

## **JUNIOR SELECTION POLICY**

### **BACKGROUND**

Over the past years the number of junior teams fielded by the Club has grown rapidly. In the past, it was uncommon for our Club to field more than one junior team in any age division. We now find ourselves fielding numerous teams in each age group.

The increase in players and teams has resulted in more new players and some first time coaches. With Hockey WA requiring grading of teams to be done by "Paper Grading", with reduced emphasis on actual grading games, it is important that we as a Club look at the way we place players in particular teams. It is important that Coaches, Players and Parents have a common understanding of how players are graded.

While it will not be possible to please everyone all of the time, having a policy should provide for greater consistency and harmony.

### **PRINCIPLES**

- Victoria Park Xavier is a family based Club which values and supports long term membership and also values how family units work to support the Club.
- Individual and team excellence and winning are important factors, however these need to be balanced by values such as participation, teamwork, skill development, fairness and enjoyment.
- It is important that the Club endeavours to secure and maintain a range of competitive grades so that players of the full range of abilities can be catered for. The Club and Coaches will endeavour to ascertain as much information from new players as possible, such as player history, preferred positions, grade they wish to play (eg A, B or regional).
- The Club policy on junior player grading has been endorsed by the Executive and Junior Committees.
- The Club policy on junior player grading is printed and made available to families at the commencement of each season together with the Club's codes of behaviour.

With all the above in mind, the following criteria should be used wherever possible in the selection of players.

### **SELECTION CRITERIA**

- Information from the players (ie previous grades, grade preference)
- Information from previous Coaches should be used to facilitate a good transition between age groups and to inform the grading process.
- The grading of players should be an 'open system' particularly pre season and in the early season so that necessary adjustments can be made.
- For younger age groups in particular, consideration to include friends like to play with and any transportation issues.

Preliminary training groups will need to be established to enable some orderly coaching to start with, however, actual grading of players should occur after the following factors have been considered:

- a) player ability and/or potential as demonstrated at training, in a practice game environment and from information from previous coach(es) and player history
- b) player demonstrated attitude and commitment / contribution to a positive team and learning environment
- c) a balance between older players and younger players with potential so that both a nucleus of experienced players remain for the following year (this will assist with the paper grading completed by Hockey WA)

- d) strategies for grading individual children should be consistent with the Club's overall strategy for next years grading and the securing / maintaining of a competitive range of grades
- e) particularly within the younger age group, factors relating to family transport and friends (eg school group) are also to be considered

Where there are three or more teams in an age group and particularly where there are new, young or inexperienced coaches, an age group coordinator is to be appointed to oversee the initial process of registration and grading (ie training groups, number of teams and cut off dates for any further registrations and player grading). Coordinators should be appointed by the Junior Committee to implement the Club's grading policy. These may or may not be the senior coach of that age group.

Where a player / parent is unhappy or disagrees with their grading, **in all cases**, they should approach their coach first. If it is deemed necessary, the age group coordinator will help with explanations as to the grading decisions made. The final avenue open to the player is to approach the Vice President – Juniors, whose role should be to ensure the Club's selection criteria was used when making the grading decisions. The final decision, however, will be made by the coaches / grading coordinators, as they have first hand experience of the players capabilities and attributes.