

Goals of Player Selection

The Victoria Racquet Player development is based on a year class hockey system. The system's goal is to have a competitive team in each year class with a limited number of players so as to not negatively affect following years. Previously one year class would dominate an age division to the detriment of the following year. What this means to a player in the Racquet Club system is that he/she will primarily play with the same group of individuals throughout their time at the Racquet Club. What this means to the selection criteria shall be described below.

Hockey Skills

As a result of the year class system the Racquet Club will be picking the year class team at the end of the Atom season. Players will be evaluated using the attached criteria, input from the coach and game review throughout the season by the appointed selection committee. The goal of the skills evaluation is to provide a snap shot of where individual players stand from a skills criteria in their year class and will only be a portion of the selection criteria.

Player Character

During the skills review player character will also be evaluated coachability, commitment, leadership, maturity and other like traits shall be evaluated. The players coach will play a large role in this portion of process as well as interviews with the player, parents and other team mates. The Racquet Club's goal is not simply to have a team that wins but to also have a team that is respected for its character on and off the ice.

Potential

The selection of a team that will likely be together for the next 4 years as a minimum requires that potential be taken into consideration. Potential is difficult to measure but there are some areas that will be reviewed. Years of play, non-Racquet Club development and rate of development shall be some of the things considered here.

Fit

Some players will be better fits for the team or association. Essentially the makeup of the team needs to be taken into consideration. Fit means balance, is there enough checking forwards, big defensemen, scoring, speed etc. The best teams are generally not all made up of the players that score the most, role players will be given due consideration. Association fit is slightly more ambiguous but can be as simple as the player has siblings that play or parents who are particularly active in association related activities. Just as the association wants to have players with good character it is equally important that our families represent themselves well and apply themselves to making the Racquet Club the best association on the island.

How does this all come together? The selection committee will be made up of existing members that are not affiliated with the year class being evaluated. The committee will review all of the above components and render decisions as best they can.

What does all this mean? It is equally important to be a good player as it is to have good character.

Bottomline? When there are players with similar skills their character, commitment (player and family) and potential shall be the deciding factors.

Player Selection Criteria

The following is a reference that will be provided to evaluators prior to the player selection process. An age specific skill list can be found on the following pages.

General Overview of the Skills to Play the Game

Skating: Acceleration, speed, mobility, agility, balance, stride, crossovers, pivots, 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.

- ★ 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, in traffic.

- ★ 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?
- ★ 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't they stop quickly or change directions 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.

- ★ 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: Concept of 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 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 and opposing player and pin them on the boards?
- ★ Does the player shy away from other players?

Goaltender Evaluation

Overview

The evaluation of goaltenders requires specific attention outside of the regular player evaluation sessions. Associations are encouraged to include the goaltenders in all sessions but also book a minimum of 3 sessions for goaltender specific evaluations. In the development of the goaltender the Hockey Canada goaltender skills manual identifies the basic progression of skills:

1. Basic Skating Skill
2. Position-Specific movement skills
3. Positional/Save movement skills
4. Rebound – Control/Recovery/Tactical
5. Transitional Play
6. Advanced Positioning

Depending on the level of play and the age and development of the goaltender the evaluation process for goaltenders should incorporate these 6 basic areas. To break it down:

Physical Characteristics:

Balance
Mobility
Quickness
Fitness Level

Technical Characteristics:

Low Shots
High Shots
Use of Stick

Situational Tactic Characteristics:

Positioning and Angling
Face-Offs
Deflections and Screen Shots
Play at Posts

Mental Characteristics:

Concentration
Anticipation
Consistency
Confidence
Desire
Discipline
Communication
Coachability