



# North West Lightning Hockey Club Inc.

Academy – Junior State Championships – Shield – Vic League  
ABN 13 547 546 303

## Team Selection Guidelines for Senior Teams

Adopted January 2024

### Pre-season

Pre-season is a time for developing fitness and skills. Pre-season will be used as an opportunity for players to be stretched and coaches to assess skill and potential. This should not necessarily be seen as an indication of where the player will be selected once the season starts.

### During the season

Once the season starts, the teams may continue to train as a squad. There may be movement up and down over the duration of the season. The teams will be drafted from the start of the week with communication of the teams released by Thursday evening. Last-minute changes may cause these selection decisions to be released later than this indicated time.

### General Criteria Applicable for all Senior Teams

Team selection for any senior team shall consider, but not necessarily be restricted to the following matters, which are not listed in order of precedence:

- (i) Team balance (across positions and generally seeking a mix of senior, current and emerging players to ensure future succession).
- (ii) Team match up with the opposition.
- (iii) The form of individual players.
- (iv) Training attendance and performance of the individual player.
- (v) Skills/attributes of the individual players.
- (vi) Player availability.
- (vii) Injury management.
- (viii) Whether the player is a Secondary School student.
- (ix) Development opportunities for players as a whole.
- (x) Must be a financial member of the club.
- (xi) Alignment with the club culture and values.

For players seeking promotion within the grades, their attitude, ability, development potential and training will all be taken into account.

All players must realize that **the Club** comes first and there may be times where team balance and development take precedence over an individual's form or commitment.

In particular:

- (a) Players cannot assume they are playing for the same team each week. Just because a player was in a particular team one week.
- (b) The prime focus for coaches and team managers is player welfare and this takes precedence over anything else.
- (c) There will be last-minute changes that will require departure from the process. This may result from injury, illness or unavailability. This needs to be recognized and respected by all and will require careful management as multiple teams may be impacted.
- (d) Games are generally scheduled on Saturdays, with the occasional Sunday, and players are expected to have made themselves available for either day unless they have advised their respective coach or team manager.

## **Under 18 Players**

The BoM recognises the time and physical restrictions placed on all players but particularly secondary school students or under 18 players due to:

- (i) School work;
- (ii) School sport;
- (iii) NWL Junior Hockey;
- (iv) Extra- curricular activities other than Club Hockey, including playing other sports;
- (v) International/ State training and tournaments.

Under 18 players and their parents or guardians are encouraged to discuss at the beginning of each season and to continue to do so during the season proper with the relevant coach and any relevant Section Coordinator the player's:

- (i) Workload including the matters listed above;
- (ii) Injuries;
- (iii) Any other matters of concern.

## **Communication**

Communication is essential between all coaches, players and team managers. In particular the following principles apply:

- (a) Where a player is demoted or promoted, the coach is to ensure the affected player understands the rationale for their movement and is given a clear explanation as to the reason.
- (b) It is the individual player's responsibility to inform their coach of their unavailability to train or play - and why. Failure to do so in a timely manner will be taken into account in selection decisions.
- (c) It is the individual player's responsibility to inform their coach or team manager when they are injured and the nature of the injury; to ensure the injury is managed appropriately to assist in proper recovery and allow for efficient management of the player group.
- (d) Selected teams will be communicated to the players via an agreed communications platform.
- (e) Every player registered to play in a senior team is expected to be available for selection in any given week unless they have otherwise notified their respective Coach by Tuesday of that weekend's matches.

## **Movement of players between teams**

1. Always must be in accordance with the Selection Guidelines
2. If a player is to play in a team below their normal team, the higher team coach is to speak/email/etc with lower team coach first, to aim for seamless transition of player and consistency of messaging. Players should be told face to face (where possible) by the higher team coach.
3. When talking to a junior about playing down or up, a parent should hear the conversation either first or with the player present. Follow up with an email to the junior repeating what was said in conversation. Copy the other coach.

## **Selection Process**

Selection of teams for the various sections is carried out as follows:

### ***Vic League:***

VL selection is by the VL coach who may consult with the reserves coach, or any other coach deemed necessary to consult with, any appointed Senior Coordinator or any appointed Chair of Selectors.

### ***Vic League Reserves / Pennant C:***

Team selections are made by the coaching group (Head and Reserve) and any agreed leadership group, which may include the captain, vice-captain and any other senior players included in the group.

## **Finals Eligibility**

All teams must abide by the HV anti-stacking rules. This often means that by round 10 players are likely to be placed in the same team for the balance of the year to ensure their eligibility for finals. In some instances, players will be asked to double up to try and keep finals selection flexible.

We recognize, at times creates unfair results, as the playing form of a player may change post round 10.

All coaches must have a frank discussion with those players who may be affected by anti-stacking by the end of round 9, so that informed decisions can be made by the coach and player concerned. The player should be provided the option to agree to playing down to balance their game quota eligibility in the lower team or accept the risk that by playing in the higher team, with a greater portion of games in the higher team than the lower team may not be guaranteed selection in a finals team.

## **Review of Selection**

While all attempts are made to be objective in the selection of all teams, ultimately it is recognized by the BoM that selection decisions are subjective, and disputes may arise.

The BoM encourages coaches, players and parents or guardians (in the situation of secondary school students or players under 18 years of age) to act in good faith to try and resolve any selection dispute that may arise.

If a dispute arises the following review process is available to players and coaches.

**Step 1 - Discuss with respective Coach**

**Step 2 - Discuss with Senior Coordinator (Paul Lahn)**

**Step 3 - Discuss with President**

**Step 4 - Grievance Procedure as per HA Safe Hockey Policy**