

APPENDIX B

NPHA TRYOUT PROCESS 2025-26

Welcome to the start of the 2025-26 hockey season. The information provided is designed to communicate what will take place throughout the tryout process. This will include the tryout schedule, registration process, skills and scrimmages, scoring by evaluators, team selections, and tryouts for missing or injured players, and grievances regarding team selections.

Please note that in order to participate in player tryouts, player registration must be completed by the tryout deadline of September 20th.

The purpose of hockey tryouts is to group players by ability. The objective is to provide an appropriate level of competition for each player that will challenge their skills and increase their knowledge and enjoyment of the game.

Due to the competitive nature of tryouts, players should make sure they are well rested and arrive at the tryout session at least 30 minutes early. Attendance at a pre-season clinic and dry land training is recommended but not required.

Parents, guardians, and grandparents, please be advised that you will not be allowed in the arena area.

If you have any questions before or during the tryout process, please direct them to the Vice President or any member of the HDC.

Peewees/Bantams/Squirts/10U/12U – Sept 27-28 and Oct 4-5

Extended evaluations as needed up until 12/31 as determined by the HDC

**These dates are subject to change as needed*

Tryout Registration

On the first day, players are to check in at the tryout registration table where they will be issued a numbered tryout jersey. These jerseys are to remain with the player throughout the tryout process. Players should only wear their assigned jerseys for the tryout session. Players who forget their jersey or switch jerseys will not be allowed to step onto the ice until the situation has been corrected. All players must wear a black helmet, black breezers, and NPHA colored socks; any deviation from this must be approved by the tryout committee. Tryout jerseys must be returned to the association upon completion of the tryout process, or a \$30 fine will be assessed.

SQUIRTS/10U, PEEWEES/12U, & BANTAMS TRYOUT SCHEDULE

Girls Trying Out for Boys' Team

It is acceptable if a girl decides to tryout for a boys' team. However, they cannot move back to a girls' team once tryouts have started. This applies to all levels of players.

Scoring Process

The basis for the team selection uses a scoring system to rate individual player skills and game play utilizing a scoring methodology whereas a player's score is based on the percentage of points accumulated over three days of assessment. Each evaluator utilizes a 0 – 5 scale to assess each player's ability across twelve categories over the first three days of tryouts. Those individual evaluator scores are averaged across all evaluators resulting in the player's aggregate score. The twelve categories assessed by each evaluator are: Basic Skating, Edges and Balance, Basic Puck Skills, Transitions, Crossovers, Basic Shooting, Passing & Puck Control, Offensive Play, Defensive Play, Player Engagement, Physical Engagement, and Scoring Ability. The skills and situations used in the tryout scoring process have been derived from a variety of credible hockey organizations. This process provides for training of evaluators in the use of the scoring system so that competent, reliable, and consistent scoring is achieved at all levels. Evaluators will be given ample opportunity to see how each player performs in specific on-ice skills.

Tryouts may consist of both skills and game play evaluations designed by the HDC. Day 1 and 2 of tryouts are primarily assessments of individual skating, edgework, puck handling and shooting skills through standard drills and cross ice games. Day 3 of tryouts "Scrimmage Day" is a combination of cross ice and full ice games evaluating team play, player engagement and offensive and defensive play. Day 4 of tryouts are full ice games. After day 2 of tryouts, players will be split into 2 pools based on evaluator scoring from day one and two. Schedules may change based on potential outside scrimmages if utilized.

At the end of the tryout session all evaluation sheets will be tabulated. Scores will be confidential and not released to anyone outside the HDC or the Board of Directors. Scores will be held until completion of tryouts and certification/approval of teams by the NPHA Board of Directors.

Evaluators

Non-parent, independent evaluators will be selected for each level based on their hockey coaching and/or playing background. They will also be asked to commit to all tryout sessions if possible. In addition, coaches are expected to participate in evaluating players and making team selections. Parents and players are asked to avoid discussing the tryout process with the evaluators and coaches.

Team Selections

Upon completion of the initial tryouts process, the HDC will review the resulting scores and averages to determine a preliminary list for team selection. The NPHA Board may request visibility into this review process, including access to scoring data and evaluation summaries, to support transparency and alignment. As a part of the tryout process, adjustments in team size and player placement may be made after receiving input and advice from past and current coaches at each level. The scoring is to be used as a guide but not the ultimate determining factor. Head coaches, past coaches, and the tryout committee can be consulted on final player placement, and the board may request dispositions of these communications for final approvals. The ultimate player placement lies with the HDC and its recommendations to the Board. At the conclusion of the 4-day tryout process, proposed teams and coaches will be presented to the Board for approval. There may be a need for extended tryouts which would be based upon the coaches' evaluation of players at up to 5 consecutive practices at each level. After completion of these adjustments (herein referred to as extended evaluations), the HDC would present any proposed team adjustments to the NPHA Board of Directors for final approval. The extended evaluations and adjustments may be implemented if the HDC and coaching staff at that level determine that there is a need for them. The extended evaluations will be used on an as needed basis and will not be used unless there are extenuating circumstances. Because high school hockey starts AFTER youth tryouts, adjustments in player placement may have to be made if players that made a Bantam team during tryouts move to the high school level. Possible adjustments may include, but are not limited to, moving players between teams, placing injured players that were unable to tryout on the correct skill level team, moving Peewee's up to Bantams, and looking for Bantams from other associations to help make a complete New Prague team. Generally, the HDC and NPHA's philosophy is to not move players "down" a level and to only move players "up" which periodically can result in the number of players on a team being skewed within a level (e.g. more players on PeeWee B versus PeeWee A), however following extended evaluations the number of players on each team will align with District 6 and Minnesota hockey guidelines. In the case of injured players, a spot may be left open on the highest team for the injured player or the next most qualified player to move up to the highest team.

MITES/8U PLACEMENTS SCHEDULE

Mite/8U – November 1st & 2nd, 2025

**These dates are subject to change as needed*

During the first weekend of the Mite/8U's regular season, all players will be skating as a group. You will be notified as to when your son/daughter will skate that first weekend. These two days will be used for establishing Mite/8U teams, otherwise known as Mite/8U placements.

First-year Mites are not required to attend placements. This policy is designed to ensure that our youngest players can focus on developing their fundamental hockey skills and enjoying the game without the pressure of placement evaluations.

You will be notified of the exact times your player(s) will skate. The goal of the first weekend is to start the year off for all kids with a good foundation of skill-based training while evaluations are going on at the same time. A similar scoring system will be used as is used for our upper-level tryouts.

On the first day, players are to check in at the registration table where they will be issued a numbered pullover. These pullovers are to remain with the player throughout the placement process. Players should only wear their assigned pullovers and either a black or white jersey for the tryout session. Players who forget their jersey or switch jerseys will not be allowed to step onto the ice until the situation has been corrected.

It is recommended that all players wear a black helmet, black breezers, and NPHA colored socks.

Tryout FAQ

So why does the HDC and the Board review and approve the teams and not just take the numbers as they come in?

There are several scenarios that require discussion such as:

- Players missing sessions: did we see enough of that player to place?
- Scores are very, very close. Did something happen one of the days that wasn't reflective of that player's skills the other 3 days?
- Team size and level requirements from District 6, Minnesota Hockey and NPHA

- Do the scores indicate that we may need to change the level of a team?

Can't the group just override scores and "make" things say what they really want?

- No names or jersey numbers are shown until needed. The scores drive the conversation.
- System has an audit log that tracks all score changes. Shared by system admins to HDC members as a safeguard.
- HDC members with player at the level being reviewed are not in the room, not on the ice during tryouts, not in the conversation about team size, level or anything else until names are revealed and coaches need to be chosen.
- Evaluators do not see each others scores; they also don't stick around to review the team selection process.
- There are 12 voting HDC members and many additional board members representing all levels of NPHA. Every season creates healthy discussion on this process and outcome.

What about goalies, girls and mites?

- We hire a third-party company (MEGA) to provide expertise and detailed feedback on goalie evaluations as well as invite an additional independent evaluator to offer yet another perspective.
- Mites and girls all can go through a placement process with scoring in Team Genius.

How does the Day 4 "Bubble" process work?

- Day 4 of the tryout process is reserved for specific identification and evaluation of players above and below the approximate team sizes. The number of players evaluated is based on the prior 3 days of average scores
- All evaluators are asked to assess: 1) Relative rank of the players being evaluated and 2) Their thoughts on level designation in the event a B1 / B2 recommendation needs to be made
- Final player determination is made prioritized by: 1) Team Genius scoring, 2) Day 4 evaluation, 3) Evaluator input about level designation, and 3) Feedback from New Prague coaching staff
- NOTE: If a Board or HDC member's player is being discussed they are asked to leave the coaches room while a determination is being made.

What about Coaches, will my kid get placed on a team based on the need for an awesome Coach like me?

- No.
- There are times when HDC or Board members will call on parents who didn't sign up to coach if there is a gap
- Coaching determination is made after player determination and based on member/parent feedback and the coach's survey.
- NOTE: If a Board or HDC member is being considered as a coach they are asked to leave the coaches room while a determination is being made

TRYOUTS/PLACEMENTS FOR ALL LEVELS

Injured Players

PARENTS OF ANY PLAYER WHO WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ATTEND A TRYOUT OR PLACEMENT SESSION DUE TO ILLNESS OR INJURY MUST REPORT THE ABSENCE TO THE HDC COORDINATOR AND VICE PRESIDENT PRIOR TO THEIR CHILD'S SCHEDULED TRYOUT/PLACEMENT SESSION. The player will be given an additional opportunity to try out at the extended evaluations if needed. The player will be scored using a similar system. However, only coaches will be used to evaluate the player.

If a player participates in tryouts while sick or injured, it will be considered their official tryout. Sick or injured players cannot use the tryout for "extra ice time." If you are on the ice during tryouts, that counts as your tryout. If a player is too sick or injured to participate, they must wait until they are cleared to participate, at which point an extended evaluation will be conducted.

After the completion of the extended evaluation, players who were unable to compete during tryouts or unable to attend the extended evaluations due to illness or injury will be placed on the lowest level team for that age group. These players will be given an opportunity to move up to their appropriate level prior to December 31st.

Grievances

The Grievance Process is described in Section VIII (F).

Coaching Selections

Coach assignments for each team will be recommended by the HDC to the Board of Directors. Coaching recommendations will be made based on previous coaching experiences, end of the year parent and coaching surveys, as well as the applicant's team preference.