



Field Hockey Canada Conference 2022: Community Roundtable Discussion

Please note that many of our points that were discussed were laid out in our Jam Boards, which you can access here:

<https://jamboard.google.com/d/1XRAgksuumk7KlvqZRDjh7Cc8tDEC2NvhHZwlKhS4nao/edit?usp=sharing>

TOPIC 1: RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

1. What barriers do you face when it comes to recruitment and retention of players?

- Not enough access to facilities – competing for field space
- Sport seasons running later than usual impacting field hockey season because there are many multi-sport athletes
- Clubs trying to recoup losses from Covid due to 2-year gap in participation – parents don't understand that they are needed to support and help as managers & volunteers as well.
- Loss of engagement in both BC & ON – currently experiencing a 2-year re-build

2. What strategies have you implemented to enhance the recruitment and retention of players?

- Mom' Got Game – moms can bring their kids to the game – helps also bring kids to field who are interested to learn/play
- School Program – takes 2 years of exposure but they have gotten 3% of the kids that they see enroll in their program – WVFHC
- School programs help to introduce field hockey to kids as a sport
- In Ontario, field hockey has just been approved at elementary schools to be played – planning to make a hockey kit to send out to schools

3. Were your strategies effective in increasing your number of players – why or why not?

- We can be creative to get folks back in the game – but we do what works and get stuck in a rut often times
- Looking at the reasons why they don't come back is not something we had to do before – but we are getting creative and coming up with new ways to address them

- Talk to members more and engage with them and getting ideas from them - last 2 years has given us time to dig into this.
- Adapted school programming model based on survey results

TOPIC 2: ENGAGING BOYS IN FIELD HOCKEY

1. What barriers do you face when it comes to engaging boys in field hockey? How does this differ from girls?

- PE teachers who are men didn't know much about the sport. PE teachers in general need to know about the sport in order to offer it.
- Less opportunities for boys. NCAA for girls but not boys. More leagues for girls than boys. Hard to find meaningful competition for boys. Pandemic has hit really hard for boys side of sport.

2. What strategies have you used to expose boys to field hockey, and have they been successful?

- Masters have more than just hockey – very social based – big community feel.
- If a dad coaches his daughter's team approach them to play in the men's league.
- Family Days – advertise that it can be a family sport – both genders can play and there are mixed leagues – safe to play together
- Partner with local ice hockey teams and clubs for cross training

3. Any advice or recommendations to help clubs increase boys' participation?

- Has to do with how we market the sport for the boys – Challenge their ego
- Umpire abuse – yelling matches, fighting matches – what she has seen as an umpire – building in better sportsmanship is needed for the men's league to create a safe space where people want to encourage others to join this space.
- Visibility – join a bunch of community events – play at different locations to show the sport exists – offer programs for all age groups and all genders and expose this to people via social media, word of mouth, community events – encourage members to tell people and share information – grassroots effort – this is how they get the bulk of their registrations – they don't pay for advertising

- All High Performance players got cool field hockey merchandise for the kids to wear everywhere, which helped to advertise the sport