



**MOUNDS VIEW IRONDALE
YOUTH HOCKEY
ASSOCIATION
(MVIYHA)**

TRYOUT MANUAL

MVIYHA Tryout Manual

This **Tryout Manual** has been drafted as a supplement to the MVIYHA Handbook and Bylaws. It highlights the information associated with the MVIYHA Tryout Process and will be reviewed and potentially modified by the Board of Directors on an annual basis. Any questions or comments regarding the manual, please direct them to the **MVIYHA Tryout Director**.

MVIYHA Tryouts are conducted under the direction of the Tryout Director, with the assistance of the Director of Hockey, the Boys/Girls Coordinator and the appropriate Level Coordinators (when applicable), under the guidelines identified and approved by the MVIYHA Board of Directors.

This manual will be comprised of the following sections:

Important Information

Suggestions for Skaters and Parents

Reminders

Tryout Anecdotes

Frequently Asked Questions

Tryout Selection Criteria

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Player Departure Policy

Injury Procedures

Confidentiality

Important Information

- Optional pre-season **Warm-up Sessions** are scheduled for Bantam, PeeWee, Squirt, U15, U12, and U10 hockey teams. The cost for the pre-season warm-up sessions is included in the tryout fee for each skater.

There are warm-up sessions scheduled for each team level associated with the tryout process. In the case of multiple sessions at a particular level, players will be assigned to a certain session by last name.

The pre-season warm-up sessions will begin in early September and proceed through the end of the month. Please refer to the MVIYHA website (www.mvihockey.org/tryouts) for specific details on dates, times, and rinks.

- A **Tryout Informational Forum** is held in advance of the tryout process every season. Depending upon the number of anticipated attendees and room availability, the meeting is usually held at the Shoreview Community Center. While all parents are encouraged to attend and learn about the process, what to expect, and what is expected, much of the material will be geared to address skaters and families new to the MVIYHA tryout process (Squirts, U10s, and those new to the Association).
- Efforts have been made to coordinate the MVIYHA tryout process with other important events within the community. Minnesota Hockey, District 621 Laurentian trips and the statewide MEA break typically dictate our tryout dates. We understand there may be conflicts, however significant efforts are made to coordinate the MVIYHA tryout schedule with major fall sports. Please refer to the MVIYHA website for specific details on dates, times, and rinks.
- Individual **Tryout Sessions** are scheduled for Bantams, PeeWees, Squirts, U15, U12, U10, and goaltender-only sessions. Tryout evaluations will consist of four total sessions for all levels and teams, and a supplemental goalie-only session for goaltenders.

While goaltenders will be required to attend each of the tryout evaluation sessions at their appropriate team level, they will also be required to attend 60-minute evaluation session, specifically for goaltenders.

- Please have your player(s) ready in full gear and skates to take the ice at least **15 minutes** before your assigned session for both warm-ups and tryouts. Goaltenders should be present at least **45 minutes** prior to your assigned session. Failure to appear on time to a tryout evaluation may impact your score and jeopardize your chances of making your desired level.
- Unless specifically excused **IN ADVANCE OF THE FIRST TRYOUT SESSION** by the Tryout Director, a player must attend all tryout sessions. The Tryout Director, with assistance from the Director of Hockey and Boy's/Girl's Coordinators, will determine the status and eligibility of anyone not able to attend all sessions using pertinent information to make this decision.

Any circumstances not covered by the tryout policy will be addressed by the aforementioned individuals and their decision(s) will be approved by the MVIYHA Board of Directors.

- **Only the independent tryout evaluators, select tryout volunteers, applicable A-level coaches, the Tryout Director, the MVIYHA President, Director of Hockey, and/or the applicable Boys/Girls**

Coordinators are allowed in the evaluation area of the arena (i.e. inside the actual ice rink area) while the players are on the ice.

- Composite tryout scores are **strictly confidential**. For privacy reasons, the scores will not be posted publicly and will only be available to the Tryout Director, Boys/Girls Coordinators, Director of Hockey, and/or MVIYHA President, and their designees.
- While there are no official uniforms for the tryout process, we prefer to have our skaters represent the Association in a uniform manner. Efforts should be made on behalf of players to wear MVIYHA colors (breezers, gloves, and socks) at tryouts. Breezers are preferred to be black, and **gloves and socks must be a matching pair**.

To aid this initiative, the Association may attempt to provide any leftover socks at the Tryout Informational Meeting and at the first tryout session for each level.

- The tryout results will be posted on the MVIYHA website at a time designated by the Tryout Director. Final results are typically posted to the website within 72 hours of the final tryout at each level.
- **Volunteers are always needed to help make the tryout process successful.** Please visit the DIBS section of the MVIYHA website frequently for tryout volunteer opportunities and direct any questions you may have to the Tryout Director.
- **All skaters and goaltenders are expected to attend all scheduled drills and scrimmage sessions.** Under extreme circumstances, the Tryout Director should be contacted to request an absence. See the Procedures for Injuries section if an absence is due to a medical issue.
- All warm-up and tryout dates, times, and rink locations will be posted on the website by the first week in September.

The Association reserves the right to change ice dates/times and/or rink locations, based on changing conditions with available ice and pool scrimmages with outside associations.

While the time slots that are published in early September typically do not change, **please check the Tryouts section of the website often**, as this will be the most up-to-date listing of the ice sessions for our Association. Skaters/goaltenders will be responsible for reporting at the correct date, time, and location.

Suggestions

The following are some basic suggestions to help both skaters and parents alike. Many of these suggestions have been offered by Minnesota Hockey and have been proven to help players/parents successfully navigate the hockey tryout process.

For players:

- Relax and focus on the things that you can control.

Your effort, your attitude, and your ability to listen are just as important as your hockey skills.

- Come mentally and physically prepared.

Always think positive but be sure to rest up and eat appropriately beforehand.

- Work to the best of your abilities on every shift.

You never know what might catch the evaluators' eyes.

- Regardless of the result, learn from the experience.

Exercise modesty/humility in success, fortitude/perseverance in failure.

- Have fun.

Remember, after everything is complete, you are still fortunate enough to be playing a great game.

For parents and other family members:

- Please avoid any comments to the players or reactions to the plays on the ice.

Relax and enjoy watching your skater while they compete with their peers.

- Remember, the tryout process is a very small facet of your skater's life.

Try to help them learn from their experience (both good and bad) and try to have fun.

- Take the opportunity to get involved and volunteer to help with the tryout process.

Many prior volunteers have learned a lot about the tryout process and have provided their input to improve the tryout process for future skaters.

Reminders

As adults, we need to remind ourselves and our sons and daughters trying out as to the relevance of this process in the big picture.

- The skaters are competing for a roster spot on a **team**, to play a **game**. It seems obvious and simplistic, but it's something that we all need to remind ourselves about regularly.
- While most participants aim to make the highest team possible, the purpose of the process is not to 'weed-out' players in pursuit of making an 'A' team. **The purpose of the tryout process is to align players of similar ability and make sure they are playing at the right level**, so that they can enjoy the game and develop in an appropriate setting.
- As parents and family members, it is a basic instinct to be proud of our children and want them to succeed to the best of their abilities. However, this instinct may tend to cloud our perspective.

The independent evaluators are just that, independent. While they may not see your skater in the same light as you, please respect their **independent** opinions and the tryout process. Be assured that we are making every effort to make your son or daughter's tryout experience as fair and objective as possible.

- The teams in the MVIYHA this season will look different next season, and every season after that. Young skaters continue to develop at different levels, and we all need to understand that last year's success or failure is not a measurement of this year's final placement.

Because your skater made an A or B team last year, they are not guaranteed similar placement this season, especially as players move up. 'Backsliding' does, and will continue to, occur.

Every year is different and prior accomplishments are not considered in team placement.

- Unfortunately, heartache and disappointment in life will occur. Competing for a team (just like competing for a job later in a young athlete's life) is a part of a maturation process. Both skaters and parents alike need to do their best to learn from this experience and keep things in perspective.

Your players success will allow you to teach them modesty and humility. Failure to make a certain team is not failure in general, yet it will allow an opportunity to teach fortitude and perseverance in pursuit of a goal.

Tryout Anecdotes

In support of these helpful reminders, we provide the following anecdotes:

The late Herb Brooks was not only the coach of the 1980 *Miracle On Ice* team, but he also was the **last player cut** from the gold-medal-winning 1960 Olympic team.

According to legend, Brooks and his father were watching the final game together. When the final buzzer sounded, giving the US the gold medal, the elder Brooks did not curse the Olympic tryout methodology or process. He did not condemn the evaluations that prevented his son from being part of that deliriously happy event. He simply said:

"Well, it looks like they cut the right guy."

Similarly, the following story comes from another north suburban hockey program.

As a skater growing up, a certain young man never made an 'A' team. After making Varsity in 1998 as a Junior (on a team that went to the State Tournament), the young man met with his coach.

With tears in his eyes, he stated: *"Coach, all my life I have never made an 'A' team, I will not let you down."* By his senior year, he:

- Was selected by his teammates as Captain, where he led his team to the State Tournament and won the State Championship.
 - Went on to play Junior hockey and subsequently played Division I hockey at the University of North Dakota.
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Lastly (and this one hit closest to home), one of our own MVIYHA alumni recently had the following experience:

After a tough Squirt tryout, the young skater was evaluated as the last skater to make the A team. Upon learning many of his friends would be skating on the B team, he opted to forego his spot on the A team he earned, to play with his friends at the B level.

While many questioned his decision, citing his hockey development would be stunted by such a decision, the player went on to become:

- Mr. Hockey Minnesota
- a member of the Wisconsin Badgers
- a member of the 2014 US Olympic team
- the captain for the New York Rangers of the NHL

Everyone develops at a different pace and very little of your skater's future will be determined by these (or subsequent) athletic tryouts.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The following is a list of Frequently Asked Questions that have been compiled by the MVIYHA and with consultation of other hockey associations within District 2. This list will be reviewed annually and revised as appropriate.

Q. How are the skaters assigned / grouped and tracked?

A. *Players are assigned to a group and provided with a jersey and number. Each tryout participant will have this same number through the first two tryout sessions, at which time they will be returned and redistributed prior to the 3rd session. The candidates will be assigned a new color/number prior to the 3rd session that they will turn back in upon completion of the tryout process. The skater will only be tracked and scored by color/number and not by name.*

Q. Who will be the tryout evaluators?

A. *The tryout/team selection process will be conducted by the Tryout Director and will utilize 4-5 outside, independent evaluators who have no eligible players in the MVIYHA. They have been asked to observe and evaluate all skaters in the tryout process, at each level. The MVIYHA Board of Directors has found each of the evaluators to be knowledgeable and experienced with evaluating hockey skill, as well as dedicated individuals who are passionate about hockey.*

Our current independent evaluation team has playing and coaching experience at the youth, high school, collegiate, and semi-professional levels.

In addition to the independent evaluators, the A-level coach at the applicable level will be invited to be an additional evaluator. Their scores will be aggregated with those of the independent evaluators.

Q. How are the skaters initially scored / tracked?

A. *Each skater will be scored by multiple evaluators. Skaters are tracked by number, not name. Evaluators will be evaluating two randomly selected skaters per shift. The scores will be compiled and tabulated by jersey color/number to determine the teams after the A/B and B/C splits.*

Q. How is the 'A' team selected at each level?

A. *The individual scores from the independent evaluators and the applicable A-level coach will be aggregated to select the top 10-12 skaters for the A-level team. Every effort will be made to comprise teams of not less than 13, and not more than 15 skaters. The final number will be determined by the number of teams/skaters at a particular level and where the obvious scoring breaks exist.*

Q. What are the skills and attributes desired and scored?

A. *Selection criteria for A and B teams are based on two primary areas, drills and scrimmage. Skating drills will test speed, quickness, balance, agility, stick handling (carrying, passing, and shooting the puck) and hustle. Scrimmages will comprise 5 on 5 situations and may utilize 3 on 3 and/or 4 on 4 situations, depending on the number of skaters available. In most cases, the final tryout will be a scrimmage versus an outside association team competing at the same pool level as part of their own tryout process.*

Tryout Selection Criteria

Selection criteria for the A and B teams at each level are based on two primary areas, drills and scrimmage. Skating drills will test speed, quickness, balance, agility, stick handling (carrying, passing and shooting the puck), and hustle. Scrimmage evaluations will take into consideration the following:

- Skating/passing/shooting
- Back-checking
- Defensive abilities
- Toughness (corners and front of net)
- Playing the body (Bantams, and to a lesser extent, PeeWees)
- Play-making
- Ability without the puck
- Vision
- Speed
- Hustle/intensity/aggressiveness
- Team play
- Leadership on the ice
- Attitude/sportsmanship

At each successive level from Squirt to Peewee to Bantam, and similarly from U10 to U12 to U15, a greater emphasis will be placed on scrimmages, and less emphasis will be placed on drills. For this season, the scoring breakdown will be roughly weighted as follows:

Squirt/U10 *~60% scrimmage including 3v3 or 4v4/~40% drills*

PeeWee/U12 *~80% scrimmage including 3v3 or 4v4 /~20% drills*

Bantam/U15 *~90% scrimmage including 3v3 or 4v4/~10% drills*

The drills to be conducted in warm-ups and subsequently evaluated in tryouts will be identified in an appended supplement outlining the operational elements of the tryout process. The drills to be used in tryouts will be identified by the respective program coordinators, prior to the commencement of tryouts.

Separate sessions will also be conducted for goaltender evaluations. Goaltenders must also attend the assigned group sessions at their appropriate level. The goaltender evaluators will be an outside organization (ie PGD or MEGA) and will score goaltenders during the drill and scrimmage sessions, as well as during the goaltender-only sessions.

For goaltenders, the evaluator scoring breakdown will be **approximately** weighted 50/50 to 30/70 (based on level) goalie only session/drill and scrimmage sessions.

Team Selection Process

The A and B teams (Boys Bantam, PeeWee, Squirt, and Girls U15, U12 and U10) within MVIYHA will generally consist of 15-17 players (13-15 skaters and two goaltenders, if player numbers allow), and may be modified by the MVIYHA Board, as deemed appropriate. These numbers may vary depending upon the number of players available at each position.

Team composition at any age level will be selected as follows, upon the conclusion of the four tryout sessions.

- AA/A-level: the first 10-12 skaters by tabulated scoring, including head coach at-large selections (if applicable)
- B1/B2-level: the next 13-15 skaters by tabulated scoring unless a head coach is selected for a team prior to tryouts, then the AA/A criteria above applies. In the event two equal B-level teams are declared at any age level, the teams will be comprised by selecting the top scoring individual at the B-level to one of the teams, the next two highest scores to the other team, repeating until the equal B-level teams have the 13-15 player allotment.
- C-level: If numbers allow for more than one C team, the attempt will be made to balance the skill levels between the teams. However, consideration may also be given to geography, coach availability, player age, etc.

15 Players On Team Roster			13 Players on Team Roster		
	Rank by Tryout Scores			Rank by Tryout Scores	
Player 1	1	Locked into team by tryout scores	Player 1	1	Locked into team by tryout scores
Player 2	2		Player 2	2	
Player 3	3		Player 3	3	
Player 4	4		Player 4	4	
Player 5	5		Player 5	5	
Player 6	6		Player 6	6	
Player 7	7		Player 7	7	
Player 8	8		Player 8	8	
Player 9	9		Player 9	9	
Player 10	10		Player 10	10	
Player 11	11	Head Coach can select 5 players from this group	Player 11	11	Head Coach can select 3 players from this group
Player 12	12		Player 12	12	
Player 13	13		Player 13	13	
Player 14	14		Player 14	14	
Player 15	15		Player 15	15	
Player 16	16		Player 16	16	
Player 17	17				
Player 18	18				

Table 1: Head Coach Roster Selection Examples

Individual Team Selection

Bantam/U15 Team Selection

Due to the physical nature of the Bantam level and the increase in injuries typically incurred, efforts will be made to assign 15 skaters to the Bantam teams.

Each team will be comprised of 15-17 players (13-15 skaters and two goaltenders), if possible. Tryouts will be structured with 90/10% of the evaluation being scrimmage/drills with players being placed on teams based on tryout evaluations.

For the top-level team, the top 10-12 skaters, based on evaluator rankings, will be placed on the AA/A team. The 4-5 primary evaluators will be independent of the Association and may be supplemented by the AA/A-level coach.

The remaining skaters on the AA/A team will be chosen at-large by the AA/A-level head coach. They may be selected from the next 5-6 candidate skaters (see Table 1, Head Coach Roster Selection Examples), according to the evaluator rankings.

Unless the head coach has been identified prior to tryouts, the remaining teams (B1, B2, and C) will be determined based on evaluator scores, with the intention of having 13-15 skaters on each team, where possible.

Goaltenders will be placed on teams based on the composite evaluator rankings, with the intention of having two on each team if possible. If goaltender numbers do not allow for two goaltenders being assigned to each team, efforts will be made to assign the goaltenders based on their evaluator rankings, with comparable goaltenders being placed on similar levels.

In the event a Bantam or U15 skater is selected for a High School Varsity team, the AA/A-level Head Coach may choose to select another player from the next 6-8 candidate skaters (see Table 1, Head Coach Roster Selection Examples), according to the evaluator rankings. This player selection must be approved by the Tryout Director, Director of Hockey, and/or the applicable Boys/Girls Coordinators. If additional players from B/C teams are needed to move up and fill vacancies, the same approach will apply. If a Bantam or U15 goaltender is selected for a High School Varsity team, the next highest scoring goaltender will move into that position. All skaters and goaltenders are expected to attend all scheduled team sessions, unless prohibited by the Minnesota State High School rules.

Peewee/U12 Team Selection

Each team will be comprised of 15-17 players (13-15 skaters and two goaltenders), if possible. Tryouts will be structured with an approximate split of **80% scrimmage** and **20% drills**.

If the Association has an AA/A team, the top ~10-12 skaters, based on evaluator rankings, will be placed on the AA/A team. The evaluators will be independent of the Association and will be supplemented by the AA/A-level coach.

The remaining skaters on the AA/A team will be chosen at-large by the AA/A-level head coach. See Table 1, Head Coach Roster Selection Examples.

The remaining teams (B1, B2, and C) will be determined based on evaluator rankings, with the intention of having 13-15 skaters on each team, if possible. Goaltenders will be placed on teams based on evaluator rankings, with the intention of having two on each team if possible.

Squirt/U10 Team Selection

Each team will be comprised of 15-17 players (13-15 skaters and two goaltenders), if possible. Tryouts will be structured with an approximate split of **60% scrimmage** and **40% drills**.

If the Association has an A team, the top ~10-12 skaters, based on evaluator rankings, will be placed on the A team. The 4-5 primary evaluators will be independent of the Association and may be supplemented by the A-level coach.

The remaining skaters on the A team will be chosen at-large by the A-level head coach. See Table 1, Head Coach Roster Selection Examples.

The remaining teams (B and C) will be determined based on evaluator rankings, with the intention of having 13-15 skaters on each team, if possible. Goaltenders will be placed on teams based on evaluator rankings, with the intention of having two on each team if possible.

C Team Selection

After the composition of the AA, A, and B teams have been finalized, the Boy's/Girl's Coordinator, Director of Hockey, and the Tryout Coordinator will divide the remaining players into one or more C teams. If numbers allow for more than one C team, the attempt will be made to balance the skill levels between the teams, but consideration may also be given to geography, coach availability, player age, etc.

Any questions regarding the tryout and team selection process shall be directed to the Tryout Director.

Exceptions to Team Selection

Every season will vary, depending on the total number of skaters at any given level and the District 2 team declarations. The MVIYHA Board cannot accurately predict how many players will register to tryout for the youth association, depart to another hockey association, depart to high school, or opt to quit playing hockey all together.

Every effort will be made to follow the designated team selection process. However, the MVIYHA Board reserves the right to modify team sizes and District 2 designations, as appropriate.

While this is a fluid process, the MVIYHA Board will attempt to communicate the final team declarations and sizes, prior to the commencement of the tryout process.

Player Departure Policy

As part of their participation in the MVIYHA tryout process, players and their parents are obligated to agree to their ultimate placement on a MVIYHA traveling team for the upcoming hockey season.

Participation in the tryout process is defined by those players that have completed the tryout process, by stepping on the ice for their final (4th) tryout session.

If, upon completion of the tryout process and assignment to a MVIYHA traveling team, the participant elects to withdraw from the MVIYHA and not participate with their assigned team during the upcoming hockey season, they will be found in violation of the MVIYHA tryout process.

Those found to be in violation of the MVIYHA tryout process will be deemed **ineligible** for the following season's tryout process. Players who are deemed ineligible for tryouts, or do not tryout, will be placed on a C team.

Example:

- Player X completes four tryout sessions in the fall of 2021 for the 2021-2022 hockey season.
- Player X fails to report to their assigned team, upon completion of tryouts and opts to withdraw from the MVIYHA, thus violating the MVIYHA tryout policy.
- Player X is ineligible for the following year's tryout process (2018) for the 2018-2019 season.
- Player X will be offered a place on a C team if they opt to play for MVIYHA in the 2018-2019 season.
- Player X will be eligible to participate in tryouts in the fall of 2019, for the 2019-2020 season.

The Departure Policy is **not intended to be punitive** for withdrawing from a designated team, and subsequently returning to the MVIYHA in following years. Rather, it is intended to give families pause and dissuade the player from opting to leave the MVIYHA, due to unsatisfactory placement from the tryout process.

The Mounds View Irondale Youth Hockey Board is responsible for prioritizing the program's needs and the development of all skaters. In agreement with this responsibility, Mounds View Irondale Youth Hockey will not approve Discretionary Waivers for the 2023-2024 season.

For those players who move outside of our district or attend school outside of our district, School Waivers will be processed before the start of the season. Players departing after tryouts and team assignment creates numerous problems for other associated families. We simply ask that you consider that your decisions will impact several other players/families.

We understand that parents and/or participants may not always agree with their placement. However, failure of a player to report to their designated team, after teams are posted, also creates significant problems for the

Association/Tryout Director, Director of Hockey, and the Boys/Girls Coordinators when shuffling players to/from other posted teams.

Procedures for Injuries

In the case of an injury, **the parent/guardian of the injured skater must notify the Tryout Director in writing, immediately upon incurring the injury**, either prior to or during the tryout process. The player will be placed in "Injury Protocol" per the following:

In either case, both injured and/or sick skaters must provide a written doctor's note to the Tryout Director. This note must be dated within seven days of the first day of tryouts or within 24 hours of an injury during tryouts. The note should state the nature of the ailment, that they are unable to participate in the hockey tryout process, and when the player might be able to return to play.

Players unable to participate in any tryout due to injury or illness will be placed appropriately at the discretion of the applicable Boy's/Girl's Coordinator, Director of Hockey, and the Tryout Director. Information available from prior year tryout scores and placement, peer scoring and peer team placements, and prior year coach feedback will be considered. Additional input may be sought from the MVIYHA Board.

In the event proper documentation is not provided from a physician, the skater will forfeit the tryout session score and be placed in accordance with their current score total if injured during tryouts, or will be placed on the lowest level team at that age group if injured prior to the first tryout.

Confidentiality

Under no circumstances will final tabulated composite tryout scores be shared with skaters, parents, or Association coaches. The tabulated results will be used to identify team rosters. Skaters will be listed by team on the MVIYHA website, listed by skater last name and appearing in alphabetical order.

The results will only be available to the Tryout Director, Boys/Girls Coordinators, Director of Hockey, the MVIYHA President, and other individuals deemed appropriate by the MVIYHA Board of Directors.

In addition, all individuals involved in the MVIYHA tryout process will be held in strict compliance with these rules of player/score confidentiality.