



# Witney Hockey Club Selection Policy



## Objectives of the Policy

The aim of the policy is to provide a clear framework for team selection to all members of the club.

This will enable each player to play to their full potential in a team suitable to their ability and provide a structured process for development which is transparent and fair.

## Selection Committee

- Chaired by the relevant Club Captain
- Captain of each team
- Coaching staff
- Meetings will be held monthly

## Eligibility

- Annual subscription is up to date by 1<sup>st</sup> October.
- The player is registered accordingly with the club and league in accordance with league rules.
- Match fees are not in arrears of more than two weeks (with the exception of separate agreements made with the committee.)
- The player is not subject to suspension due to league rules.

## New Players

- Registered with the club and appropriate league before eligible for selection for a league game.
- If joining the club mid-season, new players may play up to 3 games before subscription is required.
- New players may be expected to start playing in a team below their perceived ability until coaches and captains have agreed on the appropriate squad.

## Selection

1. Selection will be within the rules of local and national governing bodies with particular reference to guidelines regarding the selection of players between different league structures.

2. The interest of the club and individuals will always be considered in the selection process. The primary objectives will be to develop the team and support a team's objectives for the season within the wider development planning for the club.

3. The determining factors for selection are (in no particular order):



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- Training commitment – including clear communication in advance of absence where possible. See below for further clarification.
- Ability
- Individual performance in training and games.
- Team performance and the requirement of players to support team development.
- Attitude/conduct at training and in games (representation of the club's values and standards.)
- Availability
- Position

4. Personal relationships will be put aside by captains/coaches/managers when selecting teams and any concerns regarding this can be discussed with the Men's or Ladies' Club Captain or if requested the Chairperson.

5. In the event of attendance at training being significantly affected by work, family or home location it will be expected that players attend a different venue to train and that by doing so they maintain the fitness and skill level required for each given squad. Agreements over alternative training options must be discussed with and agreed by the selection committee in order to enable coaches to effectively plan appropriate sessions based on numbers expected at training. If absence from training outweighs attendance to training or if fitness and skill levels are not maintained, this may well have a bearing on squad selection. **As a club we believe that attendance at training is paramount to maintaining the development goals of each team and for coaches to have the opportunity to work on vital set plays and other tactical improvements for league games. Attendance at training is also important for both fostering a strong team spirit and giving development opportunities for junior players to train with more experienced players.**

6. Where the decision between two players is completely equal, taking into consideration the above points, the player with the most 'development potential' will take priority.

7. As with all clubs the 1st XI in both sections of the club must take priority. The club is judged on the performance of the 1st X1 and the league performances of both teams plays an important role in attracting players and setting the standard for the club as a whole.

8. Availability of all players should be received one month in advance to team captains. This is to allow the selection committee to plan in advance for absence and development opportunities. Any changes in availability other than illness or emergency must be communicated to the relevant Captain before 21:30 on the Wednesday prior to the match concerned or as early as possible.

9. Teams will be selected in the first half of the week after the week's training sessions have concluded and captains will contact their team with selection.

10. Once selection has been published; each selected player must confirm their selection no later than Thursday 21:00 prior to each match. If confirmation of selection is not received, a player will be deemed unavailable.

11. Once selection has been confirmed then any changes in circumstance due to illness or family emergency must be communicated to the relevant captain as soon as possible to allow time to organise replacements.

12. In the event of a player being unavailable for selection for a prolonged absence such as injury, extended travel or maternity; the individual will be assessed through training and potentially in a



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league game for the squad below their regular team, in order for coaches to determine fitness and skill level. It is important not to rush players back to positions when this could be detrimental to development and result in injury.

13. The size of match day squads will vary each week due to availability, development opportunity and league level. Every opportunity will be made to balance the opportunity to give as many players a game as possible with appropriate opportunities for pitch time and development.

## Communication

1. Fixtures and results will be published on Fixtures Live, the relevant league websites and on the club website and social media. Players are expected to use this information to provide availability one month in advance.

2. It is expected that availability is given based on dates of matches rather than whether fixtures are home or away as which team a player is selected for cannot be guaranteed in advance.

3. Captains may decide which format selection will be communicated (WhatsApp/Email etc) and are responsible for setting up a format for this communication which is separate from the teams' social platforms. This then avoids issues of communication over selection and availability being missed among other communications.

4. No player shall be dropped without direct communication from the higher team captain/coach prior to publication of team lists. During this explanation, the coach/captain will give the player two areas to work on and two areas of strength in order to keep the player motivated and create a development pathway.

5. Selection will always be published by Thursday of match week.

6. Team selection will only be posted on the individual teams group email/WhatsApp or similar and will not feature on any other social media platform.

## Player

1. It is the responsibility of the player to advise their captain of availability one month in advance and if changes occur that they inform the relevant captain at the very earliest opportunity. In the event of emergency please see above.

2. If a player's work, family or home location is likely to impact on their ability to attend training on a regular basis this must be communicated to the selection committee in order for arrangements to be made as discussed in point 5. of the Selection section above.

3. A player's availability is expected to stand, even if selected for a team or position other than their regular one. Refusal to do so will be taken as the player making themselves unavailable for any team both that week and the following week. **Changes are sometimes necessary to reflect absence or development of the club as a whole and it is important players buy into the 'One Club' ethos.**



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4. A breach of the England Hockey or Club code of conduct may have an effect on selection. By registering for membership players are deemed to be in agreement with the code of conduct for both club and England Hockey as a whole.
5. Players who can train but are unable to play regularly shall train with the squad most appropriate to their standard; this will be assessed and decided by the coaches. The captain of that squad will then inform said player.
6. Players are expected to accept the decision of the captain/coach with the understanding you play for the club not a team. If a player is moved to a different squad, the reasons for this move will be clearly communicated in advance of selection lists being posted as explained above.
7. The aim is that the selection policy will enable each player to play to their full potential for the benefit of the Club and with a view to both enjoying their hockey and developing their game. It is recognised that, on occasion, some players may wish to remain in a particular team squad rather than be moved up. Captains will consider the player's wishes and in return it is important that players consider the needs of the Club. It may not always be possible to accommodate such requests.
8. To be considered for promotion to a higher squad, players must:
  - Be a club member
  - Be regularly available
  - Be seen to be 'shining' in training or matches and at training.
  - Be considered to be better at the level required of the team above and where directly replacing another player, be considered to be of a higher standard.
  - Be put forward by the current team captain to the selection committee.

## Appeal

1. Once selection has been made by the committee and communicated to players by the team captain either as a team email or in person, selection is considered complete for that week. In the event that a player is unhappy with selection they can contact the relevant club captain via email.
2. Any appeal will be considered by the Selection Committee in the first instance and in the event of no resolution, may be referred to the main club committee or Chairperson.
3. Feedback or comments on selection may be made privately to the team captain or relevant Club Captain. These will be taken into consideration in the spirit of good communication and the desire to develop as a club. Comments on selection must not be made on whole team social media or email platforms at any time.

In the spirit of transparency all members are welcome to recommend changes to the policy. Any such recommendations must be addressed to the committee via one of its officers.

**Agreed by Committee:**

**To be reviewed:            June 2022**