

VARSITY DERBY LEAGUE

Young Skaters within VDL Policy

Principle

Varsity Derby League (VDL), pursuant to its mission of promoting roller derby, does not and will not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, intersex status, **age**, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations.

These activities include, but are not limited to, membership eligibility, disbursement of resources, and eligibility for office. VDL is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all skaters, officials, volunteers, and fans.

The principle behind this policy is to provide a safe and supportive environment that gives opportunities for all approved young skaters to participate in roller derby in a variety of capacities. By encouraging and catering for young skaters we can encourage lifelong participation and improve athleticism within the sport.

Definitions

Adult Skater	A skater over the age of 18
Coaches	VDL Trainers. These may be members of Training Committee or guest trainers.
Direct Supervision	When a young skater is in view of, and in direct verbal communication with, a coach or parent while carrying out tasks
Game Area	The area during any derby activity where players, officials and volunteers are admitted. This includes the track and surrounding player's or official's area.
Indirect Supervision	When a young skater is: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• in verbal communication by the use of two-way radio or telephone• given comprehensive instruction/induction/training to carry out tasks
Young Official	An approved on-skates official (aged 16 and over) or non-skating official (aged 14 and over) who is trained to undertake a specific task or role during a VDL event.

Young Skater	An approved skater aged 16 or 17
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§1 Roles and Responsibilities

Varsity Derby League is committed to strengthening and improving the sport through safe and appropriate transitions from junior, to adult, roller derby.

Approved young skaters participating in adult roller derby activities are the shared responsibility of Varsity Derby League, our affiliated associations, parents/guardians, coaches and officials, sports health professionals and the participants themselves.

Varsity Derby League

With the continued improvement of junior roller derby and its training, we are seeing young skaters with skills and knowledge to match those of adult roller derby. VDL sees the need to facilitate transition from junior, to adult, roller derby so as to continue the participation and progression of the sport.

VDL will provide:

- the best possible sporting experiences for all approved junior skaters so as to encourage lifelong participation in sport.
- supportive environments for enjoyable participation in a wide variety of roller derby activities, through the development of skills and good sporting behaviour.
- the safest possible environment for the conduct of approved junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities.
- equal opportunities for approved young skaters to participate in adult roller derby activities.
- provide safe playing conditions and to educate approved junior skaters and parents on health and safety in sport.

VDL will achieve this by:

- encouraging the use of our facilities by all participants.
- liaising with all members regarding the participation of an approved junior skater in adult roller derby activities.
- maintaining compliance for the participation of an approved junior skater within their adult roller derby activities.
- by being transparent regarding all participants involved during training and competition.

Coaches

Coaches educate all participants in the fundamentals and various techniques of a sport. Appropriately trained coaches are vital to quality roller derby development. They have a special responsibility to foster positive attitudes towards physical activity and sport, and to help approved junior skaters develop roller derby skills.

They are a powerful influence on the continued involvement of approved junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities.

VDL coaches will:

- encourage the enjoyment of roller derby and cater for varying levels of ability.
- recognise exceptionally talented skaters and give them the opportunity to develop their full sporting potential.
- set realistic standards and objectives for their approved junior skaters.

VDL coaches will achieve this by:

- providing equal encouragement to all participants to participate, acquire skills and develop confidence.
- preparing and conducting sessions based on sound coaching principles.
- ensuring that the consequences of inappropriate behaviour are clearly understood.
- keeping up to date on roller derby sport coaching developments.
- setting an example of good sporting behaviour by following the VDL Code of Conduct.

Officials

Officials also have an important influence on approved junior skater's enjoyment of adult roller derby activities and their continued participation.

When officiating at adult roller derby activities that have approved junior participants, VDL Officials will:

- be consistent, courteous and helpful to all participants.
- be models of good sports behaviour for approved junior skaters to copy.
- keep informed of sound officiating principles that take account of approved junior skater's growth and development.
- discourage unsporting behaviour and promote respect for opponents.

VDL Officials will achieve this by:

- officiating to the most up to date version of the WFTDA/MRDA rule set.
- being respectful to all participants and following the VDL Code of Conduct.
- participating in official's training (both in-house and through WFTDA)

Members

All participants involved need to be made aware that there is an approved junior participating in adult derby activities, it is the right of any participant to decline participating with an approved junior skater.

Parents/Guardians

The delivery of approved junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities would not be possible without the on-going commitment of parents and guardians, who provide voluntary support in many ways.

Their expectations and attitudes significantly affect the enjoyment that junior skaters receive from adult roller derby participation.

To ensure that approved junior skaters receive the greatest benefit from their participation in adult roller derby activities, parents and guardians will:

- encourage approved junior skaters to participate, without forcing them to do so.
- encourage approved junior skaters to always play according to the rules.
- be models of good sports behaviour for approved junior skaters to copy.
- support all efforts to remove verbal and physical violence from roller derby activities.

Parents and guardians will achieve this by:

- focusing on effort and performance rather than on the outcome. Never ridicule or yell at an approved junior skater for making a mistake or losing at an event.
- supporting the roles of coaches and officials and encouraging good understanding and application of the latest WFTDA/MRDA rule set.
- being courteous in their communication with skaters, coaches, officials and members.
- following the VDL Code of Conduct (if members) or the VDL Fan Code of Conduct.

Fans and Media

Fans and media play a significant part in the shaping of attitudes.

To be a positive influence, fans and media will:

- develop a climate of acknowledgement and support by reporting on all roller derby activities.
- identify and report on the benefits of participating in roller derby.

Fans and media will achieve this by:

- increasing coverage of both competitive and non-competitive activities.
- focusing on the participants' fair play and honest effort.
- taking into account the differences between junior and adult roller derby.
- placing in proper perspective any incidents of unsporting behaviour, rather than make such incidents the highlight of the event.
- reporting equitably on all forms of roller derby activities – WFTDA, MRDA, and JRDA.

- recognising that there may potentially be an approved junior skater participating in adult roller derby activities and act accordingly.
- following the VDL Fan Code of Conduct.

§2 Competition

Competition is an intrinsic part of sport that involves measuring performance against an opponent, oneself, or the environment. Competition provides stimulation and challenge as well as the opportunity to apply, test and further develop skills in a game situation. Properly managed, competition should be seen as a healthy and desirable part of sport.

Competition is also a test of ability and potential, with the pursuit of excellence as desirable in approved junior skaters as in other participants. All approved junior skaters should be encouraged to achieve, do their best, and develop their full supporting potential. Challenging competition is one element of this developmental process. All participants should be given opportunities to succeed and do their best through competition.

All participants at VDL events (training, scrimmages, games) will be made aware that there is an approved junior participating in adult derby activities. It is the right of any participant to decline participating with an approved junior skater. Approved junior skaters will be made aware that this can potentially happen, and they will not be able to participate in some activities. Where this is the case, young skaters will be expected to observe and participate in different drills as set out by the coach.

Approved junior skaters need to be aware that junior roller derby is inherently mixed/non-gendered though adult roller derby activities are separated into 3 forms: female (WFTDA), male (MRDA) and mixed/non-gendered. This may limit the approved junior skater's accessibility to participate in some adult roller derby activities as per the VDL Code of Conduct.

§3 Officiating

Varsity Derby League acknowledges and values the hard work and dedication that volunteers from our community provide to the sport. Without their help, roller derby would not be able to continue and grow. VDL is committed to encouraging the participation of young people (under 18 years old) within the sport, particularly with early opportunities to experience being an official.

Through the Young Skaters in VDL policy, and pursuant to our mission of inclusion, we aim to create a safe, healthy, fair, and fully inclusive environment for everyone to participate in roller derby. Especially for those young people who wish to be involved as volunteers and officials. Our commitment is to ensure that adequate training and supervision is provided to these individuals.

Types of roles that Young Officials can participate in may include:

- Officiating within expected roles (see Activities)
- Helping commentators
- Track set-up and pull-up
- Helping at working bees (fundraising, etc)

Further to our Code of Conduct, and Fan Code of Conduct, VDL will not tolerate harassment of any kind towards our volunteers and officials. We believe that everyone should be able to work in a supportive environment free from any discrimination or harassment as set in VDL policies. We will investigate any such complaints promptly, confidentially, and impartially.

Training

Varsity Derby League, through our Training Committee and Officials Committee, will ensure that all Young Officials are adequately trained to fulfil any duties they may take. Young Officials will also be verbally briefed before any roller derby activities by a supervisor to ensure they have a solid understanding of their role and responsibilities.

Young Officials will, at all times, be under the direct or indirect supervision of an Adult Skater who is a member of VDL. When in the specified Game Areas, they will be under the direct supervision unless permission has granted by a parent or guardian.

Young Officials will be required to wear the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) applicable to undertake their role. Supervisors will ensure Young Officials are equipped with, and are trained to use the tools required to fulfil their 'duties'.

Varsity Derby League will:

- organise the recruitment, training, and supervision of junior officials;
- obtain written consent from the parent or guardian of the child
- provide a 'Schedule of Duties' to Young Officials which includes:
 - Who they are responsible to; and
 - Safety measures related to the activity
- ensure valid Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) checks held by those supervising or working with children
- assign Young Official's to a supervisor and monitor the work of the supervisor, ensuring proper supervision of the child.

The Supervisor:

- Shall ensure that each Young Official is trained and capable of fulfilling their functions adequately;
- shall supervise and provide suitable information, training and resources for Young Officials;
- must be over 18 years of age; and
- must hold a current and valid WWVP check and not be a prohibited person.

The Parent or the Legal Guardian of a young skater must:

- Read and abide by the following VDL policies;
 - VDL Constitution
 - VDL Gender Inclusiveness and Non-Discrimination Policy
 - VDL Code of Conduct
 - VDL Fan Code of Conduct
- Complete and Sign a 'VDL Young Skater Participation Consent Form'

The Young Official will:

- Learn the WFTDA rules of flat track roller derby
- Complete the required VDL Officials' Training (as directed by Skate Victoria)
- Listen to their supervisor and take direction
- Be aware of the procedures to undertake the activity safely
- Report to the supervisor as soon as possible any incidents, accidents, illnesses or near misses which relate to the activity
- Adhere to Skate Victoria's Codes of Conduct
- Advise their supervisor of any medical condition they have which may prevent them from undertaking their role
- Inform their supervisor if they are unable to undertake or complete a task
- Use appropriate communication channels within the activity structure when needing support, back up, supervision or debriefing.
- Ensure situations involving conflict of interest are declared and any conflict mitigated.

Recommended Ages for Young Officials and roles

Activity Position	Minimum Age	Supervision Level Required
Non Skating Official Roles: Non Game Areas Score Keepers Scoreboard Operator Penalty Tracker Lineup Tracker Note: if positions are located in game area during activity, the position needs to be classified as in game area and the appropriate age limit followed.	14 years old <i>Dispensation can be sought for 12-14 year olds if the sports facility have rink barriers which separate juniors from gameplay (ie skating rinks)</i>	Indirect
Non Skating Official Roles: Game Areas Jam Timer Inside White Board Penalty Box Penalty Wrangler	16 years old	Direct
Skating Official Roles: Full Contact Gameplay Referee	16 years old Must apply for dispensation	Indirect
Skating Official Roles: Training/Positional and modified adult gameplay Referee	16 years old	Direct
Skating Official Roles: Training/Positional and modified junior gameplay Referee	14 years old	Direct

§4 Safety Guidelines

An important objective of this Policy is the provision of safe environments for junior skaters who have met the Skate Victoria requirements to participate in adult roller derby activities.

Accordingly, those involved in the conduct of junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities need to:

- Take into account the ways in which the physical and emotional maturity of a junior skater differs from that of an adult.
- Take into account any long term or short term medical conditions participants may have.
- Ensure that sport facilities and equipment are appropriate and safe.
- Ensure that participants wear protective equipment and that coaches have adequate first aid knowledge.
- Ensure that participants are properly prepared for their sporting involvement, especially through quality coaching.

Physiological Considerations

General

Warm-up and cool-down exercises should accompany all roller derby activities. Repetitive training techniques should be avoided, and endurance activities restricted, so that developing bones, joints and muscles are not injured. Junior skaters should play in a variety of positions and not over-train in particular skills.

Body temperature regulation

Compared with adults, junior skaters have a larger skin surface area to body mass ratio, and their sweat glands are immature, making them more susceptible to heat loss or heat gain. Sport sessions should not, therefore, be of long duration (over 30 minutes) in conditions of extreme temperature (over 30 degrees) and humidity (over 50 percent).

Fluid

Junior skaters do not instinctively drink enough fluids to replace the amount they lose during activity. Adequate fluid intake before and during all sessions must be ensured.

Nutrition

The nutritional needs of junior sport participants are affected by their level of activity. A balanced diet that provides them with all the essential elements should be encouraged. Regular fluid intake before and during training and competition should also be encouraged.

Weight loss

Methods of weight reduction by dehydration are extremely dangerous and should not be used under any circumstances.

Weight Training

Before adolescence, weight training does little to increase muscle size or strength; time and effort are better spent on skill development. At any level, weight training should only be under the supervision of a qualified instructor or it may result in injury if inappropriate.

Stress

Whether junior skaters find playing roller derby stressful depends on the attitudes of parents, coaches and officials. Adults should not set unrealistic goals but should instead offer support and encouragement.

Drugs and Sport

The drugs most commonly used by (mostly older) children are alcohol and tobacco. Their use affects general health and well-being and, therefore, sports performance. Less common but still of concern is the use of performance-enhancing drugs, which some young people may use in response to pressures to 'win at all costs'.

Sleep

Sleep is very important in the development of good physical, athletic and emotional health. Young skaters should be aiming to get around 8 hours of sleep per night, however this varies for individual people. The benefits of maintaining regular sleep to maximise physical, emotional and athletic performance should be discussed with young skaters.

Everyone involved in roller derby can help junior skaters to develop appropriate attitudes by discussing the issues with them, by emphasising participation rather than outcome, and by setting a good example. It should be stressed that good training practices and a healthy lifestyle are the factors that most contribute to enhanced sports performance.

Medical Considerations

Some junior skaters have medical conditions that may affect their participation in physical activity. Particular care should be taken in the case of long term conditions (eg asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and heart or lung disease). Coaches should be aware of each junior skater's specific needs and also know how to deal with any emergency.

Medical opinion should be sought when the fitness or performance of any junior participant is questionable, and when recovery from illness or injury is in doubt.

\$5 Forms

Young Officials Parental Consent Form (could be given as Google form)

Host Club Details

Name: Varsity Derby League

Contact person name:

Contact Person position:

Parent or Guardian responsible for young person

Given name:

Family name:

Relationship to child:

Address:

Mobile number:

E-mail address:

Nominated contact person (Details of another person who may be contacted by the child/club if the child's parent/guardian cannot be contacted)

Nominated contact person name:

Nominated contact person mobile number:

Nominated contact person e-mail address:

Young person details

Given name:

Family name:

Date of birth

Address (if different from above)

Mobile numbers:

E-mail address:

Activity Type

Check applicable activity positions

X	Activity Position	Min Age
Non Game Areas		
	Score Keeper	14 years
	Scoreboard operator	14 years
	Other:	
Game Areas		
	Jam Timer	16 years
	Inside White Board	16 years
	Penalty Box	16 years
	Penalty Wrangler (PTLT)	16 years
	Other:	

X	Activity Position	Min Age
Non Game Areas		
	Penalty Tracker	14 years
	Line-up Tracker	14 years
	Other:	
Game Areas		
	Referee: Training/Positional and modified adult gameplay	16 years
	Referee: Training/Positional and modified junior gameplay	14 years
	Referee: Full contact gameplay	16 years (with dispensation)

Parent/Guardian Consent

I (full name)

give my permission for (full name of young official)

to participate in the above marked Activity Types.

(Signature)

____/____/____
(Date)

§6 Related Policies

VDL Constitution (§ 13. Duties of Members)

VDL Gender Inclusiveness and Non-Discrimination Policy

VDL Code of Conduct

VDL Fan Code of Conduct

§7 Review Process/Document History

VDL Young Skaters in VDL Policy V1

From the Skate Victoria Policies:

- Approved Junior Skaters Participating in Adult Roller Derby Activities Policy (January 2017)
- Junior Officials Policy (June 2017)

V1 July 2018

V1 Review July 2019

Date	Detail of Changes	Responsible