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# **Team Selection and Junior – Senior Transition Policy**

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| **TYPE OF POLICY** | Participation |
| **EFFECTIVE DATE** | April 2021 |
| **POLICY OWNER** | Derwent Hockey Club |
| **POLICY CONTACT** | Derwent Hockey Club - Secretary |

## **REASON FOR POLICY**

To articulate the process of team selection and the transition of players from junior to senior teams.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The Derwent Hockey Club supports a fair and transparent process for the selection of all teams both junior and senior. The aim of this policy is to clarify the team selection process and the transition from junior to senior teams to ensure that it remains in line with the Derwent Hockey Club’s values and objectives.

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all coaches and managers of Derwent Hockey Club’s junior and senior teams.

## **DEFINITIONS**

## **POLICY HISTORY**

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| **PARTICIPATION POLICY – NAME** | **VERSION** | **RELEASE DATE** | **AUTHOR** |
| Team Selection and Junior – Senior Transition Policy | 1 | April 2021 | DHC Committee |

## **BACKGROUND**

Winning is not the primary objective of the Derwent Hockey Club. The club considers winning as a potential outcome that stems from the development of the individual within the structure and objectives of the team. Notwithstanding this it is accepted the club aims to field competitive sides with players who display a healthy competitive spirit.

# **Team Selection and Junior – Senior Transition Policy**

## **Team Selection Criteria**

Selection may be based upon the criteria set out below.

Inclusion of a team in the Southern Hockey Competition is at the discretion of the Derwent Hockey Club Committee and will ultimately be based upon fielding a financial team with adequate player numbers. Players should refer below to selection guidelines specific to your division.

## **Stick 2 Hockey(S2H)**

Stock2hockey is comprised of three levels:

* Under 7’s & under 8’s played on 1/8 of a field
* Under 9’s played on ¼ of the field
* Under 9‘s+ player on ½ of the field
* Mixed Full Field played on a full field by a boy/girl combined team.

The Club’s stick2hockey programs focuses on foundation skill development in a fun-filled environment. For this reason, the club recommends that players play in their age group and do not play up age groups unless filling in occasionally for a team. This is to ensure that players are playing at a level appropriate to their age, skill and physical and mental readiness for the game.

In rare circumstances a player may be permitted to play up an age group where they display exceptional skill and physical and mental readiness for the game. Such decisions are at the discretion of the stick2hockey coordinator.

Team selection is at the discretion of the stick2hockey coordinator who should have regard to those considerations set out in section entitled ‘Juniors’.

The club recommends the following pathway to transition juniors:

## **Juniors**

Derwent Hockey Club is keen to provide hockey for all players at an appropriate standard. Players should have the opportunity to play in the highest grade possible if they have sufficient skills. They should play in a team where they are more likely to use all their skills.

Generally, our policy is for players to play in their own age group but occasionally circumstances may make it more appropriate for a player to play out of their age group. Such a decision would be made after discussion with the player and parents. However, no child playing in his/her applicable age group is to be disadvantaged by the playing of a younger child in a higher age appropriate group.

Selection of Junior teams will occur at the beginning of the season and is primarily the decision of the Junior Boy’s and Girl’s Coordinators.

In determining junior team selection consideration **must** be given to the following factors:

* Player availability
* Fielding a financially viable team (i.e. enough player numbers to field a stand-alone team and not a reliance on fill ins)

Consideration **may** also be given to these other factors:

* Ability/skill/experience
* Players with greater ability may play up an age group where keeping them in their own age group would detract from the enjoyment of the game for the other members of the team. Such a decision should only be made in unique circumstances.
* Inexperienced players who would struggle in their age group may benefit from playing down an age group and being allowed to develop their skills in a competition at an appropriate level. In such circumstances a dispensation should be sought from the Tournament Director.
* Mental or physical readiness to play
* Friend preferences
* Team preferences

Subsequent selection of junior teams is at the discretion of the applicable coach who may consider those factors set out above.

## **Playing Up Age Groups in Juniors**

Increasingly we are seeing junior players wishing to play in multiple junior age groups. It is the Derwent Hockey Club’s position that Junior players should always play in their own age group and should only play up age groups in unique circumstances. Such unique circumstances may include the following:

* The ability of the player. Note that the player should be dominant in their own age group before being permitted to play up an age group.
* Where a team could not be fielded without the additional players. Note that the team should have a core 11 of age players and the additional below age player’s parents should be informed that they will incur additional fees. Where there are less than 11 of age players consideration should be given to amalgamating this age group with that of a similarly positioned another club. This approach is only to be undertaken in the interest of Hockey and not to facilitate players playing in multiple grades with multiple clubs.
* Goalkeepers may play in multiple age groups where needed.

***Junior players will not be permitted to play up an age group where the team has adequate numbers of age players (14 or >) and to do so would detract from the enjoyment of the game for of age players.***

## **Interchange**

Increasingly interchange is used as a legitimate strategy in the game of hockey. This strategy allows for the rotation of players to prevent fatigue.

Derwent Hockey Club has developed an interchange policy for coaches and managers.

* Most teams will have a squad of 13 or 14 players of whom only 11 can be on the ground at any one time. Each player is to be considered a full member of that team.
* All players are to take their turn on the interchange bench throughout the season.
* No player is to be on the interchange bench to the extent that he or she is regularly playing substantially less than a full game.
* In the situation where the team has a regular goalkeeper, he or she may be exempt from the above rules.

## **Playing Positions**

Players in all teams will be expected to learn to play several (three or more) field positions.

If you can play in several field positions, you give yourself several chances of getting into the team you want to be in. Whether it be the School 1st team, the ‘A Pool” team or the State team etc. If you say you only want to play in a single position you give yourself only one chance of making that team.

It is the aim of Derwent Hockey Club that players will have developed a working understanding and ability to play in three or more positions after two years with the club. To assist with this aim Derwent Hockey Club has developed a ‘Playing Positions Guidelines’ as outlined below for the guidance of coaches and managers.

Coaches in the Full Field Mixed and u13 grades shall regularly rotate players through each playing line and both sides of the field. It is recognised that when the team has several inexperienced players and some experienced players, it is beneficial to the team to play the more experienced players in the key positions early in the season. However, over the season it is expected that each player will be give experience both at training and in games in 3 or more positions.

## **Games Played in a Week**

The Derwent Hockey Club recommends that junior and senior players play no more than two full games in a week. This does not include filling in or benching for a third team.

* E.g., one senior game and one junior game
* E.g., two junior games

Players and parents of junior players are encouraged to consider the impact that overloading can have on players health and wellbeing and to actively manage workloads.

## **Transition from Juniors to Seniors**

One of the major aims of the Derwent Hockey Club junior section is to develop junior hockey players so they can compete at the highest level possible at senior level. To achieve this outcome, junior players and their parents at some stage need to address the issue of when a junior player should begin to play senior hockey.

There are obviously no hard and fast rules and the appropriate time for a given player will depend upon a number of factors such as skill level, physical and mental maturity, playing ambition and so forth. There is no question that senior hockey is played more aggressively and usually at a faster tempo compared with junior hockey. This provides unique challenges to the junior player which they need to overcome before the transition to senior hockey is complete.

Junior players are actively encouraged to seek out opportunities for development and growth through training and/or playing seniors.

The Derwent Hockey Club recommends the following pathway for transitioning to Seniors:

## **Juniors Playing or Training with Seniors**

Increasingly juniors are seeking to extend and improve their skills by playing in senior teams. Parents are expected to be aware of the following in permitting their child to trial for or play for a senior team.

* Selection of senior teams/squads is at the discretion of the relevant coach or B pool coordinator who may but is not required to consider the factors set out above in the relevant section.
* Selection of Senior teams may be subject to change any time at the discretion of the relevant coach.

Factors that may be considered when choosing a junior player to train or play with a senior team include the following:

* The players hockey ability
* The players performance and attitude
* Team balance and stability
* The players physical and mental readiness for playing senior hockey
* The number of senior games already played, where applicable
* Availability for training and games, i.e. individual workloads may be taken into consideration
* There is a limit on the number of juniors that can reasonably play in any team

## **Seniors**

### **Selection Guidelines**

The Derwent Hockey Club aims to select the most appropriate team for each grade based on several criteria, each of which may be given different weighting depending on the team’s circumstances.

In doing so, it is recognised that senior teams range from the social to the elite level, and that players join the Derwent Hockey Club for significantly varying reasons.

Given the nature of hockey, some criteria might have a subjective element and a few criteria might overlap with one another in some respects.

### **A pool**

## Selection of 1st grade or Premier League teams is at the discretion of the relevant coach.

The Derwent Hockey Club is bigger than the individual so the primary consideration for the selection of 1st grade and Premier League teams will always be to field the team that the coach perceives will put the Club in the best possible position to win.

It is important for junior players and parents to remember that the selection process is sometimes painful for both players and officials. Please also remember that all coaches and officials are volunteers putting in a considerable amount of time and effort to enable all the children to play hockey. Without them we have no club. Some players set themselves unrealistic goals. Frequently an athlete’s own assessment, or more commonly, their parent’s assessment is very subjective. Our aim with this policy is to be as objective as possible.

In making their decision coaches may also consider the following factors in making their decision:

* Attendance at pre-season and in season training
* Player contribution to team and/or club culture
* Payment of club fees
* Attitude on and off the field including any disciplinary procedures
* Fitness
* Ability, skill or experience
* Opportunities for development and growth of individual players
* Physical or mental readiness of the player
* Age
* Workload i.e. state representative requirements
* Elite players who cannot attend training because of elite hockey commitments may still be considered for selection
* Availability of an appropriate position

### **B pool**

Selection of ‘B Pool’ teams at the beginning of the season is the decision of the Men’s or Women’s ‘B Pool’ co-ordinators. Consideration must be given to the following factors:

* Player availability
* Fielding a financially viable team

Consideration may be given to these other factors:

* Friend preferences
* Team preferences
* Player dynamic e.g. keeping juniors who have aged into seniors together
* Ability/skill/experiences
* Physical or mental readiness of the player

Subsequent selection of the applicable B pool team is the discretion of the team’s coach or representative and consideration may be given to those factors set out above in (b).

## **Communicating Team Selection**

Selection of A pool and B pool teams shall be communicated weekly to the playing squad via Facebook, Text or such other platform for communication.

Where a junior player is selected or not selected for a senior team, consideration should be given to the players age and whether it is appropriate in the circumstances for a parent and/or guardian to be involved in the discussion.

Selection of junior teams shall be communicated to players at the most recent training.

## **Grievance procedure**

A player’s initial concern about selection or otherwise, should be communicated to the team’s coach/captain/senior team member/ relevant coordinator. Where communicated to the captain, senior team member or coordinator the player’s concern should then be passed onto the coach where requested by the player. In the first instance the coach should attempt to address the player’s concern within the framework of this document.

If the player finds the coach’s response unsatisfactory, she/he may raise her/his concern with the Player Liaison Officer (see contact details below). The Player Liaison Officer will discuss the concern with the team’s coach and provide further feedback to the player. The Player Liaison’s Officer’s primary role is to advocate for the player aggrieved.

If the player is still dissatisfied with the response from the coach the matter should be elevated by the Player Liaison Officer to the Club President or Vice-President.

Player Liason Offier - Matt Davies.

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## **Training**

An invitation is extended to all club players to participate in ‘A Pool’ preseason training sessions. Once the season commences only those players selected or invited by Premier League and 1St Grade coaches are expected to attend ‘A Pool’ training sessions.