



Knights Hockey Club

2023-24

Evaluation & Player

Placement Manual

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Placement Program Objectives and Philosophy

The Knights Hockey Club placement process is a fundamental component of the overall hockey program. The Placement Program Operations Manual (the “Manual”) is approved by The Knights Hockey Club in accordance with the Hockey Calgary “Return to Play” program. We recommend all members read the manual thoroughly and contact the VP On-Ice or the Evaluation Team to answer any questions you may have.

The objective of the Placement Program is to provide each player with a fair, impartial, and consistent process to be placed with players of like skill, resulting in the best chance to develop their hockey skills, and understanding of the game. Teams will be formed which maintain a skill balance where players can develop, participate equitably, and have fun playing hockey. All placement policies and processes are developed to ensure players are given opportunity and are in the best interests of every Knights Hockey player.

Parent Expectations:

- We have instituted a **no spectator policy**; however, we will not be covering the glass for the KHC player placement program for the U9 to U18 age groups. We ask that parents respect this policy and do not attempt to enter the ice surface area during the player placement skates.
- Any spectator issues arising will be sent to the VP of Safety and Governance for review.
- Read all communication distributed by the Evaluation Team and The Knights Hockey Club. Attend the mandatory Evaluation Town Hall.
- Ensure you and your player understand the process. Evaluations personnel will be available at the facility to answer any questions. They will be identifiable by a lanyard that states they are a member of the evaluation team.
- Practice proper sports etiquette and adhere to the principles outlined in Respect in Sport. Each family is required to have a complete updated RIS certification.
- Abide by any special facility guidelines regarding pre and post ice time process and parent attendance.
- **DO NOT** approach evaluators with questions about rankings or marks. Evaluation information is kept confidential. Should you have questions, please contact your Division Age Group Evaluation Coordinator or the Director of Evaluations. Performance testing results will be made available by request.
- Assist your player in being prepared. Ensure your player is at the rink 30 minutes before their scheduled ice time and ready 5 minutes before their ice time. This will give on-ice instructors and age group coordinators the chance to explain the session to the players. Additionally, performance testing demonstration videos

will be available at knightshc.ca and on our social media prior to the commencement of evaluation.

- Check equipment fits properly, and skates are sharpened before their session. Kids change sizes over the summer and their safety is important.
- Stay positive and support your player through the process. They will perform at their best when stress is lower.

Due to the no spectator in rink policy, KHC will have LIVEBARN available for viewing during the placement program. Livebarn videos will not be used or considered as part of placement reviews.

As per the Knights Hockey Club Electronic Device Policy, no photos or video inside the players dressing room are permitted. Photos of sign-in sheets are prohibited.

Player Expectations:

- Be prepared for evaluation skates by arriving 30 minutes early and be fully dressed on the bench inside the dressing room 5 minutes prior to start time
- Be respectful to on ice staff, volunteers and other players. Demonstrate good sportsmanship on and off the ice.
- Be respectful of the performance testing equipment. This is sensitive, calibrated laser equipment. Horseplay around the equipment will not be tolerated.
- Do YOUR best and have fun. Perform the drills to the best of your ability.
- Understand the process for your age-appropriate level. Ask questions of the on-ice team and evaluation volunteers when you need clarification.
- No alcohol, marijuana (in any form), other illicit drugs, nicotine or vaping is permitted in the rink. Suspensions will occur if this policy is not followed.

The Process

A process will be utilized to ensure efficient and effective placement of players in all age groups. These groups provide the opportunity for evaluators to assess the players during the process. Target group sizes will be between 20-30 players. Initial group sizes will vary based on final registration numbers, and in the case of U13, U15 & U18, position declaration.

U7 Age Group:

- Skate #1
 - Players will be divided alphabetically for their initial evaluation session.
 - Players will participate in various age-appropriate drills
- Skate #2
 - Players will be separated into groups based on skill
 - Players will participate in various age-appropriate drills

Players will be placed on teams after skate #2 as the objective of U7 is to create parity teams for optimal development. This is in accordance with Hockey Canada and Hockey Calgary process and procedures.

U9 Age Group:

- Skate #1 & #2
 - Players will be placed in groups based on birth year and division played last season. (Note: depending on registration number and group sizes there may be instances when a player is placed in a group with a different birth year.)
 - Players will participate in 2 Performance Tests
 - Skate #1 is without puck
 - Skate #2 is with the puck, if possession of the puck is lost during the drill, the player must retrieve the puck to continue.
- Skate #3 & #4 – Game play sessions
 - Players will participate in 2 game play session sessions
 - Upon completion of the 2 game play session sessions, players will be placed on their tiered teams

U11 – U13 Age Groups:

- Skate #1 - Performance Testing
 - Players will be placed in groups based on birth year and division played last season. (Note: depending on registration number and group sizes there may be instances when a player is placed in a group with a different birth year.)
 - Players will be placed into game play session groups based on their results in the performance testing session.
 - Best overall performance test score (combined score with and without puck) will be used, and each player will have an opportunity to improve

their performance score if they make a mistake. If a player loses possession of the puck while performing a drill, **they must retrieve the puck and continue.**

- Players will then advance into 2 Small Area Skill Sessions and 2 game play skates (games)
- Skate #2 - #5 – Game Play Sessions
 - Players will participate in 2 game play sessions and 2 small area skill sessions.
 - We are aiming to eliminate multiple skate times in a given day, however, at the discretion of the Evaluation team, players may be asked to skate again in the next session (same day movement)
 - Player may move up or down a group depending on session scores and group sizes
 - Upon completion of the Small Area and full ice game play sessions, players will be placed onto their team. As per the Hockey Calgary Grid, if there are two (2) teams in the same division, after all evaluation skates are completed players that are locked in the specific division may be scheduled an additional ice time.

U15 Age Group:

U15 Body Contact (BC) divisions 1-3, Non-Body Contact (NBC) divisions 1-4. These are the Hockey Calgary divisions for this season.

This age group will use 1 Performance Test, 1 Small Area game sessions and Knight's Cup for player placement. The Knights Cup is a tournament style process. **Not all players that chose to evaluate for body contact are guaranteed to be assigned to a body contact team.**

Knights Cup Tournament #1 – Body Checking Tournament

Depending on registration numbers, 4-6 evaluation teams will be formed from the players who choose to play body contact. Each evaluation team will participate in 3 games. Once the Knights Cup-BC tournament is completed, players will be ranked and either assigned to a body contact team or assigned to participate in the NBC Knights Cup. **Not all players that chose to evaluate for body checking are guaranteed to be assigned to a body-checking team.**

Knights Cup Tournament #2 – Non Body Checking Tournament

Upon completion of the U15-BC Knights Cup tournament, 4 evaluation teams will be formed for the U15-NBC Knights Cup evaluations. Players participating in the Knights Cup – NBC Body Contact will participate in 3 games. At the end of the U15-MBC Knights Cup, players will be assigned to a Non Body Checking team. **If you are playing in this tournament, you are guaranteed a spot on a non-body checking team.**

Note: Depending on registration numbers for the U15 group, the number of teams is dictated by Hockey Calgary.

U18 Age Group:

U18 Body Contact (BC) divisions 1-3, Non-Body Contact (NBC) divisions 1-3. These are the Hockey Calgary divisions for this season.

This age group will use Knight's Cup for player placement. The Knights Cup is a tournament style process. We will start with the non-body contact divisions and then a second tournament for contact divisions. **Not all players that chose to evaluate for body checking are guaranteed to be assigned to a body-checking team.**

Knights Cup Tournament #1 – Non-Body Contact Tournament

Depending on registration numbers, 4-6 evaluation teams will be formed from the players who choose to play non-body contact as well as players that have chosen to play contact but are either first year U18 players or players that have played U18 non-contract in previous years. Three non-contact teams will be determined by the tournament. Once the Knights Cup – NBC tournament is completed a number of players that wanted to play contact may be asked to continue into the contact tournament. **Not all players that chose to evaluate for body checking are guaranteed to be assigned to a body-checking team.**

Knights Cup Tournament #2 – Body Contact Tournament

Four evaluation teams will be formed from the remaining players that did not participate in the non-contact tournament and those players asked to skate in the contact tournament. Players participating in the Knights Cup – Body Contact will be evaluated to form the 4 contact teams. **If you are playing in this tournament, you are guaranteed a spot on a contact team.**



Note: Depending on registration numbers for the U18 group, the number of evaluation teams could increase or decrease.

INITIAL GROUP POPULATION

Number of groups, sizes and placement are subject to change based on final registration numbers. The teams are numbered in the order groups are filled.

U9-U13 Grouping

- The performance testing sessions will determine placement in game play sessions and there will be no predetermined groupings

U15 Grouping

- Players must designate body checking or non-body checking at registration.
- Players who designate for the body checking stream can be placed in a non-body checking stream based on their overall rankings.
- Players designating for non-body checking **WILL NOT** be placed in the body checking stream.
- Rankings will determine a player's final placement. Therefore, a player can be placed in a non-body checking team even if the body checking stream is designated at registration.

U18 Grouping

- Players must designate body checking or non-body checking at registration.
- Players who designate the body checking stream can be placed in non-body checking divisions based on their prior year division.
- Players designating non-body checking **WILL NOT** be placed in body checking divisions.
- Rankings will determine a player's final team placement. Therefore, a player can be placed on a non-body checking team and team even if the body checking stream is designated at registration.
- Players will be initially placed in groups depending on which team they played on last season.

Number of Sessions Per Age Group

- U7 – Players will participate in 2 placement skates

- U9 – Players will participate in 4 placement skates, (2 performance testing and 2 game play sessions)
- U11 – Players will participate in 1 performance test skate, 2 small area game/skill sessions and 2 full ice game sessions.
- U13 – Players will participate in 1 performance test skate, 2 small area game/skill sessions and 2 full ice game sessions.
- U15 – Players will participate in 1 performance test skates, 1 small area game/skill session and Knights Cup tournament play.
- U18 – Players will participate in the Knights Cup games.

Note: As Per Hockey Canada guidelines, Pathway Skates will be offered to all age groups based on ice availability and placement skate ice requirements. Age group coordinators will schedule the Pathway skates for their age groups in conjunction with the ice scheduler.

Evaluation Skates:

Knights Hockey Club will be utilizing age-specific, pre-approved drills from the Director of Player Development, Director of Evaluations and the 3rd party evaluation team. These drills are designed to highlight a player's skills while remaining in a safe environment.

Scoring (ranking):

- Players are ranked according to the number of players in the age group (example: if there are 100 players in U11, the players will be ranked 1-100).
- In U13, U15, and U18 players are ranked within the position they are evaluating for (example Forwards: 1-60 & Defense: 1-40).
- Criteria: Evaluators will evaluate players using the following criteria:
 - Skating
 - Puck Skills
 - Hockey Sense
 - Compete

Movement (U9 – U13):

- **Following each evaluation session** players may move up or down in their respective groups. Players are capable of movement **up and down** throughout the **entire evaluation process**. This provides players the opportunity and ability to continuously improve their final ranking and impact their final team placement.

- It is our goal to reduce multiple or back-to-back evaluation skates, However, in some cases, a player may be asked to skate more than once on the same day. The purpose of this movement is to see if player(s) in one group have similar or different skills than players in another group. Same day movement will be solely at the discretion of the Director of Evaluations in discussions with the VP On Ice and independent evaluation team.
- Player movement is dependent on evaluation score/rankings therefore the outcomes of each evaluation session will determine the number of players moved up and down from each group. Following the completion of all sessions, evaluation scores are reviewed and the capacity for movement assessed.

Pulling Players U11-U13:

At the discretion of the VP On Ice and the Director of Evaluations, top players from the top group may be removed from the evaluation process. This is referred to as pulling the player/players. If this is done it will **only** be after the 4th skate. The player(s) pulled will be asked to not attend the 5th skate. The only reason for pulling players is for allowing additional evaluations of players from the top of group 2 with the group 1 players. Again, the pulling of players is at the sole discretion of the VP On Ice and the Director of Evaluations.

Evaluators:

- Evaluators will be assigned to specific age groups by the Evaluation Team.
- All attempts will be made to have 5+ evaluators for each session. This will consist of a combination of independent evaluators and coaches.
- Evaluators will be identified after registration and assigned to a specific age group for the duration of the process for the U7 and U9 age groups.
- Evaluators will not be permitted to evaluate their child or a relative.

Goalie Evaluations (U11 – U18):

Designation of goaltenders in U13 – U18 Groups is mandatory on the official Hockey Calgary rosters. It is important for goalies to be aware that when they elect to evaluate at the goaltender position, they will be expected to remain at that position through the balance of the year. The exception is for the U11 hybrid pathway, a goalie may also participate as a player if they evaluate within the same division as a goalie and player.

- **Process:** Goalies will participate in a goalie specific technical session, at the beginning of the evaluation process. A goalie's initial group placement for game play will be determined by the technical skate. Final team placement will be based on the results from the initial skills skates, small area skill sessions and the game play skates.

- **Skills Session:** The technical session will be weighted and count for a portion of the goaltenders final ranking. Drills will be used which highlight modern goaltending techniques and attributes.
- **Evaluators:** To ensure effective and optimal evaluation of goaltenders, outside accredited goalie evaluators will be utilized.
- **U11 Hybrid and Goalies** – availability for the number of hybrid positions will be determined by the number of teams and full time goalies. Full time goalies will be guaranteed a spot as a goalie.

Absentee/Sick Policy ALL Players:

Skaters and Goaltenders are required to attend ALL their respective evaluation sessions. It is the responsibility of the player/family to notify their Evaluation Team and the VP On Ice **prior** to their scheduled evaluation if they are unable to attend an evaluation session. Notifications should be via email and can be followed up with a phone call or in person meeting. Any player who misses an evaluation session will have their next placement reviewed by the VP On Ice and Evaluation Team.

- When players miss an evaluation session without a legitimate reason, they will receive the lowest ranking within their designated group. This can adversely affect their overall ranking and impact their final cohort placement
- A player who misses the first evaluation session without a legitimate reason may be moved down to another group based upon receiving the lowest ranking and the movement of their peer group from the previous season. In addition, players who miss the session following movement up to a group may be moved down based on the movement of their peer group from the previous session and their lowest ranking.

Legitimate and Excused Absence:

When a player misses due to legitimate reasons, policies are followed, documentation is provided and approved by the Evaluation Team and the VP On Ice, the player will not receive a score for that session. Sessions they participated in will be averaged to determine team placement.

- **Injury or Illness:** Medical notes are required for any player missing all or any evaluations due to sickness or injury. Medical notes **MUST** be presented within 48 hours of a missed session (24 hours of the last evaluation skate)
- Players who are injured during evaluations will be placed on a team based on their performance/rankings during evaluations.

- Players who are not able to participate in the evaluation process due to illness/injury will be placed on a team based upon their peer group from the previous season with input from their coach from the previous season. Players that are unable to attend an evaluation session with an excused absence will be given the average score of the 2 players ranked above them and 2 players ranked below them for the session.
- All decisions on team placement due to injury or illness will be done in collaboration with the Evaluation Team and VP On Ice.
- Legitimate personal, family, and medical emergencies are situations that will also not count in the final player ranking. Each case will be reviewed separately by the Evaluations Team and the VP On Ice.

Players Returning from Quadrant and GHC AA:

Players trying out for quadrant teams must follow the registration guidelines determined by the Knights Hockey Club to be considered during the Player evaluations and placement process. Spaces may not be held and acceptance into Knights may not be guaranteed unless players are pre-registered prior to the start of the Player Placement Process. Players that are selected for quadrant teams will be reimbursed all hockey fees paid to Knights Hockey Club. Refund requests must be submitted in writing to the Administrator by email.

Evaluation Apparel:

- Evaluation jerseys will be provided for players.
- Knights, dark socks or solid socks with no other team or program affiliation are required for U9 – U18 placement sessions (and can be purchased from Play It Again Sports - Shawnessy).
- No Helmet stickers from other teams (example spring hockey) or any tape or markings are permitted during placement sessions. Stickers that aren't removed will be removed by the evaluation team (this includes numbers).
- Note: game socks will be distributed once teams are formed

Reviews U9 - U18:

A Review of a player's placement can be requested 24 hours after final team placement notification. There will be a review fee of \$250 payable before the review will begin. A review looks at a player's progression throughout evaluations to ensure that process errors did not occur. We do not change actual evaluators rankings during a review. Feedback from Independent Evaluators will also be reviewed and discussed. Video from LIVEBARN cannot be submitted and if it is submitted will not be reviewed by the

player placement review group. If it is determined that an error has occurred in the player's placement, a player may be added to the correct team if there is room for an additional player following the Hockey Calgary guidelines and requirements for team sizes. In no circumstances will a player on a team be moved down a team.

Evaluation Dates and Times:

- Evaluations will commence in September and will be completed by October 5th.
- The U13, U15, and U18 skates will begin later in the month to accommodate quadrant tryouts.
- Please refer to the website for general evaluation dates and times for each age group
- Parents/Players will receive emails with their specific ice time closer to the start of evaluations

Please feel free to contact the Director of Evaluations – evaluations@knightshc.ca or VP On Ice – vponice@knightshc.ca with questions and inquiries prior to and during evaluations.

This document will act as the general guidelines for all involved to ensure a consistent, integral application of the principles of evaluation are applied throughout the process.