

## **Team Splitting Guideline**

The intent of this policy is to provide the RLHA Board of Directors with guidelines for the creation of teams based on the number of players available at a given level.

### **Learn to Play Hockey**

Players at the LTPH level will not be split into formal teams. Players may be separated into several groups based on ability in order to facilitate training which meets the appropriate degree of difficulty for the players involved. Informal teams may also be formed to play cross-ice games, etc...

### **Mites**

Mites will play a house league format with players divided into teams of 6-10 players to play cross-ice games against each other during scheduled practice times or additional game times.

Depending on the ages of mite players, a team may be formed of the older players to compete in 12-15 games after Christmas versus neighboring towns. This team should consist of 12-15 or so players, depending on abilities of eligible players (generally, players who will move to squirts in the next 2 years). It has traditionally been the stance of the RLHA Board that mite teams do not participate in playdowns or state tournaments.

Whenever possible, mites should not be used to supplement squirt-aged teams.

### **Squirts, Peewees, Bantams**

The same general considerations apply for squirt, peewee and bantam levels, with exceptions noted below. These points are guidelines, understanding that circumstances may not allow consistent application. The RLHA Board of Directors has final authority to follow or deviate from the guidelines based on available numbers, relative abilities of players or other pertinent factors.

#### **Considerations:**

1. Ideally, there will be two teams at the Squirt, Peewee and Bantam levels.
2. The RLHA believes that smaller teams are beneficial and provide the best opportunity for players.
3. The ideal minimum number of skaters (not including goalies) for A level teams is 11, provided no fewer than 8 skaters will be left for the B level team.
4. 16 or fewer skaters will constitute 1 A level team.

5. When 17 skaters are available all possible options should be explored and discussed to determine if the creation of two teams is possible.
6. In the event 18 skaters are available, it may be best to form a 10 skater A level team and an 8 skater B level team.
7. When an age classification has 24 or fewer skaters, there should be a skater differential between A and B level teams not greater than 2.
8. When an age classification has 25 or more skaters, there should be a skater differential between A and B level teams not greater than 4.
9. In the event that ideal minimum team numbers can be achieved, the RLHA promotes the creation of a third team at an age classification, subject to player abilities, etc...
10. At the Bantam level, slightly larger teams may be more appropriate depending on relative abilities of players.
11. The RLHA does allow players to "Roster up" to the "B" or lowest level team in the next age classification (i.e. – SQ to PW, PW to BT) in order to supplement the older team when the need arises. This practice may also be beneficial for players moving to the older classification for the next season by providing them some game and practice experience at the older level. In this scenario, in order to qualify for playdowns and state tournaments, players must meet the minimum game requirements as set forth by WAHA.
12. In rare cases, the board may recommend that some A level players at an age classification play games with the B level team in order to facilitate schedules without impacting the A level team at the lower age classification by requiring players to "Play up" – therefore inhibiting the lower level A team.

### **Girls/Women's Teams**

The RLHA encourages the formation of girls/women's teams where sufficient numbers exist to do so. General guidelines apply for these teams as well.

### **Co-op Teams**

The RLHA supports the formation of co-op teams when necessary to fill a team at a specific level and there is general support from the families involved. Typically, these teams would form under the Rice Lake Division 2 designation. Details such as practice sites, team name, representative city, etc... will be handled by the Board as needed.

### **Deviations from Guidelines**

Deviations from these guidelines should be noted in board minutes for future recollection.