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SPRA U10 Evaluation Guidelines



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 As such, changes to this process may be required from time to time which may not be published externally. 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 skill level, ringette experience, physical maturity, emotional maturity and social maturity. Evaluations at the U10 level are not tryouts (teams are not tiered) but rather opportunities for athletes to showcase themselves at a point in time on their athletic continuum. This approach has been evaluated by Ringette Alberta and accepted by associations within the province as appropriate for the age range of U10 athletes for long-term 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 gameplay/scrimmage) will be provided with the exception of the Step 1 which will only receive a UAA (NOTE: All is 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)** – 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 allows an athlete to track progression as the measurements and tools are controlled and consistent.
- **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. (May be former University or National level Ringette players, U19AA Players or SPRA coaches free of conflicts of interest).
- **Evaluations Director** – responsible for oversight of the process, coordinating the evaluation ice times, liaising with all committee members, communicating with evaluators, and collaborating with the U10 Director to provide evaluator briefings on



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the rubric and standards for U10 gameplay evaluations.

- **U10 Division Director** – responsible for organizing player skate groups, scheduling volunteers to support evaluations/scrimmages, developing the structure of the pre-evaluation ice times, and providing information to volunteers to execute. The U10 Director is also responsible to tabulate results received from the third-party evaluators and submit to Ringette Alberta by required deadlines. The Division Director is responsible for communication with players and parents and for aggregating coach feedback to input into team selection.
- **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 of each team 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.

2 Team Selection Committee (TSC)

Throughout the SPRA evaluation process, independent evaluators, Division Directors, Coaches and Assistant Coaches will provide input into player placements. Once the evaluation-based recommendations (UAA Scores and Evaluation feedback, 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 to ensure parity, and appropriate coach distribution. 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 UAA Preparation Skates

To prepare athletes for evaluations, SPRA hosts pre-UAA prep skates in mid-August. These sessions are mandatory for SPRA to offer, but optional for players to attend. During these sessions, the UAA drills will be practiced, led by experienced coaches to prepare the athletes. The intent of these sessions is to provide athletes with a chance to become familiar with the UAA drills in a non-evaluative, supportive setting so that they are more relaxed and mentally ready in the evaluations. Ringette Alberta supports the preparation of players prior to UAAs using this method.

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. These ice times are required by Ringette Alberta policy to occur between the last weekend in August and the



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second weekend in September. The UAAs occur first, and game play evaluation skate groups are formed based on UAA data and coach input. Once both UAA sessions and game play sessions are complete, team formation will occur.

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 impact final placement of the athlete.

4.1 Missed UAA Sessions

To ensure player placement is fair, equitable, and reflective of a player's abilities, it is required that all athletes attend evaluations. Any athlete missing a session will not be given a score for that session. When possible, previous seasons coach input will be obtained to support the team selection committee in player placement for the upcoming season.

The TSC will assess players who have missed a session on a case by case basis, 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 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.
- 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.
- provide input in writing on player evaluation forms assessing a player's performance relative to peers in their respective skate groups.

4.3 UAA Evaluation Sessions

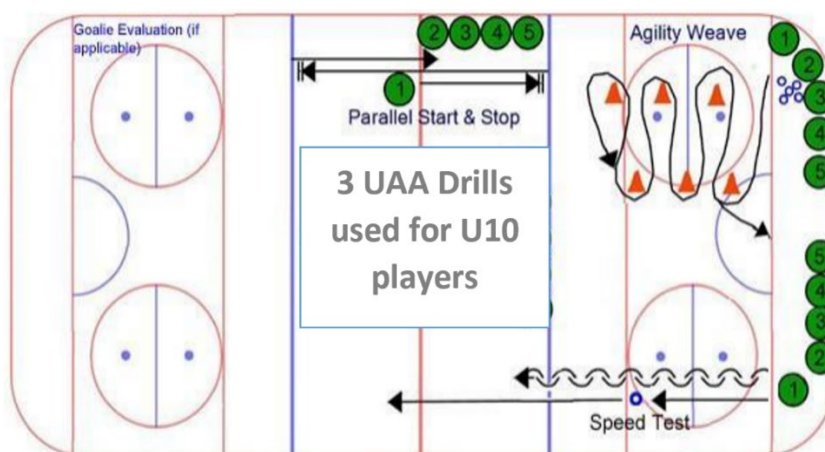
For U10, players will be evaluated on skating skill (UAA Session) and game sense (Gameplay Session(s)).

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: [Ringette Alberta : Website by RAMP InterActive](#).

Developed by Ringette Alberta, these are repeatable, timed, skill measurements. 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:

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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 ice times. Parent helpers will be asked to volunteer on the bench for these sessions (open gates, etc.), and will be informed of expectations and responsibilities. First stripes referees will be utilized to maintain the flow of the game and call minor infractions. No penalties will be given during gameplay skates. Excessive infractions by players (violations that would result in penalties during normal league play) will be addressed at the discretion of the U10 director.

The overall intent of the scrimmage evaluations is to assess the athletes based on their game sense (ability to play Ringette). The scrimmage/game play grading criteria will be informed by Ringette Alberta Children's Ringette guidelines and developed by the SPRA Evaluation committee to focus on age-appropriate game play metrics. Families will be informed of their child's scrimmage/game play evaluation time as soon as possible after their player's UAA ice time.

Note: Turn-around time between the first session (UAA) and subsequent sessions (Gameplay Evaluations) will be tight and short notice. Please mark your calendars for the week identified during the parent meeting and be ready to attend an ice time during that week.

Gameplay evaluations will be 3 v 3 half ice for Step 2 level sessions and 5 v 5 full ice for Step 3 level sessions (this is subject to change at the discretion of the evaluation director and players previous access to adequate full ice experience in the previous season).

For half ice, line changes will be indicated by the buzzer or whistle every 90 seconds and follow typical RAB guidelines (pass over the ringette line). 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.

For full ice, players will be evaluated with a live ring and changes on the fly (pass over both blue



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lines). Gameplay evaluations will follow the structure of a Step 3 game, and all applicable rules will apply.

Note: Gameplay sessions will not be held for Step 1 group players due to limited game sense at that stage.

4.5 Skate Group Formation

During game play evaluations 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 players relative to their peers. Sometimes, a player needs to skate with two different groups to be evaluated thoroughly, and sometimes that is not required. Families should expect either circumstance.

UAA skate groups are organized by age, followed by step played the previous season. SPRA is limited to the number of players on ice at once by the third-party evaluator so some kids may be moved skate groups to balance numbers.

Scrimmage/game play skate groups are organized by UAA score, previous step played, and previous seasons coach feedback. 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 highest step available within u10 (if age appropriate). Evaluators will then get an idea of the relative competitiveness of the player at that 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, they would proceed with a second skate at the step that corresponds best with their skill level **or** automatically placed on a team within a Step of best fit during team selection.

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 permitted in U10, 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.

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
- Years of previous experience
- Level played the previous season
- Age, maturity, size



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- Previous seasons coach feedback
- Readiness to learn/readiness for competition
- Team balancing/size
- Division balancing

The mandate behind Children's Ringette is to adjust 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 very much emphasizes other non-ringette factors (as outlined above).

A player's ability to compete at the next level is determined by many inputs that transcend skating speed and skill. A player's focus, sportsmanship, effort, coachability, attitude, leadership, maturity, and self-discipline are the driving factors behind which step they are placed in each season. These are attributes that the U10 program at SPRA has been specifically focused on supporting the developing of over the past 3 several years.

5.1 Ringette Alberta Player and Team Target Scores

Ringette Alberta has provided the following UAA scoring parameters for associations to follow for team creation within U10. A player's UAA score will generally plot them somewhere within the range of a step below. SPRA will be utilizing this guidance where appropriate to create skate groups for gameplay evaluation sessions but also as a benchmark to place players in the appropriate step within U10 and drive parity between teams in each step when it is time for team selection. **Please note that a players UAA score does not automatically place a player in a specific step. See section 5.0 for more information about attributes that are utilized for player placement that are often more applicable than UAA scores in some cases.**

U10 Step	Target Team Score	Target Team Range	Team Score Range
1	12	10-14	6-18
2	23	21-25	18-29
3	34	33-36	30-39

5.2 U10 Team Size Guidelines

The ideal team size for U10 teams per Ringette Alberta is 10-14 players. SPRA plans to target team size in alignment with that, however, some years higher registration numbers will result in larger teams.

SPRA reserves the right to limit the number of under-aged U10 players to ensure U10 teams remain within acceptable sizes. Players outside of the birth year range for U10 will be required meet



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minimum evaluation standards and still may be required to remain in Active Start for the season regardless of parent preference in order to support the needs of the division and association overall.

5.3 Oversight of Team Selection

The Division Director along with U10 Head Coaches, will review all the evaluation results and will make recommendations regarding team formation based on UAA scores, gameplay evaluation feedback from evaluators, and individual player feedback data collected over the past several years.

U10 rosters will be submitted for proposal to the Team Selection Committee. The TSC will review all teams at the U10 Team Selection Committee Meeting to ensure that fairness and equity has been achieved to the highest possible standards.

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. As outlined in Section 5.2, SPRA will evaluate player movement between divisions on a case-by-case basis.

Team Selection Committee decisions (including but not limited to player placement) are final and there is no right of appeal per Section 11.1 of the SPRA Guidelines and Procedures Manual.