



# West Vancouver Field Hockey Club

*"The home of North Shore Field Hockey"*

---

## Spring League 2025 - Girls U16 to U18 Team Formation FAQ's

Our mission is to support multi-sport, social, and high-performing athletes equally, as well as offer options for all in their pursuit of excellence. We understand that athletes evolve over the years; they develop at different rates and priorities change.

At U13, teams grow by more than 50% in size and are assembled based on U12 team results, athletes' competitive preference, input from coaches, and input from WVFHC staff. Efforts are made to keep like-minded players and friends together over a multi-year team formation process from U13-U15.

As part of the Girls U16-U18 registration, WVFHC will be asking athletes to identify their competitive preference and if they would like to return to the same team as the previous year. This is an opportunity to request a realignment of their competitive preferences. If the athlete would prefer to remain on the same team as last year, this will be granted whenever possible. We cannot guarantee which teams remain year over year as this depends on enrollment, but we will do our best to accommodate player movement requests.

**1. Why are you making this change to the WVFHC Spring League philosophy of “playing for fun with your friends”?** WVFHC has not changed the Spring League philosophy; Spring League's priority is for players to have fun, above all else. The team formation policy has not changed for the U6-U12 age groups. Beyond U12, team sizes need to grow yet enrollment traditionally decreases, and some athletes start to look for a different experience in Spring League than they may have had up to U12. WVFHC wants to make sure athletes have some choice in their Spring League experience whether spring is their “off” season or their “main” season of field hockey. We want to offer all members an enjoyable and appropriately challenging Spring League experience.

**2. It sounds like WVFHC is moving to create select and house teams. Why aren't there any tryouts? Will the better teams get better coaches?** We are not moving in this direction. The junior league (GVJFHL) in which we play is not structured or operated the same way as ice hockey or soccer. We will not have tryouts, and all the best players will not end up on the top team in each age group. There are only 2 tiers, and in most age groups WVFHC has several teams. Age Group Coordinators (AGCs) will strive to form balanced teams within each tier. The goal is to offer athletes the option to play with and against athletes and teams of a similar mindset and skill level. Playing with friends may be your top priority, and this will be honoured whenever possible.

**3. In registration, why are you asking me about my competitive preferences when I just want to stay on the same team as last year?** Good question! We are gathering this information at registration because it makes the AGC's job a lot easier when placing new players, or when teams fold and merge. It gives them a better understanding of the teams' general competitive profile. This will help avoid merging incompatible teams or placing new players in uncomfortable positions.

**4. Who decides what teams fold or merge each year, and how do they determine which players get to stay together?** Every age group has an AGC. This person spends countless hours before the start of each season forming teams and responding to dozens of requests from players. The AGC will be folding and merging teams based on enrollment, last season's league results, athletes' competitive preferences, tier requests, and coach (parent & club) recommendations.

**5. I just want to stay with my current team, but I don't care who we play against, or what level of competition we face. What should I do?** When you register on Sports Engine, there will be a page that asks for this information.

**6. I would like to switch teams to play with my friend. How do I make that request?** A lot of thought goes into team formation with multiple variables. AGCs try to accommodate all friend requests, but they must consider roster sizes and attempt to create balanced teams within each tier. Part of the Spring League philosophy is to foster new friendships. In that spirit, many athletes find that over time new friendships grow at field hockey, which is a wonderful complement to friends made at school, art, dance, and soccer, etc. Having said that, there is movement each year, so you are welcome to make a request each year. In registration, there is a Player Profile page where you may let us know that you do not wish to return to your team. You may add a comment about joining your friend's team at the bottom of the page.

**7. My level of competitiveness does not match my team. How do I switch teams? Do I need to fill out a Player Transfer Request form?** In registration, there is a Player Profile page where you may let us know that you do not wish to return to your team. Include as much detail as possible in the comment box. Every effort will be made to put you on a more appropriate team. No need to submit a Player Transfer Request form unless your request is made AFTER you've already registered.

**8. What if I move to a new team this year but I change my mind next season and want to move back to my previous team with my old coach and teammates? Is that possible?** Each year there will be a place to include this information/request during the registration process in Sports Engine. If your previous team is intact and there is room on the team, the AGC will make every effort to grant your request.

**9. I want to stay on my current team this year, but what if I change my mind next year and want a different level of competition?** Each year there will be a place to include this information/request during the registration process in Sports Engine. If there is space on an appropriate team, the AGC will make every effort to grant your request.

**10. Why can't we know the practice days and times earlier? Wouldn't it help with team formation to have more time to adjust for conflicts with other sports?** WVFHC understands the frustration of not knowing schedules further in advance. We strive to support multi-sport/activity families with busy schedules, this is not within our control. Our field requests to the municipalities are not confirmed until February. Since parent coaches get to request practice times, this cannot be done until teams have been formed and coaches have been identified. With registration closing at the end of January, teams aren't fully formed until mid-February when the League requires the club to declare the number of teams in each age group. The timeline for such variables makes it impossible to have this information to parents any earlier. When you are notified of your team's practice day/time and it absolutely does not work, you will need to contact the AGC. The AGC will try to place you on a team with a practice day that works.

**11. Why aren't the boys included?** At this point, the enrollment for the boys does not support this initiative. The league goes from two tiers of several teams in each tier at U12, to one tier with 4 teams (2023) in U14. There's no tiering in the league after U12, and we usually have one team in each of the U16 and U18 age groups.