

SWAT Player Evaluation Policy

Revised August, 2011

1.0 SWAT Player Evaluation Policy Statement

The goal of the SWAT Player Evaluation Process in the Novice, Atom and Peewee categories is to fairly and consistently evaluate players for the purposes of placing them on teams with other players of similar ability. This allows SWAT to tier its teams in accordance with the tiering policy of Hockey Edmonton.

The goal of the SWAT Player Evaluation Process in the Initiation 2A and Initiation 2B categories is simply to assess the skill level of those players who are in the early stages of their hockey playing experience so that teams of equal relative strength can be formed in both the Initiation 2A and Initiation 2B categories.

The above goals will be achieved through the establishment and maintenance of a consistent evaluation program.

2.0 Player Evaluation Process (Novice, Atom and Peewee)

2.1 General Procedure

The evaluation of each player will be based on his or her performance in a series of not less than 3 evaluation games. Depending on the category, each player's initial evaluation game group will be based on his or her scoring in a standardized skills session or his or her previous playing history. Subsequent evaluation game groups will be based solely on a player's performance in the prior evaluation game(s). **Scores from the standardized skills sessions that are used to determine initial game groups will not be used in the determination of a player's final ranking. 100% of a player's final ranking will be determined by his/her rankings in the evaluation games.**

Other than affecting the placement of players for their initial evaluation game in certain categories, player evaluations will not be influenced by player history or any other pre-conception of a player's ability. Team coaches will be selected only after the evaluation of all players is completed and they will therefore have no influence on the selection of the teams.

The VP Evaluations, Player and Coach Development and the Player Evaluation Director will oversee the player evaluations to assist with and ensure the consistent implementation of the SWAT Player Evaluation Process.

2.2 Initial Evaluation Game Groups

2.2.1 Skills Sessions

In those categories where skills sessions are used to establish groups for the initial evaluation games, the drills to be used in the skills sessions will be determined by the Category Director in consultation with the VP Evaluations, Coach and Player Development and the Player Evaluation Director. The skill sessions will consist of age appropriate drills designed to allow players to demonstrate their particular level of ability. A description of the drills will be posted on the SWAT website at least 1 week prior to the skills sessions.

Players will generally be evaluated in on ice groups of 25 to 50 players. Each on ice group of players

will be further split into an appropriate number of sub-groups to ensure an efficient evaluation process. The grouping of players for the skills sessions will be at the discretion of the Category Director. These groupings will have no bearing whatsoever on a player's ultimate ranking after the skills sessions as all players will start out with a zero score and their score from the skills session is not relative to the performance of other players within their group or sub-group. After the completion of all skills sessions within a category, players will be ranked within their category and that ranking will be used to place them into groups for the initial evaluation games.

2.2.2 Playing History

In those categories where skills sessions are not used, players will be ranked and grouped for initial evaluation games according to their previous playing history within SWAT. If a player has not previously played for SWAT, the Category Director, in consultation with the VP Evaluations, Coach and Player Development and the Player Evaluation Director, will pre-group the player on the best information available.

2.3 Game Evaluations

2.3.1 Evaluation By Position

For the Peewee category only, players will be required to declare in advance of the game evaluations whether they wish to be evaluated at the forward or defence position and their relative rankings throughout the evaluation process will be based on their ranking at that position. In the Novice and Atom categories, while players will play both forward and defence in the evaluation games, they will be ranked against all other players within their category.

2.3.2 Formation of Teams

The group of players for each evaluation game will be divided into 2 teams of relative equal strength based on player rankings in accordance with paragraph 2.2 above (for initial evaluation games) and in accordance with paragraph 2.3.3. below (for all subsequent evaluation games). When arriving at the rink, players will be given pinnies based on their ranking (i.e. Rank #1 - White, Rank #2 - Black, Rank #3 - White, etc.). The lists of players will be prepared alphabetically by the Category Director so as not to divulge the rankings of the players.

2.3.3 Individual Player Evaluations

In evaluation games, players will be evaluated on their ability to play against other players of similar ability. They will be scored relative to the group they are skating with in accordance with the following scoring criteria:

- Offence - 1 to 10 points (scoring, shooting, forechecking, puck carrying, stick handling, passing)
- Defense - 1 to 10 points (back checking, positioning, taking away scoring chances)
- Physical Play - 1 to 10 points (effective corner work, winning battles, ability to give and take checks (if applicable))
- Team Play - 1 to 10 points (passing and puck movement, positional play)

1	2 – 4	5 – 6	7 – 9	10
Unable to perform the required skill(s)	Demonstrates a below average degree of skill	Demonstrates an average degree of skill	Demonstrates an above average degree of skill	Demonstrates an excellent degree of skill

Total Score for each player based on the above categories will be between 0 and 40 points

2.3.4 Ranking of Players Following Evaluation Games

Following each evaluation game, players will be ranked in accordance with their performance in that game relative to the other players. As part of this process the Category Director (in consultation with the VP Evaluations, Coach and Player Development and the Player Evaluation Director) will normalize the scores (the scores of the players on the white and black teams will be compared to ensure that the range and mean of all players' scores are generally equal), review individual player and evaluator scores for anomalies, and make any necessary adjustments. Once this has been done, the Category Director, the VP Evaluations, Coach and Player Development, and the Player Evaluation Director will make decisions regarding any movement of players up or down to adjacent groups for the next set of evaluation games.

2.3.5 Miscellaneous

From time to time situations may arise where a large number of players of roughly equal skill are in different groups. In these circumstances the Category Director, in consultation with the VP Evaluations, Coach and Player Development and the Player Evaluation Director, has the discretion to arrange evaluation games involving a broader range of players from two different groups. This may involve the removal of certain players from those groups whose relative ranking is clearly evident.

At the discretion of the Category Director, in consultation with the VP Evaluations, Coach and Player Development and the Player Evaluation Director, players may be removed from future evaluation games after the second evaluation game to allow a more effective evaluation of other players in the group.

2.4 Final Ranking and Team Selection

After all evaluation games in a category have been completed, a final relative ranking of all players within the category will be created based on each player's average score from the evaluation games (in the Peewee category only, players will be ranked based on their selected position - defence or forward). It should be noted that direct comparisons of evaluation game scores between groups within a category is not possible as each group is expected to play at a different level (i.e. a score of 25 out of 40 in Group C is not equivalent to a score of 25 out of 40 in Group A).

Once the final ranking of players has been completed, tentative team lists will be submitted by the Category Director to the VP Evaluations, Coach and Player Development and the Player Evaluation Director, who will then make the final team lists in consultation with the Category Director.

In the interest of optimum player development, the VP Evaluations, Coach and Player Development, the Player Evaluation Director and the Category Directors will strive to compile final team lists in accordance with the following guidelines:

Novice and Atom: 13 players and 1 goalie
Peewee: 9 forwards, 6 defence and 2 goalies

It should be noted that these guidelines may not be met in certain circumstances due to factors such as the number of players registered in a category.

2.5 Peewee Tier 1 Team Selection

For the Peewee category only, the players on the tier 1 team will be determined using a “tryout” process which will involve a more competitive atmosphere. All Peewee age players will be invited to participate in the tryout process at a non-refundable cost of \$50 per player. As with the regular Peewee evaluation process, those players participating in the tier 1 scrimmage sessions will be required to declare their position (forward or defence) before the scrimmage sessions and they will be ranked relative to other players trying out at that position.

Tryouts will consist of at least 4 evaluation scrimmage sessions. Each player will participate in at least one of the first 2 scrimmage sessions. After the second scrimmage session, the number of players eligible to participate in the remaining scrimmage sessions shall be set by the Category Director in consultation with the VP Evaluations, Coach and Player Development and the Player Evaluation Director.

Goalie selection will follow a process similar to player selection in that following the completion of the second scrimmage session the number of goalies eligible to participate in the remaining scrimmage sessions shall be set by the Category Director in consultation with the VP Evaluations, Coach and Player Development and the Player Evaluation Director.

The players and goalie(s) on the tier 1 team will be determined in accordance with their overall ranking in all of the scrimmage sessions using SWAT’s standard evaluation policy set out in paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4 above and paragraph 4.2.2 below.

2.6 Team Blending

Category Directors reserve the right to blend teams in certain situations. Blending of teams is a process by which a group of players of generally equal skill will form two or more teams that will begin play at the same EMHA level. Category Directors will determine which teams to blend and submit a written recommendation, with justification, to the VP Evaluations, Coach and Player Development and the Player Evaluation Director for final approval.

In certain circumstances, as part of this team blending process, Category Directors may feel that it would be beneficial to have teams formed without utilizing all of the scheduled evaluation games. In these situations, Category Directors will submit a written recommendation to the VP Evaluations, Coach and Player Development and the Player Evaluation Director for final approval. In no circumstances will teams be formed with less than 2 evaluation games having been played.

2.7 Friends Playing with Friends

Requests from players wishing to play together will be given consideration, but such requests must be made via email to the Category Director by all players involved prior to the first evaluation game. Such requests will only be considered in circumstances involving blended teams (see paragraph 2.6 above) or in the case of players in different tiers if the higher tiered player moves to the tier of the lower player. A move of one tier will generally be considered, but the granting of such requests is solely within the discretion of the Category Director, the VP Evaluations, Coach and Player Development and the Player Evaluation Director, and their decision is final.

2.8 Female Novice Team

An effort will be made to establish a team at the Novice level consisting entirely of female players. This will depend upon the number of players interested in this concept and the range of player abilities available. If a sufficient number of players are available in a reasonably narrow band of skill level, a female team may be established and entered in the most appropriate tier. A final decision will be made at the completion of all the evaluation sessions by the Category Director.

3.0 Player Evaluation Process (Initiation 1, 2A and 2B)

Initiation I players will participate in an entry level hockey program with no regularly scheduled games. As a result, there will be no skill evaluation process for the Initiation 1 category.

All Initiation 2A/2B players will participate in one Skills Session in accordance with the format set out in paragraph 2.2.1 above. Following that skills session, the players will be ranked relative to all other players in the category. The top 50 to 60 ranked players will attend a second skills session. Following this second skills session, the top ranked players will be placed into the Initiation 2B program and placed onto 4 teams of equal relative strength. All remaining players will be placed into the Initiation 2A program and placed onto teams of equal relative strength.

Requests from Initiation 2A/2B players wishing to play together must be in writing and submitted to the Category Director prior to the Skills Session. Although every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate these requests, the final decision with respect to whether or not a request can be accommodated is within the sole discretion of the Category Director, the VP Evaluations, Coach and Player Development and the Player Evaluation Director, and their decision is final.

4.0 Goalie Evaluation Process

4.1 General Information

The evaluation of those players wishing to commit to playing as a goalie is separate from the player evaluation process. Those players wishing to be evaluated as a goalie in the Novice, Atom and Pee wee categories must commit to playing goal on a full time basis throughout the season. There are no goalie evaluations in the Initiation 2A and Initiation 2B categories.

With the exception of the goalie(s) chosen for the Pee wee Tier 1 team in accordance with paragraph 2.5 above, each goalie will be evaluated based on his or her performance in a skills session and in not less than 3 evaluation games.

The VP Evaluations, Player and Coach Development and the Player Evaluation Director will oversee the goalie evaluations to assist with and ensure the consistent implementation of the SWAT Goalie Evaluation Process.

4.2 General Procedure

4.2.1 Skills Sessions

All goalies In the Novice, Atom and Pee wee categories (with the exception of the goalie(s) chosen for the Pee wee Tier 1 team in accordance with paragraph 2.5 above) will go through one skills session prior to participating in any evaluation games in order to assess their relative goaltending skills. The drills to be used in the skills sessions will be determined by the Tiering Committee.

The skills sessions will be run on ice by SWAT personnel chosen by the Category Director. The goalies will be evaluated by goalie evaluators approved by the VP Evaluations, Player and Coach Development, the Category Director and the Player Evaluation Director and such evaluators may be SWAT evaluators, evaluators from an outside agency, or some combination of the two.

For each drill/skill station the goalies will be scored on the following point criteria:

1	2 – 4	5 – 6	7 – 9	10
Unable to perform the required skill(s)	Demonstrates a below average degree of skill	Demonstrates an average degree of skill	Demonstrates an above average degree of skill	Demonstrates an excellent degree of skill

After the completion of the skills session, each goalie will be ranked relative to the other goalies in his or her category and that ranking will be used to place the goalies into groups for the initial evaluation games. These rankings will be used only for the placement of the goalies in the initial evaluation games. **A goalie’s final ranking within his or her category will depend solely on his or her performance in the evaluation games.**

4.2.2 Game Evaluations

The number of goalies participating in each evaluation game will be determined by the Category Director in consultation with the VP Evaluations, Player and Coach Development and the Player Evaluation Director, and will depend on a number of factors including the number of players wishing to be evaluated as a goalie in that particular category. Goalies will be given an equal amount of ice time during the evaluation games and will be rotated throughout the game.

During the evaluation games, the goalies will be evaluated by goalie evaluators chosen by the VP Evaluations, Player and Coach Development, the Category Director and the Player Evaluation Director and such evaluators may be SWAT evaluators, evaluators from an outside agency, or some combination of the two. The evaluations will be based on the following criteria:

Puck Control				
1	2 – 4	5 – 6	7 – 9	10
Unable to perform the required skill(s)	Demonstrates a below average degree of skill	Demonstrates an average degree of skill	Demonstrates an above average degree of skill	Demonstrates an excellent degree of skill

Shots/Angling/Position				
1	2 – 4	5 – 6	7 – 9	10
Unable to perform the required skill(s)	Demonstrates a below average degree of skill	Demonstrates an average degree of skill	Demonstrates an above average degree of skill	Demonstrates an excellent degree of skill
Overall Impression				
1	2 – 4	5 – 6	7 – 9	10
Unable to perform the required skill(s)	Demonstrates a below average degree of skill	Demonstrates an average degree of skill	Demonstrates an above average degree of skill	Demonstrates an excellent degree of skill

Following each series of evaluation games within a category, the evaluation of each goalie will be reviewed by the VP Evaluations, Player and Coach Development, the Category Director and the Player Evaluation Director and each goalie will be re-ranked relative to the other goalies in his or her category. This new ranking will then be used to place goalies into groups for the next series of evaluation games.

Upon completion of the final series of evaluation games within a category, the evaluation of each goalie will be reviewed by the VP Evaluations, Player and Coach Development, the Category Director and the Player Evaluation Director and each goalie will be given a final ranking relative to the other goalies in his or her category. Goalies will then be placed on teams for the season based on this final ranking.

5.0 Player Evaluator and On Ice Instructor Selection

5.1 Player Evaluators

SWAT Evaluators must have an appropriate background to effectively evaluate player skills and performance. Volunteer Evaluators will typically have coaching experience or have similar qualifications of SWAT coaches. Here are some examples of appropriate qualifications:

1. Experience with player evaluation and performance systems;
2. Background in hockey as a player;
3. Coach training qualifications for the category;
4. Acceptable ratings from previous years SWAT Coach Evaluation Program;
5. Experience as a coach.

Using the criteria above, the category directors shall strive to have a good cross-section of Evaluators including the parents of players at different skill levels within a category and, if possible, in different categories. It is desirable to have a consistent group of Evaluators throughout the entire process. Preference will therefore be given to Evaluators that are able to commit to the entire evaluation process which includes the orientation session, the skills sessions (where applicable), and all game sessions. A list of proposed Evaluators shall be submitted by the Category Director to the VP Evaluations, Player and Coach Development and the Player Evaluation Director for final approval.

At the discretion of the Tiering Committee, an outside agency may be utilized to evaluate one or more categories of players. The selection criteria and remuneration must be approved by the

Board prior to awarding a contract.

For evaluation games, enough Evaluators should be present to achieve an appropriate sample. It is recommended that at least 10 Evaluators be in attendance for each evaluation game, with half of them evaluating one team and the other half evaluating the other team. Evaluators will be randomly assigned a team for evaluation but parents will not evaluate their own children. In addition, Evaluators who feel their objectivity towards a player is compromised are expected to not evaluate that player or request a different team.

Evaluators are expected to sit apart from each other and from parents in the arena during the evaluation sessions. Evaluators are expected to behave professionally and not to discuss the results of their evaluations with others in the arena. Any Evaluator not acting in the spirit of fairness and honesty will not be allowed to participate in future evaluations.

5.2 On-Ice Instructors

The On-Ice Instructors will be responsible for organizing players during the skills sessions, leading the players in a proper warm up, explaining the drills to the players and demonstrating the drills for the players. On-Ice Instructors will be selected by the Category Director in consultation with the VP Evaluations, Player and Coach Development and the Player Evaluation Director based on the following criteria:

1. Previous coaching experience or experience communicating drills to young players.
2. Adequate skating and athletic ability to demonstrate the drills correctly; and
3. Ability to quickly organize players and to stay on schedule during the evaluations.

5.3 Evaluator and On-Ice Instructor Training

Prior to the start of the evaluation process an Evaluator Information and Training Meeting will be held for all Evaluators and On-Ice Instructors. The meeting will be chaired by the Category Director. The VP Evaluations, Player and Coach Development and the Player Evaluation Director may also attend to explain the SWAT Player Evaluation Process. The meeting will explain the overall role of the Evaluators and On-Ice Instructors. The following points will be covered at the meeting:

1. SWAT Player Evaluation Process Generally
2. Expectations of Evaluators
 - Time commitment
 - Duty to learn and understand scoring criteria for evaluation games
 - Duty of fairness, objectivity and impartiality
3. Role of On-Ice Instructors
 - Control and organization of players
 - Leading a proper warm up
 - Explanation to players of drills and skills being scored
 - Demonstration of drill
 - Timing consistency and repeat policy
4. Review of Category drills and scoring criteria

5. Distribution of Category Drill packages for review and use at evaluation sessions

The Category Directors will be responsible for providing all Evaluators and On-Ice Instructors with sufficient notice of the evaluation session times, coordinating On-Ice Instructors and Evaluators, notifying players about their evaluation session times, greeting and marshalling players at the evaluation sessions, coordinating and distributing pinnies, arranging for refreshments for the Evaluators and On-Ice Instructors.

6.0 Administrative Policies

6.1 Absenteeism

Players missing any of the tiering sessions will be placed into groups at the discretion of the Category Director, the VP Evaluations, Player and Coach Development and the Player Evaluation Director. Scores derived from partial attendance at the evaluation sessions will not simply be extrapolated to give full scores as this is felt to be unfair to those attending all of the sessions. Absentee players will be considered on a case by case basis.

6.2 Late Registrants

Players missing the evaluation process entirely will be asked to practice with as many teams as necessary to ensure their proper placement.

6.3 Underage Players

SWAT is regulated by the policies of Hockey Edmonton, including its policy on "Player Acceleration". A player wanting to play in a category higher than his or her appropriate age category must meet Hockey Edmonton's qualifications and have written support of all of the following prior to the commencement of the evaluation process: Category Director from the player's birth year, the VP Evaluations, Player and Coach Development and the Player Evaluation Director. Hockey Edmonton's policy can be viewed at www.emha.ca.

6.4 Checking Camp For First Year Peewee Players

SWAT is also regulated by the policies of Hockey Alberta. As such, in accordance with the requirements of Hockey Alberta, all players in the Peewee category must have completed a Certified Checking Camp before participating in the evaluation process.

7.0 Appeal Process

SWAT acknowledges that special circumstances affecting the tiering of a particular player may occur. If it appears that a player's ranking has been grossly unfair, that ranking may be appealed under the SWAT Appeal Policy.

The appeal process is intended only to review instances where a player's evaluation has been grossly affected due to a documented medical condition or injury that may have significantly impeded the player's ability to perform during the evaluations. Appeals may also be founded on compassionate grounds, such as personal tragedies or family deaths.

The appeal process will not accommodate claims based on lack of preparation by a player, player absence due to holidays, lack of understanding of drills by a player, minor illness, tiering results of previous years, tiering results of former teammates and other players in the evaluation process, tiering results of other hockey clubs, dissatisfaction with Evaluators, Category Directors, the Tiering Committee or the tiering process itself, or allegations of tampering, persecution, or mismanagement of the evaluation process. Movement to another category will not be considered as a remedy to a tiering issue.

A player's ranking will not be considered to be grossly unfair if only a move to the next tiered team above his current team is contemplated. Player movements under this appeal process will not be made at the expense of another player's position and moves will only be made if there is reasonable room on another team's roster.