



## **Raiders Evaluation Guidelines**

Effective September 2025

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## OVERVIEW & GOVERNANCE

### Objectives

- To provide a fair, consistent, and comprehensive evaluation of each athlete's overall skill set
- To ensure that all athletes are selected to play on a team appropriate for their level play
- To provide a reliable and consistent process, so that all athletes and parents know what to expect throughout the evaluation process.
- To form balanced and competitive teams, where the athletes can develop and participate equitably, while having fun playing hockey throughout the season

### Evaluation Executive Committee

The Evaluation Executive Committee is responsible for executing the evaluation process. The Committee is responsible for ensuring that the approved process is followed and to coordinate all necessary elements of the evaluation process. The Executive Evaluation Committee may include any of the following members:

1. President
2. VP On-Ice Operations
3. VP Off-Ice Operations
4. Director of Goalies (for goalie evaluations)
5. \*Age group Division Director
6. \*Age Group Lead Evaluator

*\*For their age group only*

### Schedule and Important Dates

The evaluation schedule is built based on several factors including; age groups, ice/arena availability, Hockey Calgary important dates, elite releases, and most importantly, registration numbers. A preliminary schedule will be released as soon as possible each season, based on this information.

- Per Hockey Calgary, no evaluation of players may take place before **September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025**
- Evaluations will start on **September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025**
- Evaluations end not later than **October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

## PREPARATION & PRE-EVALUATION

### Evaluation Communication

An email will be sent to each athlete with the time for their **FIRST** evaluation session. Please note that this will be the **ONLY** email sent out. All subsequent sessions will be posted on the Raiders website. Evaluation groupings (by jersey number), ice times, arena, and the focus of those evaluations (eg. skills or game) will be posted online under "Evaluations" on the website: <https://raidershc.ca> It is the athlete's responsibility to ensure they attend all assigned sessions as the Raiders Hockey Club will not contact individuals with their ice times.

**IMPORTANT** - We encourage Raiders Hockey Club members to ask questions about the evaluation process rather than engage in rumors or speculation. **Please direct any questions to your Age Division Director** who will put you in contact with the Evaluation Team if necessary. Or, if you see one of our Board of Director representatives around the rink during evaluations, please feel free to say hello and ask questions. If they cannot answer your question, they will direct you to the appropriate rep who can.

### Player Attendance

Attendance at all evaluation skates, including timed sessions, skills sessions, and games is **MANDATORY**. Failure to participate in one or more evaluation session prohibits RHC from being able to fairly evaluate and place your player on a team according to the processes outlined here within. Therefore, in the event of any absence, movement between groups during evaluations will be restricted. Should a player be absent for a time trial or placement skate, the initial placement will be up to the discretion of the Evaluation Committee. Should a player be absent for the entire process, the Evaluation Committee will ultimately decide the placement of the player on a team. **These placements are not up for appeal.**

**Injuries and Family Emergencies:** In the event of an injury or family emergency during evaluations, please notify BOTH VP On-Ice, VP Off-Ice, as well as the assigned Division Director for your player's division as soon as possible, accompanied by a doctor's note for injuries.

The Evaluation Committee makes great effort to accurately place players dealing with unfortunate injuries, family emergencies, or other health concerns. Depending on the duration of the absence, the Evaluation Committee will either place the player within the process, or on a team taking into special consideration the following factors:

1. Performance in evaluations, should any skates have been completed
2. Safety
3. Team previously placed on
4. Previous coach and assistant coach feedback
5. Final peer placement

### Contacts:

#### Executive:

VP On-Ice Operations – Ryan Maertens Poole: [vpon-ice@raidershc.ca](mailto:vpon-ice@raidershc.ca)

VP Off-Ice Operations – Rob Henderson: [vpoff-ice@raidershc.ca](mailto:vpoff-ice@raidershc.ca)

#### Division Directors:

U7 & U9 – Jessica Buzanko: [directorgrassroots@raidershc.ca](mailto:directorgrassroots@raidershc.ca)

U11 – Colin Beaman: [director11@raidershc.ca](mailto:director11@raidershc.ca)

U13 – Trish Solobay: [director13@raidershc.ca](mailto:director13@raidershc.ca)

U15 – Paul Harvey: [director15@raidershc.ca](mailto:director15@raidershc.ca)

U18 & Director of Goalies – Curtis Adam: [director18@raidershc.ca](mailto:director18@raidershc.ca)

U21 & U13AA – Jake Turgeon: [director-development@raidershc.ca](mailto:director-development@raidershc.ca)

## Evaluation Conduct Expectations (Player and Spectator)

All spectators need to remain in the viewing areas of the arena. Please respect the posted signs for areas that have restricted access. All spectators are required to abide by the [RHC Evaluation Spectator Policy](#)

## Evaluators

- It is expected all evaluators have a strong knowledge of hockey and they will be selected and approved by the evaluation executive committee
- *New for the 2025/26 Season RCH will not pay for third party evaluators for skater evaluations. This decision was made by reviewing and comparing scores submitted by all evaluators last year. There were no discernible patterns or differences between 3rd party evaluator scores and RHC evaluator scores.*
- Evaluators cannot evaluate any division they have a player participating in the upcoming season
- The process, scoring system and expectations will be explained to all evaluators prior to any player evaluations
- All scores, conversations, and information available to evaluators is strictly confidential, and must not be discussed with anyone outside of the evaluation committee during and after the evaluation process. Anyone violating this will be removed as an evaluator and will not be considered in future years as an evaluator or coach
- Evaluators can be removed and/or replaced at any point during the evaluation process at the discretion of the Evaluation Executive Committee for not complying or fulfilling any of the above criteria
- After every ice time, evaluators are expected to review the results with the evaluation team and provide feedback on their scores (if needed) as well as participate in discussions involving the movement of players for the next ice time.

## Goalie Specific Notes:

- Due to the specialized knowledge required for evaluating goalies' technical skills and abilities and a limited number of experienced volunteer evaluators, Raiders will secure 1 evaluator from GDI (Goalie Development Inc.).
- *New for the 2025/26 Season RCH will assign 2 RHC evaluators to also provide scores. This decision was made to have goalies not being placed based on scores from a single evaluator. Any excessive discrepancies between evaluators' scores will result in discussions to ensure the best possible movements/placements.*

## Player Positions

In older age groups, during registration, players must declare which position they wish to play for the season. Players will be evaluated based on their performance in the positions they declare\*. If you are unsure of the position you declared for, wish to change your player's declaration, please notify the Raider's Administrator, VP On-Ice, and VP Off-Ice prior to the start of evaluations. Positions cannot be changed after the first session is completed.

- U7 & U9 – No set positions.
- U11 – Players declare as Skater, Goalie, or a Hybrid Goalie.
- U13-U18 – Players declare as either a Forward, Defense, or Goalie

*\*In very rare occasions, depending on groups sizes and player availability, players may be asked to substitute in a different position (F or D) for a few shifts to ensure sessions can proceed based on injuries or low numbers. Only players that have sufficient scores for that session would be asked to substitute and evaluators will be made aware and not evaluate them for those shifts.*

## Player Identification

Each player will be assigned a jersey number that will remain the same throughout the evaluation process. RHC will provide two jerseys per player (a black and a white), printed with their individual ID number. Goaltenders will receive a grey jersey with their ID number. Jerseys will be distributed prior to the first evaluation skate at a designated date and time. At the conclusion of the final skate, jerseys must be returned. A \$100 replacement fee will apply for any lost or unreturned jerseys. Players will not be assigned to a team until their jersey is returned, or the replacement fee is paid. Jersey collection will take place at the end of the final evaluation skate for each division.

## EVALUATION STRUCTURE

### Conditioning and Pre-skates

Conditioning, pre-skates, and pathways are **NOT** part of the evaluation process. Per Hockey Calgary, no evaluation of players may take place before **August 30, 2025**.

### Initial Placement (Starting Groups)

Players (skaters and goalies) begin the evaluation process by competing in groups with other players of similar skill levels. This pre-seeding approach allows athletes to showcase their development from the previous year in a more balanced and competitive environment, helping to ensure a positive and constructive evaluation experience.

**Please note:** NO PLAYER is guaranteed a placement based solely on the previous year's team. This means athletes may start the evaluation sessions lower, or higher than teammates from the previous season. Initial placement will take place as follows:

U7 – Players are sorted with other players of the same age

U9-U11 – Timed Skill Sessions will be used to determine the starting group for players

U13-U18 – Starting groups will be based on previous season tier and age group

## **Evaluations Components**

### **Timed Skill Sessions**

Timed skills sessions have been designed as an objective way to accurately place players in appropriate starting groups. This is particularly useful when players participated in different structures (U7, U9 half ice, U11 full ice) the prior year. Hybrid players will participate in the timed skills sessions, but full-time goalies will not. Sessions will be run by Fuel Performance. For U9, RHC coaches may be used to help support and organize players.

### **Skill Assessments / Small Area Games**

Players demonstrate technical and intangible skills in a variety of age-appropriate edgework, puck control, skating agility and competition drills. These skills will be assessed based on the three evaluation pillars. Goalies who agree to participate in these sessions will not be evaluated. Sessions will be run by RHC volunteer coaches.

### **Games**

During the games, U11 skaters will be assigned rotational positions by the bench attendant to ensure each skater has an opportunity to play each position. In U13+, skaters will be assigned to their declared positions. Referees will be used for all full-ice games.

A goalie rotation will be determined before the game dependant on the number of goalies participating to provide equal evaluation opportunity for each goalie.

The format for games will be as follows:

1. Half-Ice 4v4 (U9) - *depending on groups sizes, some half ice games may be 3v3*
2. Full-Ice 5v5 (U11+)

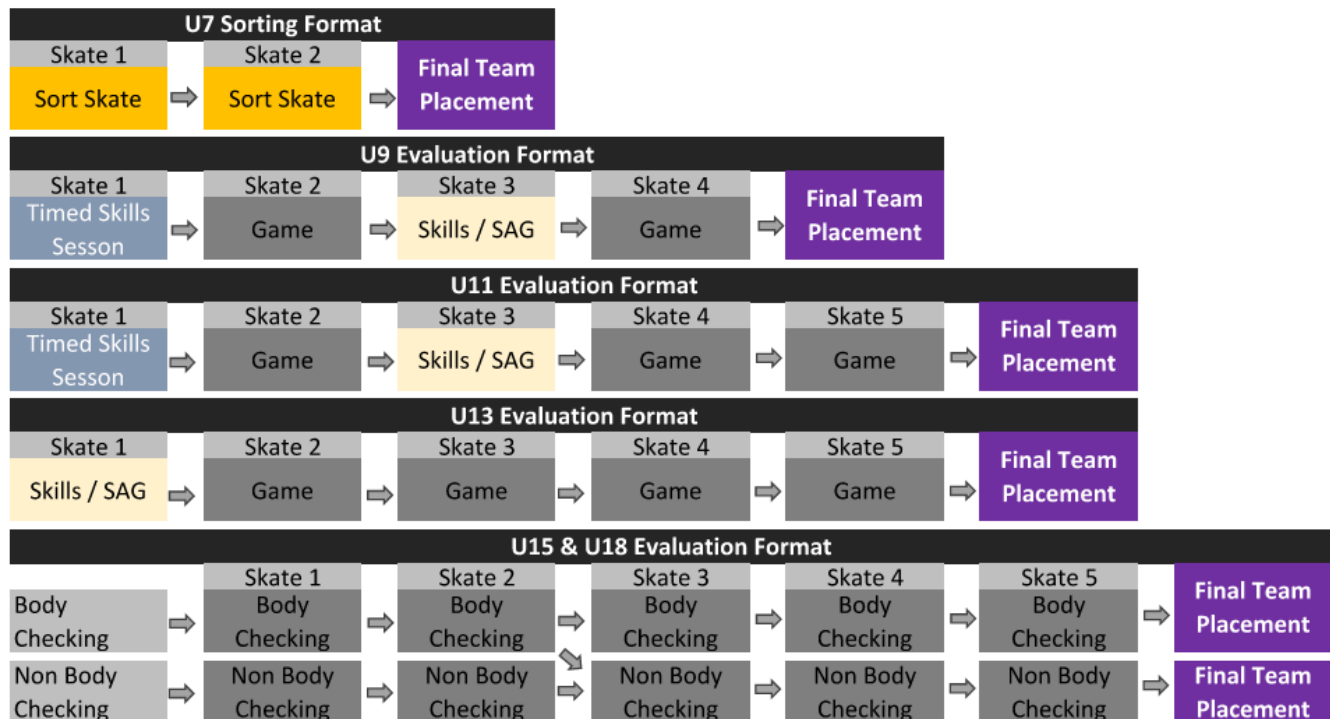
Games will use referees.

Scrimmages will use RHC volunteer coaches.

### **Technical Sessions (Goalies)**

The evaluation of goaltenders is made difficult due to the specialized nature of the position and the unique abilities and experience required of the Evaluators. Goaltenders are evaluated by independent Evaluators with appropriate goaltending instruction and playing experience. They will demonstrate skills in goalie-only Technical Sessions. If there is more than one group needed for the technical session, goalies will be separated based on the prior year's team.

## Evaluation Format

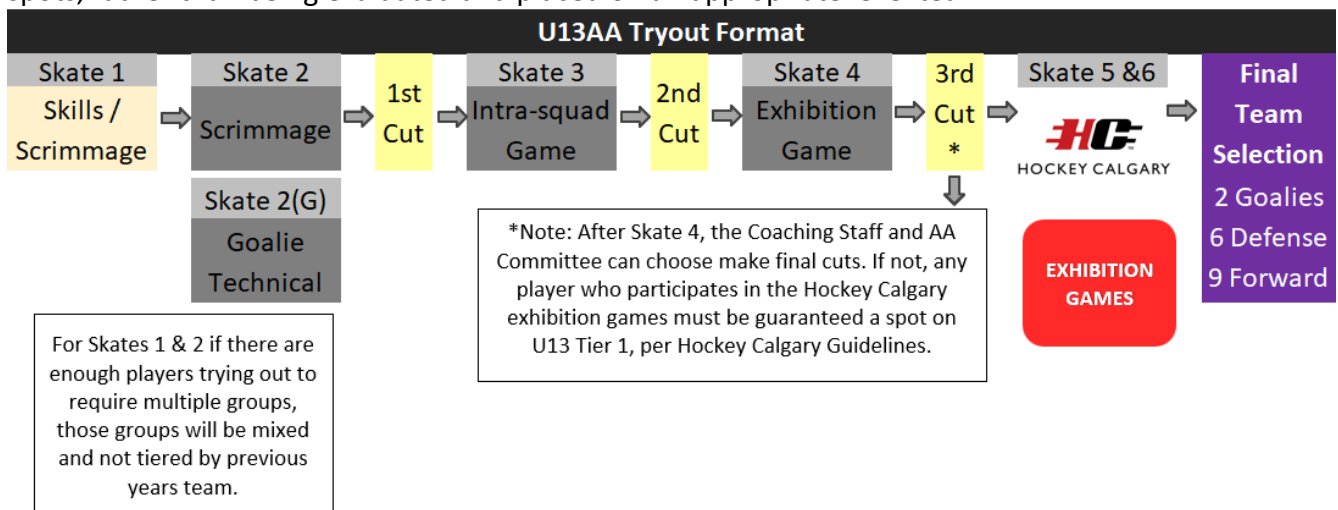


### U11AA

There is not a separate tryout process for U11AA. All U11 players evaluate together. Once the roster sizes are determined (based on registration and number of teams), the players who evaluate at the top of U11 will comprise the AA team. The remaining players will fill out the rest of the tiers.

### U13AA

There is a separate tryout process for U13AA. This program is new in 2025/26 for all Hockey Calgary associations, intended to follow elite stream programming. Unlike community hockey, AA teams are picked primarily by the head coach and their staff. It is a true 'try out' process for limited roster spots, rather than being evaluated and placed on an appropriate level team.





## U21 / Junior C

Although Junior C is a Raiders program it does not fall under typical community hockey guidelines. Junior C is considered a competitive hockey program and the guidelines for tryouts and roster selection are like that of Elite/Quadrant, Junior B, Junior A etc. The coaching staff has ultimate say in who makes the Junior C team.

Junior hockey is subject to a trickle-down effect where players cut from higher level team, may take spots from players currently on a lower team. For instance, if a player cut from Junior B wishes to continue playing at the Junior C level and the coach determines he is more suited than one of his current players, he can cut the current player for the player returning from Junior B. Junior C cuts are not assigned to lower-level teams, they are released. Released players will be refunded a pro-rated amount of their full-season fees. Final rosters are not submitted until Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

At minimum, a player must have played in a body checking division in their final year of U18 hockey. It is at the discretion of the Head Coach and the Raiders Hockey Club to accept players to try out for the U21/Junior C team.

## Evaluation Scoring

### RHC 3 Evaluation Pillars.

For each evaluation skate, players will be given a score using the 3 Evaluation Pillars. These pillars will be ranked on a scale of 1-7 (7 being highest). Players are scored against all the other players in the same ice time only. Players demonstrating the highest ability in each pillar for the ice time will receive a score of 7, and the player demonstrating the lowest ability in each pillar for the ice time will receive a score of 1. In division where players must declare a position, they will only be scored against players of the same position.

#### 1. Skills

- Skating
- Puck Control
- Shooting & passing
- Checking (in appropriate divisions)

#### 2. Hockey Sense

- Decision Making / Spatial Awareness
- Positional play
- Supports both sides of the puck
- Finds open ice
- Understands hockey systems and flow of the game
- Offensive & defensive instincts
- Anticipation of play & response

### 3. Compete

- Passion / desire
- Work ethic
- Attitude
- Communication

These scores will be averaged for an overall score and that overall score will determine the player's rank for that skate. These rankings will be used to guide the evaluation team's decisions on movement (up or down) of players between groups.

#### Sample Scoring Grid:

Player Number	Color	Pos	End Rank	Average Score	Evaluator 1	Evaluator 2	Evaluator 3	Evaluator 4	Evaluator 5	Evaluator 6	Evaluator 7	Evaluator 8	Evaluator 9
117	B	F	1	6.30	6.67	6.00	6.67	5.67	6.33	7.00	5.33	6.33	6.67
				Skills (34%)	7	6	7	5	7	7	6	6	7
				Hockey Sense (33%)	7	6	6	6	7	7	5	6	6
				Compete (33%)	6	6	7	6	5	7	5	7	7
102	B	F	2	5.52	5.67	5.33	6.00	5.33	5.33	6.00	5.67	5.67	4.67
				Skills (34%)	6	5	5	5	6	6	6	6	5
				Hockey Sense (33%)	6	5	6	5	5	6	6	6	5
				Compete (33%)	5	6	7	6	5	6	5	5	4
110	W	F	3	5.19	5.00	4.67	5.33	5.00	5.33	5.67	4.67	5.33	5.67
				Skills (34%)	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	5
				Hockey Sense (33%)	6	4	5	6	6	6	5	5	6
				Compete (33%)	4	5	6	5	5	6	5	6	6
132	W	F	4	4.37	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.33	4.33	5.33	4.33	4.33	4.67
				Skills (34%)	4	4	3	4	4	6	6	4	4
				Hockey Sense (33%)	5	4	4	5	5	5	3	4	5
				Compete (33%)	3	4	5	4	4	5	4	5	5
125	B	F	5	4.01									
113	W	F	17	1.50									
102	W	F	18	1.37	1.00	1.33	1.67	2.00	1.33	1.33	1.33	1.33	1.00
				Skills (34%)	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
				Hockey Sense (33%)	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1
				Compete (33%)	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1

## PLAYER MOVEMENT & SPECIAL CASES

### Movement (See Appendix for a sample movement matrix for each age division)

The evaluation process for U9, U11, U13, U15, and U18 divisions will focus on **upward and downward** player movement. Movement between groups will be guided by evaluator scores. After each ice session, the evaluation team and evaluators will review scores as a group to confirm which players should be moved up or down. The number of players moving between groups will vary by division and session based on registration numbers in any given year.

Ice sessions will be staggered, when possible, to allow for immediate transitions. For example, if a player starts in Group F, but is clearly placed too low, they may be moved to Group E and skate in that group's corresponding session number on the same day. This would be considered a special case.

This cascading movement will continue throughout the process. As players shift between groups based on performance, they will consistently be evaluated against similarly skilled peers. Over time, this results in more focused groupings and reduced skill disparities.

Movement up and down works the same for goalies as players, although traditionally, there is more upward and downward movement for goalies due to the limited number of goalies.

## Overall Ranking and Final Team Placement


A rank for each evaluation session is calculated based on the evaluator scores as previously noted. The overall rankings after each round of evaluations are determined by the players rank in the group they completed in, and where that group is related to other groups.

Example overall rankings based on group:

- Session 1 Group B - 25 players (At the end of the skate are ranked 1-25)
- Session 1 Group C - 30 Players (At the end of the skate are ranked 26-55)
- Session 1 Group D - 30 Players (At the end of the skate are ranked 56-85)

For final team placement, an average of each player's overall rank in each skate will be the primary guide for placing players on teams/tiers.

Example:

Player Number	Pos	FINAL Overall Ranking	Average Ranking	Eval Session 1 Rank	Eval Session 2 Rank	Eval Session 3 Rank	Eval Session 4 Rank	Eval Session 5 Rank
117	F	38	39.00	56	43	43	39	31
102	F	39	40.60	43	41	44	40	35
110	F	40	41.80	44	42	42	43	38
132	F	41	43.80	52	44	41	42	40
125	F	42	44.80	44	45	46	45	44
								
113	F	90	91.40	110	95	92	81	79
102	F	160	159.40	160	159	159	160	159
<i>Note: Evaluation Session 1 Rank is not used in the calculations for Average Rank</i>								

*\*New for 25/26 - Players scores for their first skate will be used for upward and downward movement to the next skate but will NOT be used for their overall average score. So, if a player demonstrates they belong in a higher initial group, their initial score won't count against them for final placement.*

Other factors considered for final team placement:

- Journey – a player's journey refers to their path through evals. For instance, if a player moves up every session and finishes near the top each time, their overall average may not be

reflective of proper tier placement. Conversely, if a player moves down and/or finished near the bottom of every skate, again, the average score may not reflect proper tier placement.

- Head-to-head scores – in cases of ties and potential bubble players (bottom of a tier and top of the tier below), scores where players competed in the same ice time can be taken into consideration
- See player attendance (page 3)

### Goalie Evaluation Scoring:

For each evaluation skate, goalies will be given a score using the following categories. These will be ranked on a scale of 1-7. (7 being highest). These scores will be used following the same process as the players for ranking and movement.

- 1. Glove Ability**
- 2. Blocker Ability**
- 3. Down Low Ability**
- 4. Position/Angles**
- 5. Side to Side Ability**
- 6. Read and React**
- 7. Recovery**
- 8. Battle/Compete Ability**

### Hybrid Goalie/Skaters (U11 Only)

Due to the number of evaluation ice times, it is impossible to provide 5 evaluation skates in both the goalie and player position for Hybrid Players. Depending on the number of Hybrids, the evaluation team will determine how many sessions a Hybrid will play as a goalie and as a player.

If it is determined there is too large of a discrepancy between a Hybrid Players ability as a player vs as a goaltender (more than 2 tiers) the player will not be permitted to play as a hybrid and will be asked to choose between player and goalie. *ie, a player is a tier 2 goalie and a tier 5 skater*

A player who signs up and starts evaluations as a Hybrid may switch to full-time goalie or skater at any point in the evals but once that decision is made, they cannot switch back. Final placement will be at the discretion of the evaluation committee based on the skates completed at the chosen position.

### Player Acceleration

Player acceleration is a situation where a player wishes to play in an age group older.

Performance Criterion:

- U7 to U9 and U9 to U11 movement, the underage Athlete must achieve an overall evaluation ranking within top 5 of the top group in every evaluation skate.
- U13 to U18 movement, the underage Athlete, as a forward, must achieve an overall evaluation ranking within the top 3 of every evaluation skate and, as a defenseman, must achieve an overall evaluation ranking within the top 2 of every evaluation skate.

There are two athlete acceleration scenarios:

1. When the Athlete's proper and older age categories' evaluation schedules are concurrent:

- The Athlete participates in the evaluation skates for the category older than their age, subject to achievement of the Performance Criteria
- If the Athlete achieves the Performance Criteria, the request for acceleration is deemed to be successful and the Athlete will be placed on the top team in the higher age category
- If the Athlete fails to achieve the Performance Criteria, the Athlete will be placed in an evaluation group or team within their proper age category at the discretion of the evaluation committee, depending on the evaluations being completed at the younger age category.

2. When the Athlete's proper age category evaluation starts before the older age category evaluation:

- The Athlete participates in the evaluation skates for their proper age category and continues to be considered for acceleration subject to achievement of the Performance Criteria
- If the athlete achieves the Performance Criteria at their proper age category, the Athlete then participates in the evaluation skates for the category older than their age, in conformance with the provisions of athlete acceleration Scenario 1 (above).
- If the Athlete fails to achieve the Performance Criteria at the proper age category, the request for acceleration is deemed to be unsuccessful, and the Athlete remains registered in their proper age category in accordance with the RHC Evaluation Guidelines

The difference in payment for the older age category will be required prior to being placed on a team.

### **Players Returning from Quadrant Tryouts**

The overall goal is to place athletes returning from CNHA/NWCAA within the Raiders Hockey Club at a level that is consistent with their ability and does not penalize them for their efforts within the CNHA/NWCAA organization. RHC will commence our U13, U15, and U18 evaluations at the conclusion of AA/AAA tryouts to accommodate returning athletes. Injured athletes will be placed at the discretion of the committee.

Please Note: Elite Hockey release does not ensure returning athlete initial placement in the top group. Athletes will be placed accordingly with their previous seasons team. If an athlete was not registered with the Raiders in the previous season they will be placed in a starting group at the discretion of the evaluation team.

### **EVALUATION INQUIRIES / APPEALS**

Upon receiving notice of their final team placement, if a player/parent believes that there was an error made in the evaluation process for their player, they are entitled to appeal the player placement. Advancing an appeal places the burden on the player/parent making the appeal to explain the reasons for the appeal.

## Appeal Process

The following outlines the appeal process:

1. Players/parents are encouraged to take a “24-hour cooling-off period” prior to making the decision to initiate a formal appeal. During this time, we encourage the player/parent to review the Evaluation Handbook. This dialogue resolves nearly all placement concerns.
2. If the player/parent wishes to advance the appeal there is a \$250 fee and a written appeal must be submitted to the President of RHC within 72 hours of the player being notified of their team placement.
3. Payment of the fee will be arranged with the RHC administrator.
4. Raiders Executive will schedule an appeal meeting

### Factors to Consider for an Appeal

- Was there an error in the evaluation scores that materially compromised the placement of the player?
- If the appeal is based on a player’s sickness, injury or partial attendance, was notification of the sickness, injury or inability to attend a session given by the player/parent in accordance with the procedure set out in the Evaluation Guidelines?
- Were the Hockey Calgary team size and tiering grid followed?
- Were the RHC Evaluation guidelines followed?

The following are examples of some of the unacceptable reasons for an appeal:

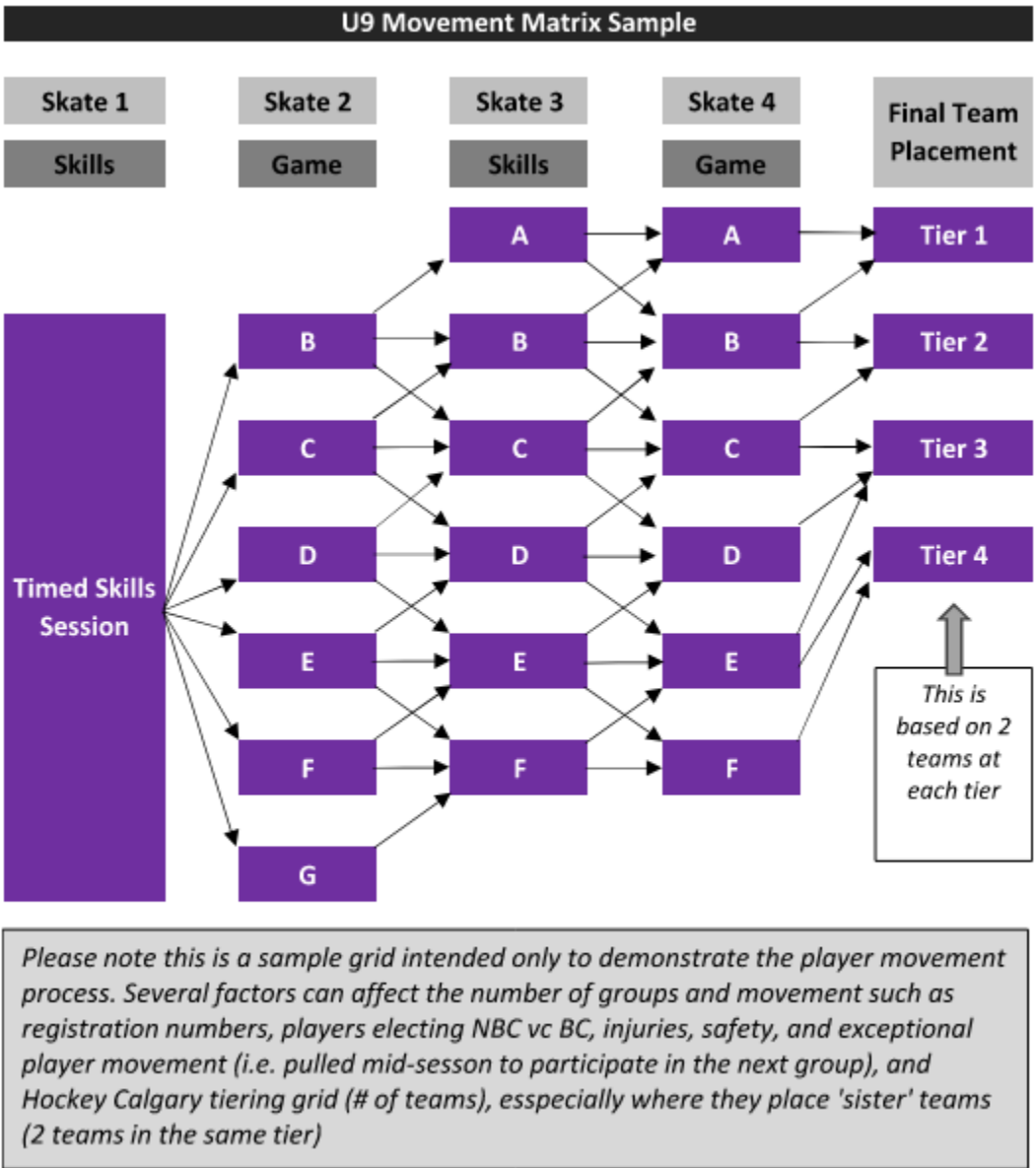
- Desire to play with a particular player or players on another team.
- Desire to play for a particular coach or assistant coach.
- Desire not to play with a particular player or player on the assigned team.
- Desire not to play for a particular coach or assistant coach on the assigned team.
- Previous year(s) performance or placement.
- Placement in relation to another player or players.
- Input from other RHC members, spring and summer hockey coaches, and outside development coaches.

### What to expect during an appeal

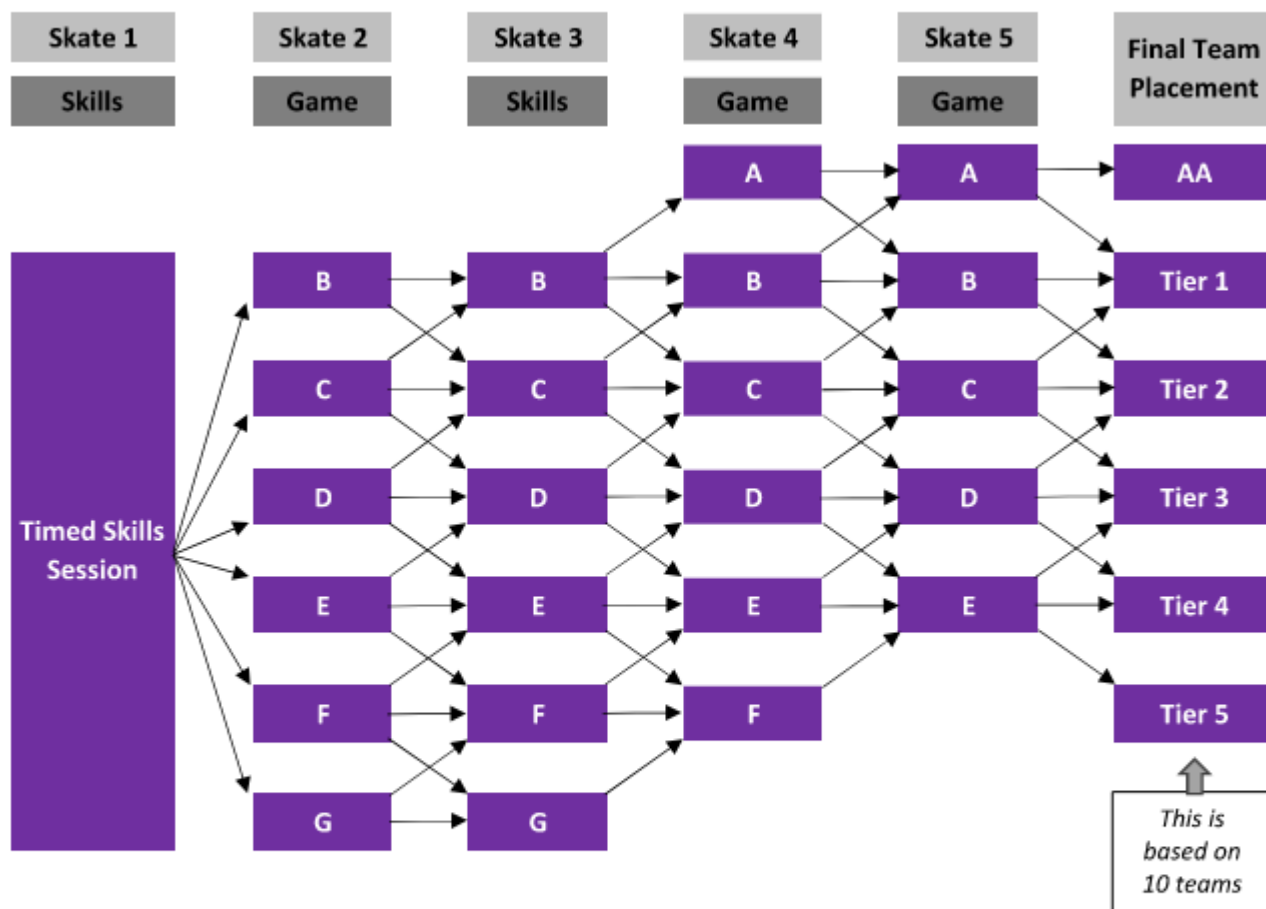
- Parents will be able to view their athlete’s ranking for each skate, overall journey, ask questions, and provide their case on how the evaluation process was not followed or errors were made.
- All information shared in the meeting remains with Raiders Hockey Club and is to be treated as confidential
- No documentation will be released to the athlete upon completion of the meeting
- Athletes are not permitted to attend the review

Appendix

Sample Matrices for Player Movement



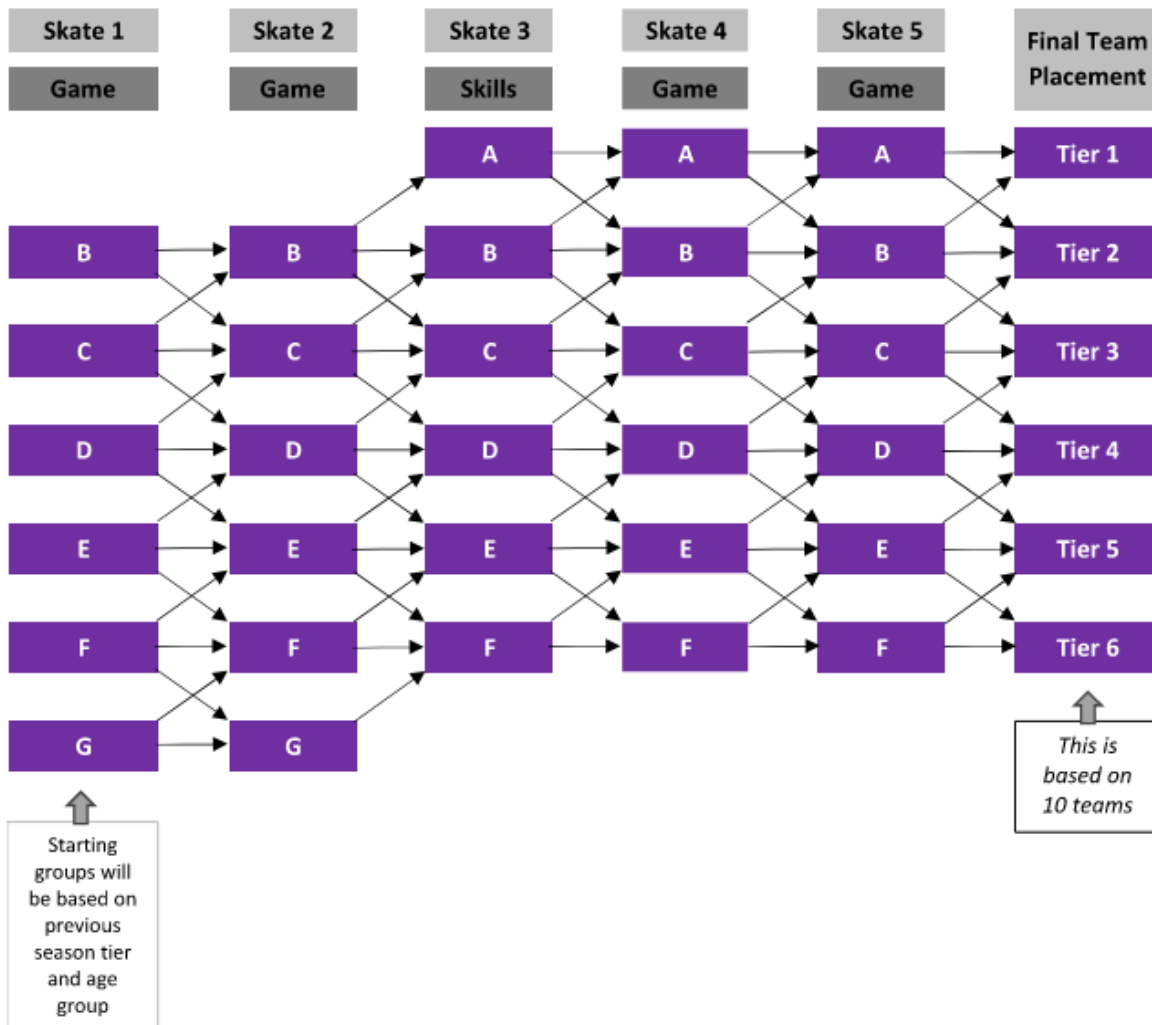
## U11 Movement Matrix Sample



*Please note this is a sample grid intended only to demonstrate the player movement process. Several factors can affect the number of groups and movement such as registration numbers, players electing NBC vs BC, injuries, safety, and exceptional player movement (i.e. pulled mid-session to participate in the next group), and Hockey Calgary tiering grid (# of teams), especially where they place 'sister' teams (2 teams in the same tier)*

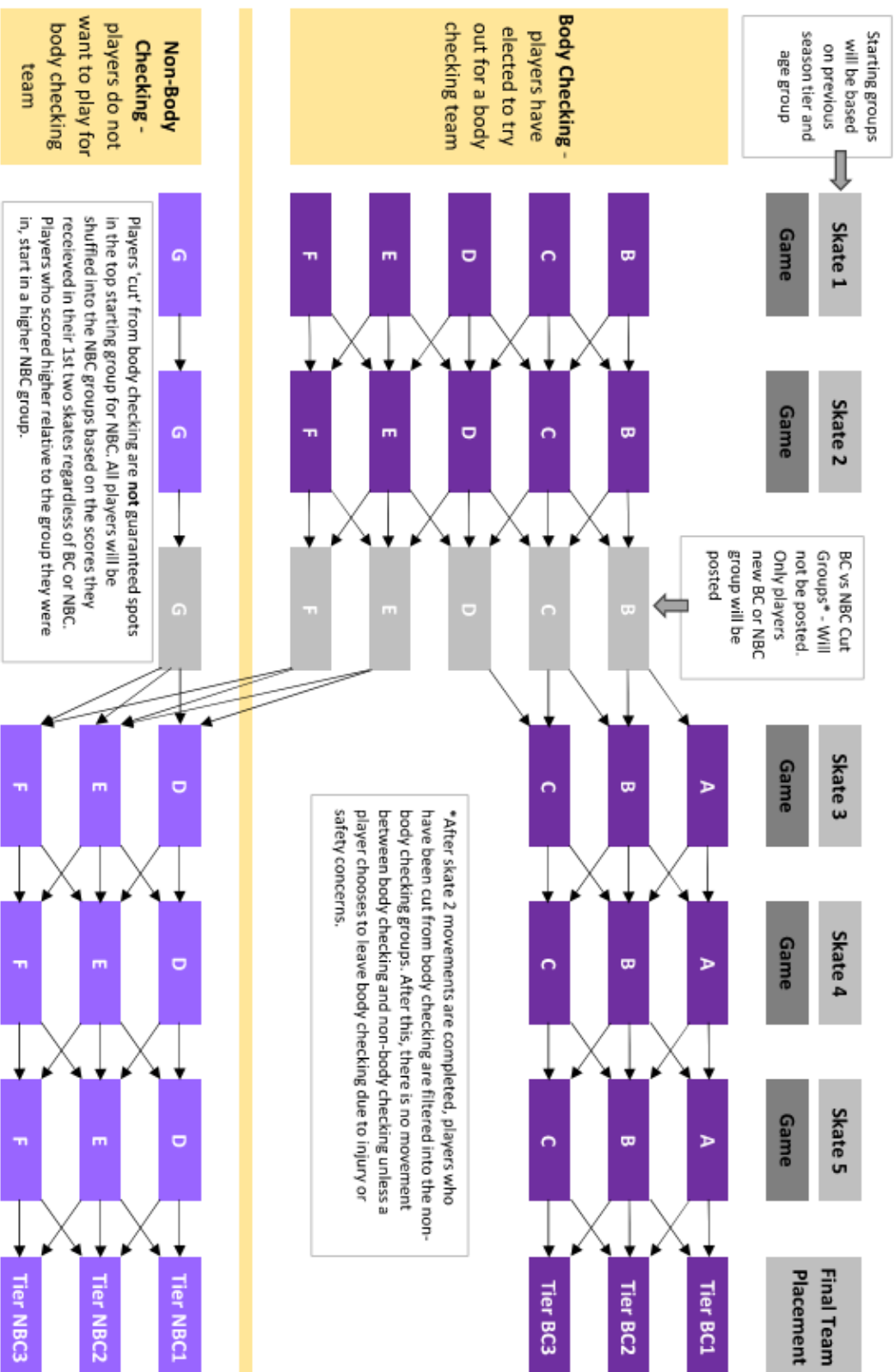


### U13 Movement Matrix Sample



Please note this is a sample grid intended only to demonstrate the player movement process. Several factors can affect the number of groups and movement such as registration numbers, players electing NBC vs BC, injuries, safety, and exceptional player movement (i.e. pulled mid-session to participate in the next group), and Hockey Calgary tiering grid (# of teams), especially where they place 'sister' teams (2 teams in the same tier)

## U15-18 Movement Matrix Sample



Please note this is a sample grid intended only to demonstrate the player movement process. Several factors can affect the number of groups and movement such as registration numbers, players electing NBC vs BC, injuries, safety, and exceptional player movement (i.e. pulled mid-session to participate in the next group), and Hockey Calgary tiering grid (# of teams), especially where they place 'sister' teams (2 teams in the same tier)