I. Goal

The goal is to create a uniform and documented process for evaluations of Forest Lake hockey tryout participants. The documentation will include on ice elements used in evaluation, elements of evaluation for use by evaluators, and general scoring procedures, as such are recommended by the Player Development Committee (“PDC”).

II. On Ice Elements of Tryouts

The PDC recommends simplification and standardization of the tryouts for all traveling levels, i.e. not mites or U-8s. The recommended drills for squirts/U10, and peewees/U12 in general terms are characterized as:

1. Forward skating, including crossovers
2. Backwards skating, including crossovers
3. Transitions
4. Puck handling/weave, shooting, and passing

Each of these elements is fundamental to playing hockey and should be utilized in evaluations. Although characterized in rather simple terms, the elements each require significant analysis by evaluators and execution of many elements by players.

Bantam/U14 will not participate in skills evaluation.

III. Skills

In furtherance of the Goal of this document, the skills delineated in Section II, Items 1-4 warrant independent explanation. It is axiomatic that each skill be included in the evaluation of skaters, but less evident are the elements to be analyzed by evaluators and executed by skaters. This section identifies the elements of each skill that should be mastered. Correspondingly, the elements of each skill must serve as the basis of evaluators, thus excluding, or at least minimizing, the subjectivity of the evaluation process and the “I’m a hockey guy” guide to scoring.

1. Forward skating, including crossovers
When executed properly, forward skating and crossovers include the following elements:

a. Fast feet start: toes out, chop steps
b. Each stride extends to 180 degrees as viewed from hip to toe
c. Each stride extends to the side, not to the back
d. Stride foot recovery is to beneath the skater’s hips
e. Knee bend of glide foot is at least 90 degrees
f. Arm pumps are long and north-south oriented, not across the body
g. Skater’s overall body angle is forward slanting, not upright and not merely bent at the waist
h. Head is up
i. The stride has good rhythm
j. Speed
k. Crossovers elements include:
   i. inside foot on the outside edge
   ii. foot stepping over lands on the inside edge
   iii. push of inside foot extends leg fully behind the stepping over foot
   iv. shoulders remain level, i.e. not slanted into the turn

If a-i are properly executed by skaters, speed will result. While not to be ignored, speed is not in and of itself a variable that should supersede the other elements of skating. A skater who is somehow capable of skating fast, but has terrible form, will not succeed at the highest levels.

2. Backwards skating, including crossovers

When executed properly, backwards skating and crossovers include the following elements:

a. C-cut starts: use of the inside edge to serve as the initial start tool, hips open up with C-cut
b. Each stride extends to 180 degrees as viewed from hip to toe
c. Each stride extends to the side, not to the back
d. Stride foot recovery is to beneath the skater’s hips
e. Knee bend of glide foot is at least 90 degrees
f. Skater’s overall body angle is slightly forward slanting, not upright and not bent at the waist
h. Head is up
i. The stride has good rhythm
j. Blades do not leave the ice
k. Speed
l. Crossovers elements include:
   i. inside/reaching foot lands on the inside edge, pushes through the outside edge
   ii. foot stepping over lands on the outside edge
   iii. inside/reaching foot extends leg fully behind the stepping over foot
iv. shoulders remain level, i.e. not slanted into the turn

Just as with forward skating, if a-j are properly executed by skaters, speed will result. While not to be ignored, speed is not in and of itself a variable that should supersede the other elements of skating. A skater who is somehow capable of skating fast, but has terrible form, will not succeed at the highest levels.

3. Transitions and Pivots

Transitions and Pivots require the same fundamental elements, those being:

a. Opening of hips
b. Pivot foot points towards target
c. Legs remain deeply bent
d. Heels lead through the transition

4. Puck handling/weave, passing, and shooting

When executed properly, Puck handling/weave, passing, and shooting include the following elements:

a. When starting, puck is on the heel of the backhand side of the stick blade
b. When skating forwards with the puck, these elements should be executed:
   i. hands remain in front of the body, i.e. top hand is not on the hip or behind
   ii. puck is carried in front of the skater with the stick blade north-south oriented
   iii. puck is carried from around the middle of the blade to the heel
c. When executing control turns, these elements should be executed:
   i. inside knee is 90 degrees or lower
   ii. inside skate is on outside edge
   iii. outside leg is extended 180 degrees
   iv. outside skate is on inside edge
   v. feet are offset from each other
   vi. skater’s body leans into the turn
   vii. puck is identifiably cupped
   viii. puck is carried at the heel of the blade
d. When making passes, these elements should be executed:
   i. puck is cupped
   ii. smooth sliding motion is utilized
   iii. toe points to target after release, i.e. no shoveling
   iv. skate looks at target while passing, not after puck is released
   v. strength of pass, while largely a function of i-iv it is still valuable as a separate evaluation element
e. When receiving passes, these elements should be executed:
   i. before getting the pass, the skater presents a target
ii. hands are out from the body
iii. a slight cradling of the pass is executed upon receipt
iv. puck is caught on the heel to middle of the blade
v. puck sticks to the blade

f. When shooting, these elements should be executed:
   i. puck gets behind skater’s body
   ii. puck is cupped
   iii. skater is looking at target
   iv. feet are moving right until the point of release
   v. legs drive through the shot
   vi. follow through is long with toe of stick pointing to target
   vii. strength of shot, while largely a function of i-vi it is still valuable as a separate evaluation element

IV. Scoring

Skills evaluations should occur with all 4 drills taking place on the ice at once. At least 2 evaluators must evaluate each drill. It is strongly preferred that the same evaluators be used at the squirt and peewee levels.

The PDC recommends using a standardized scoring system of 1-7, with 7 representing the best score possible if a player executes all the elements at the highest level. Each evaluator takes into consideration the skills delineated in Section II, Items 1-4 when evaluating their assigned drill.