

# Team Policy

*Approved August 1, 2024*

## **Team Determination**

The Board, by annual decision, shall determine the number, gender, and age categories of the teams that it will field. The determination of the number, gender, and age category of teams shall take into account:

- The availability of quality coaching staff
- The number and quality of athletes in the tryout process
- The projected competitiveness of a team
- The developmental needs of LUVC
- The availability of practice facilities
- Club budget
- Recommendations by the Technical Director
- Any municipal, provincial, federal, or public health directive regarding grouping sizes allowed to congregate together given any health or safety threat that may be occurring at the time.

## **Team Selection**

Unless there is a municipal, provincial, federal, or public health directive to the contrary that may change the LUVC normal practice, LUVC teams shall typically consist of 10 to 12 athletes. The LUVC shall conduct an open tryout process for each age category and gender, recognizing that there may be more interest than available positions.

A non-refundable tryout fee shall apply. This will cover the cost of gym time and coach/assessor personnel for a minimum of two tryout sessions. Additional tryout sessions may be held in order to finalize the team roster. Tryout sessions will consist of a combination of specific drills, activities, fitness assessments, and/or game-like situations designed to allow athletes to demonstrate their skills, physical conditioning and personal attributes.

Athletes who are unable to attend the first scheduled tryout, and who, by club approval, are to be assessed later at the additional tryout sessions must pay the tryout fee.

Team coaches are empowered by the Board to make team selection decisions with the support of the Coaching Committee. Final rosters must be submitted to the Technical Director for final approval. Their assessments may be supported by input from additional assessors as necessary. Coaches and the Technical Director can take into consideration an athlete's previous history with LUVC, commitment and progress towards improvement, and commitment level in general. Athletes chosen for competitive teams who are related to that team's coach or assistant(s) will be assessed by the Technical Director to ensure fairness in the process.

Teams whose complement is less than twelve athletes at the end of the planned tryouts may continue to recruit athletes up to a full complement until the deadline for adding athletes established by the OVA (typically February 1). Fees will be pro-rated for athletes who join later in the season. For a team at full complement (12), written approval must be received from the Technical Director to add athletes after the tryout period.

#### *Athletes injured at time of tryouts*

An athlete who is injured at the time of tryouts and who wishes to be considered for a team must register for tryouts and email the club to notify them of the injury. If possible, they should attend the first tryout session and be prepared to provide specific information about their injury and anticipated return to playing strength. A doctor's evaluation may be requested to support the information. The coach or Technical Director may make a selection decision based on prior knowledge of the athlete's abilities. The athlete must register with the club and pay their fees in full. The athlete may be expected to attend practice while injured to facilitate integration into the team.

## **Practice and Competition**

#### *Practice*

Unless there is a municipal, provincial, federal, or public health directive to the contrary that may change the LUVVC normal practice, the number of weekly practices to be held for each age group will be established on an annual basis by the Board based on the recommendation of the Technical Director.

Athletes are expected to attend all practices. If an athlete is unable to attend a practice for exceptional circumstances, they must advise the coach or team manager (depending on team preference) in advance via telephone or email. An injured athlete who intends to return to the team should attend all practices unless otherwise directed by their coach. To prevent the spread of illness through a team, athletes who are ill should not attend practice. At the discretion of the coach, sanctions may be applied for repeated missed practices, including lost play time and potential removal from the team roster.

#### *Athletes playing on school teams*

Athletes wishing to try out for their school teams must notify the school coach of their commitment to the club. It is highly recommended that they share their club practice and tournament schedule with the high school coach before being selected to the team. Athletes should also share their school practice and tournament schedules with their LUVVC coaches. For any conflict between school and LUVVC tournament/match dates, club tournaments shall take precedence, without exception. School tournaments/matches may take precedence over LUVVC practices as long as the coach (or team manager) is notified in advance.

#### *Competition*

The LUVVC Board sets out the number of tournaments and the fees for those tournaments that are included in club fees annually. Any tournament fees in excess of those covered by club fees are to be covered by additional team fees and/or team fundraising. LUVVC is to be reimbursed for any excess registration fees that it pays directly on behalf of teams. Unused tournament fees included in club fees are not refundable to teams.

Teams must plan to participate in all four OVA tournaments in their age division. Participation in tournaments outside of the OVA system or at a higher age division within is at the discretion of the coach. All teams should plan to participate in Provincial Championships.

Given the cost and distance for the National Championships, teams are encouraged to look at alternative options and decide as a team what is feasible on a year-by-year basis.

### Playing Time

LUVVC is a competitive club. While coaches are encouraged to develop all athletes, they are also attempting to balance the objective of achieving competitive success. Consequently, it is unlikely that athletes will all receive equal playing time. The following general principles shall apply for all teams:

- Playing time is at the coach's discretion.
- The coach shall make every attempt to provide playing time for all team members as game and tournament conditions permit and in keeping with LUVVC's competitive philosophy and team goals.
- Coaches may choose to use certain athletes in key games or situations to give the team its best chance to win, particularly at Provincial and National Championships. While rare, given injuries and the necessity for resting athletes, this could result in some athletes receiving little or no playing time in those sets and/or matches.
- All athletes will receive some playing time in exhibition matches.
- For 13U and 14U, the "Fair Play" rule is being applied to OVA tournament matches.
- For 15U, "Fair Play" rules will apply to pool play matches only (including Day 1 and 2 of Ontario Championships).
- 16U Girls will apply "Fair Play" rules for pool play matches only in the Trillium Division at regular season events (does NOT include Ontario Championships). The rule states that any athlete not starting the first set of a match must start in the second set. If the match requires a third set, any athletes may be started.

### Playing up/down

Athletes are expected to play within their age category. Athletes wishing to play in a higher category must identify themselves at tryouts. Decisions will be made by the Technical Director on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration whether the club is fielding a team at their age category, whether the athlete is assessed as one of the 'best' athletes at their position on the higher age category team, and the recommendations of the coaches of the two affected teams after initial assessment. An athlete may only continue tryouts at the higher age category once permission has been given.

An athlete born after September 1 may play in their own age category or in the extended age category. Athletes wishing to play in the extended age category must identify themselves at tryouts.

### Call-ups

Athletes may, from time to time, be asked to play up to complement the tournament roster of a higher age category team or a second team in their age category. This call-up must be approved by the Technical Director prior to a coach approaching the athlete. Call-ups are subject to OVA regulations.

## **Team Travel**

Unless there is a municipal, provincial, federal, or public health directive to the contrary that may change the LUVC normal practice, teams may make travel arrangements to events via air, charter bus, rental vehicle, train or private vehicle.

### Driving to out-of-town events in a private vehicle

It is the Club's expectation that all athletes will arrange personal transportation to and from practices. Note that all athletes must be picked up in a timely manner at the end of events.

Coaches will not transport athletes home (unless they are the athlete's parent).

When a team travels to a competition, it is the Club's expectation that team members will arrange their own personal transportation. Unless there is a municipal, provincial, federal, or public health directive to the contrary that may change the LUVC normal practice, shared transportation/carpooling is encouraged, but it is understood that athletes and their families make these arrangements privately. Parents who drive their own personal vehicles while transporting athletes acknowledge that any accidents or losses will be covered by their personal automobile insurance policy. Where vehicles are rented by a team for transportation purposes and driven by parent volunteers, any accidents or losses will be covered by their personal automobile insurance policy in the event that it provides such coverage or by insurance procured at the place and time of rental.

An individual driving LUVC athletes or coaches to an out-of-town event must:

- Possess a valid driver's license;
- Agree to comply at all times with laws and regulations concerning driving including laws pertaining to the use of seatbelts, cellular phones and other handheld devices, and speed limits.
- Drive safely and at reasonable speeds; any traffic infractions remain the sole responsibility of the driver; and
- Strictly adhere to driving sober laws and all other laws under the Highway Traffic Acts.

For the health and comfort of all passengers, no individual shall be permitted to smoke in a vehicle carrying LUVC athletes or coaches while in transit.

Athletes may not drive themselves to a tournament if the tournament is further than 2 hours from Lanark County. Coaches should not be transporting athletes unless the athlete is a member of their own family.

Poor driving conditions may arise from time to time while traveling to out-of-town tournaments. Drivers are asked to be in contact with the Team Manager regarding any question as to whether an event may be canceled or regarding a decision to drive or not. When returning home from a tournament, drivers should plan to complete the trip before 1:00 am. If they expect the trip to take much longer or if driving conditions are unsafe, they should plan to spend the night at a hotel.

#### Accommodation

Unless there is a municipal, provincial, federal, or public health directive to the contrary that may change the LUVV normal practice, while traveling to tournaments further than 150 km from Smiths Falls, LUVV will provide a hotel for coaches. Coaches may request that athletes stay overnight before the tournament.

Hotel accommodation:

- Coaches sharing a room must have their own individual beds.
- Athletes may share with parents. The following shall apply:
  - A parent/guardian may only share with athletes who are not related if they are of the same gender, and the parent of the athlete involved has explicitly provided prior consent.
  - If not enough parents are traveling with the team to make this possible, athletes should room together with a parent chaperone in the same room.

Refer to the Team Travel Policy for further information on team travel.

#### Use of Cell Phones - Practices and Tournaments

While the Club recognizes the usefulness of cell phones as a means of communication, especially between guardian and athlete, their use during practice and tournaments can be a distraction to the athlete and their team.

Cell phones must be stored in a backpack/duffel during practice and should be silenced so as not to interrupt practice.

During tournaments, cell phones shall be left in the vehicle that an athlete is traveling in or given to a parent chaperone for safekeeping during play. Athletes may access their phones during the lunch break only.