



*WELCOME TO TRAVEL HOCKEY!*

TRAVEL TRYOUTS 101



## Our mission:

For more than 50 years, the mission of the Eden Prairie Hockey Association (EPHA) has been to provide our athletes with the best possible age-appropriate training and coaching.

The EPHA is established to teach the fundamentals of hockey along with the development of winning character and attitudes.

Learn more about [\*The Eden Prairie Way\*](#)



## Our tryout objective:

The EPHA's objective is to ensure a fair and equitable tryout process, where every player has the best opportunity to showcase their skills.

We are committed to creating an environment where the best interests of each child are considered, with the aim to place them on a team that not only aligns with their skill level, but also provides optimal opportunities for growth and development.



## How to stay informed

- All information will be posted on [ephockey.com/registration/tryouts](http://ephockey.com/registration/tryouts).
- Updates are made daily, please confirm details morning of your skate, as schedules are subject to change.
- Be sure to check the rink assignment and player lists.
- The website will be the only communication method of schedule, player lists and other changes.



*A player will not be permitted on the ice without a tethered mouthguard and a neck guard. Failure to comply with all tryout uniform rules may result in a missed tryout session.*

## Advance preparation for tryouts

- **BLACK HELMET WITH CAGE or SHIELD**
  - All non-EPHA provided stickers and any numbers should be removed from helmets
  - This includes identifying stickers, marks or insignia from summer hockey teams, AAA, camps flair, etc.
  - Goalie helmet wraps are excluded from this clause (within reason)
- **NECK GUARD and MOUTHGUARD (with tether, attached to helmet) are mandatory**
- **BLACK BREEZERS**
- **JERSEY and SOCKS**
  - Must be plain white, red or black or combo of those colors, without names, identifying words or marks
  - Jerseys in the colors noted above may be worn inside-out are permitted provided identifying information is not visible.
  - Socks from a previous EPHA season are permitted.
- **GLOVES**
  - Must be red or black or combo of those colors.
- **TRYOUT PINNIE**



*Pinnie(s) will remain with player for the entirety of the tryout process. Please confirm the pinnie is in the bag before you arrive.*

## Day of tryout preparation

- Players will check-in starting 30 minutes before every skate at the check-in table
  - Sign name, check for accuracy, confirm correct pinnie number and color for each skate
  - Bantams/15U will declare their desired position at each check-in (F, D or F/D)
- Pinnie number and color assignment will be checked multiple times before each tryout session
- Pinnies will be collected at the end of tryouts. If your player inadvertently takes their pinnie home, it must be returned ASAP or you will be charged \$50.00.
- Squirt/10U parents will be allowed to assist with skate tying. Your player must EXIT the locker room to get their skates tied. *Parents will not be allowed in the rink 15 minutes prior to the start of the tryout ice time.*



- **EPHA Tryouts are closed to the public**
- Who is allowed in the Eagles Nest during tryouts?
  - Executive Committee Members\*
  - Session facilitators
  - Computer support
  - Board Members who have been pre-approved by the Executive Committee
  - Evaluators and Pre-registered Tryout Volunteers
  - Tryout EMT

***\*Please note:** Members of the Executive Committee will not be in the Eagles Nest when their player's level is in session. At minimum, the President and/or Vice President will remain on site, elsewhere in the EPCC, in case there is an injury or other emergency requiring immediate attention.*



**The Eden Prairie Hockey Association (EPHA) is a volunteer run non-profit.**

Your board is comprised entirely of volunteers who **also** have players participating in the tryout process.

During the tryout process, it is essential that there be no unnecessary contact or communication between players, parents, evaluators, commissioners, and coaches. This includes, but is not limited to, tryout staff communicating with players' parents. A person found in violation of this policy, will be removed from tryouts, the full Board will determine the appropriate action.





## Tryout absence policy

1. Full or Partial Absence During Tryouts due to excused absence, illness, injury or participation in MN Hockey Sanctioned Programs.
2. If a player is injured, ill, participating in a required school function tied to a graded part of their curriculum, or participating in a MN Hockey sanctioned program a signed note must be provided from a licensed physician, healthcare professional, MN Hockey Program Coordinator or appropriate school representative.
3. If a player must miss tryouts due to a reason not listed above, a request for an excused absence must be made in writing to the Vice President no later than 7 days prior to the start of tryouts. The request will be reviewed and the final decision shared back with the family prior to the start of tryouts. Every effort must be made to attend all tryout sessions, and excused absences will only be granted in extenuating circumstances.
4. In the event no tryout grade is recorded a 'comp grade' will be collected.  
To obtain a 'comp grade' the Vice President will consult with the coaches of the previous season who will advise of three compatible players from the team who are most similar in skill to the absent player. A 'comp grade' given that will be the average score of those three like players.
5. In the event of a partial grade: If the player has recorded one to three grades, the Vice President will consult with the coaches of the previous season and shall place the player in the appropriate pool, with consideration of their past EPHA history.
6. In the event of an unexcused absence: A grade of zero will be given for the tryout session that is missed.



## Tryout Process Enhancements

- Discussion with current coaches, board members and non-association coaches/board members
- Analysis of best practices across associations and in accordance with Minnesota Hockey recommendations
- Parent survey feedback
- Incremental changes discussed and approved by Hockey Development Committee

## Changes

- Ban/PW
  - Game like scrimmages with addition of refs
  - Extended scrimmage time to 75 minutes
- Pushing back Squirt/10U tryouts
- Modification of skill day drills all levels



## WHAT ARE THE EVALUATORS LOOKING FOR?

**Evaluators will look at the following criteria before providing a cumulative score:**

**SKATERS:** Skating, stickhandling, shooting, passing and hockey IQ, as well as defensive play, offensive play and compete level.

**GOALIES:** Skating and movement, angles and positioning, recovery and rebounds, glove and blocker, speed and reaction time will be evaluated in skills and scrimmages.



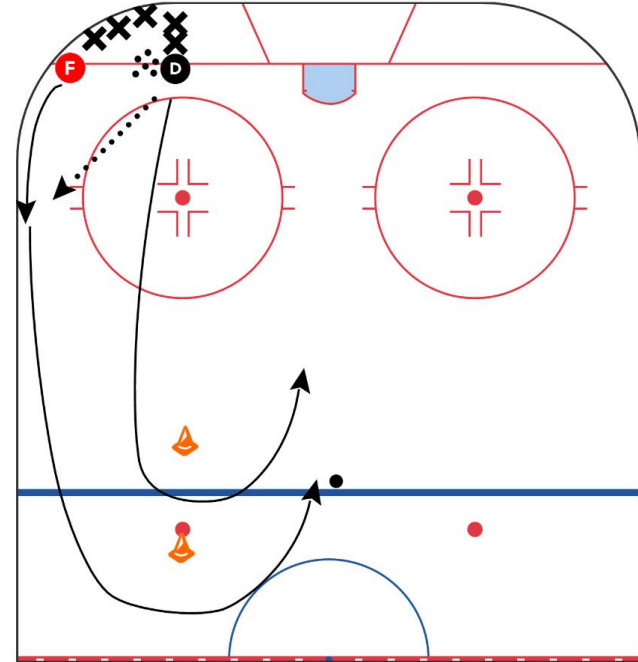
# Example: PW and BAN

## Drill 2: 1v1

- Forward starts in corner and receives pass from the Defense. Both continue to skate to the neutral zone, turning back for a 1v1
- Defense tracking the forward gapping up

### *What's being Evaluated?*

Puck control, passing accuracy, receiving passes, gap control, timing, shooting





## Scrimmages

- Format may be 4 vs. 4 or 5 vs. 5
- Scrimmages skill objectives: Hockey IQ, puck support, communication, puck movement, offensive and defensive play, compete level.
- For Squirt/10U
  - Shifts will be signaled with the scoreboard buzzer – typically 1 minute in duration.
  - Players will be assigned rotational positions by the bench attendant
- For Peewees they will shift on the fly and skaters will play roughly two periods at forward and one period at D
- For Bantams skaters will shift on the fly and play declared positions
- Experienced bench attendants will monitor lengths of shifts
- Players will not be graded on positions as Center or Defense per se, but rather how they play offensively, defensively, with/without the puck, and adjust to situational play.
- Points and goals scored during tryouts are not effective criteria for evaluation.



## **Players will be scored by a panel of expert evaluators**

- Evaluators are highly respected coaches, former high-level players, and other hockey authorities with youth hockey experience in MN
- We strive to achieve a balance of paid EPHA coaches and HDC members and coaches and players from outside EPHA
- 6-8 evaluators will evaluate at each session
- If a pre-named non-paid parent coach attends evaluations for the level they've been asked to coach, they can observe the session, but are not allowed to score
- Every attempt is made to minimize bias or conflict of interest with evaluators



## Tryout scoring will be completed in Team Genius

- Evaluators will not see player names at any time during the evaluation process.
- Evaluators may elect to jot scores on paper, but all scores will be entered into Team Genius by the evaluator with their personal device.
- Once an evaluation score is posted, it automatically propagates into the evaluation software. Once posted, a score cannot be changed unless the evaluator changes the score using his/her original device.
- Once all scores have been entered, the highest and the lowest scores will be removed and the player receives a single “averaged score” for that session.
- After confirming that all evaluators have finished entering scores for every player, the session is locked. Once a session is locked, scores cannot be changed or amended.
- After all sessions are completed, the player will receive a single “averaged score”, which determines their player rank.



## TRYOUT SCORING PROGRAM :: TEAM GENIUS SAMPLE



Scores and Ra

### Results

Override Weights

Evaluators

ALL SCORES

AGGREGATE SCORES

RANKINGS AND TEAM PLACEMENT

PLAYER ASSIGNMENTS

Search...

Manage Teams

Export

Reports

Settings

Help

Player Pool	#	Name	Eval Group	Scrimmage 1	Scrimmage 2	Scrimmage 3	Team Placement	Comments	Position	EP Unique ID
TEAM LEVEL LISTED HERE	PLAYER NAME OR NUMBER LISTED HERE	Scrimmage Day 3		85.71	88.10	91.43	88.41			364
		Scrimmage Day 3			88.10		88.10			
		Scrimmage Day 3		81.63	88.10	94.29	88.00			344
		Scrimmage Day 3		85.71	85.71	91.43	87.62			345
		Scrimmage Day 3		87.76	83.33	85.71	85.60			347
		Scrimmage Day 3		81.63	80.95	91.43	84.67			350
		Scrimmage Day 3		67.35	83.33	88.57	79.75			363
		Scrimmage Day 3		75.51	78.57		77.04			351
		Scrimmage Day 3		73.47	76.19	80.00	76.55			349
		Scrimmage Day 3		77.55	71.43	77.14	75.37			354
		Scrimmage Day 3		69.39	73.81	82.86	75.35			365
		Scrimmage Day 3			73.81		73.81			
		Scrimmage Day 3		77.55	64.29	77.14	72.99			348







## SCORING PERCENTAGES

Session	Type	Score	Notes
<b>Session 1</b>	Skills		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Player groups are divided alphabetically</li><li>• Competitive Drills</li><li>• Skills session are graded and will be used to divide players into Session 2 scrimmage groups</li></ul>
<b>Session 2</b>	Scrimmage 1	33%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Player group list is determined by skills score</li></ul>
<b>Session 3</b>	Scrimmage 2	33%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Player group list is determined by scrimmage 1 score</li></ul>
<b>Bantam &amp; PeeWee AA Team Selections (coaches game and selection)</b>			
<b>Session 4</b>	Scrimmage 3	33%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Player group list is determined by the cumulative scores of scrimmage 1 and 2</li></ul>
<b>A/B/C Level Team Selection (optional coaches games/scrimmages)</b>			

*\*Please note: Every attempt will be made to keep similar player numbers at each session. In the case where player scores indicate a clear break, the lists will be amended accordingly.*



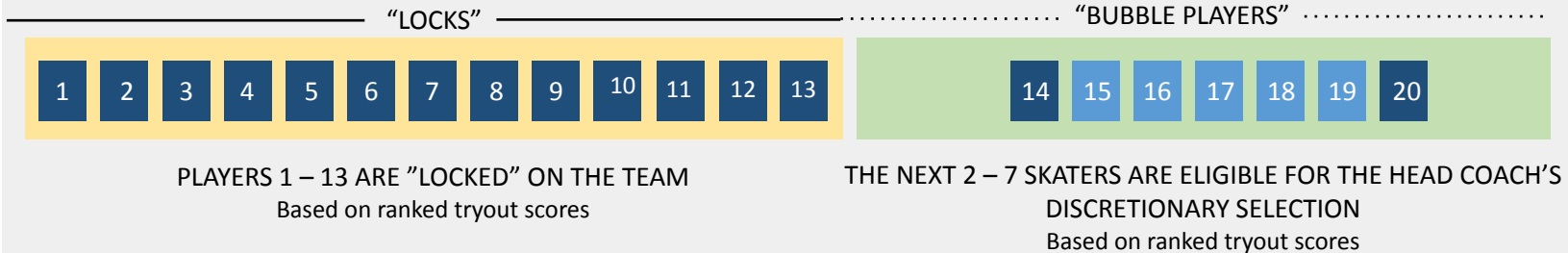
## "LOCK" VS. "BUBBLE" AND THE TEAM SELECTION PROCESS

### HIRED COACH SELECTION PROCESS



**A player who is not in the top 20 players by ranking score will not be available for selection by the coach.**

### NON-PAID PARENT COACH SELECTION PROCESS



**These numbers are based on a 15 player roster. They will be adjusted to accommodate actual roster numbers.**



# Hockey Development Committee

- New structure with age level leads
- Meeting monthly since May
- Key Projects and Decisions
  - Leveling
  - Coaches Selection
  - Preseason Clinic Structure
  - Tryouts
  - Player development Model/Framework



# Travel Teams

## Youth:

Bantam (4)

Peewee (5)

Squirts (6)

## Girls:

15U (2 co-op)

12U (4 total co-op)

10U (2-3)



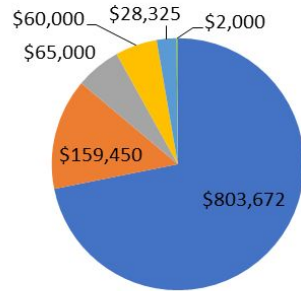
## Treasurer Report

- **2.3% average increase to registration fees for the 24-25 season**
  - **Most levels stayed flat**
  - Some levels increased but typically with associated increase in ice hours
  - **Rising costs:** Audits, District fees, travel tournaments, hourly ice cost, and home tournament expenses for ice, referees and EMTs
  - **Savings offset:** Reduced spend on jerseys, sponsorship, charitable gambling, increased number of travel players

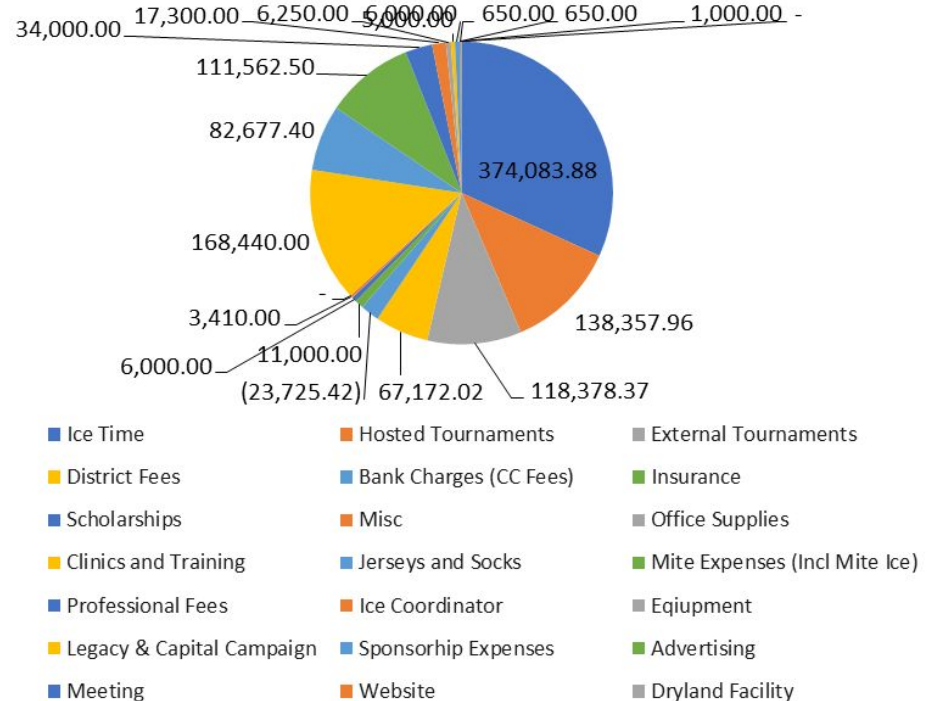


## 2025/2026 FEE AND EXPENSE STRUCTURE

Revenue Breakdown '25-'26



- Registration Fees
- Tournament Income
- Charitable Gaming
- Sponsorship Fees
- Supplemental Ice Rental
- Volunteer Buyout





# Charitable gambling

- Minnesota Charitable Gaming allowable expenditures
- \$50,000 loan repayment
- Gambling Taxes (gross receipts minus prizes)

The four-tier tax rates are:

- 9% on the first \$87,500 in net receipts
- 18% on net receipts over \$87,500 and less than \$122,500
- 27% on net receipts over \$122,500 and less than \$157,500
- 36% on net receipts over \$157,500



**PLAY PULL TABS!**  
**The proceeds benefit:**



**OLD CHICAGO**  
PIZZA + TAPROOM





# New initiatives:

## Goalie Support

- First Year as full time Goalie Squirt/10U registration fees waived
- Increased discount at all other levels

## New EPHA Player Mite/8U 1.2 and Termites

- \$99 first year promotion

## Coming Soon- Early Edge Morning Skate

- Morning hockey skills program designed to build edgework, agility, and puck control
- Twelve, 30 minute sessions
- Additional cost



## **Parent and Player Expectations**

In conjunction with MN Hockey, our association and teams will commit to the following:

1. Not making discriminatory comments or committing discriminatory actions towards anyone
2. Being an ally to teammates if someone makes a discriminatory comment or takes a discriminatory action against them
3. Being inclusive to all

All Players, Coaches and Parents will sign Codes of Conduct during the season kick-off team meetings.

Violations will be taken seriously and dealt with by the EPHA disciplinary committee and MN Hockey.



## Volunteer DIBS

- All families at the Junior Gold, Bantam/15U, Peewee/12U, Squirt/10U and shall perform twelve (12) hours of volunteer service per player for the season.
- All families at the Mite/8U levels 3 and 4 shall perform six (6) hours of volunteer service hours per player per season.
- 12 hours of DIBS per skater, capped at 24 hours per family.
- [Volunteer DIBS](#) have started to be posted - check ephockey.com → [DIBS](#) to sign up!
- Failure to complete or sign up for DIBS timely will result in a FINE for hours not completed, and inability for player to participate in post-season play.
- Start your GameSheet and game clock training early - [simulator training](#) available online

## POD = Parent on Duty

- All non-Mite/8U teams are required to have a POD inside the locker room at all times
- Same-sex PODs are required to be in the locker room when the coaches are not.
- COMPLETE your Background Check and [SafeSport](#) ASAP.



## What else?

- Practices will begin immediately after teams are formed. Players should expect to be on the ice 3-5 times per week in October.
- Travel teams will play in 3-4 tournaments per year, with at least one being out of town. Some tournaments (in or out of town) may start on Thursday.
- EPHA will provide players with home & away game jerseys & socks and a practice jersey. Current season Game Jerseys and Socks are not to be worn at practice.
- All Travel Players should be able to tie (or working towards tying) their own skates and carrying their own bags.
- If you have time, energy and ideas - join the EPHA Board. Elections will be held in March. Meeting are the second Monday of the month. This year there will be 6 rolling off.



# RINK RALLY WEEK

## 3rd Annual Brian's Ultimate Safety Meeting

- Sunday, October 5th from 2:00-6:00 pm
- Chanhassen Legion → Tickets at Door
- Enjoy Food, Drinks, and More!
- Proceeds will go to EPHA for further support of initiatives.



## Eagles Unite

- Wednesday, October 8th Time TBD
- Travel players Kickoff Event

## Girls Hockey Day

- Saturday, October 11th 2:15pm Rink 2
- On ice event celebrating girls hockey



# Additional Announcements:

## Flash Gear Sale- Happening Now

- Rink 3 Eagles Nest 4:00-6:30pm
- Used hockey gear sale, vintage EPHA jerseys, and swag

## EPHA Player, Parent and Fan Gear

- Will re-open September 29
- Order details will be posted to [www.ephockey.com](http://www.ephockey.com)



FIRST POINT OF CONTACT IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS

# *2025-2026 Travel Commissioners*

Commissioner Director  
John Pike

Bantam

Alli Larson

Peewee

Melissa Ekstrand

Squirt

Amy Ruetz

15U

Linn Buchanan

12U

Ashley Bothwell

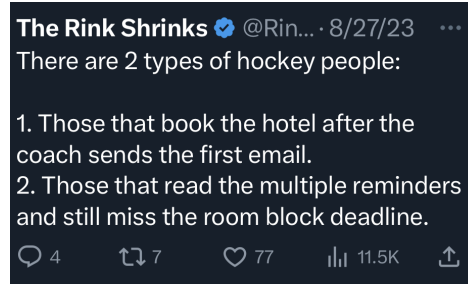
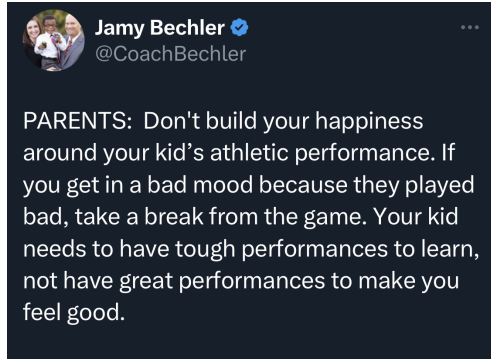
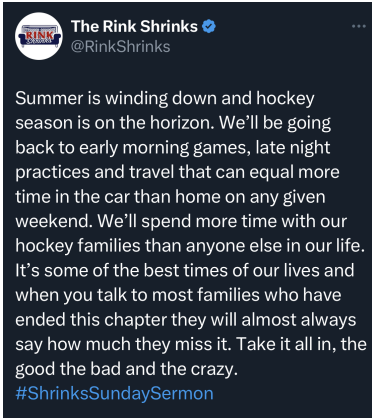
10U

Jill Oertel



# PARTING THOUGHTS

- Control what you can!
  - Make sure your players have GOOD FOOD, SLEEP, and HYDRATION!
- Be supportive
- Model good behavior
- Enjoy the journey







QUESTION + ANSWER