

WHYHA Members,

Tryouts for the 2014- 2015 season will begin on March 18th (Please see league website for your player's specific schedule). Our tryouts are designed to ensure that each player is placed on the team that will give him/her the greatest opportunity to develop their hockey skills and that provide a positive learning experience. There is no process that is perfect but we spend a lot of time evaluating and enhancing our process to ensure that it is fair and objective.

Team assignments are based on a 2 day tryout which assesses hockey skills and gameplay. Experience shows that this assessment results in correctly assigning about 95% of players correctly. Does occasionally a kid have a bad tryout? Sure. There is sometimes room for adjustments to team selection, but that doesn't happen until the fall.

As a parent of a player trying out, here is what you can expect:

- If you want to play travel hockey in West Hartford, tryouts are mandatory at all levels. The only caveat to this rule is if a child is injured and cannot tryout (please let us know prior to tryouts).
- Families must be paid in full for the 2013-14 Season or they may not participate in tryouts.
- Tryouts are scheduled for two sessions over the course of a week. Make every effort to attend them all. If you cannot make a tryout it isn't the end of the world, but it is a missed opportunity to be assessed by the tryout process. If you sign up for an A tryout, you must attend the first tryout.
- We will again have a separate tryout for our A teams. All age appropriate players may attend the A tryout regardless of previous team. This separate tryout will be conducted over two days and the tryout fee is \$125.
- The second tryout for A teams will be by invitation only based on performance at the first tryout (there are cuts). This information will be posted on our website. If your child is not offered a position on the A team they will need to attend the other age specific tryout at no additional cost.
- The tryout fee for all other teams is \$75 and is non-refundable. (Girls that are trying out for a Mite, Squirt, Peewee or Bantam team, as well as a Girls Team, will only be charged one non-refundable tryout fee of \$75, if they attend an A tryout, the fee is \$125)
- Mites, Squirts, Peewees and U12 Girls will skate separately in sessions over two days in a practice style stations approach. The goal is to have a maximum amount of skill/drill time for each player on the ice. Bantams and U14 girls will also have 2 day tryouts however the focus will be exclusively on gameplay.

- We use independent evaluators that do not know the kids on the ice to eliminate any perception of favoritism. Kids will be assigned pinnies with numbers and are not identified by name.
- After tryouts, teams will be announced on the website and players will be called by the coach of the team. Players will have a very narrow window (2-3 days) to accept the position on the team and make a \$200 commitment payment. If players do not accept within the window, their position is forfeited and will be offered to another player. No exceptions.

I am routinely asked why we require commitment in such a short period (typically by people trying out for multiple programs). We want players who want to play in West Hartford and want to commit to the hockey programs we provide. If you are not willing to commit, we will give your spot to a player that is.

Second year Bantam players (2000 birth year) that attend high school, will be allowed to tryout for and play Midget if they make they team. Midget tryouts are in the early Fall. WHYHA intends to have 2 split season midget teams for the 2014-15 season (one for Conard, one for Hall). Players that choose this option that do not play high school will not be allowed to return to Bantam and must play out the season at Midget (if West Hartford offers a team or not). I strongly recommend that players wishing to choose this option talk to their high school coaches first. Most of the time coaches want young players to return to Bantam, and players may find themselves with no place to play come November.

Any players wishing to play at a division above their intended age (“play-up”) must meet the guidelines posted on the WHYHA website.

The tryout process for all ages will be as follows:

- Pre-registration is required for all ages. This can be done at the WHYHA website.
- If you do not register 24 hours before the start of the tryout, a \$20 late registration fee will apply.
- Players will be split into random small groups of approx. 10 players, prior to the tryout. Players will then be split into 2-3 separate skill stations on the ice including skating, puck handling and game skills. Players will have a set time in each station. Drills will be pre-determined at each station with at least one coach supervising. Each player will participate in all skill stations during each tryout. Players will be assessed by independent evaluators.
- The second day of tryouts will focus more on game play.
- Goalies at each level will be assessed independently based on goaltending skills and will participate in all areas of skills assessment. Goalies should try to attend all tryouts. Any mites trying out for goalie must skate the first session in player gear. The second session they will be evaluated in their goalie gear. If you need goalie gear please request this at least one week prior to the tryouts. In addition, there will be a separate goalie tryout on that all goalies must attend. This session is clearly marked in the tryout schedule.
- At the end of the tryout period, all assessment scores will be independently tabulated and rankings will be distributed to team coaches. Team selection will be based on the combination

of: assessment scores, evaluator and coach input and prior year coaches input. The scores are confidential and are not distributed to any one for any reason.

Our goal is to have a spot on a team for every player that tries out, however this is not always possible. If a mite (U8) age player is not selected for a travel team, they can participate in the Mite Development program. If a Squirt age player does not make a team they will be assigned to the Squirt Development program.

For any PeeWee, U14 and Bantam players not assigned a team, they will be waitlisted and may assigned to an appropriate team, pending an opening. Between tryouts and the season, many things change, kids move, change schools, get hurt, get selected for elite programs, etc. **Positions do open up all the time, but it requires patience.**

I am excited about a new PeeWee Limited Travel team next year, depending on numbers this will either be in addition to or a critical component of our PeeWeeC team. Tryout attendance is NOT required, however players that attend tryouts will be given preference for a first come, first served commitment to this team. Players that do not tryout will be placed on a first come first serve basis after the players that tried out.

If your player wants to participate in the Mite and Squirt Development programs (formerly called Mite Internal, Mini-Mite, Learn-to-play, or Squirt Limited Travel) they do NOT need to tryout. Simply register at the website

If you have questions about tryouts, please e-mail me at president@whyha.com

See you at the rink.

Steve Clement
WHYHA President