



Waconia Tryouts

Approved June 22, 2020

WACONIA HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

Tryout Process & Governance



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Who's Ready for Hockey?

Welcome to Tryouts. It is almost time to begin a new hockey season, hang out with old and new teammates, make that tape-to-tape pass, score some goals (or block them) and have some fun!

We know that tryouts can be an uncertain and anxious time for you, as players, and families. You can eliminate some of that by simply knowing what to expect.

In this document, you will find information on what to do before tryout sessions, what the association is looking for during tryouts and what to expect when they are complete.

Beyond that, remember to have fun. That is probably the only way to guarantee you will put your best skate forward this season.

See you at the rink!

HIGHLIGHTS!

Tryout Viewing: This year, the initial 3 tryout sessions at each level will be closed to the public. The coach practices will be open, like practices during the regular season.

Parent Meeting: Parent meeting will be held prior to the start of the tryout process.

Tryout Process: This year's tryouts will consist of in-house competition and if possible, an external scrimmage. Depending on the external competition's request, the session may be closed to the public.

Pinnies: Different pinnies will be handed out at each tryout session.



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Player and Parent Meetings

There will be a player meeting that occurs prior to the start of the tryout process. This meeting may be informal and could occur on ice.

A parent meeting will occur prior to the start of tryouts. This will be led by one of the Executive Committee members, Hockey Development Director and the Operations Director.

Parents should be supportive of their skaters during this time. They are also expected to abide by the Parent Code of Conduct as outlined in the WHA guidebook.

Your child may have more or less ice time based on feedback from the evaluators and their ability to evaluate all players.

What should you expect for Tryouts?

The tryout process is based on registration numbers and external partnership; therefore, this process may change if the actual number of players changes.

At the end of each subsequent night, you may stay in your tier, move up or move down, based on the most recent night's performance.

WHA will do its best to post names to the WHA website the night before the next scheduled session. **It is your responsibility to monitor the website and understand which session you must attend.**



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Tryout Process

What do I need to know from day 1?

All skaters must wear Waconia colors for every session of the tryout process. All players must wear a jersey with solid-colored sleeves and Waconia colored black, white, purple or gold team socks. All non-Waconia stickers must be removed from all gear before tryouts.

Players will receive a pinnie with a number when they check in for the first day of tryouts and receive a different pinnie for each tryout session.

Players should arrive 30-45 minutes prior to your session and must be ready to get on the ice 15 minutes prior to the start time.

You must be on the ice for all assigned sessions unless previously excused by the Hockey Development Director. Any unexcused absence could impact on your overall evaluation.

Water bottles are highly encouraged for all sessions.

Player scrimmage groups may not directly reflect current player ranking.

Administrative Processes

Players must come to tryouts ready for the entire process. This includes having a completed medical release form, and signed player/parent agreement forms per the WHA policy that is outlined in the guidebook and online at www.waconiahockey.org.



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TRYOUT GOVERNANCE

WHA Executive Board

The WHA Executive Board (President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary) will audit the tryout process. They are responsible to ensure that tryouts and team selections follow the guidelines set within this document.

WHA Board

The WHA Board members, not included in the Executive Board, may be used to govern tryouts, as necessary.

SUPPORTING ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Tryout Coordinator

The Tryout Coordinator will be responsible for coordinating rosters, randomization, inputting evaluation grades and compiling results with the oversight of the Hockey Development Director and HDC.

Hockey Development Director

S/He is also responsible for overseeing the tryout process, team selection and will approve all rosters.

Hockey Development Committee (HDC)

The HDC will assist the Hockey Development Director in overseeing the tryouts. The Hockey Development Director and HDC will be responsible for approving final rosters.

Hockey Operations Director

Manage, assign and coordinate volunteers for the tryout process.

Volunteers

Tryout volunteers will be assigned duties by the Hockey Operations Director. These hours will count toward the family's DIBS hours. (*Approved by WHA Board)

- Greeters
- Pinnies – Handout, Collection and Cleaning
- USA Hockey Approved Locker Room Monitor (\$10 Background Check)
- Bench Volunteer
- Time Clock Volunteer



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Level Placement

Player placements (level) will be done by birth date. WHA uses the Minnesota Hockey Age Charts, located on Minnesota Hockey's website.

Peer Grade Placement

In situations where a player is not eligible for the level of their peer grade per USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey age classifications, exceptions will be made. Specifically, these players will have the opportunity to play up one level should they choose and be placed on a team based on overall tryout scores. This rule is designed to enable those kids born in the months of July and August to play with their classmates. It will also give those kids the option to play a second year of bantams as opposed to high school hockey. This affects younger aged players relative to their grade as follows:

Player not eligible per birth date for:	But entering:
Squirts / U10	4th Grade
Peewees / U12	6th Grade
Bantams / U15	8th Grade

Competitive Level Move-Up Policy

Any player wishing to try out for the next level, he/she must rank in the top 5 players of the top team at the next level. If the player does not score in the top 5 of the top team at the next level, he/she will be placed at the appropriate level within his/her age group.

Players must submit a move-up application to the Hockey Development Director no later than 30 days prior to the first day of any on-ice tryout session. HDC will review applications and vote to determine if the player should be granted a preliminary tryout by attending the HDC Clinic at the requested move-up level. After said HDC Clinic session, the Hockey Development Director and at least two members of the HDC will assess whether they feel that player possess the necessary skills to compete at the next level, and if so, they will be allowed to participate in the next level up tryout.

The only exception to the rule is in situations where the number of players registered for a particular level does not have enough players to fill a team; the WHA has the option of moving up kids from a lower level to complete the minimum team roster size. This policy will only be used as a LAST RESORT and will not be a normal course of practice. This policy will be consistent from year to year and WILL NOT be dependent on the skill level of potential players involved. Only the WHA Board will initiate this process.



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What if I can't participate?

All tryout sessions are mandatory. In fairness to all players trying out, the only excused absences are severe illness, injury, family emergency, or other reasons PRE-APPROVED by the HDC, at least 7 days in advance of the absence.

What do I do if I cannot participate?

If you are unable to participate in tryouts due to illness, injury, family emergency or other reasons, your parents are responsible for contacting the Hockey Development Director **BEFORE** tryouts begin. The HDC shall make the final determination.

Written information from your physician detailing why you cannot participate and player history detailing past team assignments must be provided to Hockey Development Director as early as possible **BEFORE TRYOUTS BEGIN**. You will not be evaluated and placed on an appropriate team if this information is not provided.

What if I get sick or injured in tryouts?

If this is the case, your parents are responsible for getting you to a medical examination **within 24 hours** after the onset of illness/injury. The examining physician should provide written information detailing why you cannot continue. The parents must give their information to the Hockey Development Director within 24 hours after the medical exam. A doctor's note stating that the player has been cleared to participate is required before a player can go back on the ice.

How will I score for missed tryout session?

Unexcused absences will result in a 0 score for that session. Excused absence will result in the player receiving a score for that session based on the average of the attended sessions.

If a player is unable to participate in any tryouts due to an excused absence, s/he will be evaluated based on prior year's performance and coaches' limited discretion to determine team selection. New members, who join after tryouts, will be placed at the appropriate level based upon coach discretion and HDC approval.



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Tryout Evaluators

Who evaluates the players?

During tryout sessions on Day 1-3, a panel of independent evaluators will score players on a scale, following a common scoring structure.

- Minimum of three evaluators at each tryout level for skaters
- Minimum of one evaluator at each tryout level for goalies
- To the best of our ability, we will find outside evaluators. At least two evaluators must be independent of the WHA (paid or volunteer).

Evaluators are chosen for their hockey knowledge and are instructed in the process to consistently evaluate the participants.

PARENT COACHES

With HDC discretion, experienced parent coaches can perform as evaluators at a level they are coaching. Coach evaluations will be kept separate from independent evaluators. Coaches will be asked for feedback based on their experience from prior years. Parent Coaches will be involved with all other coaches and HDC during team selection.

NON-PARENT COACHES

Non-parent coaches will perform as evaluators at the level for which they are coaching. Coach evaluations will be kept separate from independent evaluators. Coaches will be involved with all other coaches and HDC during team selection.

EVALUATION SHEETS

Evaluators will provide a score on each participant which will then be turned into the Hockey Development Director, Tryout Coordinator, and Executive Committee members immediately following the tryout session.

Parents do not have the right to argue with evaluators' assessments. No information will be shared with any player or parent regarding another player's evaluation sheet.



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Tryout Evaluations

How will I be Evaluated? BY YOUR PLAY

Evaluators look for complete players, with strengths balanced across:

- Skating
- Stick handling, passing (giving and receiving), and shooting.
- Teamwork
- Positional play
- Physical play (level appropriate)
- Competitiveness
- Attitude
- Hockey sense

Scores from each evaluator are recorded, averaged and used for subsequent tier assignment and final team selection.

You are evaluated for negative contributions to play as well. Inappropriate conduct or penalty situations may result in a decrease of your scores. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Penalties
- Use of foul language on or off the ice
- Play intended to injure, illegal checks.

Players will not be evaluated on:

- Evaluations sheets from previous years
- Evaluations from summer camps
- Non---evaluator opinions
- Parental input

Keep in mind that scores from each session are added together to create a final score for the final team selection. In addition, each player can move up/down within tiers based on each night's session play – **therefore each session matters.**



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Tryout Schedule

Day 1 - 3 on 3 – estimated time of 45 mins to 1 hour

3 on 3 scrimmages with random selections of players in a scrimmage format.

Day 2 - Internal Scrimmage 5 on 5 - estimated time of 45 mins to 1 hour

Internal scrimmages will be used to assess players' performance in game like situations 5 on 5. All non-goalie skaters will be expected to play all non-goalie positions. Evaluators will have the ability to move kids around if they deem it necessary to evaluate a player. After the first scrimmage, Evaluators, HDC and Hockey Development Director and Executive Committee members will meet to determine if any skaters should move to another team, either up or down. Any player can be moved. Players will then be divided into tryout teams based on their combined scores of days 1 and 2.

Day 3 - Internal Scrimmage 5 on 5 – estimated time of 45 mins to 1 hour

Based upon the independent evaluations from Days 1 & 2, the tryout groups will be split. Internal scrimmages will be used to assess players' performance in game like situations 5 on 5. All non-goalie skaters will be expected to play all non-goalie positions. Evaluators will have discretion to move kids around if they deem it necessary to evaluate a player.

Day 4 & 5 - Coach Practices

Based upon the independent evaluations from Days 1-3, the tryout groups will be split for coach led practices. Coaches at each level will communicate with their teams regarding which practice times apply to each player. There will be 2 coach led practices and coaches will have discretion to move players with HDC oversight.

Day 6 - Scrimmage – If possible, an external scrimmage will be scheduled with the split groups. Depending upon the scrimmage partner, this may be an open or closed session.



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Tryout Selection

How are Teams Selected?

Teams will be selected based on players' evaluation ratings and rosters will be filled based on overall performance in tryouts. Coaches will have discretion to adjust team selection, as described below. Final rosters will be reviewed and approved by the Hockey Development Director, HDC and at least 1 Executive Board representative.

In the event there are multiple teams at any level (ex. 2 Squirt C teams), a serpentine method, based on tryout rankings, will be used to create 2 equal teams (see chart). Additional consideration will be given to ensure proper coaching is provided to both teams.

Team 1	Team 2
1	
	2
	3
4	
5	
	6
	7

Coach's Discretion

Primary emphasis will be placed on players' independent evaluations; however, coaches will have discretion based upon evaluation of the overall tryout and HDC approval.

Criteria to be considered in player moves include (but are not limited to):

- Player's previous performance: selection to a team as a first-year player does not entitle player to a roster spot in subsequent years.
- Player attitude
- Team chemistry and roles
- Positive contribution to team play
- Other valid Hockey based reasons.

Returning coaches at the same level who choose not to select a player from their prior year roster causing that player to drop a level must communicate directly to the affected player and parents their reasons for doing so during or immediately after tryouts.



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Tryout Structures

What will the final teams be?

Numbers could change based on the number of players registered at any level.

Team Player Breakdown

The number of players per team will be determined by Coaches, the Hockey Development Director and the HDC. WHA Board to provide recommendation/limitations based upon registration numbers. As an example, if 41 skaters are registered at a level with 3 teams, the Board would recommend 13-15 skaters per team with coach discretion and HDC oversight. This ensures that there are enough skaters on each team.

Tryout Communication

Player Placement

Players and parents will be notified about team placement within 48 hours after the completion of tryouts.

After team selections are complete, team rosters will be posted to the WHA website. An email will be sent out to notify families that the team rosters have been posted.

If results cannot be posted as described above, an email will be sent to notify parents of when the results will be posted. Team rosters will not be posted within normal school hours.

All conversations regarding player placements will be kept confidential among coaches, evaluators and the HDC.



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Questions / Concerns

What if I have questions about the process?

Questions/concerns about the tryout process must go through the Hockey Development Director. Do not bring those questions directly to coaches or evaluators. In-person meetings will be limited to 3 or 4 scheduled periods following the one-week (7 day) period.

What if I believe there was a mistake that took place during the process?

We understand that the outcome of tryouts might not always be what you had hoped for. However, team selections are final.

In the end, everyone will be on a team, and will have the chance to develop and enjoy playing this great sport.

If you would like to share your concerns and get a better understanding of why you ended up on your team, please contact the Hockey Development Director during the scheduled periods following team selection.

No information will be shared regarding another player.

Grievances will not be discussed on the phone. All contact regarding grievances will not be accepted until one week (7 days) after the completion of your level's final tryout session. Every player/parent who wishes to have a meeting to communicate their concerns will have the opportunity during the scheduled periods, as we value your feedback.

In any case, you should plan on attending your team practices as scheduled.



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APPENDIX



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Parent Code of Conduct

Waconia Hockey Association – Parent Agreement

Parents' Code of Conduct:

- I will remember that the game is for the children and not for the adults.
- I will encourage respect for the participants of the sport of hockey.
- I will be positive and supportive of each child's efforts, recognizing that each child is an individual and each possesses different skills and abilities.
- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support and behavior toward all players, coaches, officials, and other parents/spectators at every game or practice, whether it's my child's team event or another youth athletic event.
- I will remember that the development of hockey skills through practice and perseverance is more important than winning hockey games.
- I will remember that winning of hockey games is less important than developing skills and attitudes that may serve our children throughout their lives.
- I will stay out of the locker room before and after practices and games. This time is the team's and the coaches'. Dress them and leave.
- I will demand that my child participate in a safe and healthy environment.
- I will demand that my child's coaches be trained and certified by USA Hockey, and that the coaches meet the standards of behavior set forth by USA Hockey.
- I agree to pay all fees and expenses when due, to timely transport or arrange for transportation to all team events, to communicate with the appropriate parties any problems or requirements that may arise, and to help the team in any manner that I am asked or able to provide.
- I agree to abide by the policies of USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey and the WHA regarding sexual and physical abuse; anti-discrimination; and alcohol, drugs and tobacco usage. I will demand compliance by my child as a condition of participation.
- I agree that I will support the emotional and physical well being of all the participants on my child's team, ahead of any personal desire to win games or any desire for personal reflected glory.
- I agree to that final payment, or arrangement approved by the Executive Board, is required in order for players to participate in, but not inclusive: end of year festivals, jamborees, and/or districts. Failure to do so will prevent the player(s) from participating.

Most important, I pledge to commit my efforts to my child and his/her team members, coaches, team officials, and team member parents to make the hockey experience a positive, fun experience, one that will generate a lifelong love for the game of hockey.

Grievance Procedure:

Procedures to be followed for discussion and resolution of all problems, concerns and formal grievance after a 24-hour cool-down period:

Step 1 – Problems or concerns that have to do with coaching or the team (e.g., playing time, position, practice, code of conduct, etc.) should be taken to the team manager of the respective team who will attempt to resolve the problem with the coach.

Step 2 – If the player/parent does not consider the coach's answer adequate or if the nature of the problem is such that the player/parent prefers not to discuss it with the coach or team manager, the matter can be taken directly to the ACE coordinator, mite coordinator or the Girls' Program coordinator.

Step 3 – If satisfaction is not obtained in Step 2, a written grievance should be filed with the WHA president or vice president. The written grievance should outline the specifics of the incident or issue, including factual events, the names of parties involved and witnesses. Once the letter is received, an investigation will be conducted and appropriate action taken per the Grievance Procedure process discussed above.

Parent's Signature

Parent's Signature

Printed Name & Date

Printed Name & Date



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Player Code of Conduct

Waconia Hockey Association – Player Agreement

Players' Code of Conduct:

- I will attend all scheduled practices and games unless I notify the team manager/coaches in advance.
- I understand that playing time in games is a privilege to be earned by my behavior regarding practice. I pledge to attend all practices and display a positive attitude and a strong effort. I will practice hard and play hard.
- I will be respectful of my coaches and listen when I am spoken to.
- I will respect the property and equipment of others, whether it is my teammates' or others, at my home arena or at another facility.
- I will be respectful of all team members, coaches, parents, officials and members of other teams. I will treat people as I would wish to be treated.
- I will encourage good sportsmanship and play "clean" hockey.
- I agree to abide by the policies of USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey and the WHA regarding sexual and physical abuse; anti-discrimination; and alcohol, drugs and tobacco usage.
- I understand that I am responsible for my own actions and the consequences of my actions on and off the ice. Therefore, I pledge to set a positive example of behavior in all settings (e.g., team membership, in the community, at school, etc.), and I will accept the consequences when such behavior is compromised.
- I will be respectful of my teammates, coaches, and team parents and make every effort to make the hockey experience a fun and positive experience.

Sportsmanship Agreement:

I/We have reviewed the Waconia Hockey Association Guidebook (available at www.waconiahockey.org) containing, among other topics, the USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey and Waconia Hockey Association policies regarding Sexual Abuse; Physical Abuse; Anti-Discrimination; Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco Usage; and Zero-Tolerance Conduct; the WHA Parents, Players and Coaches Codes of Conduct; and the WHA Grievance Procedure. I/We agree to abide by the policies and rules of USA Hockey, Minnesota Hockey and Waconia Hockey Association (an affiliate of USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey). Literature containing the complete policies and rules of USA Hockey and Minnesota Hockey are available upon request from the respective organizations. USA Hockey may be contacted at www.usahockey.com and Minnesota Hockey at www.minnesotahockey.org.

Parent's Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Second Parent's Signature (Optional) _____

Printed Name _____

Date _____

Player Signature (Squirt, Peewee, Bantam, U10, U12, U15) _____