

Purpose of Supplement

The purpose of this supplement to the Evaluation Process Manual (the “Manual”) is to document the changes being made to the BRBHA Evaluation Process to align the 2020 evaluations with Hockey Calgary’s (“HC”) Return to Hockey guide (the “Guide”). The link below can be used to access the most recent Guide which was released on August 27, 2020.

https://www.hockeycalgary.ca/assets/file/Operations/covid/Return_to_Play_-_Community_Aug_27_UPDATE.pdf

The COVID-19 Pandemic and HC response in this Guide significantly impacts the evaluation process. This supplement is intended to highlight the many changes that are necessary to comply with the Guide.

As Alberta’s response to the Pandemic evolves, the guidance we receive from HC on their Return to Hockey plan will as well. This could require that we make changes to the evaluation process on very short notice. **The process described in this document is subject to change without notice.**

Overview

In order to understand the changes to the evaluation process, it is necessary to understand the phases of play as described in the Guide. The four phases are Prep, Sorting/Evaluation, Development and Regular Season/Competition Phase. For the purposes of this document, the Prep and Regular Season/Competition phases are not relevant so will not be discussed further.

The Sorting/Evaluation phase can be further broken down into three stages. These are pre-seeding, skills-based evaluations and cohort-based evaluations.

Pre-seeding is designed to group players of like skill together to start the evaluation process. This is the process of placing players in initial groups based on the previous year age group category and teams they played in last year. Pre-seeding is inherently more complicated when the evaluation group sizes are reduced as required for the skill-based stage. In addition to using the previous year information, we will work with the previous year coaches to collect additional data on the participants to ensure that the pre-seeding into smaller starting groups is fair.

Skill-based evaluations will involve the participants completing skill-based drill sessions where they are able to physically distance. This stage will be evaluated and players will move within the groups in the age group based on the results of each session in a manner similar to what is described in the Manual. The drills that will form part of the drill sessions will be posted prior to evaluations in Appendix A.

Once the skill-based evaluations are complete, players will be sorted into cohorts of 30 – 48 participants. The size of each cohort will be dependent on a number of factors, the most significant being the total number of participants in each age group. Once assigned to a cohort, the participants will not be able to be moved to another cohort as the participants will no longer be physically distant at this stage. During the cohort-based evaluation stage, the participants will play in scrimmages to allow for a ranking within the cohort to be assigned to the participant for the purpose of making balanced teams for the Development Phase.

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The final rankings determined at the end of the cohort stage will be one data source for making tiered teams when we move to the Regular Season/Competition phase. Other sources of data include further evaluation of mini-games, discussions with cohort coaches and a potential coach pick process which has yet to be determined. **Final rankings within a cohort will not be released to any members outside of the Evaluation Committee.**

Impact to Evaluations – Skater

The U9 to U18 skaters will each complete three (3) thirty minute skill sessions of between 10 – 15 participants. Although the ice time is shorter than the traditional one hour ice-times, the limited number of participants should allow for many repetitions of the two drills that will be covered and allow for a thorough evaluation of the skills being evaluated.

All evaluation sessions will be overseen on-ice by a third-party paid consultant while being evaluated by Bow River evaluators who have attended the evaluator training session. Preference will be given to evaluators who have applied to coach as there is a minimum fifteen hour volunteer requirement for being considered as a coach and it is also our experience that our coaches are generally more effective evaluators.

Once the skills-based evaluations are complete and the skaters are sorted into cohorts, they will play two scrimmages (4 on 4 for U9) in an evaluation setting (see 2020 Manual for details). Depending on the size of the cohort, this may be one game with the whole cohort participating or two games where the cohort is split in two. The purpose of these games is to further rank the players so that balanced mini-teams may be formed within the cohort.

These mini-teams will be subject to adjustment throughout the Development Phase to ensure balance within the cohort. When moving to the Regular Season/Competition Phase, we may complete additional exhibition games/coach pick games when tiering the players. We may receive further guidance from HC before a final decision on this part of the process is made.

The U7 assessments will be completed in a similar manner as in prior years with the only noticeable difference being smaller group sizes to allow for as much physical distancing as possible.

Evaluation Scoring:

For the skills sessions, evaluators will be asked to score players on a 1 to 7 point scale on the key skills being evaluated which will be highlighted on the evaluation sheet for each drill.

Player scores will be an average of the scores for each skill evaluated. The players will then be ranked according to their average score to determine group placement for the next session. The scores will also be cumulative from one skill session to the next in the manner described below.

For the cohort games, evaluators will be asked to score players on skating (forwards / backwards), puck skills, compete and game sense.

Mini-team placement is based on a combination of the cumulative average scores of Scrimmage Sessions (or 4 on 4 sessions in the case of U9) and the cumulative average score for skill sessions.

At a high level, the following overview summarizes the scoring process for the skills and scrimmage sessions:

1. Session scores are intended to place a player in a group and rank the player within a group.
2. Players that move up a group level will be scored at the same score as the lowest player remaining in the next higher group. For example a player that scores a 7 in a lower group and is moving to a higher group will not leapfrog players to the top rank in the higher group.
3. Players that move down a group level will be scored at the same score as the highest player remaining in the lower group. For example a player that scores a 1 in a higher group and is moving to a lower group will not leapfrog players to the bottom rank in the lower group.
4. Groups will be managed to allow for movement up from a lower group, but does not preclude player movement to a lower group.

Impact to Evaluations - Goalie

The evaluation of all goalies will continue to be completed by a third-party contractor who for the 2020/21 season is Evolution Goaltending Consultants (“Evolution”). Given the physical distancing requirement at the skills-based evaluation phase, we are not able to complete the small area games sessions we have in prior periods. As such, we have worked with Evolution to develop a program that includes two skill sessions prior to forming cohorts and three cohort games sessions.

The two skills sessions have been designed so that the second skill session will increase in difficulty from the first. This will allow for greater separation of the goalies in the scores provided to us by Evolution. An average of the two skill session scores will be used for the purposes of placing the goalies into a cohort where the evaluations will continue.

Goalies will be asked to participate in the Skater skill sessions as goalies (if necessary based on the drills being completed). These sessions will not form part of the evaluation of the goalies.

Once in cohorts, the goalies will receive a minimum of three evaluations in a scrimmage setting. The scores from the skill sessions and at the end of the second game will be used to place goalies with a mini-team inside their cohort. As with the skaters, these teams can be adjusted throughout the Development Phase.

Given that there will only be two cohort evaluation scrimmages, Evolution will continue to evaluate the goalies in their “mini-team” games so that each goalie is evaluated for a minimum of three games. These evaluations after the cohort evaluation games are complete can occur at any time within the Development Phase but all goalies in a cohort will be evaluated in approximately the same time period (i.e., second week of October). The weighting of the two skill and four scrimmages will be 40% and 60% respectively.

The Hybrid Goalie policy in U11 will continue to apply as described in the BRBHA Hybrid Goalie Policy. Each participant will complete the two goalie skill sessions and the three skater skill session. After all skill sessions are completed, each participant will be informed if they still qualify to continue evaluating as a hybrid goalie. If they qualify at this point, they can continue to evaluate as a hybrid goalie in the cohort games where they will participate as a skater for one game and a goalie for one game. As we are not tiering into traditional divisions in the Development Phase, the Evaluation Committee will consider the participants ranking as a skater and goalie and whether they would fall into the same cohort in determining if the participant still is eligible to continue as a hybrid goalie in the Development Phase.

Sickness, Injury and Partial Attendance

In the current COVID-19 environment, it is imperative that participants not evaluate if they are exhibiting any of the symptoms in the Alberta Health Daily Checklist. A positive test for COVID-19 could result in the shut-down of a cohort or even the shut-down of the entire BRBHA program. As such, we have a zero-tolerance policy for anyone participating when sick and, if found to be doing so, you may be subject to further disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension for the remainder of the 2020-2021 hockey season.

In addition, the volunteers administrating the evaluations will have the authority to remove any participant from evaluations where it is clear they are exhibiting any symptoms. Any such player who has been removed will not be allowed back on the ice for a minimum 14 day period.

Participants who do not participate due to sickness and injury will not be adversely impacted when placed in a cohort. Reproduced below are the policies from the Manual with respect to not being able to participate and how the Evaluation Committee places the effected participant.

Skaters

Sickness, Injury and Partial Attendance

- *A sub-committee of the Evaluation Committee will consider the case on its own merit and determine a reasonable and fair course of action, for the individual player and the players in the division. The sub-committee is made of the following members:*
 - *Evaluation Division Coordinator*
 - *Evaluation Coordinator*
 - *Bow River Bruins Executive member*
- *Evaluation Sub-Committee will place the player on a team utilizing the following criteria:*

Inadequate Participation

- *In the event that the injured/sick/absent player receives 2 or less sets of scores (i.e. player gets injured part way through their 2nd evaluation session) the Evaluation Sub-Committee will review the final placement of the teammates that the injured player played with the previous Bow River season. The injured player will be placed on a team within the range of the players that he/she played with in the previous season. For example, if 8 teammates from the previous season remain in the same age group as the injured player and the final placement (before coach pick games) of these 8 players is; 3 on Team 3, 2 on Team 4 and 3 on Team 5, then the injured/sick/absent player will be placed on one of the 3 teams where last year's teammates have ended up. Where possible, the coach/assistant coaches from the previous year will be asked to provide a confidential approximate ranking of where the injured/sick player fit within the team's depth chart from last year. This ranking is for consultation purposes only and will not solely dictate final placement.*

Adequate Participation

- *In the event that the injured/sick/absent player receives 3 or more sets of scores (i.e. player gets injured part way through their 4th evaluation session) then the player will receive an average of their 3 or more scores. This average will remain until the*

player participates again in an evaluation session or evaluations conclude. Please note, as evaluations continue players who are participating may receive higher and lower scores than the injured player's average. This will cause the injured player's ranking to move up or down dependant on the scores received by the other players and the potential for player movement.

- *In the case for injured/sick/absent goaltenders, the above does not apply. Under this scenario, the Evaluation Sub-Committee will review any scores/ranking received through the evaluation process and obtain input from the previous season's coach/goaltender coach/assistant coaches to assist in team placement.*
- *In the case when an injured/sick/absent player does not have any teammates from the previous year in his/her age category or is new to the association, the Evaluation Sub-Committee will select a team and have the player evaluated in a minimum of two practices. The evaluations will be conducted by the Evaluation Sub-Committee. During this process the evaluators will review the skills of the player to ensure that he/she is being placed with players of similar skill level. Should his/her skills not match up to those players on the team selected the player will be moved to another team and the process will be repeated. Once placed on a team the decision of the evaluators is final and is not subject to appeal.*
- *Team placement of players unable to attend evaluations:*
 - *Players who are unable to attend the evaluation ice sessions due to other commitments such as out of country travel must notify the Evaluation Sub-Committee in writing. This notification must occur immediately after being contacted with the evaluation ice times for the player. Once notified, the Evaluation Sub-Committee will place the player on a team utilizing the criteria listed above.*
- *Special ruling by the Board of Directors:*
 - *From time to time special circumstances may arise, and the BRBHA Board of Directors reserves the right to review any injured placements, and to make adjustments to the placements on a case by case basis, to ensure fairness for all involved. In these special cases no other player will be required to move up or down to accommodate the movement in any special circumstance.*

Note: Players' parents or guardians must relay information about an injury or illness to a division coordinator BEFORE the next evaluation session in order for the exception to be considered in the evaluation process of the player. Bow River does not support players participating in evaluations when they are sick. In general, if the BRBHA becomes aware of sickness/illness of a player trying to participate in an ice session, it is the policy of Bow River not to allow this player on the ice. Should such information not be disclosed prior to the evaluation session, the exception will not be considered in the evaluation of the player.

Please note that BRBHA's philosophy is that no player shall gain an advantage nor suffer a disadvantage over other players by missing one or more evaluation sessions.

Goalies

Each goaltender is required to attend the skill session, SAG (U11 and U13) and at least one evaluated scrimmage to have a valid evaluation. The goaltender's ranking is at the discretion of the third-party evaluator using the evaluated session and the performance of like evaluated goaltenders, at the time of injury or illness, as the basis.

In the event less than the required sessions are attended. The final ranking is at the discretion of the third-party evaluator. The goaltender may be required to attend a skill session evaluation

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with another BRBHA age group, or at the third-party evaluator's place of business for the purpose of evaluating and placing the goaltender.

Medical evidence of injury or illness is required. In the event that this evidence cannot be provided, the final placement is at the discretion of the Goaltender Committee and the Evaluation Committee upon consultation with the third-party evaluator.

Appendix A
Skills Session Drills