
**Policies & Procedures
of the
Vancouver Thunderbird
Minor Hockey Association**

P-9

REP PLAYER SELECTION

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A. Introduction

1. The rep player selection process by its nature dictates that not all applicants will be selected. This may be a stressful time, not only for the players and their parents, but also for the coaches and other volunteers who each year must co-ordinate this facet of our association's program. The goal of this policy is to help all participants understand the process, as well as their individual rights and responsibilities.

B. Registration for Rep Tryouts

1. Players wanting to attend the rep tryouts must indicate this on their registration documents. Any player who decides to participate in rep tryouts after registering shall contact the Administrator seeking to amend his or her registration documents not later than 4:00 pm on August 15. Whether such a request can be accommodated will depend upon availability of space at the time the request is made.

2. A player registering for rep tryouts must elect to try out for either goalie or skater. Those who elect to try out as skaters in the Peewee, Bantam or Midget divisions will be asked to further indicate a preference to play either forward or defence. A player will be assessed based on their position preference until practice groups are formed where coaches may ask a player to play forward or defence depending on the needs of the team.

3. Before participating in the rep tryout sessions, players must be fully registered with the VTMHA, have paid all required fees, and have met all requirements of the PCAHA, BC Hockey, Hockey Canada and the IIHF in order to play rep hockey with the VTMHA.

4. For rep tryouts in Bantam and above, every player (other than a goaltender) who has not played bodychecking hockey in the past must have completed a VTMHA bodychecking clinic or provide written proof of completion of a bodychecking clinic from another qualified organization.

5. Players who have not completed the requirements in this section will not be allowed on the ice for a rep tryout session.

C. General Procedures

1. Rep tryouts consist of several on-ice sessions that evaluate the players' skills and abilities.

2. A schedule for the rep tryout sessions will be prepared following the close of the registration period (August 15) of each year and will be posted online on the Thunderbirds website with email notification sent to all registered players.

3. In preparation for the tryouts, the Administrator will prepare lists of all those who applied for rep hockey (by division) and will provide that list to the Executive Director and Director of Rep Hockey. Players will be divided in each division into groups of approximately equal size for the initial evaluation session.

4. Following the initial assessment, players will be divided into tiered groups for the

remainder of the ice sessions with players being evaluated within their group to determine player movements from one stage to the next.

5. At the start of each tryout session, each player will be issued a numbered jersey for identification during the rep tryouts. Jersey numbers will be assigned to each player by the Executive Director or by a person designated by her or him.

A Selection Committee shall oversee the evaluation of all players prior to the formation of Practice Groups. It will be comprised of a minimum of two external evaluators with no other connection to VTMHA, the non-parent Head Coaches, and the potential parent coaches who may be assigned as Head Coaches at the completion of the tryout process. Coaches will only participate in the evaluation of the age division they will be coaching in with the potential exception of a coach who is also Association staff. The Executive Director will ensure that an independent goaltender assessor, who has no link to any player participating in the tryouts, attends at least one session with each division in order to provide his or her assessment of the goaltenders.

D. Attendance At Rep Tryouts

1. All players trying out for rep hockey must attend all rep tryouts applicable to that player, which usually are scheduled to commence approximately a week prior to Labour Day.

2. Players who do not attend all applicable tryouts will forfeit their opportunity to play rep hockey for that season and will immediately be registered for C level hockey in their division except as provided in this section.

3. A player who has registered for rep hockey but is unable to attend a rep tryout session due to sickness or injury must provide, not later than 2 hours prior to their next scheduled ice session, a letter from a physician confirming this. In such circumstances:

- a. If the player's injury prevents the player from completing the tryout process, the player will be assessed by the rep coaches for that division, the Executive Director and the Director of Rep Hockey after the earliest medical approval date provided it is prior to the final ice session scheduled before final team assignments are determined.
- b. A rep coach may hold a position on his or her team if he or she is positive that the player, as shown from his or her past history, would make that team. This must be approved by the Executive Director and the Director of Rep Hockey, based on input from all of the rep coaches in that division.
- c. A position may only be held for an injured player if the player has a doctor's certificate indicating that the player is expected to be able to play hockey by October 31 of the current season.
- d. If a position is held for an injured player, then the player must pay the applicable rep tryout fees prior to playing with the team.

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- e. If a position is held for an injured player, then the player must attend all team functions (ice sessions, meetings, etc) even though they cannot participate on the ice. They may be asked to assist the team in other manners and must agree to doing so.
4. A player who has registered for rep hockey but is unable to attend a rep tryout session due to work related obligations must provide to the Executive Director, in advance of the session to be missed, a letter from that player's employer. If work-related obligations require a player to miss more than one session, then the continued participation of that player in the rep tryout sessions shall be at the discretion of the Director of Rep Hockey, in consultation with the Executive Director.
5. A player who has registered for rep hockey at the Midget or Juvenile level may miss a rep tryout session due to conflicting attendances at major midget or junior team tryouts but is required to notify the association a minimum of 2 hours prior to the ice time.
6. A player who has registered for rep hockey but is unable to attend a rep tryout session due to exceptional personal circumstances must seek permission in advance of the session to be missed by way of a letter (which includes electronic mail) addressed to the Director of Rep Hockey and/or the Executive Director. The Director of Rep Hockey, in consultation with the Executive Director, shall determine whether to approve the request. Failure to attend a rep tryout session because of holiday travel will not be considered acceptable.

E. Procedure at Rep Tryout Sessions

1. The plans for the on-ice sessions will be designed by the Executive Director in consultation with the rep coaches who are evaluating the players. The plans may incorporate various combinations of hockey drills as well as scrimmages in order to allow the coaches to appropriately assess the players. If approved by the VTMHA Board, the plans may also incorporate a skills assessment provided by an independent third party provider. Later in the process, exhibition games will also be used as rep tryout sessions.
2. The Executive Director will ensure that there are qualified coaches overseeing all rep tryout sessions.
3. Players must wear all protective equipment, including a CHA approved neck guard, during tryouts. Any player found not wearing all of the required protective equipment must be sent off the ice and must not be permitted to return until he/she has put on the missing approved equipment.
4. Players must wear their assigned rep tryout jersey during all on-ice sessions.
5. The Executive Director shall endeavour to set up the viewing areas in such a manner as to discourage contact or discussion between parents or players and those evaluating the players. Evaluators will maintain separation from each other during the ice sessions and will submit their rankings prior to the group discussion.

6. It is extremely important during the evaluation that the rep coaches and others involved in evaluating the players be neutral in their public comments and actions to avoid misunderstandings with players or parents. They should only discuss player evaluations with other rep coaches, the Executive Director, and any independent evaluators. Parent coaches should not discuss player evaluations with their own children or family members under any circumstance.

F. Evaluation and Selection Criteria

1. The goal of the Rep Selection Policy is to fairly and consistently evaluate players for the purpose of tiering.

2. Player shall be assessed based on their performance in the rep tryout sessions, based on:

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| a) Skating | i) Hockey Sense |
| b) Passing / Receiving | j) Attitude |
| c) Puck Control | k) Desire and Work Ethic |
| d) Positional Play | l) Coachability |
| e) Scoring / Shooting | m) Conduct on/off the ice |
| f) Checking | n) Sportsmanship |
| g) Teamwork | o) Fitness |
| h) Competitiveness | |

3. In an effort to develop the rep program, the rep coaches in forming teams shall endeavour to have, overall, at least 33% first year players at each of the Atom, Peewee and Bantam levels, and at least 25% first year players at the Midget level. Any deviation from these ratios shall be subject to the approval of the Executive Director and the Director of Rep Hockey.

G. Evaluation Process – Conflicts of Interest

1. Notwithstanding anything said below with respect to the evaluation process, under no circumstances will a rep coach be involved in the evaluation of his or her own child. At no time in any stage of the selection process will a parent coach be involved in a selection conversation concerning their child. They will be required to leave the room when their child is being discussed.

2. In the event the Director of Rep Hockey has a child trying out for a rep team, an alternate Board Director will be assigned to oversee that age division(s).

3. No parent, friend or relative of a player participating in the rep tryout process shall offer any sponsorship, financial incentive or other benefit to a team or to the coach of a team in connection with or during the tryout process.

H. Evaluation Process

1. Ice Sessions

All players will participate in a minimum of 5 ice sessions during the selection process: an on-ice assessment, a skills practice and three scrimmages. Goaltenders will also attend a goalie specific evaluation session. For players assigned to a practice group, they should expect to have a minimum of three additional ice times consisting of internal scrimmages and external exhibition games.

2. Player Assignments

Throughout the process, player movement will occur based on players' performances within each tiered group. Movement may occur upward, lateral and/or downward dependent upon the tier level. Following the initial five ice sessions, players will be assigned to one of the two practice groups at each age division or be assigned to the C division for placement.

3. Practice Groups

Phase 1

Players assigned to practice groups will participate in two intra-group scrimmages, after which the coaches will be required to select the following total number of players to move to the next stage. These numbers will be determined each season by the Director of Rep Hockey and Executive Director based upon final registration numbers, however the target will be:

For Atom and Peewee:

A1 pool = 18 skaters and 3 goaltenders

A2 pool = 15 skaters and 2 goaltenders

A3 pool = 15 skaters and 2 goaltenders

A4 pool = 15 skaters and 2 goaltenders

For Bantam:

A1 pool = 18 skaters and 3 goaltenders

A2 pool = 15 skaters and 2 goaltenders

A3 pool = 15 skaters and 2 goaltenders

For Midget:

A1 pool = 18 skaters and 3 goaltenders

A2 pool = 15 skaters and 2 goaltenders

Phase 2

Coaches will be responsible for arranging a minimum of one exhibition game during this period. This will be their opportunity to assess a small group to identify their final selections for the season.

All players must be dressed for all exhibition games for A2, A3 or A4 teams. If an A1 team schedules two or more exhibition games, the coaches may choose to not dress all 18 skaters,

however no player should sit more than one game.

Following the exhibition games, coaches from all teams within a division will make the final selections and create final rosters.

4. Communication to Players

Prior to the start of tryouts and during the phase prior to the creation of the practice groups, all communication regarding player assignments will occur via the VTMHA website and/or email.

Immediately following the final ice sessions in each division prior to assignment to Practice Groups, in person interviews will be conducted with each player to inform them of their next assignment - Practice Group 1, Practice Group 2 or C Division.

Individual emails will be sent within 24 hours of the deciding ice time to all participants following the internal scrimmage stage and the final team assignments.

5. Decision deadline

Final assignments will be confirmed during a coaches' conference call no later than three (3) weeks following the start of the tryout process.

- a) Generally speaking, players released from the "A1" pool will be assigned to the "A2" pool, players released from the "A2" pool will be assigned to the "A3" pool, and players from the "A3" pool will be assigned to the "A4" pool, and players from the "A4" pool will be assigned to recreational hockey. No player who was among the Practice Group 1 skaters or goalies shall be assigned to recreational hockey for that year without the prior approval of the Executive Director and the Board.
- b) The recreational program relies on the rep program to release players to the recreational program in time to allow those players to be placed on recreational teams with minimal impact on the balancing process. Any variation in any of the deadlines above must be approved in advance by the Director of Rep Hockey. Any variation in the deadline provided for final releases to the recreational program must also be approved by the Director of Recreational and the Director of Player and Coach Development - Recreational.
- c) If a team has not made its final releases by the deadlines noted above, or any extension granted to those deadlines, then the Executive Director may make releases in order to bring the team to the approved roster size.
- d) Each head coach (or, if applicable, Executive Director) shall forthwith upon releasing a player (either to a different rep pool or to the recreational program) notify the following persons of the names of the released players:
 - the Director of Rep Hockey,
 - the Executive Director,
 - the Division Manager for that division,

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- the other rep coaches for that division (except in the case of a player released to the recreational program), and
 - the Director of Recreational Hockey (in the case of a player released to the recreational program).

I. Rostering

1. Rosters for all rep teams shall be submitted to the Administrator within 48 hours of the deadlines noted above for final releases.
2. No player will be rostered with a rep team unless and until the appropriate rep fees have been paid. A player who has failed to pay the rep fee after being asked to do so shall not practice or play with that rep team. In the event that non-payment continues for seven days following written notice of such failure to the parent or guardian of that player, then the player shall be immediately assigned to a recreational team.
3. No player will be rostered with a rep team until that player has submitted a signed commitment policy document (see Appendix A to Policy P8).
4. No release can be made after teams have been rostered without the permission of the Director of Rep Hockey. After this date, coaches are expected to make a commitment to work with each member of their team.

J. Self-Release

Decisions are made as to the numbers, sizes and composition of rep teams (and also of recreational teams) based on the number of players who have registered. Players who participate in rep tryouts, then leave the rep program, can cause significant difficulties to both the rep and recreational programs. As a result, the following restrictions have been imposed to minimize these situations:

- a. Any player who self-releases and leaves the VTMHA after commencement of the fourth rep tryout session will not be entitled to try out for the VTMHA rep program the subsequent year. For this purpose, any independent third party skills assessment does not count as a rep tryout session.
- b. Similarly, any player who self-releases to the recreational program more than seven days after the initial assignment to any pool may not be entitled to try out for the VTMHA rep program the following year.

K. Appeals

1. A player may appeal his/her release from a rep team. Any such appeal must:
 - be made by notice given to the Director of Rep Hockey and/or the Executive Director;
 - be given within 48 hours of the meeting at which the release was communicated;

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- be in writing (verbal appeals will not be accepted); and
 - clearly state the reasons for the appeal.
2. Such appeal may only be made on one of the following grounds:
 - the decision under appeal was influenced by bias;
 - irregularities in the process leading up to the original decision are such that an unjust result may have resulted; or
 - the decision was patently unreasonable.
 3. The notice shall be referred forthwith to the President and/or Executive Director, who shall appoint three persons to constitute a review panel (the “Panel”). The Panel shall be comprised of persons with no significant relationship with the appellant, who were not involved in the decision being reviewed, and who are free from bias or conflict.
 4. The Panel shall consider the information contained in the notice of appeal, speak with the rep coaches for that division and the Executive Director, and review the Selection Committee rankings from the initial tryout sessions and any independent third party skills assessment, and provide the appellant with an opportunity to make any further submissions.

The Panel shall consider whether any of the grounds of appeal noted above have been established and, if so, what an appropriate remedy might be, and shall render their decision within 72 hours of being appointed.

L. Players Returning from Junior or Major Midget

1. The VTMHA seeks to support those of its players who are interested in playing at the Junior or Major Midget levels, while also recognizing the importance of fairness and commitment to the players who are committed to and fully participate in the VTMHA’s rep tryout process.
2. A returning VTMHA player who registers with the VTMHA but who has also been carded with a Junior or Major Midget team, but is later released from the Junior or Major Midget team, may on request be placed on a VTMHA Midget rep team in accordance with the procedures set out in this section. In order to be eligible, the player must have participated in at least one of the initial three tryout sessions (unless excused in accordance with section D above). The player may apply to the Director of Rep Hockey for permission to participate on a VTMHA Midget rep team in which case the Director of Rep Hockey will consult with the Midget rep coaches and the Executive Director.
3. In the event that the application is received prior to final releases being made from a Midget rep team, the player may be considered for inclusion on that team in accordance with the criteria set out in section F above.
4. In the event that the application is received after final releases have been made but before October 31, then the Director of Rep Hockey, with approval of the VTMHA Board, may

authorize the addition of that player to a team. In deciding on any such application, the VTMHA Board shall consider the number of players already rostered on that team, any long term injuries suffered by players on that team, the impact of adding a player on playing time and overall hockey experience of those already rostered on the team, and the historical commitment of the player to the VTMHA rep program. A player added to a team pursuant to this section must be an addition to the initial roster size, subject to the permitted maximum. No player shall be released from a Midget rep team as a result of the addition of a player pursuant to this section.