



# ST PATRICK'S HOCKEY CLUB

## PLAYER NOMINATION, SELECTION AND GRADING POLICY AND PROCESS

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## Introduction

St Patrick's Hockey Club (St Pats) strives to be a highly competitive, inclusive and united hockey club that provides opportunity for every registered player, coach and umpire to improve and develop. It is also a welcoming and inclusive community. St Pats aims to improve the lives of its members through the sport of hockey.

## Policy Statement

This policy provides a framework for the nomination, selection and grading of players into St Pats teams for participation in Hockey ACT competitions.

Nominations, selections and gradings are to be undertaken with integrity and the process applied must reflect the core values of the Club. The process must also be clearly communicated, transparent and fair. St Pats wants participants and parents to know in advance how team nominations and selections are undertaken, provide effective opportunity for players to demonstrate their skills and ability during the selection process and feel that the methods applied have merit and integrity.

St Pats want the Grading Coordinators and selection panel to have flexibility within the scope of this policy to deliver the processes how they decide and to determine the type of selection activities and sessions they deem appropriate. The Grading Coordinator and selection panel need to be accountable for their decisions and choices and be able to provide feedback and support to players and parents if it is requested.

The St Pats Executive (Exec) or their delegate is responsible for ensuring that this policy and accompanying processes are applied and that all relevant information (e.g. training sessions, trial matches, finalised teams, etc) are made available to members by the Grading Coordinators. The Exec or their delegate will also provide members of the selection panels with guidance, direction and support as needed. In order for the process of forming teams to be effective, the Exec or their delegate and Grading Coordinators need to work together in a cooperative and unified manner.

It is important to note that indoor and outdoor hockey competitions delivered by HACT operate very differently. Indoor hockey is significantly less structured and formal compared to outdoor hockey, and as such a thorough selection and grading process is not necessary, nor can one be resourced by the Club. Instead, teams are formed based largely on a player nomination process and performance during the previous indoor and outdoor seasons.

It is also important to acknowledge that pitch availability and the team nomination processes are determined by Hockey ACT (HACT), and these impact the duration and timing of club selections. There are also financial and resource restrictions that St Pats, as a community sporting club, must manage. The processes provided reflect these limitations while balancing the competitive, participation, social and play-based hockey opportunities provided by the club.

## Guiding Principles

- Hockey should be fun, safe and inclusive
- Well-graded teams allow for improved individual skill development, cater for those that seek competitiveness and contribute to successful team performances
- Player selections are determined in the best interest of the broader Club, while also providing an equal opportunity for players to demonstrate their ability and skills

- Opportunities are provided for players to play hockey for St Pats in more social teams while still developing and improving their skills
- St Pats has the wellbeing of all players at heart when grading players and determining teams.

## Outdoor Hockey – selection process

A Grading Coordinator will be appointed to coordinate the grading process, as follows:

- CL – First Grade coach
- SL – Women’s Coordinator/Men’s Coordinator
- Junior League – Junior Coordinator

Where the above mentioned person is not available the Exec or their delegate will select a suitable alternative.

The Grading Coordinator will:

- Determine the grading process used to select players and form teams and have it approved by a date determined by the Exec or their delegate
- Appoint a selection panel (panel) in accordance with the guidance below
- Ensure that players, panel members and coaches know how selections will occur so that everyone involved understands the process and players know how best to demonstrate their skills and ability
- Chair selection panel meetings and manage discussions
- Ensure player confidentiality is maintained and that discussions and documentation regarding player performance and selections are managed by the panel on a ‘need to know’ basis
- Engage others from within the St Pats and hockey community, including coaches from previous seasons, for guidance, feedback and support, if appropriate, and
- In consultation with the Exec or their delegate, determine the process for communicating and publishing information relating to the selection of teams, including finalised team selections.

The grading process may include:

- A Grading Day/s, event/s, or function/s
- Pre-season fitness sessions
- Pre-season training sessions, drills or practice
- Inter-club trial matches
- Intra-club trial matches, and/or
- Individual goal setting and evaluation exercises.

The specific activities delivered during grading and the method used to select players will be determined by the Grading Coordinator in consultation with the selection panel.

Generally speaking, the following qualities and information should be considered by the selectors when grading players.

- Ability and performance, which includes:

- physical attributes: speed, strength, agility, endurance and fitness, and flexibility.
- skill attributes: technique, tactical awareness, positional play and specialist skills, and;
- the player's demonstrated ability to implement these skills in accordance with the directions provided by the coach
- Potential to develop and improve
- Attitude, teamwork and commitment to the team and/or attendance at training, and
- Age eligibility.

For Capital League (CL) teams, the grading process should:

- Provide a minimum of four opportunities for players to demonstrate their hockey ability in comparison to other players (e.g. a grading event, a pitch training session, a 'scratch match' and a practice game against a local or interstate club). Ideally there will be more than four opportunities.
- Include the appointment of a selection panel, as determined by the Grading Coordinator. The panel should consist of at least one CL coach and a person either 'new' to the program or 'independent' to the CL program. Ideally the panel will consist of a minimum of three people.

For State League (SL) teams, the grading process should:

- Provide at least two to three opportunities for players to demonstrate their hockey ability in comparison to others.
- Include the appointment of a selection panel, as determined by the Grading Coordinator. The panel should consist of at least one SL coach and a person either new to the program or 'independent' to the SL program. Ideally the panel will consist of a minimum of three people.

For Junior League (JL) teams, the grading process should:

- Provide a minimum of two opportunities for players to demonstrate their hockey ability in comparison to others
- Include the appointment of a selection panel, as determined by the Grading Coordinator. The panel should consist of at least one Junior League coach and a person either new to the program or 'independent' to the JL program. Ideally the panel will consist of a minimum of three people.

The Exec or their delegate may decide that additional requirement/s need to be added to the grading process and will communicate this to the Grading Coordinator/s, if necessary.

## Outdoor Hockey – guidelines

1. The Club will promote relevant information in relation to the selection process (e.g. dates, venues, etc) for the information of members and the broader community.
2. Players wanting to play for St Pats will register their interest for the upcoming season and may also be asked to provide:
  - a. their preferred grade
  - b. the positions they play

- c. any relevant factors that selectors and coaches should be aware of (e.g. availability concerns, holiday plans, injury recovery, etc).
- 3. If players want to play with a friend/friends, this may be accommodated in State League 3 or lower teams or in the Junior League division 2 teams, rather than the higher league/division and will be dependent on the number of players within the relevant teams and the grading process.
- 4. Ongoing performance and commitment during the season as determined by the team coach may result in a player being moved from one team to another. A player may also be moved if best for the individual player's wellbeing and in the interest of the team. Moves of this nature will occur in consultation with relevant coaches and the competition coordinators.
- 5. On occasion, a player may be requested by a coach or manager to fill-in for additional teams after the player has demonstrated they have the appropriate skills and physical attributes.
- 6. The preferred number of players in a team is as follows, noting that teams across each division of the club (mens, womens, boys, girls) need to be balanced to maximise player participation:
  - a. Outdoor: 13-15, with a maximum of 16.
- 7. The Club is bound by Hockey ACT Competition rules as listed below and considers these when determining player selections and team nominations:
  - a. Competition By-Laws
  - b. Senior Competition Rules
  - c. Junior Competition Rules.

#### ***Additional Guidelines - Seniors***

- 8. Many junior age players play senior hockey with St Pats, in accordance with the age restrictions applied in the HACT Senior Competition Rules. Playing both is a great way for junior players to develop their skills and play more hockey. Junior age St Pats players are welcome to trial for a place in a senior team, while still playing juniors.
- 9. Where a player registers after the initial team selection has occurred, an assessment will be made by the Grading Coordinator or a suitable alternative to determine if and in which team they may be best placed. Factors such as the players' previous experience and playing level in another jurisdiction may be considered, while balancing the opportunity of other players to progress to a higher level.

#### ***Additional guidelines - Juniors***

- 10. Players will be allocated a team in their age group in accordance with Hockey ACT criteria for age level allocation
- 11. In age groups where there are enough players for two or more teams, players will be allocated to either a Division 1 or a Division 2 team within their age group, based on the outcome of the grading process. If warranted, additional training sessions may be utilised to finalise the selections.
- 12. Occasionally there may be exceptional circumstances where a player may wish to play out of their age group. Coaches or parents wishing to have a child play out of their age group must submit a written request to the junior registrar via [juniors@stpatrickshockey.com.au](mailto:juniors@stpatrickshockey.com.au) and include their reasoning in their communication. Note that requests for a player to play in a higher age group will only be considered where the team can accommodate additional players. Preference will be given to players who are the correct age for that team.

13. On occasion, the club will endorse a player to play in two teams on a permanent basis (e.g. u13s and u15s) when it is in the best interests of the player, there is a need to make up numbers in a team or to make a team competitive.
14. Where a player registers after the initial team selection has occurred and there are two or more teams in the respective age group, generally, the player will be registered in the lowest grade and will be required to be assessed by the team coach/es or other suitable individual to determine whether the player should be promoted to a higher division. Factors such as the players' previous experience and playing level in another jurisdiction may be considered, while balancing the opportunity of other players to progress to a higher level.

### **Indoor Hockey - rationale for player nomination process**

The indoor hockey competitions that are delivered by HACT are significantly shorter than their outdoor competition and involve less participants and teams, in part because access to facilities is reduced significantly.

Teams have previously been nominated based in large part on friendships and been coordinated by individuals. The club has decided to regulate team selection and nomination and unify the process.

While recognising the want of some players to create teams based on friendships, the Club believes that first and foremost, it exists to provide opportunity for Club members and will determine the makeup of teams with this in mind.

Registered St Pats members will therefore be given first opportunity to play indoor with St Pats, followed by those that have previously played for the club, and then those seeking to join the club for the indoor season.

### **Indoor Hockey – nomination process**

A formal selection and grading process is not applied when forming indoor teams. Instead, a process based on player nominations is applied, noting that the Coordinator may also consider gradings and performance from the previous outdoor and indoor seasons. They may also consult with other individuals, such as Club coaches and committee members, if necessary.

The following Club committee members will coordinate the nomination process:

- Seniors – Indoor Coordinator
- Junior boys – Junior Coordinator • Junior girls – Junior Coordinator.

Where the above mentioned person is not available the Exec or their delegate will select a suitable alternative.

The Coordinator:

- Will determine and promote the process and timeframes for obtaining player nominations and registrations. This may include a process in which players nominate the grade/division they would like to play.
- Place players into teams in a manner consistent with this policy and process.
- Will ensure member confidentiality is maintained during any discussions they may have with other individuals and that they occur on a 'need to know' basis.
- Will determine the process for communicating and publishing information relating to finalising teams.

- Will appoint team officials to coordinate teams during the season.

The Coordinator may also engage other experts from within the hockey community for guidance, feedback and support, in relation to forming teams.

## Indoor Hockey - guidelines

1. Registered St Pats players will be given first opportunity to play indoor for St Pats.
2. The Club will provide information in relation to the nomination process (e.g. due date) for the information of members.
3. Players wanting to play for St Pats may be asked to express their interest for the upcoming season via a nomination form that includes players outlining the following information:
  - a. their preferred grade
  - b. the positions they play
  - c. any relevant factors that the Coordinator should be aware of (e.g. availability concerns, holiday plans, injury recovery, etc).
4. Generally speaking, the following should be considered by the Coordinators when forming teams:
  - a. Junior players will be placed into teams based on: whether they are a St Pats player, their age, into which division they have nominated, their ability, and previous hockey experience, performance and attitude.
  - b. Senior players will be placed into teams based on: whether they are a St Pats player, into which grade they have nominated, ability, and previous hockey experience, performance and attitude.
5. If a vacancy exists in a team, an expression of interest from a non-St Pats registered outdoor player (e.g. a player that played outdoor with another club or did not play outdoor at all) to play indoor with St Pats, or a St Pats registered player to play in more than one team may be considered. This will only occur with the permission of the Coordinator and based on the number of nominations received.
6. If players want to play with a friend/friends, this will be accommodated in line with Indoor Guidelines 1 and 5.
7. Players must be financially cleared by the Club.
8. A player may be moved from one team to another if it is best for the individual player's wellbeing, their level of ability, and in the interest of the team. Moves of this nature will occur in consultation with relevant players and with the authority of the relevant Coordinator.
9. On occasion, a player may be asked to fill-in for additional teams ideally after the player has demonstrated they have the appropriate skills and physical attributes.
10. The preferred number of players in a team is as follows:
  - a. Indoor: 7-9, with a maximum of 10
11. The Club is bound by Hockey ACT Competition rules as listed below and considers these when determining player selections and team nominations:
  - a. Indoor Competition Rules.
12. Junior players wanting to play senior indoor hockey with St Pats must nominate in accordance with the promoted nomination and registration process. Given a junior competition is delivered by HACT, priority to play in senior Indoor Competitions will be given

to players that participated in and registered for St Pats in the previous senior outdoor competition.

13. Junior players wanting to play senior indoor hockey with St Pats will be considered in accordance with the competition restrictions applied in the HACT Indoor Competition Rules.
14. Where a player registers after the teams have been determined, a decision will be made by the Coordinator to determine if and in which team they may be best placed.

## **Variations to the Nomination, Selection and Grading Processes**

Where appropriate and with the permission of the Exec or their delegate, variations to this process may be applied when it is in the interests of the Club as a whole, is consistent with the values of the Club as outlined in the Club's Strategic Plan and provides opportunity for every registered player, coach/manager and umpire to participate, improve and develop their hockey.

## **Feedback on the Nomination, Selection and Grading Processes**

St Pats recognises that player selections can be a challenging process, not only for individual players but also parents, selectors, coaches and coordinators. Sometimes the decision of the selectors may not be agreed with by all.

If a player or a parents wish to provide feedback or discuss the result of the selections and grading, the following process applies:

1. The player/parent can engage the relevant Grading Coordinator by email:
  - a. Junior outdoor and indoor - [juniors@stpatrickshockey.com.au](mailto:juniors@stpatrickshockey.com.au)
  - b. Senior men outdoor – [men@stpatrickshockey.com.au](mailto:men@stpatrickshockey.com.au)
  - c. Senior women outdoor – [women@stpatrickshockey.com.au](mailto:women@stpatrickshockey.com.au)
  - d. Senior indoor – [indoor@stpatrickshockey.com.au](mailto:indoor@stpatrickshockey.com.au)
2. If the player/parent remains unsatisfied the matter should be brought to the attention of the Exec by emailing [secretary@stpatrickshockey.com.au](mailto:secretary@stpatrickshockey.com.au)

Feedback from the Exec or their delegate is the final opportunity for a selection review and discussion.

## **Related Documentation**

- St Patricks Hockey Club Strategic Plan • St Patricks Hockey Club Development Plan.

## **Document History and Review**

	Date	Purpose of Original document / Review
Originally documents	1: 1/2/2018 2: 1/2/2021	1: <i>Junior Selection Policy and Process</i> - ensure the selection process for all junior teams is transparent, fair and objective 2: <i>Senior Selection Policy and Process</i> (draft)- outline the framework for selection of players into senior teams

Latest review date and purpose	30/9/2022	Create one cohesive policy and process for the nomination, selection and grading of players into all St Pats indoor and outdoor hockey teams
	28/9/2024	Reference to Exec or their delegate removed and replaced with Executive. Updates made to the Indoor process to reflect changes to the nomination process and other clarifications.
Latest update to inform preparations for 2026 Season	19/01/2026	Tightened language on the grading process, role of selection coordinators and composition of selection panel.