Hockey Advisory Committee: Structure and Functions

The following is an overview of matters pertaining to team formation, activities, practices, games, player/ coach development and coaching within SRYHA.

A. Purpose Statement

- The Sauk Rapids Youth Hockey Association (SRYHA) Hockey Advisory Committee (HAC) directly supports the mission of SRYHA "to promote a fun, fair, and safe environment that maximizes participation and improves players' skills and knowledge while developing sportsmanship, teamwork, and self-confidence." Through its membership of hockey expertise, the HAC serves to maximize the enjoyment and optimize the development of all SRYHA players. As well as supporting the association coaches, whether parent or non-parent, to give them education and resources to be as successful as possible. The HAC operates within the SRYHA Guiding Principles in execution of its core functions. Specifically, the HAC proactively determines and defines the core values that form the basis of decisions made for development of players within SRYHA and within each level of play, as well as provides timely communication and clear articulation of issues and decisions. The HAC demonstrates its commitment to the Association through rigorous analysis and application of best practices from USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, and other associations.

B. Functions

- The HAC is responsible for "all things hockey" and as such manages all questions and concerns pertaining to hockey functions presented by parents and/or players to the SRYHA Board of Directors. The HAC makes decisions, communicates with parents, and informs and advises the SRYHA Board in the following primary subject areas:
    - Player development model and curriculum including goalie development and competition, practice models, game/practice numbers, and practice format
    - Coaching coordination, selection, support and education/development
    - Numbers of teams and team size determinations at each age-group Division and matters pertaining to player placement and movement across and within the Divisions
    - Tryout processes and procedures

- Player development and coaching support will be on-going and serve as the primary focus of HAC. Team determination and tryout processes are time-limited functions each year and will include respective coordinators.
- The HAC makes every effort to maintain and promote consistency and transparency with decisions and issues and effectively articulate the basis of decisions.
- The HAC partners closely with the SRYHA Board of Directors regarding matters involving financial analysis and determinations. All matters included in items on page 12 of the SRYHA handbook (above) are expected to have financial implications, and all financial decisions are made final by the SRYHA Board of Directors. The HAC is committed to close collaboration with the SRYHA Board and is responsible for assisting with consideration and analysis of multiple options and scenarios of all hockey related finances.

- Conflict and grievance resolution requirements outlined in the SRYHA Handbook are followed.

C. Membership

- The HAC is composed of knowledgeable current and past coaches who represent the teams and levels of the entire program. The Hockey Director is in charge of choosing the representatives for each level of play. Each level position does not have to be filled if that level is already represented by someone holding another assigned position on the HAC. The representative does not have to be an executive board member. Membership group is as follows:
    - Hockey Director (Chair)
    - SRYHA Board President
    - D5 Representative
    - Coaches Administrator
    - Goalie Coordinator
    - Bantam Level Representative
    - PeeWee Level Representative
    - Squirt Level Representative
    - Mite Level Representative (2 max)
    - Skills Coordinator
    - SR-R High School Coach
    - At-Large Members – Based solely on need and at the discretion of the HD
    - (Two SRYHA Riverblades HOC members may attend and observe however they will not be committee members of the SRYHA HAC)

- Each Level Representative on the HAC will be their respective level's coaching liaison. They will serve as the communication arm for the HAC for that specific level. Of course, as needed, items can be escalated to the HD. These reps will also be monitoring their respective level's practice planning and execution on ice as well, working with the HD as needed to continue refinement.

- The Hockey Director (HD) is appointed by the SRYHA Board but is not a voting member of the SRYHA Board. The Hockey Director demonstrates coaching experience at multiple levels. The HD will be facilitating the HAC meetings, as the chair, and will solicit feedback from members as needed. If the HD resigns or is removed by the SRYHA Board by vote, the SRYHA Board appoints a new Director. The other HAC positions are selected by the Hockey Director. HAC members, selected by the Hockey Director, require SRYHA Board approval annually in June, after the SRYHA Board elections. Replacement of HAC members at other times (due to resignation or removal) is completed by nomination of the Hockey Director for approval at the next monthly SRYHA Board meeting. At-large members are chosen by the HD based on area of expertise and need for broad HAC representation across the entire program. Committee membership may be assigned or requested to lead subcommittees or workgroups to execute the HAC functions. For example, workgroups such as Fall Development skating/skills/body checking clinics, Practice/Game ratios,

Practice models, Goalie Development, Tryouts, etc. Decisions made at HAC meetings are reported through monthly SRYHA Board meetings as a standing agenda item. The SRYHA Board of Directors votes on agenda items.

Coaches Administrator Role:

- Since the hiring of the HD as of 8/1/25, the ACE coordinator role will be modified into the Coaches Administrator position and duties will be as follows:
    - Responsible for:
        - Helping build and publish coaches registration
        - Tracking progress of registration and getting coaches to 100% completion of all requirements by 12/31
        - Develop a process and facilitate reimbursement of fees
        - Educate new coaches on what the coaching requirements are and what is expected of them
        - Assist the HD in coaches education communication

D. Meetings

- HAC meetings are scheduled monthly during the off season (planning phase) and special meetings may be called more frequently as needed, and quarterly during the hockey season. The HAC meets with the SRYHA Board as requested.

Coaches

- Only individuals with a current USA Hockey Coaching Certificate appropriate for the team level, a completed background check, safesport, age appropriate modules and any other requirements listed by the ACE coordinator are allowed to coach.
- Coaches may request reimbursement for the costs to register for the level at which they coach.
- Coaches are expected to attend a preseason coaches' meeting and periodic coaches' meetings during the season. These are not optional. Information from the HAC is shared at these meetings and via email.
- Coaches are provided a list of expectations prior to coaching and prior to the season and are held responsible and accountable for all expectations. Only coaches who buy into the SRYHA Player Development expectations are considered for coaching positions.
- In-House Coach candidates will be allowed to coach after working with the Hockey Director and the Coaches Coordinator on the application process.

Coaching Administrative Policies

Each coach is required to complete USA Hockey Registration, Coaching Education Requirements, SafeSport Training and all required forms as set forth by USA Hockey, MN Hockey, District 5 and SRYHA.

All coaches must wear HECC approved helmets in accordance with MN Hockey's helmet rule. An application will be required of ALL coaches. In addition, any special instructions from the Coach Admin Coordinator should be followed to ensure the proper process if followed.

The coaches selection committee will be the HAC, chaired by the Hockey Director. The committee will ensure quality coach selection, fairness, and uniformity in establishing an interview and selection process. The committee will interview selected applicants for head coaching positions, as needed. The purpose of this interview will be to:

- Make SRYHA aware of the applicant's qualifications as a coach.
- Make the applicant aware of SRYHA's policies regarding player treatment and ice time.
- Make the applicant aware of which people have agreed to help as assistant coaches.
- Help the committee choose the individuals it believes will do the best job in all aspects of coaching the team.

Whenever possible, a determination for the head coach will be made prior to the beginning of Dynamics. If a final candidate is a parent coach of a player at that level, the determination will not be made until the tryouts are completed. The coaches running dynamics session may not necessarily be coaches selected for the teams.

There will be a maximum of 4 coaches per team at the travel levels, not including student coaches. If a head coach feels it is necessary to have more coaches, they should discuss this with the Hockey Director and HAC.

Coaches cannot invite other individuals or players from other teams on the ice during their ice times. If a coach feels some special instruction or help is needed with a practice or demonstration, the coach should contact the SRYHA Hockey Director. Players from the high school teams can be used for a few occasions with coordination from the High School Coaches, without having to be registered with USA Hockey. Any occurrence more than a few times, will require the players to be registered with USA Hockey and rostered with the team as a student coach. The HD needs to be contacted before such assistance can occur.

Player Development Model and Curriculum

Player categories recognized by SRYHA are based on affiliations with Minnesota Hockey and USA Hockey and are guided as outlined in the annual Minnesota Hockey Handbook. All player development aligns with the guidance from these entities and follows the SRYHA Player Development Program expectations.

- SRYHA is committed to our primary focus of comprehensive player development, emphasizing not only technical and tactical skills but also the importance of fostering a positive mentality and strong character. We believe that a player's attitude both on and off the ice is crucial in shaping their journey and success not only in hockey but in life. Our coaching philosophy will incorporate skill development alongside lessons in teamwork, resilience, and sportsmanship. Encouraging our young athletes to embrace challenges, learn from setbacks, and support their peers throughout. By focusing on these well

rounded priorities, we aim to develop well-rounded individuals who not only excel in hockey but also emerge as leaders now and in the future.

Guiding Principles – Adapted from USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey

- **Intro to Hockey**
  - New players, Ages 4-9.
  - This will run from October to mid-Dec., with the option of continuing in their appropriate age level for the remainder of the season (through the beginning of March)
  - Developing basic skating skills, getting comfortable on the ice.
  - Players participating in the Jr. Storm program for the first time will pay zero monthly dues, a reduced SRYHA registration fee of $30, but are required to participate in fundraisers as determined and must complete ½ of the volunteer time requirements, completing the remaining ½ once they commit for the full season. Players under age 4 must have approval by the SRYHA Executive Board to participate in the program.
- **U8 (Mites):**
  - FUNdamentals – Hockey For Life
  - Engagement – not too easy, not too hard – small games do the teaching
  - Active Practices – High Go to Rest Ratios – learn more doing than listening and watching
  - Station-Based Practices: 85% individual skill improvement, 15% hockey sense, 0% systems (team play training)
- **U10 (Squirts):**
  - Golden Age of Skill Development; Learning to Train
  - Fun – Players willing to invest the time necessary to develop skills
  - Engagement – targeting the optimal level for each player
  - Active Practices – Aiming for 40-45 minutes of activity per skater for a 60-minute practice
  - Skill Station-Based Practices: 75% individual skill improvement, 15% hockey sense, 10% systems (team play training)
  - Knowledge of Rules

- **U12 (Peewees):**
  - Learning to Train
  - Fun and Engagement
  - Active Practices
  - Body contact
  - Skill Station-Based Practices: 65% individual skill improvement, 25% hockey sense, 10% systems (team play training)

- **U15 (Bantams):**
  - Learning to Compete/Train to Compete
  - Active Practices

    - Body contact/ Body checking
    - Skill Station-Based Practices: 50% individual skill improvement, 35% hockey sense, 15% systems (team play training)

Mite Program

A. Goals/Mission

- The SRYHA Mite Program is first and foremost centered around a fun environment which is family-friendly and focused on maintaining high retention levels.

To this end, the following attributes comprise this philosophy:

- Sustainable, skill-based instruction curriculum based on USA Hockey ADM (American Development Model)
- Dedicated coaching group committed to teaching through repetition, accommodating all skill levels, and communicating with other coaches and parents
- The early emphasis on fostering and growing the internal competitive spirit in each skater that will set them on their hockey path.
- Regular and routine parent communication via email (including USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey resources)

B. Playing Levels

- Players will be grouped and tiered first by age. 8U and 6U.
- Inside each age group they will be separated by ability to match skill parity to create an ideal situation for development during practice, jamborees and games.

C. Mite Development Philosophy

- Our development philosophy for our Mite program centers around a holistic approach that prioritizes the growth of each player while introducing a team environment. Coaches will focus on each group during practices and games, ensuring that each player is challenged according to their individual skill set. As noted above, 85% of our program's mission at this age will be to further enhance the players skills and skating abilities. We strongly encourage players to seek additional ice time beyond scheduled practices and games, whether that is in the back yard rink or open hockey sessions. This extra effort is crucial, as it allows them to refine their skills and improve their skating, which is the most essential skill ability.
- Our intangible philosophy emphasizes the critical role of attitude, effort, and competition in any level of our programming. We believe that fostering a positive mindset is just as important as developing technical skills. Players are encouraged to approach each ice or team session with great enthusiasm and a willingness to learn, understanding that a positive attitude not only enhances their own experience but also influences that experience of their teammates.

Player Movement and Participation
SRYHA team sizes and levels for players above the Mite/U8 age classifications are defined annually and placed within the MN Hockey age group divisions. The HAC and SRYHA Board retain the right to adjust movement guidelines based on specific situations, but in general, adhere to the following guidelines.

A. Player Movement up one Division

- SRYHA has identified six plausible, most common, situations in which a player may request or be requested to move up one Division. Players are not allowed to move down a competitive Division. All USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey, and District 5 player movement rules shall supersede any guidance below. District 5 approval of player movement is required.
    1. **Team Size**: There may be instances where the number of Division registrants exceeds the maximum recommended number of players per team but does not meet the minimum number of players for an additional team. HAC also completes an assessment on the potential impact of the program at the lower Division. Team placement in this situation is as follows:
       Skaters- Players who fall in the top five (5) of their new level, are placed on the top team. Skaters who rank outside the top five (5) but in the top half of the second team, are placed on the second team. Skaters who rank below the top half of the second team, are placed on the lowest team.
       Goalies- Goalies are placed in order of ranking on the appropriate team.

    2. **Goaltending**: The possibility exists that Divisions do not have enough Goaltenders to field the appropriate number of teams and/or competition level. SRYHA allows Goaltender movement to address these situations. If, after exhausting all possibilities to field a Goaltender within the Division, the Division coaches may submit a written petition to the HAC for the upward movement of the Goaltender. All parties including coaches, parents, player, and HAC must agree on the move. HAC ensures adequate goaltending at each level. HAC makes every attempt to identify the need prior to tryouts so all eligible Goaltenders can be assessed accordingly.

    3. **Siblings**: There may be instances where siblings within the same Division are placed on different competition level teams. The HAC allows parents to submit a written petition to move their players within the Division. A player is only allowed to move to a lower competition level within a given Division (A player to B, B to C).

    4. **Grade Appropriate**: SRYHA enforces the policy of placing all participating skaters in the level of play associated with their age/birth date. Starting with the 2020-2021 season, Minnesota Hockey “Play-Up” rule states, Association Play-Up policies must accommodate players with younger birth dates but in the same grade as older players so they can "peer up" and participate with their classmates,

if they desire. Parents must submit a "peer move up" waiver prior to September 15 of the season they wish to be moved up. This policy affects skaters who are young relative to their grade in school, as follows.

Player Not Age Eligible But Entering
Squirts/ U10 Girls - 4th Grade
PeeWees/ U12 Girls - 6th Grade
Bantams/ U15 Girls - 8th Grade

SRYHA does not allow skaters to "play down" a level, in accordance with MN Hockey rules. An exception would be a Bantam eligible skater who has already completed two years at the Bantam/U15 level may play a third year at the Bantam level, as long as MN Hockey & USA Hockey age guidelines are followed. Also, to ensure a place on a Bantam/U15 team, the (third year eligible) Bantam/U15 player MUST register in SRYHA as a Bantam/U15 player and participate in SRYHA Bantam/U15 tryout process. Should the player make either the JV or Varsity high school team, all fees and dues are pro-rated, and the appropriate amount is refunded, with the exception of the MN/USA Hockey fees.

5. **Skill level**: For players who are developing ahead of their age group: SRYHA's first preference is to follow MN Hockey age group guidelines. Every effort is made to continue to challenge and develop these exceptional players within their age group Division. "Skill level move-up" is defined as a player choosing to play in a category designated for older children (e.g. PeeWee age player wants to play on a Bantam team). Players may move-up only one age category. Move-up occurs only at the recommendation of the HAC and the procedure will be set by the HAC to further evaluate the player to substantiate the need for a move up.
6. **6. Hybrid Move Ups**: These are internal move ups from U6 to U8. Items that must be met to qualify a player to be eligible for a move up are as follows:
    a. Have already spent 2 or more years at 6U.
    b. The DOB puts the player 7 years old before 12/31.
    c. Size and skill level of the player is a better competitive fit for 8U.
    d. Numbers for 8U allow additional players to join. The maximum is 50.

   This hybrid move up policy is meant to provide flexibility for a broader case by case policy to ensure we have an avenue to put players in the best possible position to succeed as young developing athletes and is at the full discretion of the Hockey Director and HAC.

Mite Program level to Squirt level - Player's parent/guardian submits a move up waiver prior to September 1st. In order to move from Mites to a Squirt/U10 team higher than the lowest Squirt team, the parent must make a written request to the Hockey Director and the HAC for approval. There will be a tryout process that will be facilitated by the HD and the HAC. If the player does not rank in the top five (5) players in Squirts, the player will return to the Mite division for the season.

Squirt to PeeWee. The player's parent/guardian submits a move up waiver prior to September 1st. Players requesting move-up must participate in tryout sessions at both the Squirt and PeeWee levels. The request may be approved after having two HAC members evaluate the player in a minimum number of sessions determined by the HAC to confirm skill level comparable with the top players at that level. A player must be ranked in the top ten (10) going into the final tryout session to continue PeeWee division tryouts and have a final PeeWee ranking in the top five (5) skaters. If the player does not rank in the top five (5) PeeWees, he/she will be placed on the appropriate team at the Squirt level based on their final ranking from the Squirt tryouts. A goalie must finish ranked #1 to move up based on skill.

PeeWee level to Bantam level. The player's parent/guardian submits a move up waiver prior to September 1. Players requesting move-up must participate in tryout sessions at both the PeeWee and Bantam levels. The request may be approved after having two HAC members evaluate the player in a minimum number of sessions determined by the HAC to confirm skill level comparable with the top players at that level. A player must be ranked in the top ten (10) going into the final tryout session to continue Bantam division tryouts and have a final Bantam ranking in the top five (5) skaters. If the player does not rank in the top five (5) Bantams, he/she will be placed on the appropriate team at the PeeWee level based on their final ranking from the PeeWee tryouts. A goalie must finish ranked #1 to move up based on skill.

Players should always register with USA Hockey for their age group Division.

All move-up requests are subject to final approval by the HAC, the SRYHA Board of Directors, and subject to MN Hockey rule that states all teams must be at least two-thirds (2/3) age appropriate players.

All players who are approved to move-up are required to pay any adjustments in registration and team fees at their new level of play.

It is the responsibility of the player's legal guardian(s) to submit a written request to the HAC and the Executive Board each consecutive move up year (1st year PeeWee, 1st year Bantam). Approval is granted in conjunction with District 5 approval.

B. Player Movement within Same Division

- Once selected to a SRYHA team, a player may be moved only for extreme reasons. The most common example is team sizes within a level are close to equal after tryouts but become discordant due to players leaving association play (for example, make the high school team). Both head coaches involved, the player, parent, and the HAC must all agree to the move. If any member of the group is a parent, he/she is not eligible to participate in the decision.

  If a parent/child has a preference to play on a B team versus an A team, the parent shall notify the Association of the decision before the tryout process. The player will go through the normal tryout. If he/she qualifies for the A team, he/she will be placed on the B team. If a player chooses not to try out, he/she will be placed on the least-advanced team at his/her respective level.

C. Sickness/Injury/Extenuating circumstances

- If a skater becomes sick, injured, or has extenuating circumstances that will not allow him/her to attend a tryout session before tryouts or before completing two tryout sessions to the extent that he/she cannot play, the parents of the player must notify the HAC of the issue prior to the missed sessions with as much notice as possible. The HAC may, at its discretion, defer a final decision by placing the skater on a team temporarily and reviewing the player's circumstances after further evaluation by tryout evaluators. All details going into the final decision are communicated to the impacted coaches and the player's parents.

D. Practice Policy

- Only rostered players are allowed on the ice unless a specific request is made to the HAC via a Mentor Program request form and approved by a simple majority. Goalies are allowed within their level and individuals invited by the coaches to "teach a specific skill" are allowed on the ice. For example, a high school or college hockey player may be invited to demonstrate a skill to younger players, or older players and goalies may be assigned as part of a "Mentor Program" to younger players to demonstrate a skill. The intent of the Mentor Program is to demonstrate for players one division below the mentor. The Association recommends these invited individuals have a current coaching certificate and/or completed SafeSport training, as required.
- **Practice Cancellation**
  A team practice cannot be canceled under any circumstances unless in direct conflict with a district game, a tournament game, extenuating circumstance, or because of weather.

E. Practice to Game Ratio Policy

- A focused practice to game ratio of 2:1 is encouraged for all players. Players should strive for a ratio of 3 hours of focused practice to every game played during the season.
- Opportunities for focused practice:
- Team on-ice practices
- Off-ice practice – shooting, stickhandling, agility
- Outdoor ice – small area games, skill development competitions

- Open Hockey / Open Skating

F. Game Counts/ Travel Guidelines

- Game counts are considered by the number of skaters on each team to provide equal "game experience" for each season for each level. Playoff games are NOT included in game count limitations.
    - Bantams/U15 – Up to 55 games
    - Peewees/U12 – Up to 45 games
    - Squirts/U10 – Up to maximum set by Minnesota Hockey (35 games) for full-ice games and/or half-ice games
    - Mite/U8 Program - No more than the maximum allowed by MN Hockey and in alignment with SRYHA policy

G. Team Sizes

- The team sizes are a guideline HAC strives to meet, understanding situations may arise requiring exceptions. The HAC makes decisions with the intent of what is right for the majority of the players involved. Guidelines are as follows:
    - Minimum 10 skaters and 1 goalie, per team
    - Maximum 18 skaters and 2 goalies, per team

Goalie Development Program

- SRYHA is committed to goalie development forming a community of goaltenders.
- Specialization as a goalie is not expected at the Squirt/U10 level, as SRYHA strives to allow as many players to experience the position as possible. At Peewee/U12 a player is expected to choose whether they are a skater or goalie.
- Goalie Development Coordinator provides oversight and guidance for all teams at each level to ensure proper development principles are followed and exercised. The coordinator reports to and works collaboratively with the HAC.
- Goalie focused practices are scheduled on Mondays, monthly during the season. These may be sessions led by the goalie coordinators and goalie coaches locally in the area.
- Each team is asked to have a designated goaltending coach. The goalie coaches are required to attend the goalie focused practices in an effort to execute a coordinated and consistent model of goalie instruction at each level.
- Goalie mentors and outside coaches may be utilized to help build skills and confidence.
- At each goalie development opportunity, goalies and coaches are provided simple groups of drills that can be applied as part of the regular team practices throughout the year.
- Parents are invited to attend any of the sessions and parent meetings can be arranged to allow for time for Q&A with other parents and coaches.

Travel Program

A. Goals/Mission

- The SRYHA travel levels first begin with the Squirt and U10 levels where the players are in the golden age of development and learning the rules and more strategy of the game. Next is the Peewee and U12 level where the players are really learning how to train, using more body contact and developing more hockey sense as their brains continue to develop. Lastly, SRYHA's oldest group is the Bantam and U15 group where they are putting all of this together, competing at a much higher intensity and developing more team strategy than ever before. We are still centered around a fun environment which is family-friendly and focused on maintaining high retention levels with equal playing time for most of these teams and development being the biggest mission.

B. Travel Team Development Philosophy

- Our travel team development philosophy closely follows that recommended by USA hockey. Our coaches will follow the recommended progression with skill development, hockey sense, and systems based on each level, noted above.
    - The SRYHA Squirt model has been designed as a hybrid model to give our players a longer runway of development internally, working on their skill acquisition and compete levels. This hybrid model is also designed to reduce travel for the first half of the Squirt season. We can maximize the puck touches and competition on the ice by using small areas and half ice games. We believe that if we can shrink the rink to an age appropriate size (as well as nets) we can give our kids more opportunities in our limited ice touches. This will allow them to work on their skill development, offensively with the puck, with defending the puck, in the transition phase of the game as well as with goaltending. After Jan. 1 (no sooner than Dec. 1) the schedule is wide open and full ice games are in full force through the remainder of the season. This is all done to prepare our smaller group of players for upper levels. They will compete at an A or B1 as our top team, and we will also have a B2 and a C team competing in the D5 leagues as well.
    - The Peewee and Bantam levels are both going to compete at an A level, and pending two or three teams at each level, there will be a B1 and or B2. In these levels, coaches will continue to develop the skating abilities, puck handling, shooting, body contact, and positional play. Video analysis is introduced at these ages and will be used by coaches as a tool for development throughout the season. Further video analysis and watching hockey, paying attention to the positioning of players, is highly encouraged away from team sessions as well!
    - Throughout our entire travel level, the intangible skills will be as important as the tangible abilities. Similar to our Mite program, players will be expected to approach each practice and game with a great enthusiasm and willingness to learn. High levels of effort are non-negotiable at these levels and we expect our players to give their best in every situation, recognizing that hard work and dedication are essential for improvement. The commitment to effort cultivates resilience, helping players to overcome challenges and setbacks on and off the ice.
    - Additionally, we promote a healthy and high competitive spirit. Competing at a high level encourages players to push their limits, strive for excellence, and support one another in the pursuit of common goals. This blend of attitude, effort,

and competition creates a dynamic environment where players can thrive, develop confidence, and build a lifelong love for the game. Together, these elements form the cornerstone of our philosophy, driving our players to become not just better athletes, but also outstanding individuals.

Travel Team Playing Time Guidelines

SRYHA's philosophy is to promote the growth and development of all players. In doing so, we hope to put forth competitive teams. A player's skills, attitude, work ethic and practice attendance can affect their playing time. The following policies should guide playing time:

- **Girls 10U/Squirt:** Skill development of all players is strongly encouraged. Coaches will strive for equal amounts of playing time for all players. The use of distinct power play and penalty killing units is strongly discouraged. Players could also play a reasonable amount of time in both forward and defensive positions. When multiple goalies are on a team, they shall have equal playing time over the course of the season. Keeping of league standings and/or individual statistics will follow guidelines set forth by MN Hockey. Game limits are set by MN Hockey and SRYHA may choose to further limit the number of games. A 3:1 ratio of practice to games should be maintained. The squirt program has been revamped to focus on a player first model. This has led to in-house, half ice games for the first half of the season for all our Squirt teams. They will learn the basics of off-sides and icing during these in-house games, as well as playing in odd man situations. (4 on 3, 5 on 5, etc.) This is meant to shrink the rink allowing them more puck touches and are forced to make skilled moves and decisions with and without the puck quicker. They will play a shortened travel schedule that will begin in December, including travel tournament(s).
- **Girls 12U/Peewee:** The focus on skill development should continue, but team play, and strategy also become a focus. Game play should be equal throughout the season, but coaches will have discretion during the last half of the 3rd period during closely contested league games, playoff games and tournament medal games. Scrimmages and non- medal tournament games will be equal playing time. All players should experience power play and penalty killing play throughout the season. When multiple goalies are on a team, they shall have equal playing time over the course of the season, but the coach may use discretion to pull a goalie in a game situation when warranted. The coach may also have discretion on which goalie to play in a rotation, keeping the amount of starts for each goalie equal.
- **Girls 15UA/Bantam A level:** Coaches shall have FULL discretion on all aspects of ice time.
- **Girls 15UB/Bantam B level:** The emphasis on team play and strategy is key, while still addressing individual skill needs. Equal ice time should be provided for the first 2 periods during 5 on 5 play. Coaches will have discretion to use power play and penalty kill units during those periods. Coaches shall have discretion during the entire 3rd period for amount of play in closely contested league games, playoff games and tournament medal games. Scrimmages and non-medal tournament games will be equal playing time and

provide all players with the opportunity to experience power play and penalty killing play. When multiple goalies are on a team, their play may be based on game performance, work ethic, attitude and practice attendance, but every attempt should be made to provide equal playing time.

Tryout Process

- The Tryout process is used to assign players to the team that best matches their ability. Players mature and develop at different rates and their improvement is best facilitated by playing with and against players with similar ability. Future potential of players is not determined by making the current "A" team, as a number of pro players were not selected as "A" team players as youngsters. It is a disservice to a player to be placed on a team that exceeds his/her ability, as he/she has very limited puck controlling or "touch" time in game situations (due to the player's current ability vs. the opponent's).

  Participants and volunteers are the only people allowed in spectator areas. The HAC assigns neutral, qualified, and experienced judges; this policy is designed to provide them with an atmosphere conducive to non-pressured and unbiased evaluations. Bench coaches assist skaters with equipment in the locker rooms before tryouts.

  The Code of Conduct and Grievance Resolution Procedures are followed. Significant effort has been made, and substantial time is spent by all volunteers involved to reach as fair of results as possible. Results can nonetheless be disappointing. The SRYHA Board and HAC will consider improvements to the process annually and welcome suggestions designed to help in that effort. Tryout judges must not be contacted in any way under any circumstances regarding any issue related to tryouts other than by those responsible for conducting tryouts. Please refer to the Code of Conduct and the Grievance Resolution Procedure to address any concerns.

A. SRYHA Tryout Procedures in the Locker Room

- Players are split into evenly skilled teams by the coaches and HAC. Goalies skate all tryout sessions.
- One tryout representative is present in the lobby to help assist players find their appropriate locker room.
- Each locker room has a volunteer to hand out jerseys and parents may assist skaters getting dressed, if needed. Each skater may be assigned a different jersey number each night of tryouts.
- All skaters must wear assigned jerseys.
- No prominent helmet stickers other than Storm stickers are allowed on helmets.
- Skaters are assigned a tryout jersey and a tryout number as they show up, which is placed on tape on the back of their helmets. This number is used to determine when the skater will be on the ice during scrimmage play.

B. SRYHA Tryout Procedures on the Ice

- When the skaters are allowed on the ice, at least one coach from each locker room is on the ice to assist in warm-ups, and volunteers remain in each locker room until all skaters are dressed and on the ice.
- Tryout evaluators must be approved by the HAC following a review of their hockey experience. A tryout judge may not assess a level in which he/she has a child or relative participating. Goalie evaluators may evaluate a level where they have a relative trying out as long as their relative is not a goalie.
- At least three (3) evaluators to review skaters and one (1) judge to review goalies are present at each tryout session.
- Non-parent coaches participate in the tryout process through on-ice assistance, tryout evaluation, or tryout observation.
- Evaluators assess the following:
    - Player's Skating Skills
    - Player's Individual Hockey Skills (puck handling, passing, receiving, shooting, etc.)
    - Player's Team Skills (hockey sense, offensive skills, defensive skills, etc.)
    - Player's Positional Play, Teamwork, Game Skills, and Awareness\Player's Desire, Work Ethic, and Self-Control

C. Level Specific Guidelines
All tryout procedures determined by the HAC are communicated to parents and players prior to tryouts in a mandatory parent meeting and in writing by publication on the SRYHA Website. Changes to information below will be explicitly noted.

D. Final Results
- Final team placement is based on the average of the scores from all tryout sessions or sessions completed for a skater who becomes sick or injured in tryouts.
- Team rosters for each level are emailed upon completion. This may be after the final day of tryouts, if coaching determinations need to be finalized.
- Parent communication for each level includes the expected day/time the rosters will be posted.

*No parent may approach the association (president, HD, or any level or try-out coordinator) to complain about their players placement on a team. These are independently judged try-outs by our try-out coordinator and nonaffiliated volunteer judges. The handbook will be enforced if parents cross the line with their behavior towards anyone in our association due to tryout results.

Team Meeting with Parents
Before tryouts, there is a mandatory parents' meeting with the Level Coordinator and representatives of the HAC to review Association information, player development intentions, and Tryout information. Information from this meeting is posted on the Association website for parent review.

- Once teams are chosen and prior to the start of the season, a parents' meeting with coaches and Level Coordinator is mandatory. The meeting has the following agenda:

- Head coach and assistant coach introduction
- Distribution of Parent Handbook for the team and team schedule
- Coaching philosophy, team objectives, attendance policy, and team goals for the season in writing
- Review of relevant SRYHA Handbook items and specific team additions to Handbook Guidelines
- Team Manager selection
- Tournament overview
- Parent Directory and Player Roster

PARENTS: As you are aware, finding coaches is an extremely difficult job in youth sports. Unfortunately, some parents across all youth sports are making this increasingly difficult. This inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated in our association, the code of conduct portion of our handbook addresses these violations. To reiterate, you DO NOT have the right to attack or chastise a coach, at ANY TIME. If you have an issue, the first and best course of action is to have your player talk to their coach. If that doesn't resolve the situation, you must then direct the issue to the team manager, and only AFTER 24 HOURS HAS EXPIRED. If the team manager cannot resolve the issue for you, the team manager will inform the coaches of the issue and set up a time for you to discuss together. NEVER approach a coach right after a game with a complaint or negative comments, as that would violate the 24-hour rule and be in direct violation of our Code of Conduct. You MUST ALWAYS be respectful to the coach, talk to the coaches in a calm manner and ask questions, without accusing. The coaches will listen to the parents' concerns and explain their decisions. If you feel like the coaches are violating our coaches codes of conduct, please reach out to the President or Hockey Director and report this asap.

Tryout for High School Team

SRYHA does not encourage youth eligible players to play High School Hockey. For any Girls 15U/Bantam player wishing to try out for the High School team, but maintain their eligibility to play youth hockey, the following policies apply:

- The player must register with SRYHA and pay the registration fee.
- They must declare in writing his/her intent to try out for the High School team at the time of registration.
- Any dues or fundraising occurring while they are with the youth league, must be paid.
- The player must participate in the SRYHA tryouts. If they do not and choose to return to the youth league following the High School tryouts, they will be placed on the lowest team offered in their age level.
- A meeting with the player, parents, travel team coaching staff, high school coaching staff and SRYHA President will occur at least 5 days before the youth hockey tryouts to discuss whether the player is a legitimate candidate to play on the high school team. The level coordinator is responsible for planning for the meeting.

- Following the meeting, the player needs to notify the SRYHA President of their final decision to try out for the high school team at least one day prior to youth tryouts.
- The player can skate with the team they made during youth tryouts, until the high school practices start. The player has 7 days from the time the high school practice starts to notify SRYHA President whether they will be returning to the youth team. If the player returns within the 7 days, they will return to the team they made during tryouts. If they return after 7 days, they will be placed on the lowest team at their level.
- Games or scrimmages may occur during the time the player is practicing with the high school team. The player cannot participate in these unless they have declared they are returning to the youth team. Attempts will be made to avoid games or scrimmages during the high school tryout week but may not be avoidable due to scheduling needs.
- Team rosters may be adjusted to accommodate the loss of a player(s) due to movement to high school after review by the SRYHA Executive Board.