

SMHA House Division/Recreational Hockey Equal Ice Time Policy

Key factors/principles leading to the creation and implementation of the equal play policy:

- a) SMHA identified a need to inspire and support coaches to continue to develop all players strengths and weaknesses rather than focusing on developing strong players and forsaking those deemed to be weaker.
 - b) SMHA is dedicated to creating an environment that has a strong focus on the player and what they are taking away from the game at any given time. If the players experiences are negative, they are less likely to continue on in the sport and will be more likely to seek other recreational activities.
 - c) SMHA values player development over game results.
 - d) SMHA vision for equal play policy: All players-All lines-Every opportunity.
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- 1. It is the policy of the Board of Directors of SMHA that all players receive equal ice time while participating in any and all SMHA sanctioned Class B (House League) games and practices. This includes tournaments, play downs, playoffs and championship games. This is not stopwatch accuracy. For example, Defensemen may play 50% of a game while forwards may play 30%. If a team has five players on the bench the coach should not be double-shifting people.
 - 2. For all House League games in the Mite and Squirt divisions, the equal ice time policy will be applied for all three periods. For all House League games in Peewee, Bantams and Midget divisions, the equal ice time policy will be applied during the 1st and 2nd periods- after the first half of the 3rd period ice time will be left to the coach's discretion. One exception will be made to the equal playing time rule and that is to the coaches discretion of Bantam and Midgets for Districts and States.
 - 3. Travel teams do not have to follow the equal ice time policy, although the Board recommends that they do.
 - 4. Each incident that has been witnessed and documented on paper by a SMHA board member will result in the following disciplinary actions being applied to the coach. 1st offense will be a verbal warning. 2nd offense will be a game suspension for that coach. 3rd offense will result in removal of the coach.
 - 5. As a parent, you have the responsibility to understand the challenges of equal playing time and speak up if you feel it is abused. Give our coaches some latitude and consider your position over at least 3 games. Please dont bring your stopwatch to the game. We respectfully ask parents to realize that it is impossible for all players to receive the exact same number of shifts or minutes of play time in a single game. Many times the shift length depends on whistles or what end the puck is in. We should strive to have equal and fair play time over 2-3 games.