



Southern Maryland Sabres Hockey Club
P.O. Box 6350
Waldorf, MD 20603

Southern Maryland Sabres Travel Tryout Policy

The purpose of the Southern Maryland Sabres travel team tryout process is to evaluate a player's skating ability, hockey skills and commitment to teamwork, in order to place him or her on a team that will provide the best environment for improving their self-confidence and enjoyment of the sport of ice hockey.

The tryouts for Southern Maryland Sabres travel teams will begin the first date possible as set by PVAHA, 3-weeks following USAH Nationals (late April). The Sabres Board will finalize and announce tryout dates by February.

Tryout dates and times will be posted on the Southern Maryland Sabres website (www.somdsabres.org). We provide skaters every opportunity to show their skills. There will be 2-tryout sessions per age level with both sessions mandatory. Any scheduling conflicts need to be communicated in advance to the Travel Director and age level Travel Head Coach.

Player must register and tryout with their own age level per USA Hockey age divisions. All midget age players (U16/ U18) attend the same tryout time slot. Any request to tryout at a higher age division must be submitted to the Travel Director and approved in advance of Tryouts by the Board.

All skaters and goaltenders that wish to be considered for a Southern Maryland Sabres travel team must attend tryouts. Exceptions made are generally for families moving to the area after the scheduled tryouts. Injuries or other unavoidable situations will be considered on a case by case basis. Depending on the number trying out, it is possible that some who attend tryouts will not make a travel team.

Session Expectations

The Travel Director will work in advance with the Special Events Coordinator to plan the administrative portions of tryouts. This will include up-to-date player sign-in sheets with all registrants through the night before the first session. Players should arrive to the rink 30-minutes in advance of each session to sign-in at the welcome table, obtain their assigned pinney, and sign any necessary code of conduct, or other forms. The Event Coordinator will update the colors/ numbers onto the evaluation sheets. Each player is responsible for returning their pinney back to the welcome table following evaluations.

Evaluations

The Travel Director will create in advance of tryouts a committee of evaluators. Evaluators will use a standardized scoring system that will assess skating ability and hockey skills. The Travel Director will attempt to select evaluators for a given level who do not have children trying out at that level. If an evaluator happens to have a child skating at that level, the evaluator is not allowed to score his own child. All skaters are given colored pinnies with numbers with attempt made to issue the same pinney number the second session. Evaluation sheets will be issued to the evaluators with pinney colors and numbers only.

Evaluation Guidelines

Tryout sessions will consist of drills that allow players to display their individual skating abilities as well as their shooting and passing abilities with an emphasis on situational play in scrimmages.

Evaluators will be in the upstairs stands. Only evaluators and event staff are allowed near the stands area during tryouts.

Evaluators are instructed to rate players using a standardized evaluation system, with an overall score taking into consideration the following: skating skills, hockey skills, team work, situational/decision making. Generally, the weighting of each of these categories will change at each level (Mite, Squirt, Peewee, Bantam and Midget) with the change in the style of play. At the younger level skating and basic hockey skills will be weighted more than at the upper levels where teamwork and situational play become more important as a skill.

Discipline

It should be noted that inappropriate behavior by a skater or parent on or off ice during the tryouts will not be tolerated and could eliminate a player for consideration on a Southern Maryland Sabres Travel team. Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to penalty situations such as illegal checking, elbowing, tripping, and harassment of other skaters on or off the ice and use of foul language. All players must read and sign Players Code of Conduct found on the Southern Maryland Sabres web site. This will be submitted as part of the registration process at tryouts for the upcoming season.

Notification

The Southern Maryland Sabres Board of Directors will give ample advance notice to parents regarding the timing of tryouts. Once the Tryout process is completed, each Head Coach submits their roster to the Travel Director for approval. The players and parents will then be notified with offer to join a team by the Head Coach within 2-days from the last tryout date. Offers will not be made at the rink at the end of the evaluation sessions. Parents have to provide paid commitment within 24-hours of offer to guarantee their player's slot. All players who participated in tryouts will be notified by the Head Coach within a week from the last tryout date, regardless of offer.

Team Selection

There are two important factors that go into how and where players are placed: tryout scores, and the Head coach's vision. It's the combination of these two components that provide the most accurate evaluation for each player.

In order for a Travel team at any age level to be considered viable and have ice time commitments scheduled for the season, the minimum quantity of players/goalie must be met by paid commitments prior to the first Sabres Board meeting following tryout completion. That min/max is set forth per the Sabres Travel Member Handbook. The paid players of any team not meeting the minimum must attend that same Board meeting to review alternatives to a full travel team.

Once the initial Travel team roster is submitted, changes to the roster must be approved by the Travel Director before additional player offers can be made. Within 1-week after tryouts, each Travel Head Coach must submit their **final** team roster to the Travel Director, who will forward to the Board. After that time, no roster changes can be made without Board approval. Following Spring tryouts, some roster positions may remain open. With advance Board approval, supplemental tryouts may occur to fill open roster positions. Under no circumstance is a player who participated in Spring Travel tryouts to be promised another review, yet they may be eligible to participate in a supplemental tryout under the exception circumstances listed in the following section.

The Travel Tryout fee is due payable by each player who joins a Travel team regardless of attendance.

Exceptions

The Travel Director, with approval from the Board of Directors, can place players who miss tryouts on a case by case basis due to injuries or other unavoidable situations at an appropriate level with the agreement of that team's Head Coach.

Circumstances sometimes cause a change in a Board approved Travel roster that leaves a team below the designated Sabres minimum player number. When this happens, Head Coaches, with advance approval from the Travel Director and the Board, may extend an offer to a player who participated in spring tryouts but did not initially make the team.

Any approved selections under this exception criterion must take place by June 30th. Under no circumstances will a selection be approved if it puts the viability of another Sabres Travel or Rec Team at risk of not meeting Sabres minimum player quantity criterion.

Grievances

Any parent who has a concern with the selection process and/or a player's placement should contact the Travel Director.

We hope that this summary of the tryout and team selection process has been informative. We understand that some frustrations come up every year, as this process unfolds - it is not an exact science, and different people have different opinions about the relative talent of a group of players. Please keep in mind that we are doing our best to evaluate your children and place them on the correct team that will allow them to improve as hockey players but more importantly to have fun. Experience has shown that an individual player will achieve the most success and make the most developmental progress over the course of the season if that player is competing at the proper level for his or her ability.

It is important to recognize that the Sabres Head Coach does not control the Travel Tryout process and is unable to make promises outside of the parameters of this policy. Any agreement outside of the confines of this document made without the consent of the Sabres Board will not be honored. It is the Parent's responsibility to know and understand this policy and confirm anything stated to them outside of this procedure with the Sabres Board.

Adopted by SMSHC February 2015