

SENIOR MATCH TIME POLICY

Our Commitment

We support maximum game time and enjoyment of all fee paying players so that they receive “value for money” from their season at the club.

Guideline rationale

Players and parents can become disgruntled with the club when they are substituted and replaced with a player who has already participated fully in another game in the same weekend. Dissatisfaction can lead to families leaving the club, or the sport of hockey. The guidelines below are a guide for coaches to provide fair enjoyment for all players, without interfering with the coach’s autonomy to substitute fatigued or injured players.

It is recognised that Division 1 is an elite competition and as such players performance and team needs may influence match time, however in Division 2, 3 and 4 where player development is a priority, allocated registered team members (team players) are to receive priority of match time.

This guideline may be relaxed if necessary for finals or extraordinary games at the coach’s discretion. Coaches should keep in mind that player satisfaction creates positive morale and return players for next season.

What we ask you to do

Coaches

- Your allocated registered team members (team players) are to have game time priority.
- It is the coach’s responsibility to ensure reasonable game time for team players who play only one game per weekend, as well as any team players who have paid to play a second game with your team per weekend.
- The club’s policy is to retain no more than fourteen (14) players for any one game, including any players recruited from another division team.
- The maximum number of players for any game is sixteen (16) players. This only applies to the lowest division, except in the case of injury where an extra player may be recruited for a match. On any match day when more than 14 players are present, the coach will need to ensure careful rotation.
- In division 1, it is expected that the coach will retain at least fourteen (14) players and rotate all equitably, based on performance and the team needs.
- In divisions 2, 3 and 4 the coach may choose to retain thirteen (13) or less players, depending on the availability of team players.
- Other division player(s) who have another team to play in are to be substituted sparingly* so that the team registered players are allocated maximum playing time.
*This does not apply to team registered players only to substitute players.
For example:
 - if a player only has one game, maximise match time – 60 minutes is reasonable;
 - if a player has a second match to play, maximum match time may be only 30 minutes.
 - substitute players are not to start the match ahead of team players, except in exceptional circumstances eg. players running late.
- Players invited to be bench reserves for development purposes are to be clearly informed and the player (and in the case of juniors, a parent) is to confirm they comprehend they will be on the bench. Bench reserves may or may not take the field at the coach’s discretion.
- If a player selection issue is interfering with team players receiving fair time, discuss alternative selections with your relevant Coordinator and if a satisfactory outcome cannot be reached, discuss with the Player Representative.

Players

- Be aware that if you are asked to 'bench' for a match other than your own team, depending on the number of players, you may or may not get on the field, or may only get on the field for a short amount of time at the coach's discretion.
- Use any 'benching' opportunities as an opportunity to be involved in your club and to learn, even if you only get a short amount of field time.

Parents

- Be aware that if your child is asked to 'bench' for a match other than their own team, depending on the number of players, they may or may not get on the field, or may only get on the field for a short amount of time at the coach's discretion.
- Encourage your child to use any 'benching' opportunities as an opportunity to be involved in their club and to learn, even if they only get a short amount of field time.