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## **Evaluation Policy and Information**

The North Shore Female Ice Hockey Association (the “Association” or the “Avalanche”) is a community based organization run by volunteers. The evaluation process is also run by volunteers. While the Avalanche program is one of the strongest female programs in the Province of British Columbia, we are constantly looking to improve.

Commencing for the 2016-2017 season, and at the request of many families, the Association will be revamping our evaluation process. Highlights of the new evaluation process include the following:

- All players wishing to try-out for the Tier 1 or Tier 2 team in their respective age group will be attending evaluations at the same time and will be on the ice together. For example, if your daughter wishes to try-out for the Peewee C1 team, she must register for and attend the combined tryout being held for the Peewee A and Peewee C1 teams.
- Evaluations will consist of one (1) ice time focusing on skills and two (2) ice times focusing on game play or game situations.
- After the evaluations, working groups will be set at the same time for both the Tier 1 and Tier 2 teams.
- The concept of the Top 8 used in prior years will no longer be used. There will no longer be guaranteed spots on the team for the players who rank in the top 8 after the evaluations.
- The head coach of the Tier 1 team is entitled to cut players from the Tier 1 working group and is also entitled to call up players from the Tier 2 working group, as and when the head coach of the Tier 1 team deems appropriate.
- The head coaches of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 teams, as applicable, will decide which players make their respective teams.
- The entirety of the evaluation process is subject to change as determined necessary by, and team composition is subject to the approval of, the President or the Director of Player Development, or his or her delegate. This is necessary for a variety of reasons including

ensuring the best interests of the Association as a whole are considered. In any given year, the Association needs to consider the availability of qualified volunteer coaches for teams, the number of players on each of the teams in each age group, the movement of players between age groups, and the short and long term success of the Association. The President and Director of Player Development retain full discretion.

## **What Are Evaluations?**

The founders of the Avalanche created a mission to provide an opportunity for young females to play competitive or recreational ice hockey in a safe and enjoyable environment. The evaluation process and policy is the foundation of this mission.

Every year our Association begins our hockey season with a process for registered players called “evaluations” for our Midget, Bantam, Peewee, and Atom divisions. In certain years, we have also had an evaluation for Novice aged players. Players must be registered to be evaluated. Some players call evaluations “tryouts” as this is the time players can “tryout” for the highest level of competition in their division. There is no evaluations process for Tykes and, in most years we do not run evaluations for Novices.

Evaluations involve observing hockey players in action on the ice and ranking the players’ hockey skills compared to a group of her peers. This process helps the Association group the hockey player in the most appropriate level of competition (the team) she will play on during the year.

The main purpose of the evaluation process is to benefit all players as it seeks to ensure players have opportunities to develop at an appropriate level of competition and play on a team that is appropriate for players’ abilities, skills and objectives.

The individuals who conduct the evaluations make every effort to be objective and consist with the goals of the evaluation process in mind. That being said, there is no such thing as a perfect evaluation process and different people have different views of a particular hockey player’s ability.

Player evaluations can be one of the most difficult tasks for a hockey association to deal with. It can also be the foundation for which an Association is built upon. The Avalanche evaluation process is designed to ensure (as best as any evaluation process can) that your hockey player has the best opportunities to develop at an appropriate level of competition and play on a team that is appropriate for her abilities and objectives.

Every player is always welcome to try out at any level. If a player prefers not to play rep level hockey, she is not required to pursue that goal. If a player does not wish to be assigned to a particular team, she must advise the Association in writing (email or other written form) *prior* to the announcement of the working groups. Unless approved by the Association, a player who does not so advise the Association *prior* to the announcement of the working groups shall be required to play for the team she is placed on.

A player who does not register for and attend evaluation sessions will be placed on the lowest level team for her age group. Many of our players go this route every year.

## **The Goals of the Evaluation Process**

While this is an exciting time of year, it can also be a stressful time or a time of worry for parents and players and coaches. To help make the experience less stressful and more enjoyable please note some of our evaluation goals:

- To place all players at an appropriate level so they may have a fun and rewarding experience during the hockey season.
- To ensure the evaluation process is objective, fair and has the best interests of all players and the Association in mind.
- To reduce stress and worry for players and parents through communication of the evaluation process.

## **What Level Should a Player Try Out For?**

Before registering for evaluations for A and C1 teams, players and parents should consider a number of factors to ensure that the player plays on a team that is not only appropriate to her level of abilities but is also consistent with her objectives and level of commitment and those of her family.

## **Midget A, Bantam A, Pee wee A and Atom C1 team**

The A level teams at the Midget, Bantam and Pee wee levels and the Atom C1 team are our “rep” level teams. These teams are competitive and will participate in their respective Tier 1 division during the season as well as in several tournaments. The Midget A, Bantam A and Pee wee A teams work towards qualifying for the Provincial Championships at the end of the season. There is no Provincial Championship at the Atom level.

Players on A teams and the Atom C1 team must demonstrate advanced playing abilities and skills, a desire to excel, a strong commitment to developing as a player and as part of a team, and a competitive spirit while having fun playing. Players should expect to practice at least eight times per month on average and also participate in additional on and off ice training, conditioning, and development initiatives.

The time commitment required of A level players and Atom C1 players is much greater than for players on teams at other levels. A level and Atom C1 players are expected to have close to full participation for all team practices, games, and functions during the season that runs from September to late March. Full disclosure of any external conflicts that may potentially limit a player’s ability to fully participate must be made on the Disclosure Document submitted prior to the first evaluation. A player who cannot make the required time commitment, regardless of her abilities and skills, should not expect to take away a spot on the team from another player and may have to move to a lower level team.

Upon being selected to an A team or the Atom C1 team, a player will be required to pay a “rep team” fee to the Association for, among other things, additional Association ice time that the A teams and Atom C1 team will receive. Additional fees and expenses will also be required to be paid for by players for a variety of matters that could include coaching costs, ice times for the team over and above allotted times, additional on and off ice training, conditioning and developmental initiatives, tournament fees, travel costs, etc. The financial commitment required for A level players and Atom C1 players is greater than for players on teams at other levels.

## **Tier 2 Teams**

In recent years, the level of Tier 2 female hockey has increased dramatically. Strong players who do not have the time available to make a full commitment to a Tier 1 team should consider Tier 2 as an excellent option. Also, in some cases, playing a leadership role at that level may be more beneficial to the player’s development. In recent years, a number of parents have expressed the view that their daughter’s on and off-ice development was enhanced by being placed on the Tier 2 team.

## **Evaluation Fees**

Fees are payable online when you register for evaluations. The evaluation fees are:

- Midget A & C1, Bantam A & C1, Peewee A & C1 and Atom C1 & C2 - \$105
- Novice – no fee
- Goalie (all levels) - \$55

## **What to Expect and What is Expected During Evaluations**

Players registered for evaluations must attend every evaluation session. When a player cannot attend an evaluation, or needs to arrive late or leave early, she should contact the Coaching Coordinators or Director of Player Development at least 24 hours prior to the session. Any health or other issues that may impact the player’s evaluation must be discussed with the Coaching Coordinators or Director of Player Development at least 24 hours prior to the session.

The Coaching Coordinators and Director of Player Development will address these situations on a case by case basis at their discretion.

Players will be evaluated based on the position that they signed up for in their evaluation registration. Goalies are required to attend both the goalie only evaluation session and the player evaluation sessions. Players who are interested in goaltending and playing out must advise the Coaching Coordinators and Goalie Coordinator at least 48 hours before the evaluation sessions begin. Goaltenders should expect to be evaluated at every session and not just at the goaltender evaluation session.

At check-in, each player will receive a jersey and number.

Evaluators refer to the jersey colour and/or number to rank players. Players should not switch their assigned jerseys with other players unless requested by evaluators, should not tuck in their jersey and should make sure that their hair does not cover up the jersey number. Goaltenders are asked to wear their number in the front. Jerseys must be returned after each evaluation session.

Generally, the first evaluation session will involve primarily skills and drills, and the second and third sessions may incorporate game situations and/or scrimmages. It may be necessary to release players from evaluations in order to limit numbers or balance the level of players during the evaluation scrimmage games.

At times, evaluators may ask for certain lines to play together or even certain players to change jersey colors and numbers. A player may also be asked to play a position different than the one she indicated she is trying out for.

Parents and others are asked to stay clear as much as possible from the evaluators to allow them do their job without interruption or without worrying about others overhearing their comments to each other. It is essential that evaluators are able to speak candidly to each other during the evaluation process.

The evaluation format and schedule is subject to change due to administrative and other requirements beyond the control of the association.

## **The Evaluation Process**

Where possible, head coaches are put in place prior to evaluations to assist in the process. In some cases two or three individuals may be chosen as potential head coaches for a team and the head coach determined after players (and coaches' daughters) are ranked and placed. All coaching decisions and changes in this regard are subject to the discretion of the Association.

Each player participating in the evaluations will be ranked confidentially for their respective team level. The concept of the Top 8 used in prior years will no longer be used. There will no longer be guaranteed spots on the team for the players who rank in the top 8 after the evaluations

After the evaluations, working groups will be set for both the Tier 1 and Tier 2 teams at each age group.

The head coach of the Tier 1 team is entitled to cut players from the Tier 1 working group and is also entitled to call up players from the Tier 2 working group, as the head coach of the Tier 1 team deems appropriate.

The head coach of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 teams, as applicable, will decide which players make their respective teams. Where a head coach is not in place during the working group practices, the Association will make other arrangements. Coaches may elect to continue with a working group in whatever format they consider necessary in order to further evaluate.

The total number of players, and the number of players for each position, a team carries, is subject to the approval of the President or Director of Player Development (or their designate) in consultation with the head coach.

Any player that is released *prior* to the commencement of the third working group practice of the Tier 1 team will be assigned to the working group of the Tier 2 team for placement consideration on the Tier 2 team. Any player that is released *after* the commencement of the third working group practice of the Tier 1 team will be automatically placed on the Tier 2 team.

## **Player Notification of Results**

For the Midget A & C1, Bantam A & C1, Pee wee A & C1 and Atom C1 and C2 teams, the working groups will be posted to the NSFIHA website following the final evaluation session.

Any player movement after these initial postings will be communicated by the coaching staff or Association in a manner they deem appropriate.

Although final rosters are submitted to the PCAHA in mid-September, players may be moved from or to a team until early January. Players may be moved down or up a level in a variety of circumstances including, but not limited to, poor attendance, poor attitude, failure to fully disclose availability to attend practices or games, etc.

## **Disclosure of Player Participation Conflicts**

The Association and coaches expect players to commit to attending the vast majority of team practices, games and functions with a view to supporting personal development and team success. Practices at all levels are considered to be just as important as games, but especially in Tier 1. If a player cannot make the required time commitment, regardless of her abilities and skills, this may be an issue that could affect a player's placement on a particular team.

Full written disclosure of any external conflicts that may potentially limit a player's ability to fully participate must be made to the Coaching Coordinators or Director of Player Development prior to the evaluation process via the Disclosure Document. If a player has not fully or correctly disclosed conflicts or if her attendance at practices or games is lacking, she may be moved to a lower level team during the season.

This does not mean that a player is prohibited from playing other sports or activities while on the roster for a team, and particularly for a Tier 1 team, as it is recognized that good athletes play a multitude of sports. However, full written disclosure is required by all players to enable the Association to make an informed assessment prior team selection. Players' disclosures will be provided to the head coach prior to player selection.

A player will not be evaluated if she fails to provide a written disclosure on the required form before evaluations begin.

## **Parents Are Required to Help**

Without support and assistance from parents, the evaluation process cannot proceed.

As parents, you can help the evaluation process by:

- Explaining to your daughter what evaluations are. Many players do not know what the process is and what it accomplishes. You can tell your hockey player she is constantly developing as a hockey player and evaluations are a time for her skills to be recognized so she can be placed on the appropriate team. Tell your daughter to showcase her current level of development by trying her best each time she goes on the ice. Remember she (as a person) is not being evaluated. It is her specific hockey skills for her age and experience that are being ranked. These skills change year by year so the Association needs to “check” where she currently stands in terms of her skating, shooting, passing, checking etc.
- Getting your daughter to the arena at least 45 minutes before the start of evaluation sessions to allow for check in, personal warm up to prevent injury, and time to change.
- Encouraging your daughter to be dressed and ready to go on the ice 5 minutes prior to their evaluation time. This will give on-ice instructors and divisional coordinators the chance to explain the session to the players if needed.
- Staying positive. Support your daughter throughout the process. Don’t try to be her coach and do not sweat the small stuff – it’s the beginning of the year. She may fall, may not be in top shape, and may miss pylons and passes. It’s all part of hockey. Be positive and help your daughter enjoy the time on the ice.
- On scheduled dates, Association representatives will be present at sign-in and information tables in the arena. A minimum of 6 parents are required per evaluation session to assist with check-in and den mom duties.
- Divisional Coordinators will email parents to determine which sessions you can assist with.