

FHC – TAP TOWNHALL QUESTION AND ANSWER



Q: What is extended NextGen?

A: NextGen is athletes 4-8 years from a world podium. This was running for the past 4 years and has had a positive impact. Now we are extending this group (as there had not been talent development and new intake into this program in the past 2 years, so TAP and the extended NextGen pathway will close the gap that this pandemic has caused.

Q: Is TAP for U16/U18 athletes ? Are there U21 Athletes involved as well.

A: There are a couple of U21 athletes that have been invited to the TAP start up. These are athletes that have been invited by the PSO and have not had a chance to be evaluated for U21 NextGen programs. We are also aware that due to Covid there has been a gap in development for these U21 athletes so we don't want to lose them from the system because there has not been identification opportunities over the last two years. There may also be some U21 athletes that were evaluated within NG environments but were deselected but would benefit from some consistent training in order to be re-selected. Anyone that has been identified as a targeted athletes is invited to train and will continue to be evaluated for Next Gen consideration.

Q: What happens to the athletes that have been deselected from NextGen and have been assigned to TAP?

A: Selection / deselection is a common practice in high performance, and an environmental reality for national team athletes at all ages. As these programs are national pathway development programs participation is done based on skill evaluation. If an athlete is not performing in alignment with NextGen, they will return to the TAP program for additional development and vice versa if a TAP athlete is performing well they may be elevated to NextGen.

Q: What happens if a player is not identified by their PSO to be in the TAP program? How do they get into the program if not via their PSO programming ? ie. they're only training with their club, academy etc.

A: Athletes wanting to be identified for TAP programming should attend either FHC Identification camp or Provincial Selection Camp opportunities. FHC staff may also be in attendance at other domestic tournaments, league or school championships and can identify athletes through any of those playing environments.

Q: This program looks almost identical to the women's regional program that FHBC ran for years that was recently cancelled as a result of stakeholders here wanting the high performance streams provincially fully reviewed

A: This is not an isolated program and is not specific to one geographic area. This is a national program to develop a Canadian identity, pathway and positions within u16, u18 and u21 national teams (u16 and u18 being launched this year), and will run similar programs consistently across the country allowing FHC to develop a national hockey identity and train athletes for our National Programs. This is not a grassroots program but by scheduling around club needs and players remaining in clubs throughout season (including Spring league in BC) then club grassroots will also benefit.

In BC for example, there is no scheduled training for weekends so it will not impact the traditional Saturday/Sunday schedule for league games or competitions.

Q: How does this program or any FHC program help the clubs develop their grassroots programs to conform to the national strategy? Current club structures vary heavily in terms of skills delivered to the kids participating. The kids coming in to your proposed hubs will come from the Club structure. The clubs are all doing different things, and kids are not building out the basic sport skills.

A: In a healthy pathway, we rely on clubs for grassroots athlete development, bringing new athletes into the sport and providing them with opportunity to learn the sport, to play games, and compete in a regular leagues and events. As athletes develop some may choose to pursue involvement at the sport at higher levels, provincial teams and may have goals to play internationally. Through this program FHC can accelerate the development of the high-potential athletes, while allowing clubs and provincial programs to continue to work in other areas of the sport (competition structure, leagues, event hosting, grassroots and development programming, indoor programming etc), This type of partnership extends our capacity as an overall sport structure. This is not a threat to other programming, but like Soccer Canadas Excel and Rex programs, and similar athlete pathways in other sports such as Basketball and Volleyball Canada, for instance, this will help support capacity in provinces and support club development. Clubs are the heartbeat of our sport and this is foremost in our mind.

Q: A lot of the provinces' best athletes already train with various academies or HP teams within their own clubs. How is this any different?

A: Yes, some athletes are already in academies or HP programs. These all run on own curriculum and focus, which is all great. The TAP Program is FHC's national pathway and identity, It will train athletes in the Canadian Style of play which will support our Podium results in the Senior International Environments.

Q: Sounds like an excellent program, but while the TAP program aims to prepare the athlete for NextGen, current academies and other hp programs can offer the same training. will an athlete that choose to stay with their academy lose the opportunity to proceed to NextGen?

A: Selection to Next Gen is done based on Gold Medal Profile Evaluation. Athletes interested in becoming part of the NextGen Program will need to be evaluated in a formal setting in order to be selected to this program. At the moment this evaluation can be done through FHC ID Camps and through TAP training environments. We want to create a national program, national system which enables talent to flow within and through to junior and senior national teams. We are a fair, equal and diverse sport and want to ensure equal access to quality programs which are well managed. we will not be exclude those in the pathway external to this.

Q: Did FHO help select Ontario athletes for TAP?

A: Athletes that attended the FHC ID camps were evaluated based on FHC Gold Medal Profile Criteria and assigned to the appropriate skill development program. Prior to the launch of on field training in Ontario, further identification will happen based on athlete performance at National Championships and FHO will also be given the opportunity to nominate their provincially targeted athletes for participation in TAP training and evaluation.

Q: How will FHC and FHO work together?

A: We are continually searching for ways to work with our provincial members. Indeed, we did put our NextGen coach in Ontario to start with back in 2019, but it didn't quite work the way we envisaged and so we brought him back West. I use that example as ideally we would have a full time professional coach in Ontario

that does both programs (TAP / NG). Our staff share the information and data from camps etc with FHO and we will continue to search for ways to find efficiencies.

Q: NextGen men and women currently do not have an employed coach. (Patrick and Indy have both left). Who will coach?

A: This will be led by FHC coaches from within the NextGen NTC environment. Additional coaches will be added to each Hub environment to support on field delivery and will participate in mentorship activities to accelerate the development of these coaches. As the TAP program grows, so will the capacity of qualified coaches across the country. We encourage Provincial and Club organizations to encourage their coaches to work toward their coaching certifications and participate in this program for mentorship and experience. All coaches will be FHC coaches / NCCP qualified.

Q: Will this take coaches away from existing programs (clubs, academies, those coaching in provincial HP programs) ?

A: The TAP Program will not conflict with provincial programs, athletes and coaches will complete this program in May and will then be released into the Provincial Environment for National Championship Preparation. Head Coaches of these programs will come from the FHC NextGen Environment and will provide performance planning, delivery and consistency to each Hub. Assistant coaches will be hired to support the Hub Leads. Additional coaches on field may also have club commitments and their schedule of commitment to TAP can be arranged to work with their club teams. For example, TAP training is twice per week, and we may have volunteer coaches that only come to one TAP training per week, but participate in other mentorship opportunities / coaches meetings and resource sharing

Q: 2028 seems to be a target here. What does that say about 2024? Especially seeing that our Women just qualified for the World Cup

A: yes, 2028 is the target for new athletes coming in at this TAP stage. 2024 would be more those already identified and in the system.

The Next Gen system identifies athletes in the number of years they are away from making an impact at the Senior Team. A U21 athlete might be 1-2 years away from senior impact, U18 3-4 years away, U16 athletes 4-6 years away. A TAP athlete might be 1-2 years away from NextGen involvement.

Q: is there a tiering system for targeted athletes? what is the difference in these tiers? how would those tiers be defined and how are these skill criteria established? Will FHC commit to full transparency with this skill criteria to stakeholders?

A: Evaluations and Tiering is based on Gold Medal Profile Evaluations. Evaluation and feedback will be provided to all athletes and expectations will be clearly communicated to athletes as well as new coaches involved in the program so that they can learn the National expectations. These metrics are tied to our gold medal profile, and we won't put that on website as we don't want other international competitors seeing it.

Q: For athletes that were not accepted into TAP but are working towards that goal, will the digital presentations and the at home program be made available to them?

A: Athletes that have not been invited into the TAP program should return to their club and provincial environments for training and development opportunities. In this way, we can all work together to ensure that athletes at all stages of development are receiving instruction and support to progress toward their goals.

Q: What are the locations of the four hubs for Fall of 2022

A: At this point we are in talks to activate in BC – Tamanawis (Surrey) and North Shore as well as Alberta (Calgary) and Ontario (Toronto) Additional full time Hubs will be activated as capacity grows. We will be in communication in the coming months with provinces and may do camp based training approaches for this group of athletes in areas where a full time Hub is not possible (ie. Atlantic Regions, BC Island, Other parts of Ontario)

Physical Training Program

Q: will athletes have an advantage on other athletes who have person to person training? As face to face training and conditioning is better as there is someone to que and give feedback

A: In Person Strength and Conditioning coaching is a huge benefit

Q: How many sessions per week per athlete?

A: Three times per week: on field twice with one in Person, coached Strength and Conditioning Session. The TAP schedule may vary from hub to hub depending on the environmental realities of each province and region.

Q: So both NextGen and TAP stop over the summer?

A: In May all TAP athletes will be released to play within their Provincial programming in preparation for National Championships which are typically end of July/Early August. Next Gen Athletes that are not named to youth national teams will also be available for Provincial Team Selection. It is up to each PSO to name their provincial teams, and FHC does not guarantee that participation in TAP programming will mean selection to Provincial teams. Depending on the International Calendar, and U16/U18 Youth National Team commitments, those programs may run programming through out the summer.

Q: Can out of region BC athletes make arrangements to come to some of the lower mainland sessions but knowing they cant make all of them.

A: Yes, absolutely. This can be arranged on a case-by-case basis and in communication with the Hub coaching staff. Athletes that are outside a realistic travel distance can remain in the program and attend training when travel is possible. We want to make this as accessible as possible to targeted athletes.

Q: What was the purpose of ID camp conducted in Eric Hamber Oct 30th-31st for U18/22 not sure why we are saying they were not evaluated by FHC?

A: Athletes that attended ID camps were evaluated and assigned an appropriate training environment (Either NextGen, TAP or Provincial program) Some athletes that have been nominated by their PSO have not yet been evaluated, and did not attend the summer/fall 2021 ID camps. These athletes will receive evaluation at the first on field training sessions.

Q: Will there be anymore official FHC ID camps in 2022

A: Athletes will be observed at National Championships in 2022, and additional formal FHC ID Camps will be planned on an annual basis to identify new athletes to the program. These are TBD.

Q: Are we to register now even if we are you unsure if child can commit

A: Registration is open for invited athletes for the Feb – May 10 week pilot program. All Athletes that are unable to commit for the first 10 weeks will be re-invited for the Fall 2022 Start Up.