



Policy Name National Masters Athlete Selection Policy		Policy Category National Team
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Approved By Board of Directors		Review Cycle TBD

FIELD HOCKEY CANADA NATIONAL MASTERS ATHLETE SELECTION POLICY

Masters Hockey is recognized by Field Hockey Canada (“FHC”), World Masters Hockey (“WMH”) and the Fédération Internationale de Hockey (“FIH”), as hockey for athletes aged 35 and older (“Masters”).

Canadian National Masters Field Hockey Teams are comprised of athletes aged 35 and older that represent Canada at international Masters Competitions sanctioned by WMH, and which are supported by FHC with respect to training, competition, coaching and administration.

FHC’s athlete selection process for its Masters National Teams aims to be transparent and fair. FHC’s Masters Hockey Committee is dedicated to the continued development of hockey for Masters athletes and to encourage international competition with their peers.

1. National Team Program Goal

To develop athletes and Masters National Teams capable of winning international matches. The performance of the National Teams and its members enhances the image of the sport, attracts new athletes, provides sponsorship opportunities and inspires athletes within the sport to progress within the competitive system.

2. Objective of the Selection Policy

The objective of this selection policy is to

- outline a clear and fair process on how athletes are identified and selected to Masters National Teams; and
- select athletes to Masters National Teams with the goal to achieve success for Field Hockey Canada at international matches, tournaments and competitions.

3. Responsibilities of Field Hockey Canada, Coaches and Athletes.

- FHC:
 - to establish and maintain a sound athlete selection policy;
 - to communicate the selection criteria to athletes and coaches;
 - to implement the selection policy appropriately; and
 - to promote Masters hockey at all age levels.
- Coaches:
 - to be familiar with, and utilize appropriately, the athlete Selection Criteria;





- ii. to use their expertise and technical knowledge as may be appropriate for Masters athletes;
 - iii. to communicate appropriately with athletes with respect to the selection process; and
 - iv. to support FHC in the development and application of clear and comprehensive athlete selection policies.
- c. Athletes:
 - i. to review and familiarize themselves with the athlete selection criteria and, if necessary, request further information or clarification from coaches or FHC to ensure they clearly understand the requirements for athlete selection;
 - ii. to pay the costs, charges and levies, as may be determined by FHC, of and related to Talent Identification sessions and other elements of the athlete selection process; and
 - iii. If selected for a Masters Team, to enter into and abide by the FHC Masters Athlete Agreement.

4. Definitions

- a. **National Squad** – Masters athletes who register with FHC and who are invited to practice by the Coach or a coordinator appointed by the Masters Committee for a Masters Age Group. Practicing with the National Squad is a way of acquiring fitness and learning the skills necessary for national team selection, but not a guarantee of selection to a National Team.
- b. **National Team** – the athletes for a particular age category selected to represent Canada at a particular international Masters competition sanctioned by WMH, including at men's, women's, outdoor and indoor hockey competitions.
- c. **Maple Leafs** – a non-national team may be selected by FHC out of registered FHC players to play in non-national tournaments or a sub-tournament of a national tournament (e.g. World Cup). A Maple Leafs team has greater selection flexibility with respect to age (where the competition permits) and performance standards.

(National Teams and Maple Leafs teams are collectively referred to in this Policy as "**Masters Teams**")

- d. **Selector(s)** – means a Coach of a Masters Team, assistant coach(s) or athlete selectors appointed by the Masters Committee. As with all its national teams, FHC has the ultimate right to select its Masters coaches, athletes, staff and umpires.
- e. **FHC Masters Committee** – a committee appointed by the FHC Board of Directors pursuant to the FHC Bylaws, which is authorized to create sub-committees relating to Masters hockey.
- f. **Coach** -- one or more persons appointed by the Masters Committee to coach a National Team or a Maple Leafs team for a particular age category for a WMH sanctioned event, and who is appropriately qualified pursuant to FHC policies.



5. Eligibility for Selection

- a. All athletes who wish to be considered for selection to a Masters Team must:
 - i. be a Registered Participant of FHC;
 - ii. register with FHC's on-line database;
 - iii. not be under suspension or sanction by FHC or Sport Canada for any doping or doping related offence, or be subject to any other sanction recognized by FHC or by a member of FHC;
 - iv. hold or be eligible to hold a Canadian Passport or have been a permanent resident of Canada for twelve (12) months;
 - v. commit to sign any applicable Masters Athlete Agreement and Release as required by FHC; and
 - vi. be eligible under the current WMH Eligibility Policy standards (<https://worldmastershockey.org/wmhddocuments/eligibility/>).
- b. Except for athletes eligible for Masters Teams in the oldest age groups (where there is no upper age limit), an athlete is only eligible for selection to a Masters Team if their age is classified within the 5-year age group of the Masters Team at issue. Pursuant to the WMH Eligibility Policy, an athlete's age is calculated by their year of birth, not their actual age at the time of an event; e.g., for a WMH event in 2022, an athlete born on the 10th December 1972 would be identified as 50 years old from the 1st January 2022 to the 31st December 2022. Therefore, that athlete would be classified as over-50 from 1st January 2022 until 31st December 2027. On the 1st January 2028, they would be re-classified as over-55.
- c. Notwithstanding sub-paragraph b. above, the Masters Committee may exercise its unfettered discretion to permit an athlete to be selected for a younger Masters Team than their age classification. For example, an athlete classified over-50 may be permitted to play for an over-45 National Team. This discretion should not be exercised if a National Team for the athlete's actual age classification is to be selected for the same event. Additionally, the Masters Committee may, in its unfettered discretion, apply to WMH for an "underage dispensation" pursuant to WMH's Eligibility Policy, to permit an athlete to be selected for a National Team older than their classified age.
- d. FHC's Trans Inclusion Policy applies to Masters athlete selection (<https://fieldhockey.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/FHCTransinclusionPolicyMarch13.pdf>)
- vii. **Talent Identification**

Talent identification for selection to Masters Teams by the Selector(s) ("**Talent ID**") is an on-going process. Talent ID may occur from the following sources:

 - a. performance at national Masters championships or other national Masters events;
 - b. performance at other domestic competitions including club, regional or invitational events;
 - c. recommendations from club, regional or provincial coaches; or





- d. National Team selection camps and open try-outs. The Selector(s) shall have complete discretion in determining the athletes to be invited to National Team selection camps.

Athletes not able to attend a Talent ID opportunity are not excluded from selection.

Any Provincial Association may request a Talent ID selection camp or open try-out in their province or region for athlete identification by the Selector(s). FHC will take all reasonable steps to publicize any scheduled open try-out Talent ID events.

viii. **Team Formation**

Potential Masters Teams fall in five year age categories, as determined by WMH:

- a. 35-39 Years;
- b. 40-44 Years;
- c. 45-49 Years;
- d. 50-54 Years;
- e. 55-59 Years;
- f. 60-64 Years;
- g. 65-70 Years; and
- h. Over 70 Years.

The Masters Committee must approve the formation of any Masters Team that plays in a WMH sanctioned event. This approval shall be granted pursuant to the Masters Team Formation Policy.

ix. **Athlete Selection Criteria**

In order to be selected for and remain on a National Team, all athletes must:

- a. submit to evaluation by the Selector(s) pursuant to the Athlete Evaluation System set out below;
- b. meet and maintain fitness requirements as determined and publicized by the relevant Masters Team Coach;
- c. sign and submit to FHC the current form of FHC Masters Athlete Agreement and Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims and Indemnity Agreement;
- d. demonstrate commitment to winning medals at international competitions and other WMH events;
- e. demonstrate commitment to the rigors of National Team training and competition, including travel, fitness, lifestyle, personal sacrifice, etc.;
- f. exhibit the ability to adapt to new training environments;
- g. demonstrate a positive attitude toward other athletes, the National Team, Coaches and FHC staff;
- h. comply with the requirements of the Canadian Centre for Ethics, including anti-doping requirements;
- i. demonstrate commitment to participating in injury reduction and injury management programs; and
- j. demonstrate a commitment to fair play.





(collectively, the “**Selection Criteria**”). The Selection Criteria for National Team selection may be applied differently for Maple Leaf team selection.

x. **Athlete Evaluation System**

Athlete evaluations will be conducted based on FHC’s evaluation matrix with consideration and evaluation against international Masters standards within each age group. The development of this system of evaluation and understanding of the qualitative measures will be on-going and used by the Selector(s) as a tool to aid in the selection process.

Conducting athlete evaluations for selection to a Masters Team involves weighing the needs of the team and the perceived relative strengths and weaknesses of the athletes in order to select a team deemed most appropriate to represent Canada.

The evaluation system analyzes athletes in 5 categories: technical, tactical, psychological, physiology, additional considerations and position specific skills. Athlete selection will be based on, but not limited to, the following factors, to be applied, interpreted, emphasized, weighted and assessed by the Selector(s) in their unfettered and absolute discretion:

- a. Technical and Tactical:
 - i. A high standard and consistency in the execution of the basic skills at speed and under pressure. These skills include hitting, pushing, dribbling, tackling, intercepting, receiving, possessing, scooping, marking, leading, eliminating and shooting.
 - ii. Ability to apply skills to the game situation.
 - iii. Appropriate selection, decision-making and application of general and position specific skills in the context of the game.
 - iv. Specific set play skills (eg. PC hitter or drag flicker, defensive post player, etc).
 - v. Ability to “read” and respond to game situations.
 - vi. Ability to make correct decisions under pressure.
 - vii. Understanding of individual, positional and team tactics.
 - viii. The ability to play in more than one position.
- b. Physiology:
 - i. Aerobic and anaerobic fitness.
 - ii. Acceleration and speed.
 - iii. Agility.
 - iv. Robustness, sessions missed or modified due to injury.
- c. External Considerations:
 - i. Leadership.
 - ii. Experience.
 - iii. Specialty.
 - iv. Commitment (team and training schedule).
 - v. Program focus/requirements.





xi. **Non-Compliance with Selection Criteria**

The FHC Masters Committee, on the recommendation of the relevant Coach, may remove an athlete from a Masters Team at any time if they do not maintain the requirements of the Selection Criteria, as determined by the relevant Coach. In order to remain on a Masters Team, selected athletes must commit to the training and competitive programs as established by the Coach. A Coach may require an athlete to provide a written or oral injury report from appropriate medical or paramedical personnel.

xii. **Appeals**

Any athlete who disagrees with their selection or non-selection by the Selector(s) is entitled to seek an appeal in accordance with FHC's Appeal Policy.

xiii. **Performance Readiness**

Athletes wishing to be considered for selection to a Masters Team are encouraged to have a complete medical evaluation and be medically cleared for high intensity training and competition.

xiv. **Alternate Athlete/Substitutions**

If an athlete who is selected to a Masters Team is injured, unfit to play or otherwise unable to compete, the Coach may replace that athlete with a reserve athlete who meets the Selection Criteria.

xv. **Notifications.**

Team Selection: The announcement of the athletes selected to a Masters Team or National Squad will be made and communicated by the relevant Coach. The final roster will be emailed to all athletes and posted to the FHC website.

When selected, a Masters Team or National Squad of an appropriate number of athletes for the Masters event at issue will be named. Athletes who are not selected should also receive notification from the Selector(s) at the same time as notification of the selected athletes. Coaches are encouraged to provide feedback to athletes who are not selected.

xvi. **FHC Policies**

Athletes and Coaches should review and familiarize themselves with all FHC policies that apply, or may apply, to them pursuant to this Policy or as Registered Participants of FHC. FHC policies are available on FHC's website: <https://fieldhockey.ca/about-us/governance/policies/>

xvii. **Unforeseen Circumstances**

FHC recognizes that in an effort to establish a policy that can be applied in most situations, unforeseen extenuating circumstances may occur from time to time. FHC, in consultation with the Masters Committee, will assess the submission of any extenuating circumstances and determine, in its sole and unfettered discretion,





whether the circumstances are to be considered extenuating and to rule on an appropriate course of action, including waiving any element of this Policy.