during each ranking session. This process will start after session/skate 2 for U11 and U13.

Evaluators

For the 2023 Rankings, OMHA has recruited an independent group to oversee the process.

The ranking process will start approximately Sept 17, 2023 and end Oct 5, 2023.

This group must sit separate from parents and each other to make their assessments independent of each other's or parents' influence. This group will have a marked off section where they will sit in each arena. Parents are expected to leave them alone to do their job.

Rankings for an OMHA member/player can only be requested in writing for that individual only and only AFTER the final evaluation. This must be done through the division director, 24 hours after that players team selection skate is complete.

Drills, Scrimmages, and Ranking Criteria

Players will be ranked during separate ice sessions as follows:

- U7: 1 Tune-Up skate & 2 ice/scrimmage sessions
- U9 House: 1 Tune-Up skates & 4 Half ice scrimmage sessions
- U11 House: 1 Tune-Up skates & 4 scrimmage sessions
- U11 Travel: 5 scrimmage sessions
- U11 HADP 3 scrimmage sessions (will take place prior to OMHA rankings)
- U13 House: 1 Tune-Up skate & 4 scrimmage sessions
- U13 Travel: 5 scrimmage sessions
- U15 Travel: 4 scrimmage sessions
- U16 Travel: 3 scrimmage sessions
- U18 Travel: 4 scrimmage sessions
- U11 to U18 Female: 4 scrimmage sessions
- RHL U15 and U18: 3 to 4 scrimmage sessions

Players trying out in an age category will arrive for their ice time 30 minutes prior to check in and be assigned a team and jersey. They will receive instructions, and information regarding the ranking session at this time.



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Ranking Criteria - Players

The key points which are looked at when watching players are as follows:

1. One of the most important factors is Skating. Simply because you must be able to skate to play the game and compete. Looking at skating involves a few different aspects, and they are as follows:
 - Acceleration, speed, mobility, agility, balance, stride, crossovers, acceleration of turns, quick feet, pivots, controlled skating, change of pace.
2. Other key points that factor in the decision are listed below. These key points are not in any specific order.
 - **Passing** - Passing, receiving, passing choices, on back hand, unselfish with puck, presents a good target, receives, and retains with control, tough passing.
 - **Puck Control** - Heads up, smooth, and quiet, good hands, protection, in small spaces, in traffic.
 - **Shooting** - Power, accuracy, quick release, can shoot in motion, goal scorer, rebound control, variety of shots.
 - **Positional Play** - Ability to see play developing both offensively and defensively and moves to support. Judgment, anticipation, understands systems, disciplined.
 - **Checking Concept** - Angling, good body position with balance and control, defensive side position, aggressive checker, strength, taking checks.

Ranking Criteria – Goalies

The key points that are looked at when watching goalies are as follows:

1. Probably the most important factor is Skating. Not in the sense of a player, but more for movements around, in and out of the net. Looking at skating involves a few different aspects, and they are as follows:
 - Angles
 - Lateral Movement (can he/she get across the net fast enough and in position)
 - Good balance (strong on skates)
2. Other key points that factor in the decision are listed below. These key points are not in any specific order.
 - Positioning
 - Can he/she read the play and react accordingly.
 - Can he/she decide when to stay on their feet or go down to stop a shot. (Using the butterfly is effective, however there are times when you must stay on your skates.)
 - Not shying away from shots.
 - Rebounds
 - Ability to stop the first shot.



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- Since most of goals are scored on rebounds, can they control rebounds or react to them quickly enough.
- Playing the Puck
 - Can they show they know when to play the puck and when to leave it for a player?
 - Know where to put the puck when they need to play it.
 - Know when to stop the play and get a whistle.
- Work Ethic
 - Possessing a constant work ethic through the entire camp. Not just in games and not just when getting shots
 - Doing extra "goalie stuff" in the corners when not getting shots

Goalies

U11, U13, U15, and U18 goaltenders will be evaluated in 1 or 2 separate goalie sessions. Goalies will also be ranked in the scrimmages with the weight of 75% goalie sessions and 25% scrimmage sessions. All goalies will be required to attend these 1 or 2 sessions to be ranked.

U11 HADP and U16 T1 teams will not have specific on ice goalie sessions. Selections for those Teams will be via observations of scrimmage sessions.

Team Selection

Requests for playing with another player CANNOT be accommodated for players on CAHL, RMFHL, or RHL teams.

OMHA will place teams in the following league age categories for the 2023/2024 hockey season (subject to change, based on registrations received).

House League (Okotoks Only)

- U7: 10 to 12 teams
- U9: 8 to 10 teams mixed and 1 or 2 female
- U11: 6 to 8 teams
- U13: 6 to 7 teams

Rocky Hockey League (RHL)

- U15: 4 or 5 teams
- U18: 4 or 5 teams



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Central Alberta Hockey League (CAHL)

- U11: 4 or 5 teams including HAPD
- U13: 3 or 4 teams
- U15: 3 or 4 teams
- U16: 1 team
- U18: 2 or 3 teams
- U11 Female 1 team

Rocky Mountain Female League (RMFHL)

- U11: 2 or 3 teams
- U13: 2 or 3 teams
- U15: 2 or 3 teams
- U18: 2 or 3 teams

After the ranking process is complete, there will be a team selection skate held with all eligible players for the first team. The coach will finalize his/her team after that session. The second team will then have their selection skate with all eligible players. The process will continue until all teams have been selected. All coaches can handle the team selection skate at their discretion (i.e. drills, scrimmage or combination).

***Please note players may have to attend two practices back-to-back based on ranking.**

The number of players placed on each team will be determined by registration.

Any player not chosen for U11 or U13 Travel team will be placed within the OMHA House program and placed in either the A or B divisions.

Any player not chosen for U15 or U18 Travel team will be placed in the RHL league and fees will be returned for the difference and placed in either the A or B divisions.

U11 CAHL Team Selection Process

U11 HADP

OMHA will conduct ranking sessions for the U11 HADP team (Hockey Alberta Development Pilot) in advance of and separate from the OMHA U11 Travel ranking sessions. The team will be selected through a series of on ice scrimmages where players will be ranked by OMHA's independent evaluators. This team will consist of a minimum 15 skaters and 2 goaltenders. This team will participate this season within the CAHL league against other Minor Hockey Associations (MHAs) that also host U11 HADP teams.

There will be no Goalie specific ranking sessions for this team. Goalies will be evaluated through participation within all ranking sessions. A maximum of 4 goalies will be invited to the final ranking session – Coaches skate/scrimmage.



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Participants in these ranking skates will be from within as well as outside of the OMHA draw zone. Players from within the OMHA draw zone, not selected for this team, will automatically enter the OMHA Ranking Sessions for U11 Travel. Those from outside of the OMHA draw zone will be released by OMHA and returned to their home Minor Hockey Association (MHA).

Team 1

In U11 Travel, the top 8 skaters and 1 goalie will be locked on this team by virtue of their ranking through the skills and 4 scrimmage ranking sessions within the OMHA U11 Travel ranking sessions. At the U11 Coach Skate, the coach will then pick their final skaters and goalie to round out the team roster from the remaining skaters/goalies.

For U11 the list is given to the coach for the next group of skaters (this includes his top 8 locked skaters and top ranked locked goalie). Coach then chooses his final players out of these with the locks being those not taken on team 2.

Team 2

For U11 list is given to the coach for the next group of skaters (this includes his top 8 locked skaters and top ranked locked goalie). Coach then chooses his final players out of these with the locks being those not taken on team 3.

Continue until all teams in the division are selected.

Team Selection Notification

Players will be notified which team they have been selected for, and when the next ice time will be. It will be either email format or verbal from the Head Coach Depending on division.

Notification of all players in a division will be done on a date to be determined by the OMHA VP Programs, the Division Director and the Coaches. For U13, U15, and U18, this date will be no earlier than the final date AA team rosters are announced.

House League Teams

OMHA players must choose Travel or House when registering. By choosing House you will not be made to travel and will only be considered for the house league teams, you will not have a later option of moving to Travel tryouts. By Travel it only means you would like to try and play there. Players remaining after travel team rosters are selected will go into the House league pool.

OMHA players on house league teams shall be ranked in accordance with these OMHA guidelines and procedures and shall be placed on teams in an effort to make each house league team in an age category of equal caliber. Members must understand that teams may not be equal all year long. Many factors play into this such as coaching, player improvement, goalie identification, etc.

Requests for House League teams are HIGHLY discouraged. Exceptions may be granted in the House leagues, upon approval of the Executive Committee, however they cannot be guaranteed.



Hybrid Ranking Process

The following selection procedure relies heavily on the integrity of the independent group's overall rankings; however it allows the Coaches some flexibility and additional accountability during selections. The coach can make choices (within the eligible rankings) based on previous performance, player attitude, and other intangibles to build his/her team.

For U11, the top 8 skaters will be locked on the team 1, based on their individual ranking through the ranking procedure. U13, U15 and U18 teams will be picked with the top 5 Forwards, 3 Defence, and 1 goalie being locked based on players individual ranking through the ranking procedure.

The remaining players, based on ranking, will form the remainder of each group for the coach's skate, where a coach will pick his/her remaining players. Those not chosen to a team will be a lock on following team within the age division. Each coach skate will see enough skaters on the ice to facilitate the 8 players being released, locking in a position on the team below. For example, if U11 team 1 (not U11 HADP) is taking 14 skaters, the coach skate will feature 22 skaters. Those 8 released skaters become locked on team 2. For example, in U13 if they are taking 15 skaters (9 forwards/6 defence) then the coach skate will feature 23 players (14 forwards/9 defence). Players based on ranking will round out each coach skate group based on ranking once the locked skaters have dropped down.

This process and larger coach skates provide coaches with additional choices for player selection and allows skaters who may have missed the previous "cut" to skate and earn a position on a higher ranked team, with the guarantee of being locked on the team below.

The top ranked goalie is a lock. The next ranked 2 Goalies will compete for the remaining 1 Goalie spot and the next ranked Forwards and Defence will compete for the remaining Forward and Defence positions. This process will continue down through the teams until selections are complete.

The OMHA Directors and Executive Board reserve the right to adjust the size of coach skates based on the rostered skaters required for each team and or division (14/22, 15/23, 16/24, 17/25).

Players entering the program after the rankings process, please refer to page 12 for full guidelines. These players do not qualify for any locked position.

For team selection in the U13, U15, U18 Divisions, players should be listed by position (forward, defence, and goaltender). Team selection will then be made as follows:



Ranking Process by Position

FORWARDS

Forwards team 1

If choosing 9 forwards, the Coach receives a list of top 14 with ranking. If choosing 10 or 11 then the top 15 or 16. Coach chooses his/her forwards whether it is 9, 10 or 11 out of this. The top 5 forwards based on ranking are a lock, coach then picks his/her remaining 3, 4 or 5 forwards. The 5 forwards not picked are now a lock on the team below.

Forwards team 2

Any forward not taken on team 1 becomes an automatic lock on 2. If choosing 9 Forwards, the list is given to the coach for the next 14 (these include the locks). If choosing 10 or 11 then the next 15 or 16 (these include the locks). Coach chooses his/her forwards out of this whether it be 9, 10 or 11 with the locks being those that have come down. The 5 forwards not picked are now a lock on the team below.

Forwards team 3

Any forward not taken on team 2 becomes an automatic lock on 3. If choosing 9 Forwards, the list is given to the coach for the next 14 (these include the locks). If choosing 10 or 11 then the next 15 or 16 (these include the locks). Coach chooses his/her forwards out of this whether it be 9, 10 or 11 with the locks being those that have come down. The 5 forwards not picked are now a lock on the team below.

Forwards team 4

Any forward not taken on team 3 becomes an automatic lock on 4. If choosing 9 Forwards, the list is given to the coach for the next 14 (these include the locks). If choosing 10 or 11 then the next 15 or 16 (these include the locks). Coach chooses his/her forwards out of this whether it be 9, 10 or 11 with the locks being those that have come down. The 5 forwards not picked are now a lock on the team below.

This process continues until all teams in the division are selected.

DEFENCE

Defence team 1

Coach gets a list of the top 8 or 9 defence with ranking, his/her top 3 are locks based on the ranking process. Coach then chooses his/her final defence whether it is 2 or 3 out of the remaining 5 or 6. The defence not picked now become a lock on the team below.

Defence team 2

Any Defenceman not taken on team 1 becomes an automatic lock. The coach gets a list of the next 8 or 9 available (these include the locks) and must choose his defence whether it be 2 or 3 out of the remaining 5 or 6. The 3 defence not picked now become a lock on the team below.



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Defence team 3

Any Defenceman not taken on team 2 becomes an automatic lock. The coach gets a list of the next 8 or 9 available (these include the locks) and must choose his defence whether it be 2 or 3 out of the remaining 5 or 6. The 3 defence not picked now become a lock on the team below.

Defence team 4

Any Defenceman not taken on team 3 becomes an automatic lock. The coach gets a list of the next 8 or 9 available (these include the locks) and must choose his defence whether it be 2 or 3 out of the remaining 5 or 6. The 3 defence not picked now become a lock on the team below.

This process continues until all teams in the division are selected.

GOALIES

Goalies team 1

Coach will get a list of the top 3 goalies with ranking. Top ranked Goalie is an automatic lock. He/she must then choose his/her final Goalie of the 2 remaining.

Goalies team 2

Any goalie not taken on team 1 becomes an automatic lock. The coach gets a list of the next 3 goalies (these include the locks) and must choose his/her 1 Goalie from the 2 remaining with the only lock being the goalie not selected for team 1.

Goalies team 3

Any goalie not taken on team 2 becomes an automatic lock. The coach gets a list of the next 3 goalies (these include the locks) and must choose his/her 1 Goalie from the 2 remaining with the only lock being the goalie not selected for team 2.

Goalies team 4

Any goalie not taken on team 3 becomes an automatic lock. The coach gets a list of the next 3 goalies (these include the locks) and must choose his/her 1 Goalie from the 2 remaining with the only lock being the goalie not selected for team 3.

Continue until all teams in the division are selected.

** If a team is mandated to take only 1 goalie, then in this instance the coach will get a list of the next 2 goalies and must pick 1. There will be no lock in this instance. In certain situations, goalies may be placed on teams in various orders due to limited numbers. For example, T1 – 2 goalies, T2 – 1 goalie, T3 – 2 goalies, T4 – 1 goalie.



Entering the Program after Ranking Process is Complete

The OMHA Executive Committee has determined the following procedure will be implemented for players entering OMHA's hockey program after the Ranking process is complete:

- Players new to the community who enter after the ranking process is complete, will be placed on a team in the middle of the age category to observe their skill level during several ice times and then will be moved to an appropriate team, assuming spots are available. The placement will take into consideration what level the player played at in the previous year.
- If a Player is injured or ill, before or during the ranking process, the player's placement will be determined by a committee consisting of the Division Director and the OMHA Executive board and consult the team's coach as well.
- A player who has not been ranked due to school, sickness, vacation, injury, or otherwise but can attend a selection skate may be added as an extra, not taking another player's spot. In this case the player never becomes an automatic and may skate until a team does select them.
- If a player enters or returns after team selections have been finalized, the players' placement will be at the sole discretion of the Division Director and OMHA Executive Board.
- Any player entering the program after the ranking process is complete does not qualify for any locked position.

Any questions or concerns regarding the Ranking Procedure should be directed to the VP Programs, OMHA.