



# RINGETTE BC

## Club Pathway Guidelines

### Children's Ringette to Masters

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## 1. Introduction

These guidelines are for the Community or “Club” Athlete Pathway. The Club Athlete Pathway is for the athlete who is seeking sport for life opportunities and broadly includes athletes starting at FUNdamentals through to adult teams. Participants can leave and return to the community pathway through their playing career.

The Club Pathway is focused on sport for life, long-term athlete development and long-term participant development. All Club Associations are able to support community-based “Club” teams, built around skill development, friendships

Competition includes league play and any tournaments that teams choose to attend. Teams in the U14, U16, U19 and 18+ divisions have the option to participate in Provincial Championships as a wind-up to their playing season. Teams in U12 can choose to participate in a Provincial Championship-style or Jamboree-style Year-End Event.

### 1.1. Strategic Initiatives

The Club Pathway aims to engage more athletes by allowing them to participate in a competition structure that encourages increased participation and meaningful competition. This is an integral part of the athlete experience pathways which allows players to participate at the level of their choice and their caliber of play.

### 1.2. Principles

Ringette BC, Leagues and Club Associations will be guided by the following principles:

- Athletes, Coaches and Administrators will pledge the *True Sport* Principles and will be ambassadors of *True Sport* in Ringette
- the program guidelines and policies will work to promote the principles of meaningful competition;
- the Club system of competition will provide increased opportunities for participation;
- players will be given development opportunities regardless of what team they are playing on;
- program guidelines and policies will create a network of Coaches; and
- program guidelines and policies will build a competition structure that can evolve with increased participants and support a growing sport.

## 2. Team Formation

The Community (or “Club”) competition system is for athletes starting at FUNdamentals through to adult teams. Teams are formed within each Club Association and participate in a system of competition following the program principles above and guidelines below. Club division teams can be all genders from FUNdamentals to 18+ and Masters, or Female in U14, U16 and U19.



Ringette BC encourages smaller roster sizes on Club teams to facilitate increased ring touches, player engagement and overall enjoyment of the game. In addition, smaller rosters assist with the following player development initiatives:

- increased engagement for all players as they are more active during practices and games;
- increased opportunities to experience playing different positions;
- increased opportunity for skill development;
- increased opportunity for players to experience different game situations; and
- increased opportunities for Coaches to train and develop all of the athletes on their team while recognizing individual skill levels of players.

Teams in the same age division compete against each other in balancing games between multiple Club teams from the same Club Association to ensure the rosters of the two teams are as evenly matched as possible for FUNDamentals, U10, U14, U16, and U19 club teams. Changes to team rosters can be made following balancing games and prior to the **November 1<sup>st</sup> roster deadline** each season.

The Community (or “Club”) competition system will promote meaningful competition in all age groups, increase development and provide optional travel opportunities for players.

### 2.1. Team Formation U10 Division

Teams are formed within each individual Club Association. Club Associations should aim to create as many balanced U10 teams as possible. Smaller rosters are encouraged at U10 to engage as many participants as possible in events.

Teams may be formed using simple assessment criteria and Coach input, or by player draft between Head Coaches. In either case, the Club Association is responsible for overseeing the creation of the rosters.

Balancing games between teams in the same Club Association should take place at the start of the season following assessments and initial team formation. Leagues should consider season to date results when scheduling League play to influence meaningful competition.

### 2.2. Team Formation U12 Division

Teams are formed within each individual Club Association. Club Associations should aim to create as many U12 teams as possible. While the maximum roster size in U12 is 17, Ringette BC strongly encourages smaller roster sizes for U12 Club teams to facilitate increased ring touches, player engagement and overall enjoyment of the game. Ideally, U12 teams will have 10-12 players per team. In addition, smaller rosters assist with the following player development initiatives:

- Increased engagement for all players as they are more active during practices and games
- Increased opportunities to experience playing different positions
- Increased opportunity for skill development
- Increased opportunity for players to experience different game situations; and
- Increased opportunities for coaches to train and develop all the athletes on their team while recognizing individual skill levels of players.



If a Club Association has the ability to form more than one U12 team, the teams will be tiered to support athletes in playing with and against athletes and teams of similar skill level. In order to tier teams, clubs will complete formal player evaluation using the standardized Ringette BC U12 Evaluation Criteria. U12 teams will be tiered as an A or B team, determining their caliber and pool of play for the season. The programs for these teams should look the same regardless of the level of play the team identifies as. Clubs that form only one U12 team will be tiered according to their team ordinal determined during player evaluations, as well as any tiering games completed in their league.

Clubs will form teams using the numbers below as a guide

<b>Number of athletes</b>	<b>Minimum number of teams</b>
17 or less	1
18-29	2
30-39	3
40+	4+

If a team can form more than two (2) U12 teams, two of the teams will be balanced to allow those teams to compete under the same competition structure (ie. If an association is able to form 1 A team and 2 B teams, the B teams will be balanced)

### **Forming Tiered teams**

- tiered teams are formed using the formal player evaluations, where the top-ranking athletes are placed on the higher-ranking team, and lower ranking athletes are placed on the lower ranking team
  - o Where there are an uneven number of players per team, the higher-ranking team should take the lower number of players, as they can pick up players from the lower ranking team (ie U12 A – 9 players, U12 B – 10 players)
  - o Players are assigned to teams based solely off player evaluations, with some considerations to position in the case of goaltenders
- Clubs should form a Tiering Committee of 3 impartial club members to review evaluation data and determine rosters
- coaches may be assigned prior to evaluations; however, parent coaches cannot be a part of the Tiering Committee, nor secure a spot for their athlete on any team

### **Forming Balanced teams**

Balanced teams may be formed using the evaluation criteria and Coach input, or by player draft between Head Coaches, following Ringette BC's Draft Process. In either case, the Club Association is responsible for overseeing the creation of the rosters

Teams will be assigned a team ordinal which will be used to assist with pooling and forming League and Sanctioned event game schedules. Team ordinals should be shared with the League and sanctioned tournaments to assist with creating pools to facilitate meaningful competition.



Developing Leagues may request to form two sets of rosters to support with meaningful competition during both league and tournament play. In this case, each association that can form more than one U12 team would submit a set of Balanced and a set of tiered rosters by the roster deadline. Balanced teams would participate in league play, while the tiered rosters would compete at tournaments. This must be approved by Ringette BC no later than the roster deadline of November 1st. Additionally, Club Associations with tiered rosters may create balanced rosters for the purposes of internal club exhibition games without approval.

### 2.3. Team Formation U14 to U19

Teams are formed within each individual Club Association. In an effort to create evenly matched teams, Club Associations will conduct player evaluations on all athletes within the age division using the standardized Ringette BC evaluation criteria.

Club Associations will offer individual the athletes the option to register for Club (all genders) or Female Club. Registration and Team formation will follow Ringette Canada's Inclusion Policy, in which Transgender and non-binary may choose to participate in the category of participation of their sex assigned at birth, or the category in which they identify. Club Teams (all genders) may have up to 50% male athletes on their roster.

Club Associations should provide updates to their registrants on September 1<sup>st</sup> with the current registration numbers, and likelihood of forming a team, in their desired division and category. Club Associations will be required to declare their teams and corresponding categories to Ringette BC by September 15<sup>th</sup>.

If a Club Association has the ability to form more than one team in an age division and category, the teams will be balanced to allow the teams to compete with each other under the same competition structure. Teams may be formed using the evaluation criteria and Coach input, or by player draft between Head Coaches following Ringette BC's Draft Process. In either case, the Club Association is responsible for overseeing the creation of the rosters. Balancing games between teams in the same Club Association should take place at the start of the season following player evaluations and initial team formation.

All teams will be assigned a team ordinal which will be used to assist with pooling and forming League and Sanctioned event game schedules. Team ordinals should be shared with the League and sanctioned tournaments to assist with creating pools to facilitate meaningful competition.

The vision is for each Club Association to form Club teams within their Association. However, if there is an inability to form a Club level team at U14, U16 or U19 within a Club Association, the Club Associations may choose to create Zone Club teams per Appendix 1 of this document, **or** players may be released to an adjacent community as per the existing Ringette BC policy. In all cases, the creation of Zone teams will require the consent of Ringette BC and the mutual consent of the affected Club Associations. If consent cannot be reached, the player(s) will follow the existing Release Policy.



Should a Club Association declare a Female Club team, and that team wishes to change categories to Club during the season, they must notify their league and Ringette BC in writing no later than November 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### 2.4. Club Association Geographic Boundaries

The Club Association geographic boundaries are outlined in Ringette BC policy. All athletes must register with the Club Association that governs their geographical boundaries based on their primary residential address. All registrants must show proof of residency as part of the registration process. Releases between Club Associations are not permitted in the Community Pathway unless there is no Club team on which they can play. Club Associations should make every effort to accommodate all participants.

### 3. Coaching and Team Staff

#### 3.1. Certification

All coaches, on-ice helpers and other Team Staff such as Managers and Trainers must meet the standards outlined by Ringette BC under the Team Leadership Qualifications Policy.

#### 3.2. Team Staff Selection

Individuals interested in coaching a team must complete an application, with references and participate in a screening process conducted by the Club Association. Please refer to the Coach and Team Staff Selection Policy.

### 4. Competition

#### 4.1. Season Competition (League & Tournament Play) – U10 to U19

Club teams from U10 to U19 will participate in League competition throughout the playing season. League play will determine seeding for the U12 Year-End Event and Ringette BC Provincial Championships.

League play for Club teams will be operated by the Ringette Leagues within BC; Lower Mainland, Thompson Okanagan, Northern and Island. Teams participating in League play will be subject to the League's Rules of Competition. Club teams will compete against teams within their division and category, and may attend additional tournaments should the team choose. Club teams will be expected to follow the Ringette BC Player Pick Up Policy during play for all sanctioned games and events, including league, tournament play and provincial championships.

Sanctioned tournaments may choose which divisions and categories to offer. For a tournament to proceed, a minimum of three (3) teams per division are required.

U12 teams will be placed within league and tournament play based on their team ordinal and subsequently determined tier (A or B).



#### 4.2. U10 and FUNdamentals Year End Events

Ringette BC encourages all Leagues and Club Associations to facilitate year-end fun focused wrap-up events for their U10 teams and FUNdamentals participants. Examples include the Port Coquitlam Jamboree and the Houston Jamboree.

#### 4.3. U12 Year End Event

All U12 teams are eligible to participate in the Ringette BC U12 Year-End Event. The Year-End Event is a U12 only event open to all U12 teams in the province. It is meant to be a wrap-up to the season while introducing teams to a competitive tournament format similar to Provincial Championships. In order to participate, teams must submit a *Commitment to Attend* form to Ringette BC. The tournament is built on the principles of meaningful competition and the guiding principles of competition.

The U12 Year-End Event utilize a championship format with medals.

#### 4.4. Provincial Championships U14 to U19

All Club teams from U14 to U19 are eligible to participate in Provincial Championships. Provincial Championships are optional for all Club teams and are open to all teams that commit to attend under Ringette BC's expanded format. The Provincial Championships are for *all* athletes playing within the Community "Club" structure. The tournament is built on the principles of meaningful competition and the guiding principles of competition.

The Club Provincial Championships for U14 to U19 will take place in March of each year. More than one host may be required each season, and the events will move around the province.

### 5. Other Considerations

#### 5.1. Player Pick Ups

Please refer to the Player Pick Up Policy.

#### 5.2. Player Movement

Please refer to the Player Movement Policy.

#### 5.3. Training

Teams will train at facilities that exist within their Club Association. Club teams are expected to have no more than two (2) to three (3) team events per week, including ringette games. Exceptions are for tournaments or extended play weekends, which create additional ice time.

Club Teams competing in the Community Athlete Pathway should embrace the following characteristics:

- teams practice once or twice a week and participate in a league game once or twice a





- week (two to three ice times per week maximum);
- teams focus on skill development, building friendships and ensuring fun and enjoyment;
- teams are participating in competition that will challenge and enhance their skills and experience in ringette; and
- multi-sport participation is encouraged and facilitated.

#### 5.4. Player Development

Leagues and Club Associations may work together to provide additional development opportunities for players seeking to further their skills. For instance, U12 players may participate in the Competition Introduction program. U14 to U19 players that are unsuccessful in making a Competitive Zone team may wish to participate in a Merged Club Association-led development program operated at the discretion of the local Zone or Club Association. Such program must be based on similar principles to the League-based U12 program.

#### 5.5. Long Term Development Stages of Community

Divisions and the LTD stages within the Community Pathway:

- FUNDamentals - Active Start and FUNDamentals
- U10 – Early Learn to Train
- U12 – Late Learn to Train
- U14 – Train to Train
- U16 and U19 – Competitive for Life and Sport for life



## 6. Appendix 1 – Merged Club Teams

Teams from U14 to U19 can be formed using the “Zone” principle if there are not enough athletes in a Club Association to field a team, merging athletes from multiple associations together. Merged Club teams differ from player releases at the club level because Club Associations will retain registration dollars and the players will still be active in their home community. The creation of Merged Club teams is an *alternative* to player releases when a Club Association does not have enough players to form a team.

Associations must work together to make sure that multiple Merged Club teams are balanced (if there is more than one in an area) and that every player has a team to play on.

To form a Merged Club team, affected Club Associations may submit a request to Ringette BC, supported by a team roster, ordinals and a supporting board motion from each Club Association involved, prior to October 1<sup>st</sup> of each playing season.

Ringette BC reserves the right to reject any request to form a Merged Club team for any reason. Consideration will be based on the following criteria:

- Association Boards, Coaches and Parents are informed and have read these guidelines;
- Players, Teams, or Club Associations are not disadvantaged through the formation of the team;
- Club Associations understand the requirement to provide proportional ice time;
- The creation of the Zone team is to accommodate players and is not being used as a method to “stack” a roster; and
- The home League is supportive of the request

Any Merged Club teams will train at facilities that exist within their Zone. The Club Associations that make up the teams will be responsible for contributing a proportional amount of ice to the team for practices and games based on the number of players from within a Club Association participating on each team. For example, if 45% of players come from Club A and 55% from Club B, the ice sessions hosted by each Club Association would allocate ice for practices and games following these proportions.

Merged Club teams formed on this principle will wear the jerseys of the Club Association from which the majority of its players are registered. However, registration dollars will remain with each player’s home Club Association.