

SWRR Player age advance policy:

March 2011

Issue:

During the 2010/2011 season it was identified that a policy was necessary to address a three issues:

1. Parent/player requests to advance to a higher age division (for the purpose of this document – age advance),
2. In order for SWRR to field a team (ie minimum of 7 players), a policy needed to be in place to age advance players for the benefit of the Association also referred to as Critical team formation by BCRA.
3. Parent or coach request to retreat a player to a lower age non-tiered division

Both the LMRL and BCRA policy manuals were reviewed with the following excerpts:

LMRL policies on age advance

I. Player Movement

A. Season (Permanent)

1. "A" calibre players should be encouraged to play at their skill level, but players are allowed an option of recreational level or higher level tournament play, as stated in the Ringette Canada Coaching Manual, Code of Game Section
2. A Player who is playing or moving up more than one age group must have permission of the Committee, and BCRA (i.e. A U12/Petite who is playing in the Tween division and is needed to play with the U16/Juniors).
 - a) This would only be done in such cases of an association who only has one age group and there are no appropriate teams for the player to be placed on.
3. Individual and team registration forms must be sent to the LMRL and BCRA no later than November 30th of the current playing season.
4. Before any association allows a player to age advance more than one age group, approval in writing must be received from the following:
 - a) The player and parents
 - b) The Local Association Director of Coaching; and
 - c) The Local Association executive
 - d) Independent League evaluation for safety.
5. Age advance players must play on a team with players whose skill levels are comparable

6. After the submission of team rosters, the League may still consider requests for player movement according to the following procedure. The Local Association executive will submit a request along with its approval in writing to the League, giving the specific reasons for the request along with the following:
 - a) Approval in writing from the player and the player's parents or guardians; and
 - b) Approval in writing from the Local Association Director of Coaching
7. The Board of Directors of the League, on consultation with the respective Division Manager(s) and Local Association executive, will then rule on the request.
8. All player movement must be complete by December 15th or by the BCRA deadline for submission of team rosters, whichever occurs first. The League will not consider requests for player movement beyond this date.

BCRA

Advisory #: 2010-2011-6

Approval Date: November 2010

Subject: "U12 to U14 Player Movement"

Player & Team Formation (Handbook location: pages 13-14)

1. Association Responsibility

At the beginning of the Ringette season players will be evaluated on individual skill development levels and assessed a point value (Point system: 3 good, 2 average, 1 weak). Providing there are enough players to form more than one team, it will be the Association's responsibility to make sure the players are divided equally based on the skill development ranking point values. A standardized evaluation form will be provided by BCRA that will be universal throughout the province. During the first 1/2 of the season (until November/December) Associations can re-balance Teams if there is a noticeable gap in Team skill development level. Player movements between the 2 teams will be allowed, providing all parties are in support.

Players may be moved (advance or retreat) between the U9, U10, and U12 non-tiered divisions. Player movement from U12 to U14 (non-tiered to tiered) is permitted but only if it is stage-appropriate* for the participant.

*(*Note: Players should only be moved from a non-tiered to a tiered division with careful consideration. The participant's stage appropriateness should be the primary consideration to ensure areas of development additional to skill, such as cognitive and social abilities, make them suitable for the level of participation. The general expectation will be that a participant's development is such that they continue moving forward from that level in subsequent years. In much the same way a child in school who is moved ahead a grade is not typically placed back a grade in the following year, players who are moved to a higher level of play because it is stage appropriate, would not typically revert back to a lower level in the following season. Player movement from non-tiered to tiered should not be used solely for the purposes of short term, seasonal team formation solutions.*

LTAD considerations:

On the issue of LTAD and SWRR . Do we want to look at long term or short term? It's difficult to support a theory/concept when we have limited numbers of athletes. I think it's safe to say that we all will be moving on from the exec long before any of our kids

would/will become "elite" athletes/ Olympians. On the other hand, most of our own kids are not even at the age where they would ideally start specialized training in most sports , as per LTAD (except for gymnastics and I forget the other one but it wasn't ringette!) . This program was designed with input from child psychologists, sport psychologists, elite coaches and athletes and input/observations from many, many, athletes over many years. I know I personally do not have that expertise nor have I been involved long enough in sport to trump their theories about long-term development of athletes. Yes, right now we are talking about one kid but our policy re: player movements, in general, should be based on more than one individual.

AGAIN, we are looking at these players skill level and their development, the whole picture, physical, mental, emotional, and cognitive development. When we talk about maturity we are talking about skill as a player as to where their whole game is, for example, it is great if a player scores a goal, but that same player could be a minus 3. There could have been several other offensive opportunities missed or turnovers given up due to inexperience. I know these skills may be more difficult to recognize, but they are no less important, and can be more difficult to teach. These skills initially are more easily learned at a slower pace and then are more easily developed at a competitive level. There could be a debate as to where they get this experience. If a player is not receiving good coaching or is not improving throughout the year it would be a concern at whatever level. Socially if a player is not having fun this would also be a concern. I do not believe this is the case with these two players. Ringette IQ (maturity), skill, coachability, commitment, all these attributes must be assessed and addressed if you truly want to evaluate and develop a player. We should look at age as well. Younger players have more time to develop, it is the small steps and details that lead to a solid foundation, the wider the foundation, the taller the tower. LTAD recognizes player development through different age groups. For females: "I AM PLAYING" ages 8 - 11, "I AM ON A TEAM" ages 12 - 15, "I AM A COMPETITOR" ages 16 - 18, "I AM EXCEEDING MY LIMITS" ages 18 - 19, "I AM A CHAMPION" 18 - 19+. I am not saying we should look at age brackets as only black or white, just as I am saying we should not ignore their age or LTAD. Nandor

Discussion:

These three topics generated great debate over the course of the season and it was agreed that prior to the start of the 2011/2012 season, the executive needed to have some clear policy that can be communicated to the membership.

Original two proposals were:

POLICY 1

If at the beginning of the season a player and or parent make a request to move their child up an Age Division (AD) that player MUST attend both AD's evaluations. This way there is proper documentation to show their skill level. If that player shows they are capable of playing on the higher AD the move will be granted. If there are enough players in an AD for two teams, the top players - REGARDLESS OF AGE - (this # will vary depending on how

many players each team will have) will be placed on the #1 team. The coach decides the remaining 'bubble' players based on what it is he/she is looking for to fill out their team.

Discussion:

- For evaluations we could also look at individual development over chronological age during periods of accelerated adaptation to training, by doing PHV (Peak High Velocity :basically adolescence) measurements. This would also help in identifying players who are actually physically prepared to train at this critical stage of development and recruit and or train the very best coaches to develop these players. This would show that we are truly serious about player development.

POLICY 2

If there are late registered players (deadline December 1st of that year), those players will first be placed on the lower team in their Age Division (AD). If there is room for a player to move to the higher level team within that AD the coach of the higher level team will decide which player - REGARDLESS OF AGE - is to move by going to games/practices and watching/evaluating the top players (at the current time of year) and make a decision based on what it is he/she is looking for to fill out their team. The coach of the higher-level team can then ask that player and parent if that player wishes to move up. If the answer is no then the coach can ask the next best-suited player if they so wish to do so. The coach does not have to choose a player if he/she does not wish to do so. There will be NO player movement after January 1st of the second year in the season.

Discussion:

- I think we still need to consider the evaluation scores of players who came out and skated hard for evaluations yet may have landed on the bubble. Sometimes these points are very close. I don't think it's fair to just ignore the scores those kids earned. The whole point of evaluating is to help us evaluate! So why would we not look at that evaluation information to confirm players proven abilities?
- A coach/parent can recommend any potentially suitable player and present their own evaluation and rationale for that player moving up (vs other player possibilities) and the player movement, (based on some specific criteria the exec has yet to come up with) would be approved or denied by the exec after considering:
1) suitability of individual player and
2)the pros/cons gained by both teams involved, should that suitable player actually move.
- I also think, with odd # of players, that the B team should have the extra player vs the A team as the A team has more options re: pulling up players. They have the option to pull players up from the B team or from the A team of the lower AD. The B team, however, would only have option to pull from a lower AD and only if that lower AD team is tiered as B or C.
ie. if the B team needed to pull up players but the lower AD was tiered as an A team....those A players on the lower AD team would not be eligible to play on the B team. (a B team cannot pull up A players.)

- Who are the U14 players that actually were evaluated and landed on the U14 bubble? Have we offered them the opportunity to move up?
I think earlier in the season, when we were discussing moving player(s), we took into consideration the evals and offered the bubble players the opportunity to move up. Yes, it's unfortunate this U12 player was not evaluated with the U14's. (Noted for evals next season .) So will there be more impact on the U12 player who has already been allowed to move up a div already but is playing on the B team or will there be more impact to the U14 player who evaluated on the bubble but then later watched that U12 go on to be placed on the A team?

Revised proposal:

Policy 1

Prior to the start of the new season evaluations, a player/ parent may make a written request to the Association Director of Player Development (DPD), to Age advance one Division. All requests will be accepted for the purpose of evaluations.

All requesting players MUST attend evaluations scheduled for their age appropriate division and the one they wish to age advance to. This will allow the DPD to properly assess and document their skill level. If the player(s) evaluate in the top 50% of the advanced division players. the DPD will make a recommendation to the Association executive based on:

1. Critical team formation for the two divisions not being demonstrably impacted in number or skill level,
2. Player(s) placed in the appropriate tier for their level of skill and development
3. Discussion with the coach of the higher tiered team.
4. In the case of a goalie, consideration needs to be made for the number of goalies already registered in the division.

Policy 2

If there are late registered players (deadline December 1st of that year), those players will first be placed on the lower tiered team in their Age Division (AD). If there is room for a player to move to the higher level team within that AD, the Director of Player development and the coach of the higher level team will mutually decide which player - REGARDLESS OF AGE - is to move.

Criteria used for that decision will be:

1. Evaluation conducted through observation of the player in both games/practices
2. Player/position requirements for the higher level team
3. Player commitment and attendance at practices
4. Player and parent agreement to move up
5. Coach will not be required to pick up a player by agreeing to the process
6. There will be NO player movement after January 1st of that season.

