



WEST HOCKEY LEAGUE ADULT DEVELOPMENT TEAM GUIDANCE NOTES

Overview

The West Hockey League allows Clubs to register a team in the lowest Divisions as an Adult Development Team. The intention is to help encourage participation and provide experience of League hockey.

A Development team status is temporary with the aspiration to establish a competitive League team. A Club must re-apply each season to operate a Development side within their Club.

A Development side will provide team members experience of playing League hockey as well as experience and learning of the administrative requirements to operate a team.

It is hoped that by having a side playing regularly Clubs will more easily attract new players and be able to encourage players to play more regularly.

There have been a lot of applications this season from Clubs to operate a Development side, in addition it was noted last season that an increasing number of games involving Development sides were not played. New guidelines, including penalties have been introduced for this season to help ensure that Clubs operate the teams within the spirit of growing participation in regular hockey.

Purpose

To support Clubs in establishing new Adult teams to help increase participation in League hockey. They are a temporary transition to competitive league hockey

To allow teams to play hockey for the fun of it, but in a structured way with regular fixtures

To help the development of young or returning players and support their transition to adult league hockey

Key Points

- Development teams can only play in the lowest ranked division of any part of the West Hockey League
- Requests for Development teams must be made by 20th May and will be approved on finalising League structures for the upcoming season
- The intent is that no more than two Development teams can play in any one Division, unless it is a specific Development Division. The number of teams depends on the size of the League and travelling distances. The League will confirm structures and numbers when finalising League structures for the following season.
- The status of Development Team is for the full season. Clubs cannot switch to Development status mid season
- Standard League Regulations will apply with the following variations;
 - In a regular Division no points will be awarded for any matches, this includes matches against other Development teams.
 - All Team sheets and match sheets should be recorded for the match. This includes goalscorers and cards – Divisional Secretaries will amend to 0-0 after the game. Failure



to complete match sheets will be monitored and will be taken into account for future applications for the Development team and also may result in penalties for repeated failure to complete match sheets

- Development teams cannot be promoted
- A Development Team must have a minimum of 6 core players i.e., players who have not played for another team in the league on that day (and must have a minimum of 7 players to play the match). **If a team does not expect to be able to meet these criteria for the majority of matches, participation is NOT recommended.**
- Team selection may be supplemented as follows:
 - Players of any standard doubling up and/or playing down from other teams (of same gender) from that club

NB in the Standard Regulations players should be selected on playing standard and availability. It is therefore expected that all players taking part in the game will play in the “spirit of development” and maintain a friendly competitive environment

- ‘Borrowing’ players from the opposing team for that particular fixture is allowed – matches for example can be 9 a side to get a game played
- All players taking part in the match must be a minimum 13 years old
- Development teams must apply for this status each season
- Development teams may cancel fixtures without penalty if they are unable to field a side (normal match cancellation regulations MUST be followed)
- If a Development team fails to fulfil half their fixtures in any 4 week period the ALMC reserve the right to withdraw them from the League
- Development teams who forfeit 4 or more games will be subject to penalties of a £100 fine
- Non-Development teams in the same Division who cancel fixtures against a Development team will be penalised as per Regulation APPENDIX 6 - STANDARD PENALTIES & TARIFFS OF FINES, ie points deduction
- All queries should be made with the Divisional Secretary prior to the game
- ALMC reserves the right to exclude any teams that abuse any element of this flexibility.

Specific for 2024 25 Season

- Concorde Division 3 has been designated a Development League. Ie All teams within the Division are Development sides. Therefore, the same guidelines apply except that Match Admin will be the same as in a competitive league
- Match administration is required for all games with completed results and match sheets in line with Regulations
- Games can be forfeited without penalty in line with the above guidelines
- Points will be awarded as normal regulations, so there will be a winner of the League. However, there will be no trophy or promotion from Concorde 3