***Selection Process for Elite; AA, A Teams and Development (Travel)***

This Directive outlines the Elite Stream; AA & A Rep and Development Teams (Travel Teams) selection process for the Fort McMurray Minor Hockey Association. The U11 Development A & U11 Development B (Temporary names for U11 Teams for Try Outs in 2021-22), U13 AA & A, U15 AA & A, & U18 AA & A teams will follow this process. In regards to the U11 Development Team, players who are not successful in making the U11 Development A Team may be invited to play on the U11 Development B Team.

**Coordination of Development and Elite/Rep Team Try-outs**

The VP of Elite, hereafter “VP Elite” coordinates and oversees the evaluation and selection of players for the AA and A teams. Concerns or complaints over the process shall be directed to the VP of Elite’s attention. The exception will be in circumstances where the VP Elite has children involved in the selection process.  In the applicable division(s), another FMMHA member with experience in rep team selection will be appointed by the President to avoid any real or perceived conflicts of interest by the membership.

**Appeals**

Members not satisfied with a decision of VP Elite on a complaint submitted to their attention on the selection process may submit an appeal to the President of the Association in accordance with the by-laws.

**Eligibility**

Try-outs for the AA and A teams are open to all **registered** members of the Fort McMurray Minor Hockey Association as authorized in the Hockey Alberta Rules and Regulations. Any player who owes fees from the previous season will not be eligible for Try-Outs until arrangements have been made to pay the owing fees.

**Cost**

A non-refundable try-out fee of $200.00 shall be payable at the start of the try-out regardless of the number of sessions attended. **Payment shall be collected online or at the office at the time of Try-Out registration.** The try-out fees will be kept by the FMMHA to pay for the ice rental costs and Admin fees of the try-outs. Elite fees are payable to the FMMHA Office once a player has been selected to an Elite Team. Elite fees payable to FMMHA are subject to change annually.

An additional non-refundable Player Commitment Fee will be paid by all players who play on an elite team. This fee is set by the team during the budgeting process.

**Schedule**

The try-outs will coincide as closely as possible with the beginning of the school year and will be conducted at Frank Lacroix Arena (unless ice is not available). The try-out schedule will be posted on the FMMHA Web Site at least 2 weeks prior to the first try-out session.

All eligible and interested players will be provided a minimum of four ice times for evaluation. The icetime may be split between AA and A tryouts.

**Late arrival / Inability to participate in Try-out Process**

Players **MUST** attend at least one open evaluation session to be eligible to move on in the selection process. There will be a minimum of 2 open evaluation sessions offered depending on player numbers. In the case of extenuating circumstances beyond a player’s control, consideration **MAY** be considered.  These extenuating circumstances are required to be reviewed by the VP Elite (or Elite Director or delegate, in the absence of the VP Elite) and then approved by the President.

Any player who is going to Fort Saskatchewan to try out for a AAA (U15, U16, U18) team **must** be registered & have paid the $200.00 try-out fee with FMMHA, **prior** to the start of try-outs in Fort McMurray. Coaches will ensure regular player positions are left vacant up to the final selection date of the AAA teams to allow for the return of players to the Fort McMurray AA teams. These returning players will be given the opportunity to try out for a roster spot with the AA team. If the player is unsuccessful in obtaining an AA roster spot they will be given an opportunity for a roster post on the A team. A player is not guaranteed a spot on the AA or A team because they attended AAA Try-Outs. If a player is selected to a U15, U16, or U18 AAA team they will receive a refund of their $200.00 try-out fee.

**Process**

It is the responsibility of the Head Coach to select Evaluators for the “Open Skates”.The Head Coach will send the VP Elite a list of potential Evaluators to be approved prior to scheduling the Evaluators. The VP Elite will assign Evaluators for the Blue vs Gold games.

Evaluations will follow the following process.

**Goalies:** All goalies will be required to attend a Technical Try Out session. This session will be used to evaluate all technical goalie skills. Depending on the number of goalies registered for Try-Outs this session may be adjusted to accommodate. Goalies who are selected to move on in the Try Out process after the open skates will continue to be evaluated.

·      **Open Skates:** First ice session is open to all eligible players who have paid their registration, have no outstanding fees and have paid their try out fee. Evaluations will focus on basic individual skills such as skating, stick handling, shooting and passing. The Head Coach, Elite Director, other Elite Coaches, and Approved Evaluators will carry out these evaluations.  The ice sessions will be split into two groups to be communicated 48 hours before the ice time.

·      **First Cuts**: A list of players moving onto the next ice time will be listed after the 1st & 2nd Open Skates ice times. These “1st Cuts” selections are to be forwarded to the VP Elite, or appointed delegate for review and agreement and will be posted the night before, or the morning of the next ice time. Players not chosen inside the “1st Cuts” will be invited to attend the A Team Tryouts and/or their respective WBHL Divisional Evaluations. During this ice time, players may move right to Blue vs Gold Games or have an evaluative skate. NOTE: Practice tempo and complexity increase. Additional factors are added to the evaluations such as work ethic, ability to work on a team, discipline and responding to direction. Each time cuts are made, the players moving on will be posted on the FMMHA website in alphabetical order by lastname. Players who are deemed “not ready” for AA maybe cut after the 1st Open Skate due to safety issues when it comes to U15 & U18. U15 & U18 Try Outs do have Body Checking and if coaches feel the player is not ready for Body Checking they may be cut after the 1st Open Skate.

·       **Blue vs Gold Games**: Players invited to play in these games will be posted on the website the night before the first game. Teams will be finalized to the maximum permitted roster after two to three scheduled “Blue vs Gold” games.

An evaluation committee consisting of at least three (3) independent individuals who have limited or no knowledge of the team being evaluated, approved & appointed by the VP Elite or a delegate will evaluate players during the Blue vs Gold Games. Depending on the number of players trying out for a team there may be no Blue vs Gold Games or there may be a reduction in Blue vs Gold Games or Intersquad Games.

Evaluations will include basic skills plus game playing abilities. For the U15 and U18 Divisions, the games will be played with body contact.

The following basic requirements will apply during the Blue Vs Gold games:

·      There will be no coaching on the bench.

·      Lines and positions will be juggled to ensure players continually play with and against different players.  This does not apply to juggling forwards and defense. U11 players will be required to rotate from forward to defense and defense to forward.

·      Following the first Blue vs Gold game, the evaluation committee will meet and ***may agree*** on up to the 4 forwards, 2 defense and 1 goalie being rostered to the team & also will be ranked. Note: The Evaluation Committee will determine if they are doing this based upon the group and skill set of the players in any given season. If they choose to roster & rank these players, who may or may not be returning rep players from the previous season, will play but will not be evaluated in the second or third game and the evaluators will focus on the remaining players. The number of players selected, is at the discretion and agreement of the Head Coach and the evaluation committee.

**Team Selection**

Following the conclusion of the Blue vs Gold Games, the VP of Elite or an appointed delegate (Elite Director) will compile the results of the evaluations. All players will be given a numbered score.

The VP Elite or appointed delegate ie. Elite Director will chair a meeting of the evaluation committee at the conclusion of all Blue/Gold games to discuss and resolve any discrepancies in the ranking and to take into consideration intangible factors. A final ranking will be produced of all players and goaltenders. The final ranking will be approved by the VP Elite or appointed delegate prior to posting on the Fort McMurray Minor Hockey Association website.  Any postings on the website will be done in alphabetical order so as not to indicate ranking.

Initially, 19 players - 17 skaters and 2 goalies, or upon the VP Elite/Elite Director’s (or appointed designate) approval - 16 skaters and 3 goalies may be selected to the team.

For U13 through U18 the team size will be reduced to a minimum of 15 skaters and 2 goalies after the first weekend of exhibition/pre-season games, following approval of the Head Coach’s recommendations by the VP Elite or appointed delegate.

For U11, if unable to arrange exhibition games in the required timeframe, the team size may be reduced to a minimum of 15 skaters and 2 goalies at any time after one week from initial selection upon approval of the Head Coach’s recommendation by the VP Elite or appointed delegate.

\*U11 Development B Team will not be part of the official try-out process. Players invited to this roster will be U11 players that were unsuccessful in making the U11 Development A Team.

**NOTE:** Players may be added to the maximum permitted roster or deleted from the roster at any time up to the Hockey Alberta Deadline - January 10, 2022.  The VP Elite or President must approve any roster changes from the team selection timelines above after September 20, 2021 until January 10, 2022. Players may be removed from the roster any time up to and including January 10, 2022 for any reason once approved by VP Elite and/or President.

While a minimum of 15 skaters and 2 goalies will be selected to a team, additional players may also be kept at the Head Coach’s discretion up to the maximum roster permitted by Hockey Alberta. U15 & U18 teams are encouraged to select 17 skaters and 2 goalies.

Should a Head Coach wish to select less than this minimum number of players, approval of the VP Elite is required.  Considering a development goal of the Association is to give all FMMHA participants maximum development opportunities, the rationale of the benefits of a smaller team must be submitted in writing by the Head Coach to the VP Elite.

**Confidentiality**

The result of the evaluations will be confidential at all times. All lists of invitees or selected players shall be published in alphabetic order. All participants to the selection committee meeting shall abide with the confidentiality of the proceedings. Evaluation results will only be provided as part of a possible appeals process, which is outlined in this Directive. Only the evaluation results for the requesting member’s child will be provided.

**Conflict of Interest**

Where a conflict of interest occurs the VP Elite will investigate with the help of the President or another Executive Board Member. If the conflict of interest involves an Executive Board Member they will be recused.

**Discipline**

A player may be suspended from the try-outs for the following reasons:

·       Behavior in the arena (on or off the ice) that is disrespectful to the Association, team, teammates or coaches.

·      Attempt to injure or injuring another player in a practice or game due to obvious disrespect of rules and regulations or directives provided by coaching staff.

·       Any use or possession of banned substances including alcohol.

·       Bullying incidents at or off-ice related to try-outs or Minor Hockey.

A parent may be suspended from attending try-out sessions for behavior not in accordance with the parent code of conduct including:

·       Abuse of on ice team officials, evaluators or other members of the Association.

·       Failure to abide by and accept the try-out processes and procedures.

·     Severe or repeated violation of the Parent’s Code of Conduct may lead to the exclusion of a player from the team.

**Body Checking**

Body checking will not be permitted:

·       For the U13 Division: at all times

·       For the U11 Division: at all times

**Evaluation Criteria**

The following criteria will be part of the evaluation and selection process:

·       **Skating**

o Quickness, Acceleration, Agility, Balance, Mobility

o Front, Back, Pivots, Turns, Strides

·       **Hockey Skills**

o Puck control, Passing, Receiving, Puck Protection, Puck movement…

o Shooting: Accuracy, variety, quick release, goes to net, accuracy

o Checking: Angling, stick check, Body Check & Pins, Physical Presence

o Hockey sense: Positioning, playmaking, understanding of game, read and react

·       **Work Ethic & Fitness**

o Effort, desire to win, competitive, concentration, motivation, intensity

·       **Coachability**

o Attitude, Motivation, Effort, Team Cohesion, Team first attitude

o Mental toughness, Pressure situations, Leadership

o Cooperation, Learning skills, Character

·       **Intangibles**

The following intangible factors shall be considered in the final selection of the team in comparing **players that are considered to have the same skills level**. In such circumstances, preference will be given to:

o   Second year players in the Division (and 3rd year for Midget);

o   Players that **do not** have a recorded history of recurring and frequent suspensions and other discipline incidents. A “top 19” player having a recorded history of recurring and frequent suspensions, Player Code of Conduct infractions and other discipline incidents may be added to the affiliated list and be given an opportunity to clearly demonstrate positive changes in their behavior. However, the player may be excluded from the team selection altogether if it becomes obvious during the try-outs that no changes in behavior have occurred.

·       **Underage Players**

o  Players are permitted to try-out for a AA Team and Division above their age group based on prior approval from the VP Elite or appointed delegate (Elite Director) However, an underage player may only be selected for a AA team if they are considered an “impact player” and it is unanimously agreed upon by the Evaluation Committee. An underage goaltender would only be considered if they are the top goaltender of the Division by a wide margin.

o   Hockey Alberta has disallowed Novice aged players to play up a division

o  If players are not successful in making the AA squad, they must return to their division. Underage players will not be considered for an A team.

o  The selection of an underage player selection must be approved by the President of the Association and VP Elite upon joint recommendation by the Head Coach, the evaluation committee, Elite Director or appointed delegate.

Ian Kenny

Vice President Elite

Fort McMurray Minor Hockey Association