

Development Teams Guidance

Guidance Notes for Development Teams in the Midlands Area

Key amendments: limit junior players, limit no of teams per division, limit cancellations, limit number of seasons.

Overview

The new League structure in the Midlands Area makes provision for Development Teams. The purpose of this provision is primarily to support and encourage participation in the lowest divisions of the league. The intention is to provide experience of playing hockey within a league, both from a playing and administration perspective. It is hoped that it will give new team or club start-ups the opportunity to 'learn the ropes' when they may not yet be confident of full participation in a competitive League.

- **Development Team status is temporary ie the aspiration is to establish a team and to play competitive league hockey.**
- **Development teams are not intended as an alternative to 'Badgers'.**

Key Points

- Development teams can only play in the lowest ranked division of any part of the vertical league structure.
- A team may make a request to the League organisers (ALMC) to play as a Development Team for the coming season. Requests must be received by 1st May and will approved (or not) by 31st May
 - **Subject to the number of applications, no more than TWO Development teams will be permitted per Division.**
 - Teams may not change their status as a Development team once the season has commenced.
- In general, the Standard League Regulations for participation apply but with leniency in terms of compliance on certain requirements and Regulations; the following key variations apply in the Midlands:
 - All matches played as friendlies; this includes matches against other Development teams and other teams playing on a competitive basis.
 - No points awarded to either team (or points are awarded but they do not count to final division standings – subject to GMS functionality)
 - 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 purely on playing standard and availability it is therefore expected that players playing down from a higher level and/or whose skill level is significantly higher than the standard of the game will do this in the spirit of 'development' i.e. not dominate the game.**

- 'Borrowing' players from the opposing team for that particular fixture.
- Players aged 12 or above with the agreement of their parent/guardian and if the participating club can ensure that the player has the physical development and confidence to participate. **No more than TWO U13 ie 12 year old players, permitted on the pitch at any one time.**
- **Development teams must apply for status each season – except in exceptional circumstances Development Team status will only be granted for a MAXIMUM of TWO SEASONS.**
- Development teams may cancel fixtures without penalty if they are unable to field a side (normal match cancellation protocols MUST be followed); **however if they fail to fulfil half their fixtures in any 4 week period the ALMC reserve the right to withdraw them from the League.**
- Non-Development teams in the same Division who cancel fixtures against a Development will be penalised as per Regulation APPENDIX 6 - STANDARD PENALTIES & TARIFFS OF FINES, i.e. = 1 point deduction.
- Any queries check with your ALDS.
- ALMC reserves the right to exclude any teams that abuse any element of this flexibility.