



Dear IHWC Youth Hockey Parents,

One of the most anxious times during the IHWC season is the tryout process...especially for parents! Research has shown that kids in many cases actually handle the pressure of tryouts better than parents do, making this time of the season a particularly nerve racking and potentially upsetting experience for all! This letter attempts to explain the tryout process for the IHWC Travel Teams and provide candid and transparent answers to questions especially for those parents who have not been through this process before.

Objectives of Travel Team Tryouts

While our house hockey program continues to be our focus and is also the backbone of IHWC Youth Hockey, travel teams are available for a higher level of play and commitment. For those individuals and families who are looking for that higher commitment and level of competition the travel team program will certainly offer that. IHWC travel team tryout objectives are:

- To provide a fair and impartial assessment of a player's total hockey skills during skating, small area games and scrimmage sessions
- To place players on the most appropriate team based on their level of skill, measured against their peer group, during on-ice evaluations while also factoring in feedback from previous coaches and certain hockey "intangibles" (e.g. work ethic, coachability, attitude, etc.)
- To provide uniformity, consistency and transparency in the tryout process such that player and parent expectations are consistent from year to year as players move through the various levels of the IHWC's age groups (Mites, Squirts, PeeWee, Bantam, Midget & High School)
- To form teams that are competitive at each level and provide the best opportunity for all players to further develop their skills and to **HAVE FUN** playing hockey
- To provide feedback in order to enhance the development of each hockey player within IHWC

2017 IHWC Tryout Dates & Times

Squirts:

Tryout (all players): Monday, April 24 6-7:20pm

CALLBACK: Friday, April 28 6-6:50 pm

PeeWees:

Tryout (all players): Tuesday, April 25 6-7:20pm

CALLBACK: Friday April 28 7-7:50pm

Bantams:

Tryout (all players): Thursday, April 27 6-7:20pm

CALLBACK: Friday, April 28 8-8:50 pm

High School:

Tryout (all players): Friday, April 21 7-9pm

CALLBACK: Saturday, April 22 6-7 pm

Please plan on being at the rink 45 minutes prior to your scheduled ice-time

2017 IHWC Tryout Fees

- Members of Indian Hill Winter Club do not need to pay a fee to tryout
- A \$100 Tryout Fee must be paid if you are not a member of IHWC. If that player makes a team that amount will be deducted from your initiation fees

Player Tryout FAQ's

The following are frequently asked questions that hopefully will help build greater understanding and transparency of how the process works:

1. When should we arrive for the tryouts?

Your player should arrive **45 minutes** before their scheduled tryout. This allows time to go through registration and be ready 10 minutes before the ice time begins for a meeting with the IHWC Director of Youth Hockey. At that time the Director will explain the format for that evening's tryout session.

2. How many tryout sessions will there be?

There will be 2 total sessions. The first session will be an overall evaluation of all players with 1st cuts coming at the end of session 1. Session 2 (Call Backs) will consist of a scrimmage amongst the players called back. No tryout will be longer than 1 hour and 20 minutes.

3. Why do we have tryouts?

IHWC conducts tryout sessions to provide player assessments each season and to place players on travel teams. There are enough players to have multiple teams at each age level (Travel, Select, House) and they are divided according to ability to maximize the potential for each player and each team to improve and have a successful season. The goal of IHWC is to provide the best opportunity for all players to further develop their hockey skills.

4. Should my son/daughter try out for the Travel Team?

This question can be answered by referring to your success and growth over the past season in parallel with the feedback provided by your current head coach. Any player of the appropriate age is eligible to try out for the Travel Team however; it is imperative that you, as a parent, are realistic in your expectations. If your child is not in the Top 50% of their peer group, then realistically your child will not be selected for a Travel Team and your child should consider not attending the tryout. Although, some parents see the benefit of trying out as a life lesson for their children and to see where they need to improve in the year that is ahead.

5. Are tryouts mandatory for all youth hockey players at IHWC?

No, if you and your child want to play travel hockey, then attending tryouts is required so that your child can be properly evaluated against his/her peer group and placed on the appropriate level team in order to maximize your child's opportunity to further develop their hockey skills. Players that wish to continue with IHWC's House programs ARE NOT required to attend any tryout sessions.

6. If my son/daughter was on a team other than the Travel Team last season, will that mean they automatically make the Travel Team at the same level in the coming season?

No one is guaranteed placement on the travel team's. The tryout format is to compare and assess all players and their abilities to be competitive at the Travel Team level. If there are first year players whose abilities and behaviors are more conducive to compete and be successful at the Travel Team level, those players will be chosen to participate at the level regardless if there are 2nd year players trying out.

7. What if my player cannot make it to the evaluations/tryouts?

Each player must participate in the evaluation process, absent an injury. If your skater is unable to attend because of injury, you must contact the appropriate person in advance:

- Andy Pokupec, Director of Youth Hockey

apokupec@ihwinterclub.com

- Danny Wood, Director of Youth Hockey
- Tim Johnson, General Manager

dwood@ihwinterclub.com
tjohnson@ihwinterclub.com

No player is guaranteed a spot and “close calls” will go to those that attend all of the tryouts. If a player has a documented injury and is unable to participate in the tryout process, their team placement will be at the discretion of the Evaluation Committee.

8. Who will do the evaluations?

There are 3 key groups involved in the evaluations:

- On-ice coaches to take players through the session.
- Off-ice independent evaluators who will be responsible to evaluate every player on the ice during the time allotted. There may be on-ice evaluators depending on the particular situation. Our goal is to have independent evaluators that are members of the IHWC and Cincinnati area hockey community who do not have children in the youth hockey program. The evaluators are the best available most experienced coaches and hockey players that will give us the best evaluations possible.
- Off-ice administrators who will be responsible for collating evaluations.

9. What is being evaluated?

There is a Tryout Drill Video on YouTube that each player needs to watch to see the drills that we will be going through at tryouts. Here is the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZ2b9cPGjSQ>. You can also refer to the section on Player Selection Criteria for more information on specific skills, tactics and behaviors that are being evaluated. This section and the video give a clear outline of what is being evaluated each session.

10. What should my son/daughter wear to the tryout?

- Full equipment is always mandatory. This includes a protective cup, shin pads, hockey pants, shoulder pads, elbow pads, skates, hockey gloves, hockey stick and a USA Hockey approved helmet and full shield. Also, please bring both a black and a white game/practice jersey that has number.

11. Will the player be evaluated in a skill and game environment?

In order to give each and every player a fair opportunity to exhibit the range of skills that they possess they will be evaluated within skill stations, small area games, and full ice environments. At the younger age levels a greater emphasis will be placed on the evaluation of skills - as the players get older the small area game and scrimmage sessions will have a greater overall impact on the player's placement.

12. Will the prior season evaluation information be used?

The tryout process will include prior season assessments and feedback from their prior year coaches. Players will be selected not only on individual skills but also several intangible traits. These traits are as follows:

- Attendance & Commitment
- Player's commitment, as specified by his or her previous seasons' coaches, will be used as a critical factor in final player placement. A player's commitment to the program and more specifically, their team, will not be over-looked or taken for granted
- Attitude & Behavior
- Determination, drive, intensity, work ethic
- Discipline
- Positive team player
- Coachability
- Hockey is a team sport and individuals with stronger skills but who are selfish can often be counterproductive to achieving team goals and upset team chemistry. Hockey is a long season and the right team chemistry (on and off the ice) is crucial to a successful program. IHWC will keep this in mind when making team selections.

13. When will player “cuts” be made during tryout week?

Cuts will be made after the 1st night. Players that make the callback will be notified via email and players that do not make the callback will be notified via phone call. If your player is cut from the tryout, we ask that all questions and calls to the Directors of Youth Hockey, General Manager or anyone else involved in the selection process wait until May 3rd-May 5th. This allows all of those involved to focus on the building of the travel team for the upcoming year.

14. What happens after the evaluation sessions? How are the players notified of their final standing?

Players will be informed via a phone call from the Travel Team Head Coach or Director of Youth Hockey. All calls to award final roster selection will be made before May 1st.

Teams & Team Composition

IHWC is planning to have the 1 Travel Team for the 2017-18 season at each level. This information is purely an estimate. The estimated numbers at each level are as follows: (These are USA Hockey ADM recommendations)

Squirts:

11-12 Skaters and 2 Goalies

Pee Wees:

13-14 Skaters and 2 Goalies

Bantams:

16 Skaters and 2 Goalies

High School:

18 Skaters and 2 Goalies

Player Selection Criteria

General Overview of the Skills to Play the Game

We ask that all players wishing to tryout please watch the tryout video on YouTube!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZ2b9cPGjSQ>

Skating - Acceleration, speed, mobility, agility, balance, stride, crossovers, pivots/transitions, acceleration out of turns, quick feet, controlled skating, change of pace.

- Can the players perform the basic forward and backward stride?
- Are the players knees well bent with the back slightly forward and the head up, or is the player hunched over, bending at the waist with little knee bend?
- Good skaters will use long strides with a complete recovery of the stride leg before striding with the other leg. Their strides will look very smooth and appear not to require much effort to move around the ice.
- Does the player look smooth when they skate or do they appear off balance?
- Can the player turn in both directions with little trouble or do they struggle to turn in one or both directions?
- Can the player stop in both directions? Younger players will often have trouble stopping in one direction.
- Can the player keep up with the play or do they struggle to stay with the other players on the ice?

Passing - Passing, receiving, passing choices, on backhand, unselfish with the puck, presents a good target, receives and retains with control, touch passing.

- Does the player have the basic skills to execute a forehand pass?

- When the player passes, the puck do they slap at it or is the motion smooth with the player following through to the intended target?
- Can the player pass the puck to its intended target with minimal effort?
- Can the player make an accurate pass to a moving target?
- Can the player receive a pass on their backhand or do they tend to shift their body to receive the pass on the forehand?
- Can the player pass the puck off of the backhand with some speed and accuracy?
- Does the player call for the puck vs. banging their stick on the ice or saying nothing at all?
- Does the player passing the puck make eye contact with the intended receiver or do they just pass the puck blindly?
- Can the player execute a saucer pass over sticks and other obstacles?
- Can the player pass the puck off of the boards to another player?

Puck Control - Head up, smooth and quiet, good hands, protection, in small spaces and in traffic.

- Is the player foundationally ready to handle/carry the puck using a hockey stance with hands away from the body?
- Does the player appear to be comfortable handling the puck while skating or do they appear to fight the puck and have trouble skating with some speed while handling it?
- Can the player keep his/her head up while carrying the puck?
- Can they execute dekes and fakes with the puck?
- Can they stop quickly or change direction while handling the puck?
- Can the player continue to handle the puck while in traffic and under pressure?
- Does the player get pushed or checked off the puck easily?

Shooting - Power, accuracy, quick release, can shoot in motion, goal scorer, rebound control, variety of shots wrist shot, snapshot, backhand, slap shot.

- Does the player exhibit balance within the shooting motion?
- Can the player execute the technique of a wrist shot and backhand?
- Does the player follow through to the target on all shots?
- Can the player raise the puck?
- Is the puck shot with some velocity?
- Does the puck sit flat in the air or does it wobble?
- Can the player execute a one-time shot?
- Is the player accurate when shooting?

Positional Play - Ability to see the play developing both offensively and defensively and moves to support, judgment, anticipation, understands systems, disciplined.

- Does the player seem to understand where he/she are to play on the ice?
- Do they support the puck in defensive and offensive situations?
- Does the player show patience or do they tend to panic when pressured?
- Do they protect the mid lane and force opposing players inside out?
- Can the player angle another player off of the puck?
- Does the player force the play or do they wait too long?

Checking Concepts - Angling, good body position with balance and control, defensive side position, aggressive checker, strength, taking checks.

- Can the player execute basic stick and body checks?
- Does the player understand angling and how to effectively angle an opposing player?
- Does the player check properly with their hands down or do they get their arms up to give a check?
- Can the player receive a check properly, not turning their back and staying close to the boards?
- Can the player check an opposing player and pin them on the boards?
- Does the player shy away from other players?

Goaltending – Balance, mobility, quickness, low shots, rebound control, cutting off angles, post play, stick control, reaction, butterfly, posture, flexibility and concentration

Parent Participation and Rules

As we have said, tryouts are a very stressful time for both players and parents. Since your child will be busy working on the ice during this time, we ask that you to follow these simple rules during tryouts.

Rules for parents during tryouts:

- Be positive with your child at all times.
- Stay away from the glass during tryouts. Parents and bystanders should not stand along the glass. Please sit in the bleachers or in the club room during the tryouts.
- The balcony will be closed, as it is reserved for the Independent Evaluation Team and Winter Club Administration.
- Sideline coaching by the parents during the tryouts or outward yelling will not be tolerated. Your player needs to remain focused and attentive to the instructors at all times.
- Focus on the big picture and trust that our goal is to put every child into the best opportunity for them to succeed.
- Refrain from talking about other players or comparing your child to other children. This can only cause negative or hurt feelings.
- Support the program and help your child have a great year!

IHWC Play up Policy for Travel Teams

The policy places a priority on safety and age-appropriate player development. For a player to participate above their designated age group, they must be evaluated as one of the top line players in their position in the age group they are requesting to play in. Requests to play up must be submitted to and approved by the Director of Youth Hockey and the General Manager. Coaches alone do not have the authority to authorize a player to play up, nor do they have the authority to permit a player to try out for a level at which he/she is not authorized to tryout by the Director of Youth Hockey.

Commitment to IHWC Travel Teams

Once tryouts are concluded and teams are chosen, parents and players need to make their commitment to their respective teams by May 5th. The Player Commitment & Signing Day will take place on June 9th at 6pm in the Club Room at IHWC.

Closing Remarks

The purpose of this information sheet is to improve transparency and provide assurance regarding fairness and consistency in the team selection process. If you have any further tryout or team placement questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Director of Youth Hockey or Club Administration.

We look forward to a fun and successful hockey season!

Thank You,

Danny Wood
Director of Youth Hockey

Andy Pokupec
Director of Youth Hockey

Tim Johnson, CMAA
General Manager