



St. James Assiniboia Minor Hockey Association

Player Evaluation & Team Formation Process

Updated: September 2022

St. James Assiniboia Minor Hockey Association

Player Evaluation & Team Formation Process

Introduction

The goal of this document is to provide a well-defined and unified program that establishes procedures regarding key aspects of team formation in accordance with the rules and regulations established by **Hockey Winnipeg**.

First and foremost, **Hockey Winnipeg** rules & regulations (Section D, Hockey Zones) require that teams be “drafted equally according to ability” from within an area association. This forms the basis of the SJAMHA player evaluation & team formation process, along with the following guiding principles as set forth by **Hockey Canada**:

- To provide a fair and impartial assessment of a player's total hockey skills during the skating and scrimmage sessions
- To ensure that players have a reasonable opportunity of being selected to a team appropriate to their skill levels as determined during the on-ice evaluations of the current year
- To provide coaches with the opportunity and flexibility to build a team based in part on their own coaching philosophy and knowledge of player skills and attitude
- To provide uniformity and consistency in the evaluation process such that player and parent expectations are consistent from year to year as players move through the various levels of the association's programs
- To form teams to maintain balanced and competitive play where the athletes can develop and participate equitably and have fun playing hockey during the season
- To provide feedback in order to develop players

Player Evaluations

SJAMHA policy is to use independent evaluators to complete player evaluations for players in the U9 to U15 divisions. This covers all age divisions for “A Hockey” as well as the first 4 years of “Direct Entry”, which allows for a smooth transition to the city-wide Winnipeg Hockey program. Note that for the U9 division, this only applies to “A” – the U9 Development Program will continue to be used for House League team formation. For players in the U13-U18 - the remaining Direct Entry age divisions - it is the responsibility of the head coach of each Direct Entry team to evaluate and select the players that form each team. SJAMHA has put Independent Evaluators in place for U18 to help with the process by providing feedback to coaches as in most years coaches are not in place at team formation time or until just before.

SJAMHA employs a fair and impartial player evaluation process that provides a comprehensive assessment of the skills of each player. The independent evaluators provide on-ice and off-ice personnel who are expected to conduct all activities in a professional manner. On-ice sessions are held according to pre-defined practice plans that allow the effective assessment of all players. The independent evaluators utilize a thorough player assessment strategy that captures data to complete the evaluation

of player skills. The resulting player rankings are made available to coaches during team formation. SJAMHA Policy is we do not disclose rankings, however, the Independent evaluator's feedback on your child may be provided. Depending on the independent evaluation service used, written request may be required or it may be automatically provide by email.

Each year, SJAMHA will review the performance of the independent evaluators and assess whether changes are required to the process or the evaluating team.

In order to properly facilitate player evaluations, all minor hockey registration within SJAMHA boundaries must be completed no later than August 31st of any given year.

Hockey Winnipeg rules & regulations require a minimum of two (2) ice sessions be granted to all players who have registered for A1 evaluations. SJAMHA will conduct a maximum of four (4) ice sessions to determine player rankings which will become the basis for team formation.

For players in the U9 A1 to U15 divisions, the independent evaluators will assess the skills of each player in the following areas:

- **Skating:** Forward & backward; speed and technique
- **Passing:** Forehand & backhand; technique, control and vision
- **Puck Control:** Open ice & confined space; ability to maintain control of the puck
- **Shooting:** Technique, accuracy and velocity
- **Game Understanding:** Player understands positional play, communicates with teammates, Player has the ability to read and react and displays a strong 'hockey sense'
- **Intangibles:** Work ethic and desire, behavior (good and bad), leadership

Goaltenders will be assessed according to the following criterion:

- **Stance:** Balance & mechanics
- **Mobility:** Skating, shuffling and T-pushing
- **Positioning:** Centre line, adjustments, square to puck and post mechanics
- **Saves:** Execution and rebound control
- **Game Situations:** Recovery techniques, body balance, read & react
- **Intangibles:** Work ethic and desire, behavior (good and bad), focus & anticipation

Please note the above criterion will be applied and assessed as appropriate for each age division. For example, the evaluators do not expect all U9 players to be able to "roof the puck". Players will receive an aggregated score based on the independent evaluator's assessment of the above skills. Players will be ranked by score and this will serve as a guide when conducting team formation.

After each ice session, players may be reassigned to different groups to facilitate further evaluation of skills. Such reassignments will take place according to the assessments performed by the independent evaluators. Any such reassignment does not exclusively determine the team to which the player is ultimately assigned, as per the team formation process described below.

SJAMHA strives to meet the needs & interests of all players in our area association. To that end, should a family feel that playing at a higher level of hockey is not right for their child, please advise an SJAMHA representative when checking in for your first player evaluation session. The SJAMHA representative will advise the VP Winnipeg West or the VP Direct Entry of the request and this will be taken into consideration for team formation.

Team Formation

As previously stated, Hockey Winnipeg rules & regulations (Section D, Hockey Zones) require that teams be “drafted equally according to ability” from within an area association. With this in mind, the following process has been established for team formation.

All players in the U9 to U13 divisions will be assessed by independent evaluators to determine their placement on the appropriate team for their skills & abilities – ie. A1, A2 or A3. Players that are not selected to the U9 “A” team (s) or those who may decide not to try out for U9 “A” will be automatically assigned to a U9 house league team preferably aligned with their community club but not guaranteed.

Depending on the number of goaltenders and the caliber of goaltenders participating in the player evaluations for each age division, teams will be required to carry 1 or 2 goalies. This determination will be made by SJAMHA prior to team formation. Goaltender selection will take place in conjunction with player selection during the team formation process (see below).

According to Hockey Winnipeg rules & regulations, the specific number of A1, A2 & A3 teams to be formed is determined by the total number of players registered in SJAMHA in each age division. These rules take into consideration the minimum and maximum roster sizes as defined by Hockey Winnipeg. All roster size determinations will be completed prior to the team formation process according to the Hockey Winnipeg rules & regulations.

Where more than one team is formed at a particular age & level, each team will carry the same number of players & goaltenders, to the extent the number of players mathematically allows this to be accommodated.

The Team Formation Process

At the conclusion of the player evaluation process, all players will be ranked within their age division. This data will be provided to coaches at a team formation meeting held for each age division. Every team formation meeting will include a member the age level tryout convener, the head coach (1) of each team, a member of the SJAMHA executive (the VP WW or VP DE). If the SJAMHA executive member and/or A chair have a child available for selection during the team formation of that age and are not the head coach for one of the teams, they shall vacate the room and another member of the SJAMHA executive shall preside over the team formation meeting on their behalf (it is assumed that the age level tryout convener will have been assigned to a different age level if there is a conflict).

When team formation takes place, it is SJAMHA policy that only Head Coaches are allowed in the room at the time of team formation and there are no exceptions to this policy.

For each age division, the independent evaluators will first identify 80% of the players who **must** play at the A1 level, based specifically on the ranking from the player evaluation process. The balance of each team will be formed by coach selection from all remaining players at that age division. Please see the tables at the end of this document for sample team formation scenarios for various roster sizes.

To start the team formation process for each age division, the A1 coaches will meet to form the A1 teams. At the outset of each team formation meeting, the children of the coaches will be assigned to the

corresponding teams. To ensure fair and balanced teams, the coach whose child is ranked lower in the overall ranking will make the first player selection. If a non-parent coach or the coach's child is a

goalkeeper is in place for any of the teams at a level being selected, the first selection will be decided by a coin toss.

The coach with the first selection will choose any one player from the identified list of 80% of players that must play at the A1 level or he/she may select any other player available at that age division. The next coach will choose any two players, with the stipulation that, at no point, can the total number of players selected from outside the 80% of players that must play at the A1 level exceed the number of coach selections available for the roster size in play, according to the Team Formation Scenarios table located at the end of this document. Player selection will continue in alternating sequence - two players at a time - until the prescribed roster size has been attained. For clarity, all players in the identified list of 80% of players that must play at the A1 level will be assigned to the A1 teams. No team formed will have more coach selections than as permitted by the team formation scenario currently in play. In the case where three teams or more are being formed, such as at U9 A1, the process for selecting players will be slightly different. In this situation only, the coaches will select players using the following sequence: Coach 1, Coach 2, Coach 3, Coach 3, Coach 2, Coach 1, Coach 1, Coach 2, etc. The rules around the 80% of players that must play at A1, as noted above, will continue to be applied. Throughout this process, coaches will have the ranking information of all players to assist with team formation.

Once the players have been assigned, goalkeepers will be assigned.

The process for assigning goalkeepers onto teams differs slightly from the process for players. All goalkeepers in each age division will be ranked according to the assessment completed by the independent evaluators. Next, the independent evaluators will identify 70% of the goalkeepers that must play at the age & level of team being formed. The remaining goalkeepers will be selected by the coach from all remaining goalkeepers at that age division. The coach who **did not** select the first player will be first to select a goalkeeper. He must choose one goalkeeper from the list of eligible goalkeepers – the 70% group that must play at the level of team being formed. The next coach will choose one goalkeeper from this group, and then one additional goalkeeper from all remaining goalkeepers at that age division. The final goalkeeper will be selected by the first coach, also from all remaining goalkeepers at that age division. Note this process assumes two goalkeepers per team are to be selected. In the case where only one goalkeeper per team is to be selected, as determined by SJAMHA, they will be done by coach selection, in the reverse sequence from initial player selection. Further, the process would be slightly different in the event more than two (2) teams were being formed, such as may be the case at U9 A1. In that specific situation only, each coach would select one goalkeeper from the list of eligible goalkeepers for U9 A1, in the reverse sequence from their initial player selection.

Once the A1 teams have been formed, the independent evaluators will then identify 80% of the players who must play at the A2 level, again based specifically on the ranking from the player evaluation process. A new team formation meeting will be conducted to form the A2 teams, following the same process as above.

Players not selected for an A1 or A2 team will be assigned to an A3 team. If there are to be two (2) A3 teams, then the same draft style selection as outlined above will be used to form the teams.

Upon completion of the team formation meeting for each age division and level, the SJAMHA representative will make a copy of the rosters and ensure all meeting participants, including coaches, sign off to confirm team formation was conducted according to the rules defined above.

Any players that are unable to attend tryouts can only be guaranteed placement at an A3 level. Consideration will be given to move up one level to A2 if the player played the previous season at an A1 level or higher. In rare circumstances, with support from previous year's coaching staff, the current coaching staff, documentation of injury causing absence from tryouts and with a favorable majority vote by the SJAMHA board, a player may be placed on an A1 team.

Please contact the age level tryout convenor with any questions or concerns regarding the player evaluation or team formation process. The SJAMHA Board will have final say regarding player evaluations and / or team assignments.

Coaches

SJAMHA recognizes the important role that coaches perform in the development of our children in and out of hockey. As such, it is the duty of SJAMHA to select the best applicant to become the head coach of each team. SJAMHA reserves the right to confirm or deny coaches at all levels.

Consideration will be given to assign independent coaches outside of the team's parent group; however, since this is not always possible, certain standards must be met by the parent that has applied to coach their child's team.

All coaches must meet the minimum coaching requirements as established by Hockey Manitoba and Hockey Winnipeg and will be subject to a Child Abuse Registry check.

All coaches must attend a mandatory meeting prior to the beginning of the player evaluation process. During this meeting, SJAMHA and the independent evaluators will review the processes described in this document to ensure there is a common understanding of player evaluation and team formation.

The process for selecting a pool of potential head coaches is to be completed prior to the beginning of the player evaluation sessions. While this is the objective, in some cases a lack of volunteers for coaching positions makes this impossible. In such a case, SJAMHA will work with the hockey directors and/or parent group to identify a candidate to coach the team. Where a suitable coach cannot be identified, team formation for that age division & level may not be possible. Players in this situation may need to be transferred to another area to play hockey.

Any parent interested in coaching must make their intentions known on or before the time of player evaluation. This expression of interest can be made online at the SJAMHA website at www.sjamha.ca.

Team Name & Colors

All U9 through U18 A1, A2 and A3 teams registered by SJAMHA shall be called the **St. James Assiniboia Canucks**. Where there are two (2) teams registered in one age division, one team shall be known as Canucks (Community Club) and the other team as Canucks (Community Club). In the case where there might be three (3) teams or more registered, they will be known as Canucks plus a designated Community Club.

The colors worn by the St. James Assiniboia Canucks are white and blue. The uniforms are modeled after our community local MMJHL team the St. James Jr. Canucks. Each U11 to U18 team will be provided with 2 sets of game sweaters and socks (home & away). For U7, U9, U10 and U11 the SJAMHA will use sponsor jerseys or community club jerseys as needed. This will be done at the discretion of the SJAMHA

Team Formation Scenarios

The following tables identify the number of players selected by the independent evaluators and coaches dependent upon roster size for a single team. Where multiple teams are being formed, the numbers in the table are to be multiplied by the number of teams being formed.

	Players	Goalies	Players	Goalies	Players	Goalies	Players	Goalies
Roster Size*	10	1	10	2	11	1	11	2
Evaluator Selection	8	0	8	1	9	1	9	1
Coach Selection	2	1	2	1	2	0	2	1

	Players	Goalies	Players	Goalies	Players	Goalies	Players	Goalies
Roster Size*	12	1	12	2	13	1	13	2
Evaluator Selection	9	0	9	1	10	1	10	1
Coach Selection	3	1	3	1	3	0	3	1

	Players	Goalies	Players	Goalies	Players	Goalies	Players	Goalies
Roster Size*	14	1	14	2	15	1	15	2
Evaluator Selection	11	0	11	1	12	1	12	1
Coach Selection	3	1	3	1	3	0	3	1

	Players	Goalies	Players	Goalies	Players	Goalies	Players	Goalies
Roster Size*	16	1	16	2	17	1	17	2
Evaluator Selection	13	0	13	1	13	1	13	1
Coach Selection	3	1	3	1	4	0	4	1

* Roster sizes are defined by Hockey Winnipeg rules & regulations, which also determine the specific number of A1, A2 & A3 teams formed based on the total number of players registered in SJAMHA in each age division.