

Club Vision:

To maximise participation in hockey in this area by offering players the opportunity to participate in the sport at both elite and social levels of competition; provide a pathway of performance for junior players interested in competing at local and regional levels; and by mixing a friendly, welcoming, family atmosphere with the development opportunities that ***allow individuals to fulfil their playing potential.***

Junior Performance Program Objective

The purpose of the program is to maximise the number of junior players who go on to represent BHHC at the highest level, by providing around 25 selected players with specialist coaching, earlier promotion into older age group & adult teams and more structured feedback.

How the Program Works

Selected players will be invited to join the program by the Boys or Girls Club Manager, after consultation with Lead Coaches and Team Managers. From U12, all junior players will be assessed according to the '4 Corners' model that considers;

- Technical – encompassing skills and tactical understanding
- Psychological – considering individual motivation, attitude in a team environment and willingness to learn.
- Physical – encompassing attributes such as speed and strength.
- Social – considering relationships with others, personal organisation and respect for the values of hockey.

Assessment will be made on a case by case basis, but it should be anticipated that a player will only be invited to join the program if they are demonstrating performance above the expectations of their age group in at least 2 of the 4 Corners criteria.

Once an invitation has been extended, if it is accepted by both the player and their parents, then **attendance at training and availability for at least one match per weekend should be considered mandatory**. Players not prepared to make this commitment should not accept their invitation.

The club will remain mindful of the social environment that each junior player is asked to anticipate. Although performance program players will have been selected at least in part because of their maturity, junior players will only be promoted into the adult teams up to 3rd XI standard if there is at least one other U18 player in the team.

Specific Age Group Requirements

The activities taken place in the program will depend on the Age Group of the player involved

- **For U12** – Higher performing players in this age group will not be explicitly invited into the performance program or separated into a different stream and will remain with their age group for training and the majority of matches. However, they will be nominated by the club for Sussex Junior Development Centre (JDC) that takes place in each summer and act as the first stage of identifying players to represent the County. In addition, exceptionally talented players (i.e. those which display characteristics and abilities above the expectations of their age group in all 4 corner criteria) may be invited to the performance training sessions and occasionally

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asked to play for older group teams.

- **For U14** – Players identified as high performing will be invited to join the program, at 2 points in the year – End of September and the start of January. Players who accept the offer will receive the following:
 - *Training* – In addition to nomination to JDC, program players will attend an extra Performance training season from the first week in October, in addition to attending their regular age group training. Exceptionally talented players (i.e. those which display characteristics and abilities above the expectations of their age group in all 4 corner criteria) may also be asked to attend Adult Men's or Women's 3rd XI training after consultation with parents.
 - *Matches* – U14 players in the program will be selected for U16 teams. The frequency of selection for these teams will depend on the player's performance in training and matches. All players in this group will continued to be selected for their U14 age group in important fixtures.
- **For U16** – The majority of players in the program would be expected to be identified at U14 level but the U16 group will also be reviewed at the end of September and the start of January to identify improving players and those new to the club.
 - *Training* – U16 players will continue to attend the performance training sessions in addition to age group training, but mid-way through Year 10 or at the start of Year 11 will be invited to join the Adult Men's or Women's 3rd XI training. Any players who have already been invited to train with this group at U14 and have continued their rapid development may be invited to train with the Adult 1st or 2nd teams.
 - *Matches* – U16 players in the program may be selected for Adult teams, in addition to U16 age group fixtures. Junior players who do play for Adult teams will be expected to perform and behave as if they were an Adult, but Team Managers and Captains will brief the player fully on what is expected of them before their first game.
- **For U18** – After U16 there will be no formal training for high performing U18 players because they will be expected to be playing and training regularly for Adult teams. However, the Boys & Girls Club Manager will review player performance with the relevant Adult captain and consult the player involved to garner feedback and identify ways to improve the program.

Expectations of Individual Players

Participation in the program will not be for everyone, BHHC is trying to produce players who are capable of performing at the highest levels of the game and this will be reflected in what we ask of players. There is nothing wrong with playing hockey for fun and to spend time with friends, but the Performance program will not be for you.

Players in the program will be expected to:

- **Maintain a high standard of physical fitness** – Players will be expected to work on fitness and maintain a good diet outside of the program, in order to achieve what is asked of them for a whole match or training session.

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- **Be responsive to feedback** – Coaches and Managers will be reviewing all player's performance on an on-going basis in order to provide players with structured and justified feedback. Players will be expected to take note and respond to this feedback and a lack of willingness to accept and respond will be interpreted as a lack of desire to improve.
- **Learn from mistakes and think on their feet** – Program players will be expected to be self-motivated and learn for themselves by identifying their own areas of improvement.
- **Demonstrate grit and determination** – how players respond to adversity (for example by being dropped) will be a significant part in how players are viewed psychologically and socially.
- **Demonstrate maturity** – players in this program will have to get used to playing with older juniors and adults where understanding for less mature behaviour will be less tolerant.

Leaving the Program

Although we would hope that every player who enters the program leaves it through entry into the Senior Adult teams, the number of players in the program is limited so all players who participate must maintain a high degree of development to maintain their place.

Regular feedback from coaches and team managers is designed to ensure that the player is fully aware of their performance and if they are maintaining their standards according to expectations. However, there will be circumstances where players will be asked to leave the program;

- *Failing below the 4 corners criteria for the player's age group* – players in this circumstance will be given formal feedback with clear instruction as which elements of their performance need to be improved. If the level of performance stays below the required level for further 3 months, then the player will be asked to leave the program.
- *Non-payment of BHHC subscriptions* – Players who leave the club (for whatever reason) will not be able to continue in the program.
- *Non-attendance at Training* – Unless the relevant Team Manager is notified of an illness or injury, any player who misses 3 consecutive or 3 out of the last 6 Performance training sessions will be removed from the program.
- *Long Term Injury or Illness* - Injuries that may cause a long-term risk to health may be a reason for leaving the program temporarily or permanently.