



2025-2026 Goaltender Evaluation Policy

Cochrane Minor Hockey Association

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Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Evaluation Procedures	3
2.1	Technical Evaluation	3
2.2	Game Play Evaluation	4
2.3	Gameplay Activation Flow Chart	4
2.4	Third Party Evaluator	4
2.5	Evaluation Timelines	5
2.6	Data used for Ranking and Team Selection	5
2.7	Age/Division Specific Notes	5
	Appendices	8
A	Technical Evaluation Scoring	8
B	Gameplay Evaluation Scoring	10
C	Hybrid Goalie Program	12



1 Introduction

This document outlines the Cochrane Minor Hockey Association (CMHA) goaltender evaluation process for the 2025-26 season.

Each year in Canada more than 3500 minor hockey associations undertake the task of placing players on teams. In each association, the ultimate goal of these processes is to provide players with the best possible experience in an environment where they can grow as hockey players and young people¹.

For many minor hockey volunteers, evaluators, coaches, parents, and players this can be a stressful experience – the first goal of this document is to help outline a clear and transparent workflow that any stakeholder can reference to ensure they understand the evaluation process.

This document includes details on the various stakeholders, their roles, and the processes they follow in working through the task of evaluating and assigning CMHA Goalies to their teams for the upcoming hockey season.

Like all CMHA policy and process, the CMHA Goaltender Evaluation Process is managed under a set of continuous improvement principals. Annual evaluations are considered by the Evaluation Committee and the CMHA Board of Directors as opportunities to measure and observe how well our process works for our community. Each year, committee, vendor, and community sourced feedback and process observations are compiled and reconciled to ensure that year over year we do not miss opportunities to improve on our evaluation experience.

2 Evaluation Procedures

The Cochrane Minor Hockey Association operates to a goaltender evaluation model which includes both technical sessions as well as gameplay skates. The details of each type of session, the mechanisms of sorting and group assignment as well as details on the scoring and ranking workflows for each type of session are presented below.

2.1 Technical Evaluation

It is mandatory that all goaltenders registering for any Cochrane Minor Hockey Program attend each scheduled technical evaluation session. This includes non-CMHA import goaltenders aiming to join any of the AA or AAA programs, REP and RHL participants in all age groups beginning at U11 in both Female and Co-ed program streams.

In 2025-26, the technical evaluation will be executed in a single on ice session. This session is lead by independent 3rd party on-ice instructors with a minimum of 3 trained evaluators assessing each goaltender during the technical skate against a series of objective measures described in Appendix A.

¹Hockey Canada Player Evaluation Manual <https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Hockey-Programs/MHA/downloads/mha-player-evaluation-guide-e.pdf>



2.2 Game Play Evaluation

The gameplay evaluations are carried out across a minimum of **two** on ice sessions. Each session is supported by volunteer bench captains, during these sessions goaltenders will be evaluated by an independent 3rd party evaluator assessing each goaltender against a series of objective measures described in Appendix B.

Invites to participate in each gameplay session will be allocated to the top ranked goalies who are not yet placed on a team using technical session scores and any prior gameplay skates for ranking. Invites will be generated to ensure a goaltender count sufficient to support an appropriate cohort for comparison, and an appropriate count of goaltenders to support a fair assessment of the players on the ice.

In scenarios where there are fewer goaltenders than required available, goaltenders from different age categories or divisions may be invited to support a fair player evaluation. This may include the early activation of lower ranked goaltenders in the same pool. These invites will be optional for goaltenders not appropriately ranked to justify roster activation.

2.3 Gameplay Activation Flow Chart

For the gameplay skates, the program aim is to have **6** goaltenders allocated to each team skate until the final skate for any team where we aim to have **4** goaltenders available. Goaltenders will be drawn from the pool to the active gameplay rotation as higher ranked goaltenders are placed on teams in order of their technical evaluation scores. Any specific divisions goaltender count and remaining goaltender pool balance may lead to deviations from these aims.

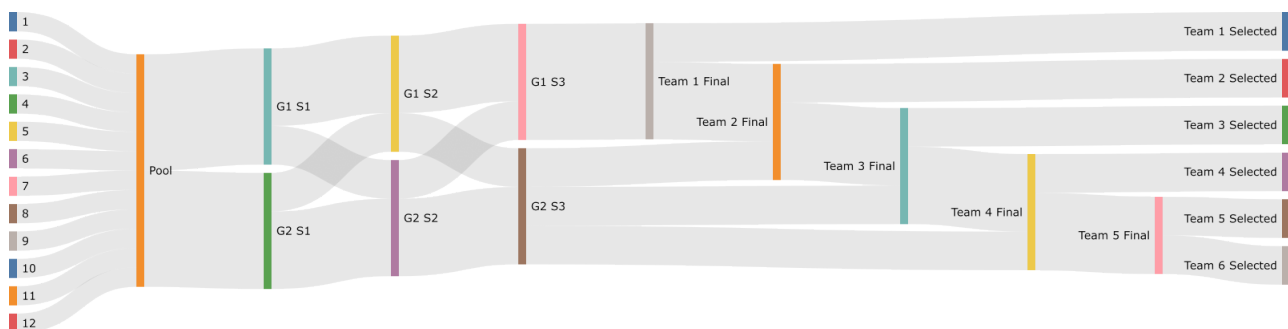


Figure 1: Example Goalie Flow for a 6 team division.

2.4 Third Party Evaluator

Cochrane Minor Hockey engages an independent third party evaluation service to provide on and off ice evaluation services, including facilitation and direct evaluation of goaltender performance in technical and gameplay settings. For the 2025-26 season, the vendor providing this service is Ballanc3d Sports².

²Ballanc3d Sports Website: <https://balanc3d.ca/>



2.5 Evaluation Timelines

Cochrane Minor Hockey goaltender technical and gameplay evaluation schedules are available on the Cochrane Minor Hockey Website³. Times and groupings are subject to change ahead of and during the evaluation period.

2.6 Data used for Ranking and Team Selection

In all age and program combinations, goaltender rankings will be compiled from the set of technical and gameplay sessions using the weights and ratios outlined in Appendix A and B.

AA/AAA team selection will be performed using ranks from technical sessions as well as AA/AAA gameplay session ranks.

REP/Female team selection will be performed using ranks from technical sessions as well as any REP gameplay session ranks.

RHL team selection will be performed using ranks from technical sessions as well as any RHL gameplay session ranks.

In the REP and across coed and female programs, goalie selection will be informed by goaltender aggregate ranks informed by the individual goaltenders body of work evaluated in the technical and gameplay sessions.

Goaltenders dismissed from AA or AAA evaluation rosters after successful selection to the AAA or AA tournament team roster, may be offered the opportunity to bypass the group skate phases of AA or REP tryouts.

This would mean inviting released goaltenders directly to the first AA Intersquad Skate for goaltenders transitioning from AAA to AA, or directly to the REP Team 1 Final for goaltenders transitioning from AA to REP.

AA and AAA programs include opportunities for head coach feedback in final roster assembly. Notes on this process are included in subsection 2.7.6.

2.7 Age/Division Specific Notes

2.7.1 U7/U9

In the U7 and U9 divisions, players are not evaluated at the goaltender position. In U7 players do not formally rotate into the goaltender position. In U9 each player shall have the opportunity to play the goaltender position. This opportunity will be provided as part of a regular rotation where each team member is given the opportunity to taking his or her turn as goaltender for a practice and subsequent game. No player shall be forced to participate as a goaltender.

2.7.2 U11 REP and RHL

Each player wishing to play the goaltender position must declare as a goaltender prior to the start of the evaluation process. Players electing as goaltenders will be evaluated at that position and placed on teams according to their ranking versus the other goaltenders.

³Cochrane Minor Hockey Association Website: <https://www.cochraneminorhockey.com/>



The Cochrane Minor Hockey Association will work to ensure that each team will have a maximum of **2** goaltenders assigned. With varying goaltender registrations against team counts, second goaltender assignments will be allocated to the next highest team with an aim to ensure a minimum of **1** goaltender for each RHL team in a division.

Coaching staff will be expected to work with goaltenders to design a goaltender rotation that supports healthy working partnership between goalie pairs. Examples of some typical rotation designs can include rotation by period, 1/2 game, full game, or even weekend. The primary goal should be to keep the goalies on the ice and on the bench engaged in the game and working to support each other and their team. The best rotation design for any specific team should be the one that considers the age, skill, and level of development of the goalie pair.

For the 2025-26 season, The Cochrane Minor Hockey Association is continuing to offer a hybrid goalie program for U11 goalies. Program details for U11 goaltenders interested in applying for a hybrid goaltender/player role are presented as Appendix C.

Players registering as goaltenders who are excluded as hybrid goaltenders for any reason identified in appendix C program will be expected to play the goaltender position in a full time role.

2.7.3 U13/U15/U16/U18 REP

Each player wishing to play the goaltender position must declare as a goaltender prior to the start of the evaluation process. Players electing as goaltenders will be evaluated at that position and placed on teams according to their ranking versus the other goaltenders.

The Cochrane Minor Hockey Association will work to ensure that each team will have a maximum of **2** goaltenders assigned. The U13, U15, U16, U18 REP program ambition is to have two goaltenders per team.

Goaltenders are expected to work with coaching staff and partner goaltenders to design a goaltender rotation that supports healthy working partnership between the goalie pair. Examples of some typical rotation designs can include rotation by period, 1/2 game, full game, or even weekend. The primary goal should be to keep the goalies on the ice and on the bench engaged in the game and working to support each other and their team. The best rotation design for any specific team should be the one that considers the age, skill, and level of development of the goalie pair.

2.7.4 U13/U15/U16/U18 RHL

Each player wishing to play the goaltender position must declare as a goaltender prior to the start of the evaluation process. Players electing as goaltenders will be evaluated at that position and placed on teams according to their ranking versus the other goaltenders.

The Cochrane Minor Hockey Association will work to ensure that each team will have a maximum of **2** goaltenders assigned. The U13, U15, U16, U18 RHL program goal is to have a minimum of **1** goaltender per team.

Goaltenders are expected to work with coaching staff and partner goaltenders to design a goaltender rotation that supports healthy working partnership between the goalie pair.



Examples of some typical rotation designs can include rotation by period, 1/2 game, full game, or even weekend. The primary goal should be to keep the goalies on the ice and on the bench engaged in the game and working to support each other and their team. The best rotation design for any specific team should be the one that considers the age, skill, and level of development of the goalie pair.

2.7.5 Female Program

Evaluation processes, and team assignment standards for the Female stream are equivalent to the Co-Ed stream.

2.7.6 AA/AAA Programs

Goaltenders are ranked based on technical evaluation rankings combined with gameplay evaluation from AA/AAA gameplay sessions per the weights and ratios identified in appendix A and B.

Individual ranks from gameplay evaluation skates from AAA or AA tryout sessions are not considered in ranking goaltenders for selection on REP or RHL teams beyond the opportunity to bypass the group skate portions of AA and REP tryouts extended to any goaltender selected for the AAA or AA tournament roster for AAA or AA team selections respectively.

Consistent with the Forward and Defensive player AA/AAA team selection process, head coaches of AA and AAA teams have an opportunity to voice opinion in final goaltender selection. In any AA or AAA team selection scenario, the top ranked goaltender is automatically selected and the second ranked goaltender is the defacto assignee for the second position.

If, for reasons that can be clearly and formally articulated, the head coach has a strong preference to retain the 3rd or 4th ranked goaltender, they can make a formal request outlining their selection decision and justification to the evaluation committee to override the defacto goaltender assigned for the teams second goaltender slot.



Appendices

A Technical Evaluation Scoring

Goaltender evaluation technical sessions will be completed over a single 1.5 hr long ice time according to the schedule provided on the CMHA website for Goalie Technical Evaluations. The technical evaluation portion will be completed prior to group assignment for any gameplay sessions.

The technical sessions consist of a skating (no pucks or shooters present) and a simulated game scenario (pucks and shooters present) section with a short break in between. Goalies will be grouped by age and tier played last season for these sessions.

A team of independent third party instructors qualified in goaltender coaching and evaluation will design and run these two technical sessions.

During these sessions evaluation scoring will be performed by a team of up to 5 third party evaluators, all who specialize in goaltender training and development.

Scoring will be performed using the ruberic presented as Table 1 which is directly encoded into the CMHA evaluation data collection platform⁴.

⁴Cochrane Minor Hockey Association uses the platform <https://teamgenius.com/> for evaluation data collection and management.



Table 1: Technical Skate Evaluation Weights and Descriptions

Criteria	Description
Save/Play Execution - 30%	
- Shots Low and High	Demonstrates rebound control technique off stick, pads, catcher, blocker, and chest protector. Use of butterfly techniques at appropriate times. Demonstrates quickness and consistent positioning of blocker and catcher.
- Puck Handling	Passing and clearing the puck. General puck playing ability.
Skating and Movement - 30%	
- Mobility and Quickness	Skating ability, strong movement on feet and while sliding. Moves with speed and control when in ready position. Reacts well to puck movement in zone. Maintains ability to recover from butterfly and siding positions. Reacts well to quick and untelegraphed shots. Effective in close range settings. Fast reaction times.
- Balance	Retains ready position after blocking shots. Holds ready position in movement and recovery. Quickly retains position after scrambling.
Technical Skill - 30%	
- Positioning and Angles	Knows position at all times. Assumes a neutral position at top edge of crease when unchallenged. Positions self properly in advance of shot. Displays awareness of shooter's options. Lines up properly on puck. Works hard to find puck if screened. Uses all of body. Demonstrates rebound control and awareness of potential deflections or passing options.
- Play at Posts	Positions self properly when play is behind net or in the corner. Demonstrates strong lateral mobility and post-to-post movement. Uses stick to decrease scoring opportunities. Demonstrates ability to challenge passes to the slot.
Disposition - 10%	
- Confidence and Discipline	Displays an in-charge attitude. Resets after goals against and displays neutral or positive body language.
- Consistency and Desire	Able to make critical saves. Demononstrates strong work ethic. Does not give up in battles for puck.
- Fitness Level	Demonstrates a suitable level of physical fitness and flexibility. Demonstrates a consistent energy level.



B Gameplay Evaluation Scoring

Each goaltender will receive a minimum of two gameplay evaluation sessions.

Gameplay sessions will be run as regular 5 vs. 5 games where player counts permit. Goaltender assessment during gameplay sessions will be performed by at least one third party evaluator who specializes in goaltender training and development.

These assessments will be used to calculate goaltender rankings which will be used to place goaltenders on the appropriate teams.

Each player in the U11, U13, U15 and U18 age groups who declares as a goaltender must attend the gameplay evaluation sessions. Goaltenders not attending their scheduled sessions will not receive a score for the missed session(s).

Scoring across all age categories and divisions will be performed using the rubric presented as Table 2 which is directly encoded into the CMHA evaluation data collection platform⁵.

⁵Cochrane Minor Hockey Association uses the platform <https://teamgenius.com/> for evaluation data collection and management.



Table 2: Game Play Evaluation Weights and Descriptions

Criteria	Description
Save/Play Execution - 30%	
- Save Selection	Makes reasonable save choices across a variety of situations.
- Goalie Reaction/Anticipation	Understands offensive team play options. Has ability to note and communicate with defense about open player(s). Able to read evolving play and shooter options.
- Puck Handling	Passing and clearing the puck. General puck playing ability
Skating and Movement - 30%	
- Mobility and Quickness	Skating ability, strong movement on feet and while sliding. Moves with speed and control when in ready position. Reacts well to puck movement in zone. Maintains ability to recover from butterfly and siding positions. Reacts well to quick and untelegraphed shots. Effective in close range settings. Fast reaction times.
- Balance	Retains ready position after blocking shots. Holds ready position in movement and recovery. Quickly retains position after scrambling.
Technical Skill - 25%	
- Positioning and Angles	Knows position at all times, assumes neutral position at top edge of crease, positions self properly prior to shot, knowledge of shooter's options, lines up properly on puck, works hard to find puck, use of body, rebound control, awareness of other potential shooters/deflectors
- Play at Posts	Positions self properly when play is behind net or in the corner. Demonstrates strong lateral mobility and post-to-post movement. Uses stick to decrease scoring opportunities. Demonstrates ability to challenge passes to the slot.
Disposition - 15%	
- Confidence and Discipline	Displays an in-charge attitude. Resets after goals against and displays neutral or positive body language.
- Consistency and Desire	Able to make critical saves. Demononstrates strong work ethic. Does not give up in battles for puck.
- Fitness Level	Demonstrates a suitable level of physical fitness and flexibility. Demonstrates a consistent energy level.



C Hybrid Goalie Program

Continuing the pilot program started in the 2024, The Cochrane Minor Hockey Association will continue work to develop and offer a hybrid goaltender program for the 2025-26 season. The program will be limited to U11 goaltenders with slot preference given to first year U11 participants.

Cochrane Minor Hockey Association Hybrid Goaltender Evaluation Process Notes.

- Correspondence sharing program options and surveying interest will be sent to registered U11 players and goalies in early August 2024.
- Hybrid goaltenders will need to participate in the goaltender technical evaluations and participate in gameplay evaluation sessions as a player.
- Hybrid goaltenders will only be accepted into the program if their player and goaltender evaluation ranks place them within 1 tier up or down across both roles.
- Qualified hybrid goaltender applicants will be selected and placed on a team based on their evaluation performance as a player.
- Hybrid goaltenders will split their time playing the goaltender position with another goalie in the hybrid program.
- Full time goalies will be given preferential team placement in situations that a full time goalies ranking places them below the highest ranked hybrid goaltender of a pair but above the next qualified hybrid goaltender.
- The U11 AA Bow Valley Timberwolves team will not be assigned any hybrid goalie slots.

