

Balanced Ice Time- “I HAVE THE RIGHT TO PLAY”!



Northwest Hockey League

September 1, 2022

Dear Valued NWHL Families:

From its inception over 30 years ago the Northwest Hockey League was created to offer a league for players looking for a competitive but enjoyable playing experience. A major expectation of this league is that EVERY player is provided a positive hockey playing experience. The NWHL created Balanced Ice Time (BIT) to help promote that positive playing experience.

Balanced Ice Time is defined as that “over the course of the season everyone’s ice time will be fairly similar”. In simple terms it is often referred to as “Rolling Lines”. Along with rolling lines there should NOT be special lines for power play or penalty kill. Also, when there are uneven numbers of players at each of the positions then the lines should be adjusted through the season so that all players get the benefit of playing a few extra shifts in a game.

No player feels good about themselves nor improves when they unfairly sit on the bench. Coaches are expected to create game lineups with a focus on ensuring every player receives BIT. For example: 4 left and right wings and just 2 star centers is not balance; having 2 sets of defensemen and 4 sets of wingers is not balanced. If your team is blessed with a player/s of greater skill or experience you should not expect those with less experience or skill to receive any less playing time, at any point in the game.

The NWHL BIT line-up policy: “The greatest discrepancy for the number of players at any one of the 5 positions and all other positions cannot be more than 1, excluding the goalie.” If a team has multiple goalies they should be rotated either within games, or game by game

While it is the coach’s responsibility to provide Balanced Ice Time, it can be the parents that hold the coach to continue following the policy. If your child is noticeably being bypassed by the coach in favor of others, you are fully entitled to contact your team manager, club NWHL representative or a NWHL board member to ask them to look into it.

Do note...the ebb and flow of games will result in varying amounts of ice for everyone from game to game. It is important to consider the average game ice time over a period of time and the NWHL tournament should be no different.

The NWHL thanks all that chose to play in our league, wish all a successful season.

*Thank you,
The Northwest Hockey League Board and Member Organizations*