



MELBOURNE CRICKET CLUB HOCKEY SECTION INC

# MCC Hockey Men's Section

## Selection Aims, Policies & Procedures





## MELBOURNE CRICKET CLUB HOCKEY SECTION INC

*MCC Hockey Men's Section Selection Aims, Policies & Procedures*

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### *MCC Hockey Men's Section Selection Aims, Policies & Procedures*

## **1. Introduction**

The Hockey Section of the Melbourne Cricket Club was formed in 1960 with two men's teams entered in B-Grade & C-Grade of the 1961 VAHA Competition. Women's teams were formed in 1989 when Nunawading Women's HC and McKinnon Women's HC merged to become MCC.

MCC Hockey is one of 13 sporting sections of the famous Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC), with the other twelve sporting sections being Baseball, Cricket, Croquet, Football, Golf, Lacrosse, Lawn Bowls, Netball, Real Tennis, Squash, Target Shooting and Tennis. All MCC Sporting Sections are proudly known as *The Demons*.

Since its formation the Section has relied on individuals to form a Committee and select teams to compete in our Winter competitions. This document aims to detail some of the team selection criteria for the MCC Hockey Men's Section. It covers the aims of the Men's Sub-committee on player and team selection, and details the policies and procedures to be followed by the Chair of Selectors and those members involved in the selection process.

## **2. Selection Committee Aims**

Player selection is based on achieving Section Objectives and Team Goals. All players, coaches and team managers must be familiar with and committed to achieving our Section Objectives and Team Goals.

The aim of selecting players into ranked teams is to:

- Optimise the enjoyment of financial members of the Section;
- Prioritise & support the Section's elite (1<sup>st</sup> XI) team's ability to win the premiership or be placed as high as possible;
- Provide an opportunity for the development of younger and improving players within the Section's 2<sup>nd</sup> XI, thereby providing direct support to the 1<sup>st</sup> XI premiership hopes;
- Maximise the potential for other teams to win games, finish as high as possible on the ladder, win finals & premierships, gain promotion or avoid relegation;
- Promote the Section to potential players, including players from other Clubs, as an attractive place to become a member;
- Grow player membership through successful transitions from the Junior Section and by attracting and retaining new players to the Section;
- Develop future leaders of the Section;
- Develop every player to the best of their ability;
- Successfully transition junior members into senior hockey;
- Identify, nurture & develop talented younger members who show the potential to play in higher grades;
- Build a level of player stability within training squads and teams as the season progresses, whilst maintaining a sufficient level of flexibility;
- Promote an appropriate club culture;
- Abide by any relevant rules and regulations.



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## **3. Selection Committee Policy**

### **3.1 Selection Committee Members**

Both the Chair of Selectors and the selection committee members are appointed by the MCC Hockey Men's Sub-committee. It is at the discretion of the MCC Hockey Men's Sub-committee to appoint or remove selectors, coaches and team managers, as it thinks fit, to carry out the selection and organisation of the Section's teams.

Optimally the selection committee should be made up of at least one representative from each team. This would typically be the coach of each team, any team assistant coaches and may occasionally include "temporary" or "fill-in" coaches. From time-to-time the views of team captains and/or leadership groups may also be sought, however team captains and leadership groups are not considered to be part of the MCC Hockey Men's Section Selection Committee.

All selection committee members shall:

- Provide leadership by embodying the requirements placed on players (see Player Eligibility Requirements section below);
- Assess players objectively using the criteria outlined in this document;
- Be open to feedback from any financial member of the MCC Hockey Men's Section;
- Provide appropriate and constructive feedback to any player from their team who requests it and to players from their team who have been demoted. Any player demoted must be spoken to by either their coach or the Chair of Selectors and must be given specific feedback as to why they have been demoted;
- Make themselves available for, and be an active participant in, selection committee meetings and other selection related requirements.

In addition to these points, the Chair of Selectors is required to:

- Co-ordinate final selections;
- Mediate any disputes that may arise;
- Seek to review and improve the selection process where appropriate;
- Ensure appropriate processes are followed by all members of the selection committee including the provision of appropriate feedback to players who are promoted, demoted or asked to double-up.

The selection committee will discuss selection with each other on a regular basis and will meet formally approximately once a month (or more or less often as required) to discuss the progress of each team individually and in the context of the Section's overall objectives.

The formal selection meeting will also serve as a forum for discussion regarding individual players being provided with opportunities consistent with their skill level, output and commitment relative to their peers.

If at any stage a selection committee member feels that they can no longer perform the required duties, the selection committee may have that person replaced by another representative from their team under the direction of the MCC Hockey Men's Sub-committee.

If at any stage the Chair of Selectors feels that he can no longer perform the required duties he will be replaced by another individual appointed by the MCC Hockey Men's Sub-committee.



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### **3.2 Team Selection Criteria**

It must be noted that the selection process is difficult and can be confronting for players, captains and coaches alike. The selection committee attempts to be objective in its selection of teams; however the nature of player assessment and selection will result in subjective decisions being made. The following criteria are designed to assist selectors and players understand the types of traits to be looked for by the selection committee.

When selecting a team the selection committee will consider a player's:

- Attendance & performance at training;
- Attitude, discipline, determination and teamwork;
- Ability to take direction from coaching staff and senior players;
- Hockey ability and recent game performance;
- Strength, fitness, and mobility;
- Decision making, and ability to read the game;
- Future potential to play competitive senior hockey to a high standard;
- Leadership qualities and/or experience.

The first three of the above criteria will weigh heavily in team and squad selections.

The individual's performance will be weighed up against the above criteria and the following:

- Team balance and stability, including a mix of youth and experience in teams;
- Availability of an appropriate position;
- Specific needs of the team or the Section for that week;
- Appropriate rules and regulations regarding player selection as set by Hockey Victoria and/or the MCC Hockey Men's Sub-committee.

Please note: A key role of the selection committee is to develop up and coming young players (defined as any player 23 years & under). Promotion of a young player may at times be at the expense of a senior player even if the two players are not considered to be of the same standing under a majority of the above criteria.

Selection will be carried out bearing in mind the Section's need to comply with its other policies including the Child Safety Policy.

### **3.3 Player Eligibility Requirements**

All members of any Senior Team shall:

- Be a current financial member of the MCC Hockey Section;
- Wear the current official MCC playing shirts (including Section allocated playing number & sponsor's logo if required), shorts & socks at all times. Players still wearing non-compliant and/or older style playing shirts and/or shorts shall update their uniforms to the current range of playing gear – such players will not be eligible for selection until they have updated their playing uniforms, including shirt playing number as required;
- Demonstrate the attitude and manner of a team player;
- Demonstrate a personal commitment to the long term development of the MCC Hockey Men's Section;
- Communicate availability to their coach and captain as soon as they become aware of their inability to attend a training session or play;
- Take on appropriate duties as required to maintain the continued day-to-day operations of the MCC Hockey Section (e.g. umpiring and kiosk duties);



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- Conduct themselves in a manner that befits a team member and a player representing the Melbourne Cricket Club;
- Be mindful of any sponsorship arrangements into which the Section may enter.

Players who demonstrate an unwillingness to adhere to the 'Player Eligibility Requirements', team rules or the Selection Policy which applies, may be relegated from their usual team or excluded from selection under the direction of the MCC Hockey Men's Sub-committee.

Please note: A role of the selection committee is to assist in developing an appropriate club culture. Where two players contending for promotion are considered to be of similar standing under the Team Selection Criteria, the relative commitment of the player toward the above 'Player Eligibility Requirements' will be considered.

### **3.4 Training Expectations**

Players in the 1<sup>st</sup> XI and 2<sup>nd</sup> XI squads are expected to train twice a week (Tuesdays and Thursdays) and as otherwise instructed by the coach.

Pennant and Metro Grade squads will have one training session per week on either a Wednesday or Thursday night. From time to time some Pennant Grade players may be asked to attend 1<sup>st</sup> XI and 2<sup>nd</sup> XI squad training either on the Tuesday or Thursday night. This request & explanations will come from either the 1<sup>st</sup> XI or 2<sup>nd</sup> XI coach or Chair of Selectors.

Exceptions to the above may be made for State/National Representative commitments and unavoidable family, school, work or other commitments.

Any absence from training by a player must be communicated to their respective coach as soon as it is known. Such communications shall be either in person or by telephone call and SMS. The relevant coach shall ensure that the player is made aware of what the training sessions will entail. The player shall ensure that they undertake some form of training during the week to make up for any missed training sessions, with the aim being that they maintain their fitness levels. Lack of appropriate communication with the relevant coach may result in a player not being selected in their current team.

In the event of injury and where possible, players are still expected to attend training, to complete fitness or rehabilitation activities or assist coaching staff with drills, etc.

### **3.5 Juniors Playing Seniors**

The MCC Hockey Men's Section recognises that junior players choosing to play with senior teams can be beneficial to their development. The expectation is that in normal circumstances, only players in the Under 16 age group will play in senior teams. However, the selection committee is willing to consider requests from younger players.

The following principles should apply to all juniors playing in senior teams:

- Parents agree that the player has the physical and emotional maturity to play senior hockey;
- Players, parents & coaches acknowledge that the player's first priority is to their junior team;
- Coaches & team managers shall take all reasonable care to protect the junior player from exposure to physical danger and inappropriate behaviour at training & games;
- Players & parents understand and accept the selection policies of the Section and acknowledge that principles of equal game time may not apply in some cases; however, the Section will endeavour to ensure that junior players receive fair game time;
- Players, parents & coaches have agreed expectations and development goals with both the junior and senior coaches and are clear about the role of senior hockey in achieving those goals;



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- Coaches, captains and/or team leadership groups and the selection committee are aware of the player's sporting commitments (e.g. club, school & representative hockey & other sports), family, school & other commitments, weekly training load, etc and are willing to make adjustments as required;
- NO SHINGUARDS | NO MOUTHGUARD | NO HOCKEY | NO QUESTIONS !!!

### **3.6 General Behavioural Expectations**

All MCC players, coaches, managers, officials, parents and supporters are expected to abide by general behavioural standards as set out in this document and other MCC Hockey Section policy documents, as well as abide by the Hockey Victoria Codes of Behaviour for players, team officials and supporters (published on their website: [www.hockeyvictoria.org.au](http://www.hockeyvictoria.org.au)). MCC Hockey Section members should demonstrate exceptional levels of behaviour, to accept all umpire, coach and official decisions and to play each match in the true spirit of the game.

## **4. Selection Procedures**

### **4.1 Match Reports**

At the earliest possible chance after the completion of a match the relevant selection committee member should complete and submit a match report to the selection committee. The match report should provide the selection committee with details about players who may be considered for promotion or relegation as well as any other issues that should be considered by the selection committee. These reports will be collated and circulated to the selection committee members prior to the selection meeting.

### **4.2 Injuries and Absentees**

It is critical that the selection committee be made aware as early as possible of any situation that means a player is unavailable, including reasons of work, school, other sport, family commitments or injury. In order of preference a player shall:

- Note down the days they are unavailable on the availability list pinned to the noticeboard provided in the Clubrooms;
- Speak with their coach (or their captain if the coach is not available) in person or via a telephone call;
- Send an SMS and email to their coach notifying them of their unavailability;
- Send an SMS and email to the Chair of Selectors (and cc their coach) notifying them of their unavailability.

All availability issues must be communicated to the selection committee prior to the Tuesday before the affected match. Players who fail to notify their team coach/captain or the Chair of Selectors in time of their unavailability, or are late withdrawals from playing on any particular weekend, without a reasonable and valid reason may, at the discretion of the selection committee and MCC Hockey Men's Sub-committee, be subject to a monetary fine or extra Section non-playing commitments (e.g. kiosk or umpiring duties), demoted to a lower ranked team the following week, or excluded from selection the following week.

Players who miss 2 or more successive games for reasons not including family, work, school, injury or illness, or representative hockey may, when they resume playing, and at the discretion of the selection committee, be demoted to a lower ranked team than they were playing and be required to earn their place in the higher ranked team again. This is to provide opportunities and encouragement for players who make themselves available for all games.



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#### **4.3 Team Selection Order**

The selection process aims to provide players with the opportunity to play the highest level of competitive hockey. The criteria outlined in the 'Team Selection Criteria' and 'Player Eligibility Requirements' sections of this document will be used to place players into a team.

A primary goal of the selection committee is to ensure that all teams have a squad of about 14 players to take the field for each game. For various reasons, players will become unavailable for games. This provides an opportunity for a player to gain experience in a higher grade; however, team selections for a team must take into account the following:

- Players for the Section's highest ranked team (1<sup>st</sup> XI) will be selected first; the composition of the team including the minimum number of players required for the team will be determined by the coach. Selection of players for the 1<sup>st</sup> XI shall never be compromised;
- Players for the section's next highest ranked team will be selected next. When deciding on additional players to make up the team squad the impact of removing key players on lower ranked teams is relevant and where the impact is considered significant, other options such as players doubling up should be considered;
- This process continues until the last team is selected. Where this causes the lowest ranked team to have less than 11 players (even with the legitimate use of double up players), the squads of the one or two next higher ranked teams may need to be reduced slightly to provide additional players to the lowest ranked team, or the selection committee, coaches/captains and team managers should attempt to source additional players from other areas including fill-in players, and/or juniors, Masters or Women's teams. In the event that no additional players can be found the impacted team will field a side with less than 11 players; giving a walkover to the opposition team due to lack of players will only be considered in the most extreme of circumstances and when team numbers are less than the 7 required by the Hockey Victoria Regulations.

#### **4.4 Double Up Players**

Players being considered as Double Up players shall be contacted by the selection committee or the coach, no later than the Wednesday preceding the relevant match where possible, to ascertain whether they are available to play both games for which they are being considered. Note this may not always be possible; occasionally last minute situations will arise to ask a player to double up.

The declining of a request to double up by any player will not be held against them regarding future selections into the higher ranked team.

It is anticipated that Double Up players will be considered as part of the normal team squad for the team into which they are doubling up; i.e. they will receive a fair share of game time as part of the normal team rotations. This requirement can be waived in the case of the 1<sup>st</sup> XI & 2<sup>nd</sup> XI however, where the coach may utilise Double Up players for as long as deemed necessary, with the coach informing the Double Up players beforehand of their likely on-field involvement in that game – e.g. they may be held in reserve in case of injuries.

The use of Double Up players should always be considered in conjunction with Hockey Victoria's Eligibility and Anti-Stacking Regulations, particularly later in the season if the lower ranked team in which they normally play is in contention for finals, so as not to render them ineligible to play finals for that team. At times, and for the greater good of the Section, this may not always be possible.

Double Up players will be used to:

- Ensure teams are not short of players;
- Replace injured or unavailable players in higher ranked teams with like-for-like players;
- Provide higher ranked teams with additional players in their squad, as required by the higher ranked team coach;



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- Provide opportunities for promising young players to play at a higher level from time-to-time as part of their development.

Double Up players should be avoided in the following cases:

- Junior players who will have played both club junior sport and school sport on the Friday night & Saturday morning before senior club hockey;
- Senior players over the age of 40;
- Double Up players having to play both on Saturday and Sunday, unless they agree, so that their weekend is not totally taken up by hockey;
- Doubling up more than say 3 or 4 weekends in a row, unless the player is considered physically and mentally fit enough to do so, and the player (and player's parents if the player is under 18 years) agrees.

#### **4.5 Selection Decisions & Communication**

Any potential player movements will be discussed by the selection committee and a draft teams list will be prepared by the Tuesday evening before match day to be discussed by the selection committee before and after training.

Coaches will be responsible for communicating to players who have been promoted from the team they coach to higher ranked teams, whereupon the coach of the higher ranked team will speak with the promoted players regarding expectations of them playing in the higher team and aspects of their game they can continue to improve.

Coaches will be responsible for communicating to players who have been demoted from the team they coach to lower ranked teams, giving reasons for their demotion and aspects of their game that they need to improve in order to gain promotion back into the higher team. The coach from the lower team will likewise reinforce that improvement message.

If possible, selected teams will be read out to the players after training on Wednesday night (Pennant & Metro Grades) and Thursday night (1<sup>st</sup> XI & 2<sup>nd</sup> XI).

Every endeavour will be made to have the final teams list posted on the MCC Hockey Section website and emailed to all players, coaches and team managers on Thursday night, or at the latest by Friday 12 noon. It is the responsibility of the player to ascertain:

- The team for which they will be playing;
- At what time and at which venue they will be playing;
- If they are also playing in the team above or below as a Double-Up player;
- If they have an umpiring, kiosk or other Section commitment that week;
- If a change playing uniform is required in case of colour clashes.

Players should never assume that playing in one team one week will confirm that they will be playing in the same team the following week.

If a player is unsure about any details or has an emergency that impacts on their availability they must contact their coach and the Chair of Selectors immediately.

#### **4.6 Review of Selection Decisions**

Whilst all attempts are made to be objective in the selection of teams, by the nature of player assessment and selection, subjective decisions are made. It is undesirable to have players unhappy about their selection for a particular team where they have not taken the opportunity to discuss any concerns with the appropriate team and/or selection committee representatives.



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If a player believes they have not been treated fairly in the selection process they have recourse via a selection review process detailed below:

– **Step 1 – Discuss selection with coach**

A player should discuss with their coach and have documented what actions the player needs to undertake to gain promotion or avoid demotion. That discussion should have specific and measurable targets and be shared with the Chair of Selectors. All coaches will give honest feedback on selection decisions.

Players who wish to be selected in a higher grade should be aware they need to accept the feedback in the openness it is given.

Players should also be aware that selection not only depends on their performance, but also on the availability of positions within a team.

– **Step 2 – Discuss selection with Chair of Selectors**

If a player has had a discussion with their coach but has not been satisfied with the outcome of that discussion, then that player may discuss the situation with the Chair of selectors.

The Chair of Selectors will review the situation and discuss the issue with the player and coach.

– **Step 3 – Discuss selection with MCC Hockey Men's Sub-committee**

If a player has had a discussion with their coach and the Chair of Selectors but has still not been satisfied with the outcome of those discussions, then that player may discuss the situation with a representative of the MCC Hockey Men's Sub-committee.

The committee representative will review the situation and discuss the issue with the player, coach and/or the Chair of Selectors and other committee members as appropriate.



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### **Appendix A – INFORMATION ONLY**

#### **Trial Selections for Pennant & Metro Grades in 2017**

As a trial for the 2017 season it is proposed that Home & Away team selections for Pennant and Metro Grades will comprise selection of team squads for three to four round Selection Cycles, which is aimed to:

- Allow for consideration of social players and personal diary management outside of hockey;
- Give more consistency in team line-ups;
- Give players more opportunities to impress for selection in higher grades;
- give promoted players more opportunities to prove their capabilities in higher grades;
- Provide opportunity for growth, development and improvement of all players.

All team selections will be completed at the discretion of the selection committee in conjunction with team coaches.

Team selections will take place at the start of each three to four round Selection Cycle, with players remaining with their selected team for the duration of each Selection Cycle. Selections will be reviewed weekly; however, any non-essential changes will be made at the start of the next Selection Cycle.

Player movement on a weekly basis will be avoided where possible; however, circumstances will likely arise from time-to-time where changes are required to be made, e.g. multiple players injured and/or unavailable in one team. In those circumstances, changes will preferably be made by use of Double-Up Players and/or Fill-In Players, so as not to overly disrupt other teams.

The first weeks of the proposed Selection Cycles are to be Rounds 1, 4, 8, 12 & 16

During each Selection Cycle, all field players are to be:

- Given fair match time for all matches in which they play;
- Selected in the starting line-up in no less than 50% of matches in which they play;
- Selected on quality & consistency of performances, opportunity and commitment;
- Preferably played in more than one position (especially younger players).

Positions played by players are to be at the discretion of the coach and may or may not be the preferred playing position of the player. It is considered that in order to further develop their hockey capabilities, players will benefit from experience in various positions on the field. Flexibility in playing positions also allows for greater application of principles such as team play, ensuring that the coach is able to give the full team squad a fair go on the field.

Coaches should attempt to utilise match rotations so that all players are rested as equitably as possible and receive comparable amounts of total match time over the duration of each Selection Cycle.

It is our goal to ensure that the MCC Hockey Section continues to be a fantastic development opportunity for young and young-at-heart hockey players, and to achieve both specific individual and general team improvements in skills, tactics, attitude and game-awareness. etc.