

Evaluations Guide

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

Enabling athletes to be their best

Evaluations are a stressful time of year for everyone: associations, families, and athletes. Being an evaluator isn't an easy task either.

Athletes are going to do their best and feel their best in an environment that best matches their playing abilities and social needs. Evaluations should allow an athlete to show what their personal best is and then they should be placed somewhere where they will be appropriately challenged.

The evaluation format should allow athletes to show their skills in a way that is as unaffected as possible by previous coaching, or lack thereof. (i.e. an athlete who doesn't know what a breakout is could easily be taught, if they have the right skills)

Identifying which skills to assess

GOALTENDERS

- Positioning & movement (follow the play, ready stance, top of crease)
- Saves & rebounds (making the saves you would expect, any rebound control)
- Distribution (quick, accurate, strong passes)
- Game sense/intangibles (engaged, body language)

SKATERS (NON-GOALTENDERS)

- Ring control (passing, receiving, protecting)
- Shooting/scoring ability (are they a threat to score or create a scoring opportunity?)
- Defensive play (body position, channeling, goal-side, discipline – applies to ALL skaters)
- Game sense/intangibles (hard to measure, do they engage in play? Smart decisions?)

Setting them up for success

GIVE CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS TO ATHLETES. CIRCULATE A PRACTICE PLAN AND ASSESSMENT RUBRIC PRIOR TO THE FIRST SKATE!

KNOWING WHAT TO EXPECT WILL DECREASE ANXIETY AND PROVIDE MORE ACCURATE RESULTS.

DON'T INTRODUCE NEW OR COMPLICATED DRILLS.



Using 3v3 or small area games

This is a valuable format to use for many age groups.

- Transition from half ice to full ice shouldn't happen at evaluations for athletes moving from U10 Step 2 to U10 Step 3, or to U12.
- Very often at full ice scrimmages, even at U14, 4 athletes are almost stationary for an entire shift while the play remains in one end of the ice. As an evaluator this doesn't present many opportunities to observe what this athlete is capable of.
- Too closely mimicking real game play provides many opportunities for coaching bias to come into play. Was an athlete only allowed to play one position the previous season, now they're required to rotate for evaluations? Is it their fault they don't know a breakout?
- 3v3 allows ALL athletes to play both offense and defense and demonstrate their raw skills. A good coach should be able to teach the strategies and tactics from there.

Avoiding conflict of interest/bias

DO

- Partner with a neighbouring association
- Use older athletes (U19) to help with U10 and U12 evaluations.
- Find current/former coaches with no ties to the division
- Pay your evaluators
- Reach out to adult teams/leagues nearby

DON'T

- Allow pre-selected coaches to formally evaluate
- Use parents of athletes on the ice as evaluators
- Have the same evaluators at each skate looking at the same athletes
- Allow division coaches to run the evaluation skate

Tips & Suggestions

- Use an assessment rubric that matches the ice plan. This makes things easier for evaluators to see what they're supposed to see.
- Share the ice plan and evaluation criteria publicly. This helps both athletes and parents better understand the process.
- **USE SMALL AREA GAMES (3V3)**
- Continue to improve your evaluation process.