



INFORMATION FOR WAHA JR. NAILERS TRAVEL 2020/2021

Founded in 1964, WAHA is a non-profit community striving to provide our players with a competitive and complete youth hockey development experience. Our goal is to develop every players' fundamental hockey skills while teaching life lessons consisting of discipline, effort, and teamwork.

WAHA provides a competitive travel hockey program at an affordable cost allowing for players to grow their skills. Travel teams compete in the Pittsburgh Amateur Hockey League (PAHL). The league is made up of youth hockey associations in and around the Western PA region, competing in divisions ranging from A minor to AA. Our teams are predominantly placed at the single A level. If your aim is to play AA and above, there are many respectable hockey associations in the Pittsburgh area that may be a better fit. All the key information you need to prepare for the upcoming hockey season is contained in this newsletter.

Please read this guide in its entirety before registering. The strength and success of our organization lies within the participation of our membership. We invite every member to volunteer and help our association continue to provide an affordable travel hockey program.

Thank you for your support. We look forward to another great hockey season!

TRAVEL COMMITMENT



PAHL games are played on weekends and may extend as far north as Erie, as far east as State College, as far south as Morgantown WV, and as far west as Youngstown, OH. In addition to end-of season PAHL playoffs - if team qualifies, travel teams may choose to take part in a maximum of 2 local or out-of-town tournaments within a 3-hour radius from Wheeling. Travel and overnight stays may be needed to cities such as Pittsburgh, Cleveland, or Columbus.

EVALUATION DETAILS

DAY OF EVALUATION/CHECK-IN

Fees due at registration: All players and goaltenders must bring a \$20 non-refundable evaluation fee. Check made payable to "WAHA".

- Arrive at the rink in plenty of time to check in and change.
- Have your WAHA contract completed and signed.
- Turn contract in to the WAHA Treasurer at the registration table with your \$20 check.
- WAHA practice jerseys will be used for tryouts, if you do not have one, it will be provided to you.

EVALUATION ABSENCES

- If a player is going to miss all or part of the evaluation process due to injury, illness or a school-related conflict, **you must still complete the WAHA contract and turn in your deposit.**
- **Notify:** wheelinghockey@gmail.com as early as possible.
- We will do our best to accommodate a player's absence within the player placement process.

REGISTRATION DETAILS

POST-EVALUATIONS: WHAT Happens Next?

The team assignments will be posted to <http://www.waha.com> on Wednesday April 8, 2020.

- Players are identified by jersey number only.
- Teams are identified by Coach's name.
- Online Registration opens after team assignments have been posted.

SEASON PLAYER FEE: \$950.00.

- Fee does not cover equipment/extra tournaments/overnight stays/scrimmages.
- Season fee does not cover the annual USA Hockey fee or other membership dues.
- Girls, U16, U18 fees may vary, depending on season/tournament scheduling.
- There are several different payment plans to accommodate families.

1. REGISTER WITH USA HOCKEY

- Start by getting a 2020-2021 USA Hockey registration number (IMR). USA Hockey's new season registration opens on April 1 <http://www.usahockeyregistration.com>. \$51

2. REGISTER FOR WHEELING JR. NAILERS

- Registration opens online April 8, 2020 for Travel teams.
- With your new USA Hockey registration number form handy, go to the WAHA web site at <http://www.waha.com.prod.sportngin.com/> and register for your WAHA age group. Link with directions from the WAHA home page. Pay the commitment fee after choosing the appropriate payment plan with a credit card online.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Satisfaction of all financial obligations to WAHA is the sole responsibility of the player and parent/legal guardian. Any unfulfilled financial obligation shall be the basis of denial of access to all practices, games, tournaments, and other WAHA functions until the obligation is fulfilled.

Membership Fee Requirements, Late Fees and Delinquency: All player membership fees must be paid in full or current if paying via a WAHA approved payment plan (payment dates as determined by the WAHA Treasurer).

Fees are non-refundable and financial obligations due to WAHA may only be waived at the discretion of the WAHA BOD. Situations involving major illness, injury, or hardship will be considered by the WAHA BOD on a case-by case basis.

A \$25 fee will be charged each month that an account is not current. This fee will be applied seven (7) days after notification that an account is not current, if WAHA is unable to collect from the payment method provided due to expired payment method, change of account numbers, or insufficient funds available.

A \$35 fee will be charged to a player's account for any insufficient funds' charges, returned checks, or chargebacks.

WAHA, in partnership with Wheeling Park, will complete Phase 2 of significant renovations in the summer of 2020 at a cost of almost \$1.5 Million. Together, we aim to complete Phase 3 in the next couple of years. Phase 3 includes a ¾ size enclosed additional rink adjacent to WP. WAHA will not raise fees this season, but an increase is necessary and forthcoming. We will continue to strive to keep total fees at ½ of nearby associations.

REFUNDS

If a player makes a travel team and then decides to leave WAHA, fees WILL NOT BE refunded, except if you decline your position before 4:00 PM on May 1, 2020. All declinations must be made by email to wheelinghockey@gmail.com .

If you haven't declined by the due date you have consented to all obligations in the WAHA contract, including responsibility for paying season player fees. After the due date WAHA will not release players to other associations before the season fee is paid. Any player-release after season start must be approved by WAHA's Competition Committee. Players failing to register before the registration period is over, without making prior arrangements are no longer guaranteed to make a team and are at significant risk of losing their roster spots. If a team does not have enough player commitments by the deadline, the team will be cancelled, and any season fees paid will be refunded.

TRAVEL HOCKEY COST COMPARISON

Rink 1 (nearby competitor) Travel Cost:

Tryout fee:	\$125
Organizational Fee U8:	\$875
Organizational Fee U10-U16:	\$2,150
Team Fee:	unknown
Coaching Fee:	unknown
Uniform estimate:	\$500
(socks, 2 jerseys, practice jersey, team-bag, team-warm-ups, team sweat shirt)	
Total (U8 - Red, White and Blue)	=\$1,500
Total (U10-U16)	=\$2,775 excl. unknown team and coaching fees

Rink 2 (large competitor) Travel Cost:

Tryout fee:	\$150
Organizational Fee U10-U16:	\$2,425
Team Fee:	\$450
Coaching Fee:	\$350
Uniform estimate:	\$500
(socks, 2 jerseys, practice jersey, team-bag, team-warm-ups, team sweatshirt)	
Total (U10-U16)	=\$3,875

Wheeling Junior Nailers Travel Cost:

Tryout fee:	\$20
Organizational Fee U8:	\$475
Organizational Fee U10-U16:	\$950
Team Fee:	None
Coaching Fee:	None
Uniform cost:	None
Total (U8 - Red, White and Blue)	=\$475
Total (U10-U16)	=\$970

TEAM COMPOSITION AND ALIGNMENT

WAHA expects several teams at each age group (U10-U18). We aim to place 11-15 skaters and 2 goalies on each team. Girls and U14 - U18, may place more skaters on each team. Players who fail to register or make arrangements before the registration period ends are at significant risk of losing their roster spots. When team mergers are necessary to support the majority, tardy registrations without prior notice will be the first cuts.

Preseason player and team movements are usually caused by overdue registrations and contract violations. If you want to avoid late team-realignments, do your part by registering on time. Many parents like to play the tryout game where their children try out on multiple teams and hold out as long as possible without communicating intentions to multiple hockey associations. To be clear, we encourage players to compete at the highest level possible and will assist players with AA or AAA placements when appropriate. Be we ask you to be mindful and transparent with your intentions, so you won't leave teammates without a place to play once the season has started.

PAHL teams are selected to divisions by the PAHL placement process, using historical player data and results from preseason games. Team placement decisions are made by PAHL, not WAHA. It is important for players to participate, compete and do well in placement games.

PLAYER PLACEMENT

WAHA team placements are based on what the evaluation committee believes will constitute appropriately assembled teams and level for players. Either a best team, equal level teams, or a combination thereof. By association policy, we do not comment on individual team placements. However, we do offer our players the same advice: If you think the evaluators were wrong, prove it with your game on the lower team. Accept their decision or go elsewhere, but be motivated and determined to train harder, play harder and fight back by improving your standard of play and earn that promotion next season.

Teams will be posted on www.wvaha.com. For privacy, no minors are posted to the website. Players are identified by evaluation jersey numbers, only the coach is identified by name. Most players will know by social media chatter which team they made within minutes.

Some of our coaches have players in the program and we won't know until after the evaluation process is concluded where those kids are placed. To keep the placement process honest, WAHA can't name parent-coaches until after the evaluation committee picks the teams. Coaches will be announced as teams are posted online unless we are looking to fill the position on a certain team.

WHAT IF A PLAYER WISHES TO BE EVALUATED FOR AN OLDER AGE GROUP?

Mites are not allowed to play up an age group, per PAHL rules. Second year Squirt, PeeWee, and Bantam players who wish to be evaluated for the allowable step-up in age group need prior approval from wheelinghockey@gmail.com and will be evaluated within their own age group as well. Ask yourself if the player moving up an age group will be able to get ice time in key situations that is so crucial for development, or if he/she is better off with more success following the proper development ladder at a lower level? As a general rule, a player taking an older player's roster spot should be in the top ¼ of the older age group to be moved up. We also consider whether players and parents are ready to handle the next maturity level emotionally.

FAQ: WHAT IS TRAVEL HOCKEY ALL ABOUT?

WHAT IS TRAVEL HOCKEY?

Travel hockey is for the player who has enjoyed past in-house hockey seasons and consistently liked the sport enough to move on to the next level to receive additional ice times and instruction. Sometimes, travel is not yet suitable for your child, but as children continue to mature might become a better fit in a year or two. Your child needs to be enthused about the game of hockey and able to compete safely at the appropriate level.

Hockey is a physical sport. Players are carrying sticks in their hands and sharp blades on their feet at high speeds with lots of protective pads and strong emotions. It is necessary to incorporate more demanding discipline than in most other sports for everyone's safety. Both kids and adults take the physicality too far on occasion making it impossible to prevent all injuries from reckless, competitive play. If you, or your player, do not want the physicality or demanding discipline, we strongly encourage you to keep your player in-house for no-contact and less competitive ice hockey.

HOW ARE THE PLAYERS EVALUATED?

Each evaluator will independently grade each player's fit for a team by the end of the first session of evaluations. The purpose of evaluations is to identify each player's current and potential skill level, so each player is placed on the appropriate team. Placements are based on what the evaluation committee believes will constitute the appropriately assembled teams and level for individuals, either a best team, equal level teams, or a combination thereof.

CAN WE SPEAK TO ANY OF THE EVALUATORS DURING THE EVALUATION PROCESS?

To maintain their objectivity, all evaluators are prohibited from discussing any aspect of the evaluation process with any parent or player until all team placements are completed. The evaluators are selected for their knowledge of the game, familiarity with the developmental needs of the level being evaluated, and their reputation as objective and impartial evaluators. The process is imperfect and many players mature over the summer, resulting in mistakes being made every year.

WHAT DOES A PLAYER DO IF THEY CANNOT ATTEND ONE OF THE EVALUATION SESSIONS?

If a player is going to miss the evaluation process due to injury, illness or a school related conflict, you must still complete the WAHA contract and turn in your deposit. You must also notify wheelinghockey@gmail.com as soon as possible. We will do our best to accommodate a player's absence within the process. It is the responsibility of the player to give notice.

WHAT IF I OWE WAHA OR ANOTHER PAHL ASSOCIATION MONEY?

All prior season balances with WAHA and other PAHL associations must be settled before a player may be permitted to be evaluated. Team fees are expected to be paid in full no later than October 1st. WAHA reserves the right to keep players off the ice until the player-account is in good standing.

THE HOCKEY SEASON

WHEN DOES THE HOCKEY SEASON BEGIN?

The PAHL hockey season typically lasts from mid-September through the first week of March. Placement games start right after Labor Day. Dates and times TBD. Most teams are finished before lacrosse, soccer and baseball start their season. WAHA encourages all hockey players to participate in multiple sports for optimal athletic development. We allow our hockey players to finish their summer season sports before committing full time to hockey and we expect the same courtesy in return from spring sports. Some of our coaches like to do training in the off season. Dryland training is determined by each team's coach.

TOURNAMENTS?

Teams can arrange for 2 optional out of town tournaments per season. Tournaments must be within a 3-hour drive radius from Wheeling, WV. WAHA recommends keeping at least one of the two tournaments within driving distance to cut down on overnight expenses. Tournament fees are not included in season player fees and becomes the responsibility of participating families. The team manager collects the fees and turns into the WAHA Treasurer who will cut a check to the tournament, all in an effort to keep payments transparent and protect the team managers. Additionally, player families are responsible to pay for coaches lodging expenses if coaches do not have a child on the team.

DO I HAVE TO BUY A PERSONALIZED JERSEY, HOCKEY BAG AND TRACK SUIT?

No. Optional Wheeling Nailers tracksuits and merchandise are available for individual purchase at authorized merchants, including Wheeling Nailers front office and Hole 'N Run. Game and practice jerseys are supplied by WAHA. To keep cost down, players are not required to wear team apparel or use team hockey-bags to games or other functions. We recommend players purchase black socks, gloves, pants and helmets when it's time to replace current equipment.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DECIDE TO LEAVE MY TEAM TO PLAY ELSEWHERE?

All players need to be paid in full before being released from an active roster. Roster moves and releases require approval from WAHA's Competition Committee. Offers from better or higher placed teams after September 1 is not a reasonable excuse for a player release. Team comes first.

WE WANT TO HOLD A FUND RAISER FOR OUR TEAM, NOW WHAT?

No individual team shall conduct individual fundraisers of any kind without the prior written request submitted and approved by the WAHA BOD. If approved, the WAHA BOD reserves the right to provide oversight and direction of the approved fundraising activity including, but not limited to, collection and distribution of funds, records, and other actions at its sole discretion. All fund raisers need to be made available for all Wheeling Jr. Nailers teams to take part in. Inquiries and requests should be forwarded to wheelinghockey@gmail.com .