



TAUNTON VALE HOCKEY CLUB SENIORS SELECTION POLICY

Adopted by Committee Sept 2024

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this selection policy is to ensure a transparent, fair, and consistent process for selecting players for the Taunton Vale senior section hockey teams. This policy aligns with the club's vision of fostering excellence, teamwork, and personal development while ensuring balance and success across all teams.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all players eligible for selection, coaches, and other stakeholders involved in the selection process.

3. Selection Committee

The selection committee will be composed of:

- **Head Coach**
- **Assistant Coaches**
- **Specialist Coaches** (e.g., Goalkeeping, Fitness)
- **Team Managers/Captains** (including relevant section club captain)

All members of the selection committee should be familiar with the selection criteria and the club's overall vision.

4. Club Vision

Our club is committed to:

- **Performance and Development at All Levels:** Striving for excellence in performance while fostering the development of all players, regardless of their team level.
- **Balanced Teams:** Ensuring that all teams, from the 1st team to the lower squads, are balanced and competitive, with each team meeting its objectives for the season.
- **Inclusive Growth:** Providing opportunities for all players to improve, contribute, and achieve their personal best within the framework of the club's goals.

5. Principles of Selection

Selection decisions will be based on the following principles (in no particular order):

1. **Merit-Based:** Selection is based primarily on the players' skill level, performance in training and matches, fitness, and attitude.
2. **Team Balance:** The selection will consider the overall team dynamics, including the balance between offense and defence, experience levels, and player versatility.
3. **Development and Potential:** While current performance is crucial, consideration will also be given to players' potential for future development, in line with the club's vision for nurturing talent.
4. **Historical Performance and Experience:** While historical performance and the teams players have previously played in will be considered, the selection committee will

prioritise forward-looking assessments of current form, potential, and the needs of the team(s) and how best each player can contribute to each team in the current moment.

5. **Commitment:** Players' commitment to training, matches, and the Vale Values will be a key consideration.
6. **Fairness and Transparency:** The selection process will be open, consistent, and free from bias, ensuring all players have equal opportunities to showcase their abilities.
7. **Alignment with Club Vision:** Selections will reflect the club's overarching goals, which include fostering a competitive spirit, promoting teamwork, and developing players at all levels.

6. Selection Process

6.1. Pre-Selection

- **Training and Performance Monitoring:** Coaches will observe and assess players during training sessions, practice matches, and competitive fixtures throughout the season.
- **Fitness Assessments:** The club actively promotes a healthy relationship with health, fitness and wellbeing. When considering fitness this will only ever be in relation to the management of/return from injuries and in consideration of a players physical and emotional readiness to perform against the forthcoming opposition.
 - It is prudent and fair to make clear that the fitness demands of games will play a part in decision making in order that players are placed in teams where they, and their teammates, can excel and execute the game plans with success.
- **Player Feedback:** Players will receive ongoing feedback to help them understand their strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Up to date payment of fees.** It is an expectation that all players will be up to date with their payments and do not owe any monies to the club. The club operates on a very simple 'no pay, no play basis'.
 - **Exceptional Circumstances.** The club is absolutely committed to ensuring inclusivity and looking after our members. Should a member find themselves in a financial situation that means payment is a prohibitive factor to playing then they can speak to their section club captain who will work with the player and committee to support them and ensure they can train/play.

6.2. Selection Order

- **1st Team Selection:** The selection process will begin with the 1st team, focusing on selecting the strongest possible squad to meet the highest level of competition.
- **2nd Team Selection:** Once the 1st team has been selected, the selection committee will move on to the 2nd team, ensuring that this team is also balanced and competitive.
- **Subsequent Teams:** This process will continue through all levels, ensuring each team is filled with capable players while maintaining the balance and objectives of each squad.

6.3. Squad Sizes

- **Ideal Squad Size:** Each team will aim for an ideal squad size of 15 players. However, squad sizes may differ between teams depending on the needs and objectives of each squad.
- **Flexibility:** The selection committee will remain flexible in adjusting squad sizes to ensure the overall balance and competitiveness of all teams.

6.4. Selection Meetings

- **Initial Discussion:** The selection committee will hold an initial meeting to discuss all players under consideration, guided by the selection principles.
- **Individual Assessments:** Each player will be evaluated based on the selection criteria. This will not typically be a written assessment, however notes may be made/compared to support decisions being made over time. The committee will aim to reach a consensus on selections, but the Head Coach, or delegated assistant coach of given teams, will have the final say in cases of disagreement.
- **Consultation:** Where appropriate, the selection committee may consult with other coaches or team members to gain further insights into a player's performance or potential.

6.5. Communication

- **Announcement of Selection:** Players will be informed of their selection status (the team they are selected to play in) in a respectful and timely manner, with feedback provided where necessary.
- **Feedback Process:** It will be very rare, and at all times avoided wherever possible, that a player is not selected for any team at all. Players who are not selected will be given constructive feedback, including specific areas for improvement and opportunities for future selection.

7. Supporting the Club Vision

- **Player Development Programmes:** The club will offer training, mentoring, and support to help all players, whether selected or not, to improve and align with the club's long-term goals.
- **Inclusive Environment:** The club will foster an inclusive environment where all players feel valued, supported, and motivated to achieve their best.
- **Understanding and Trust:** It is acknowledged that some players may feel disappointed or believe they could contribute at a higher level within the club. However, it is crucial that all players understand the complexities of the selection process and trust that the principles outlined in this policy are being followed.
- **Supporting the Club Vision:** Players are expected to embrace the opportunity to represent the club at the level they are selected for with good grace and a positive

attitude. Supporting the selection committee's decisions is essential for maintaining the club's integrity and achieving its overall vision and mission.

- **Commitment to the Team:** Players are encouraged to focus on the development opportunities available at their current level and to work towards future selection for higher teams by demonstrating dedication, improvement, and alignment with the club's vision.

8. Review and Amendments

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant and aligned with the club's evolving vision. Amendments may be made based on feedback from players, coaches, and other stakeholders.

9. Dispute Resolution

This policy is designed to ensure that, while some players may experience disappointment, disputes are minimised by fostering understanding, transparency, and trust in the selection process. It is the club's expectation that all players will respect the selection decisions and the principles that guide them.

In the rare event that a player feels aggrieved after seeking clarification from the selection committee, including discussions with their team captain and then the coach or head coach, they may raise a formal dispute. This should be directed to the relevant 'Head of Section' (Men's or Ladies) or Player Rep. In the case of communication to the Player Rep they will liaise with the 'Head of Section'.

The 'Head of Section' will then:

- **Understand the Player's Perspective:** Engage with the player to understand their concerns, goals, and what they wish to achieve within the club.
- **Review the Selection Process:** Discuss the situation with the selection committee to explore any potential steps that could be taken to address the player's concerns while maintaining the integrity of the selection process.
- **Provide Feedback:** Report back to the player with the findings and any actions that may be taken. This feedback will aim to provide clarity, guidance, and potential pathways for the player to achieve their goals within the club framework.

The Club Captain's goal is to ensure that all players feel heard and supported, even if the original selection decision stands.

10. Supporting Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- TVHC Junior Development Policy