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1 Introduction

This document is intended to provide families with information regarding the evaluation and team selection process for U10.

Evaluations and team selection require significant pre-planning, and many inputs to execute fully. As such, changes to this process may be required from time to time which may not be fully documented on our website, or in this document. Final accountability for the execution of evaluations rests with the Evaluation Director, Division Director(s), Team Selection Committee and/or the SPRA Board of Directors.

Ringette Alberta Children's Ringette Guidelines govern the foundation of how evaluations are conducted at the U10 level and ensure that every athlete is placed at an appropriate step, based on the athlete's current skill level, ringette experience and physical and emotional maturity. Evaluations at the U10 level are not tryouts (teams are not tiered) but rather opportunities for athletes to showcase themselves and this approach has been deemed by Ringette Alberta to be optimal for long-term athlete development.

SPRA makes the following commitments with respect to evaluations at the U10 level:

- appropriate evaluation drills will be utilized (following Ringette Alberta Children's Ringette Guidelines)
- the process will be communicated to parents/guardians and athletes
- a minimum of one non-evaluative preparation session will be provided in the weeks prior
- a minimum of two evaluation sessions (one UAA, and at least one game-play/scrimmage) will be provided (pending ice availability)

1.1 Evaluation Process Roles and Groups

The following individuals play a key role in execution of evaluations and team selection:

- **Third Party Evaluators – Universal Athlete Assessment (UAA)** – Typically a professional third party sports assessor will be contracted to complete Universal Athlete Assessments. Use of a company (such as Competitive Thread) is at the discretion of the board. The benefits of a professional third party is that it removes subjectivity and conflict of interest, consistency of scores as equipment used is professional caliber, and it also allows an athlete to track over time to see how they have progressed over their athletic career.
- **Third Party Evaluators – Game Play** – SPRA will enlist the services of independent evaluators to assess gameplay and provide scoring for each player. Player evaluators will be both qualified and independent as agreed to by the U10 Director and the Director of Evaluations. (These individuals may be former University or National level Ringette players, but SPRA coaches and junior coaches can also be considered for these roles provided there are no conflicts of interest).
- **Evaluations Director** – responsible for oversight of the process, coordinating the evaluations, liaising with all committee members, and communicating with evaluators.
- **U10 Division Director** – responsible for organizing player skate groups and volunteers to support evaluations/scrimmages as well as tabulating results received from the third party evaluators. The Division Director is responsible for communication with players and parents.
- **Team Selection Committee** – responsible for oversight on team selection for each division.
- **Coach Development Director and Coach Selection Committee** – will be responsible for selecting and placing the coaches after evaluations are complete.
- **Ice Allocator** – will work with the Evaluation Director to establish the schedule of the evaluations.
- **Coaches from Previous Season** – provide feedback and input to the Team Selection Committee when required.

2 Team Selection Committee (TSC)

Throughout the SPRA evaluation process, independent evaluators, Division Directors, Coaches and Assistant



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Coaches are asked to provide input. Once the evaluation-based recommendations (ratings, team selections and Coach/Asst Coach selection, etc.) are made, a final review will be made by the Team Selection Committee.

The objective of this committee is to provide one final level of review, and subsequent approval, of important recommendations prior to implementation of these decisions. Should a recommendation be rejected by the TSC, it falls to them to implement a solution.

The TSC will be comprised of current SPRA board members.

3 Preparation Skates (“Knock the Rust off”)

In order to prepare athletes for evaluations, SPRA hosts a series of “Knock the Rust Off” pre-season skates as well as pre-UAA prep skates in mid-August. During these sessions, drills and scrimmages will be performed to prepare the athletes. The intent of these sessions is to provide athletes with a chance to play in a non-evaluative setting so that they are hopefully more relaxed in the evaluations, and to get them acquainted with the drills they will encounter during UAAs. Ringette Alberta supports the preparation of players prior to UAAs.

These sessions will be available for sign up in RAMP and an email communication will be sent to families once registration is live.

4 SPRA Evaluation Sessions

Evaluation schedules for the Universal Athlete Assessments (UAAs) and Game Play Evaluations will be created by the Evaluations Director, in conjunction with the Ice Allocator. The approximate time window to expect these sessions will be from the September long weekend (where initial UAAs will occur) through the third week of September (when the Game Play Evaluations will occur), with the intent of forming the teams as early as possible after the final evaluation session. Athletes will all get the opportunity for one or more non-evaluative/conditioning skate prior to evaluations which will occur mid to late August.

SPRA will endeavor to provide pre-evaluation and evaluation ice times to families as soon as is practicable.

It is critical that athletes attend their designated evaluation ice times. Absences from evaluation skates may have a significant impact on final placement of the athlete.

4.1 Missed UAA Sessions

In our attempt to conduct fair evaluations and treat athletes equitably, it is our policy that all athletes should attend all evaluations. Any athlete missing a session will not be given a score, and the remaining sessions (if applicable) averaged.

In a continued effort to evaluate in the fairest manner the TSC will assess players who have missed a session, and the final decision on player placement will be with the TSC.

4.2 Evaluators

Evaluators will be coordinated by the Evaluation Director who will work with the entire evaluation team to ensure age-appropriate standards are being utilized for the grading system.

Evaluators will:

- be assigned to a particular age group in order to maintain consistency and fairness, where possible
- be assigned to evaluate game sense as appropriate for the U10 level or at a minimum provide input that will help the U10 director and TSC establish team parity through observation of scrimmage/game-play evaluations

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- give these results to the U10 Division Director, VP, and Evaluation Director (shared chain of custody is required for raw data and results) for compilation and data entry to determine scores
- Provide written comments where possible/necessary to provide context for numerical scores

NOTE: it is expected that evaluators will sit together, but away from parents, for discussion throughout the course of the session.

4.3 UAA Evaluation Sessions

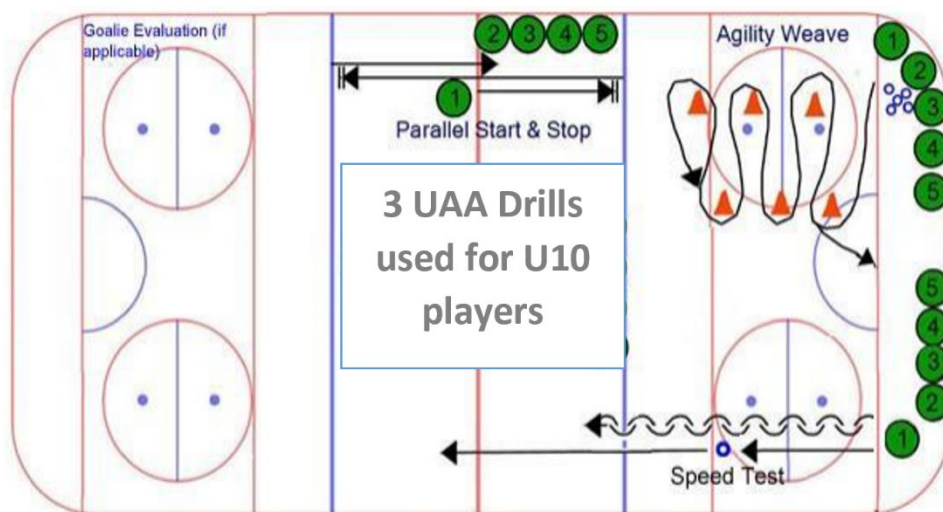
For U10, players will be evaluated on skill (UAA Session) and game sense (Scrimmage Session(s)).

The Universal Athlete Assessment, as created by Ringette Alberta, will be the primary assessment tool for skating skill. Details on this assessment can be found on the Ringette Alberta website:

<https://ringettealberta.com/universal-athlete-assessment/>.

Developed by Ringette Alberta, these are repeatable, timed, skill measurements. The three timed drills used last year will be used this season. Each skill session is designed to test a particular skating or ring handling skill specific to Ringette. Each drill will be explained (and demonstrated if needed) to the group before proceeding.

The below diagram is a visual representation of the 3 drills used for U10 players in the UAA's:



Ringette Alberta and SPRA encourages on-ice support of players during UAAs at the U10 level. SPRA coaches or designates will be on ice to provide encouragement and high level direction to U10 players undertaking evaluations by third party evaluators (Ex. Competitive Thread). The role of the SPRA on ice-support is to ensure all skaters are following the instructions of the evaluators and to provide encouragement to set the players up for success given many of them are at the early stages of their athletic development. SPRA coaches are not to provide instructions or interfere with the evaluation in a way that could compromise player scores.

4.4 Scrimmage/Game Play Evaluation Session(s)

Following the UAA session, gameplay/scrimmage evaluations will be run for the remaining evaluation sessions. Parent helpers will be asked to volunteer on the bench for these sessions (open gates, etc.), and will be informed of expectations and responsibilities. Coaches will be asked to volunteer on ice to provide structure over the flow of the ice time.

The overall intent of the scrimmage evaluations is to assess the athletes based on their game sense (ability to play Ringette) bearing in mind that the younger players in U10 (Step 1) will have limited game sense at this stage but

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will still have the ability to comprehend their purpose and direction on the ice as a member of a team in a game scenario. The scrimmage/game play grading criteria will be informed by Ringette Alberta Children's Ringette guidelines and will be scaled as appropriate. Groupings will be created based on UAA scores collected after the first evaluation session and families will be informed of their child's scrimmage/game play evaluation time as soon as possible after their UAA ice time.

Note: Turn-around time between the first session (UAA) and subsequent sessions (Gameplay Evaluations) will be tight and short notice.

Scrimmages will typically be half-ice or full-ice 3 v 3 (at the discretion of the evaluation director and will be dependent on the number of skaters to make the best use of the ice).

The line changes will be indicated by the buzzer or whistle every 90 seconds and follow typical RAB guidelines.

On the sound of the buzzer or whistle the players shall abandon the ring and leave the ice. The next line can enter the ice but play will only resume on a whistle.

4.5 Skate Group formation

During years where registration in each step is large enough to require multiple skating groups (for game play/scrimmage evaluation), some players may be shifted between skate groups to provide a comparison of the relative competitiveness of each group, and to provide a better evaluation of those players in the middle of the spectrum.

UAA skate groups are organized by age, followed by step played the previous season. Scrimmage/game play skate groups are organized by UAA score for this season and previous step played is taken into account as well. For example, where it is known a player excelled at a specific step the previous season, and their UAA score was at the top end of the Score Range for a Step this season (See Section 5.1), their first game play/scrimmage skate group may be at the next step available within u10. Evaluators will then get an idea of the relative competitiveness of the player at the next level. If they fit well at that step, a second skate for that player may not be needed. If they do not appear to fit at that level, and ice is available for an additional skate group evaluation, they would proceed with a second skate at the step that corresponds best with their skill level or placed within the group of best fit.

Note: At any point, should a player's UAA score be deemed exceptional, SPRA reserves the right to remove that player from further evaluations and slot their placement in a team at the top step. This may be necessary to allow the middle players additional ice time allowing the evaluators more time to watch the players that require further analysis.

4.6 Goalies

In keeping with the goals of the Long Term Athlete Development Matrix (LTAD), goalie specialization is not encouraged until U14, thus there are goalie play limits in place at U10 and players will rotate through the goalie position throughout the season.

During evaluations, U10 players will only evaluate as skaters and not as goalies.

While on the ice for evaluations, players will rotate in net every shift (even though RAB does not recommend this in a regular season game play scenario). This is done so that time spent in net is kept consistent for all players. No pads will be worn and a goalie stick will be provided.

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5 Team Formation

U10 is unique among the age divisions. Due to the large size, the three-year age span, and the diversity of experience present, U10 teams will be formed in 'steps' using the following factors, in addition to evaluation results:

- Ringette IQ
- Previous experience
- Age, maturity, size
- Readiness to learn/readiness for competition
- Team balancing/size

The mandate behind Children's Ringette is to make adjustments to ringette practices and structure to meet the needs of children, while promoting a fun, safe and healthy environment which supports physical literacy and the long-term development of all players. Each athlete is considered as a whole when SPRA undertakes team formation. Supporting opportunities for players that demonstrate readiness to participate in a group or step that is the best fit for them which includes ringette skills but other non-ringette factors as well, regardless of their birthdate is at the core of Children's Ringette principles. (<https://www.ringette.ca/play/childrens-ringette/>)

5.1 Ringette Alberta Player and Team Target Scores

Ringette Alberta has provided the following UAA scoring guidance to help create teams within U10. A players UAA score will generally plot them somewhere within the range of a step below. SPRA will be utilizing this guidance not only to place players in the appropriate skate groups for the game play/scrimmage portion of evaluations but also to place players in the appropriate step within U10 and further to achieve parity between teams in each step when it is time for team selection.

U10 Step Category	Target Team Score	Target Team Range	Team Score Range
1	17	10-14	6-18
2	23	21-25	18-29
3	34	33-35	30-39

5.2 U10 Team Size Guidelines

The ideal team size for U10 teams per Ringette Alberta is 10-13 players. SPRA plans to target team size at 9-10 players for Step 1 and Step 2 teams, and 12-13 players for Step 3 Teams.

At the Step 1 level, smaller teams will be formed to allow for flexibility of movement of Active Start players that require a greater challenge throughout the season.

5.3 Oversight of Team Selection

The Division Director will review all the evaluation results and will make recommendations regarding individuals and teams which will then be submitted for proposal to the Team Selection Committee. The TSC will review all teams at

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the U10 Team Selection Committee Meeting to ensure that fairness and equity has been achieved to the highest possible standards.

At the U10 level, developing the whole player will be considered along with one friend request in team formation.

6 Miscellaneous

6.1 Exceptions and Association Needs

In exceptional years, it may be necessary for the Association to move players in order to balance divisions or to form viable Teams.

6.2 Movement Between Age Divisions

One of our principal goals for U10 Players is to ensure that they have a positive playing experience. Considering all of the attributes outlined in Section 5 - Team Formation, against the overall complexion of the association in a given year, it may be better for a player to play up or down. (Playing down means playing in a division lower than defined for the player's age. Playing up means playing in a division higher than defined for the player's age).

As U10 division is included under Ringette Alberta Children's Ringette Guidelines, criteria for this decision is governed by SPRA but declared when applicable to RAB and/or BGL. For additional context, when determining whether a player should play down, the RAB Section 7.0 "Over Age Policy" states that the inclusion of an over age player should be irrelevant to opposing teams provided the inclusion of the player does not affect the team's relative competitiveness or compromise player safety. The policy can be found here: [7.0 Over Age Policy](#).

Exceptions will be considered in rare cases and must align with criteria in this document, augment the development of the player and support the formation of viable teams in a given year.

Criteria

- a) All requests will only be considered if it does not impede the ability of the affected playing age divisions to field competitive teams and does not adversely affect the team sizes for all involved.
- b) Players may only be one year removed from the requested playing division.
- c) The applicable Division Director(s) will work with the Player Development Director, and previous coaches etc. to determine if the players request is approved.
- d) Exceptions to the above must be approved by the President.
- e) The Director of the players approved division will inform the player/parents of the final decision.