

Taken From Ringette BC Website

Why are we Changing?

The changes to our athlete pathways are driven by a need to improve retention of athletes at all divisions while increasing new registrations. The primary goal of improving the athlete experience is to retain and attract athletes to our sport. Under the old competition structure, players begin to drop out in large numbers at age 11 so that 40% of players have left the sport by age 14.

Over the past three seasons Ringette BC has made incremental changes to the competition structure and athlete experience. While the changes to date have been small, they have been purposeful in identifying and addressing gaps under the current competition structure of ringette in BC. Ringette BC has focused on the attrition of athletes in our sport while taking a pulse of our membership to understand what their needs and wants are.

What is Ringette BC's Measurement of Success?

Ringette BC's measurement of success is to have 3,000 on-ice participants in 2023.

What is Ringette BC's Strategic Plan for 2019-2023?

Over the next five years, Ringette BC will lead in the advancement of the sport of ringette in BC through four identified pillars *Athlete Experience, Inclusion, Continuous Improvement, Sport Awareness*. Ringette BC is seeking to have 3,000 on-ice participants by 2023.

What is the Athlete Experience pillar of the Strategic Plan?

Ringette BC has developed player pathways that are athlete-centric in their design. These pathways are supported by a new competition framework that include a U12 *Train to Train* program, a U14 *Train to Compete* program and integrating male athletes into the competition structure.

What divisions are in the Community/Club Pathway?

The Club pathway includes all divisions of participation from Fundamentals to Adult Ringette (18+ and Masters).

What divisions are in the Competitive Pathway?

The Competitive pathway begins at U14 and will include U16, U19 and 18+ divisions after complete implementation.

At what age can I participate in the Pursuit of Excellence program?

The Pursuit of Excellence division is introduced at U16 and includes U19 and 18+ aged athletes.

What is the objective of the New Athlete Experience Pathway?

Ringette BC has identified the need for Athlete Pathways that are easy for athletes to understand and access and that promote meaningful competition.

The next steps for change are to fully address large scale gaps and systemic limits in the sport system and the competition infrastructure which were identified in conjunction with Ringette Canada's Competition Review. Over the next five years, Ringette BC will be implementing further changes to improve the Athlete Experience and close those larger gaps as part of our 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.

Ringette BC is committed to creating a competition structure that is inclusive for all athletes and follows the Guiding Principles of Competition and Long-Term Athlete Development while building a system that allows for future growth. Ringette BC has identified four pathways of participation for our athletes: Community, Competitive, Instructional and Pursuit of Excellence. These four participation pathways will be the future base of our sport system. As the sport grows, the contexts will allow athletes to optimize their experience in sport.

What changes can I expect to see in the 2019-2020 season and in the 2020-2021 season?

For the 2019 – 2020 season, the following changes will be implemented under the Competition framework:

1. Expanded Provincials for U14, U16, U19 and 18+ divisions
2. The U12 Year End Event will become a Championship-style competition
3. The evaluation process for U12, U14, U16 and U19 will be reviewed and published by July 2019
4. U12 will follow Ringette BC's U12 Community Guidelines
 - This requires Club Associations to form drafted and reasonably balanced U12 teams if they have the ability to form more than one team.
 - U12-aged participants who are interested in additional development opportunities to advance their ringette skills can participate in Ringette BC's U12 Competition Introduction Program
5. U14 Division:
 - Club Associations will have the option to use the new Competitive and Club (Community) guidelines for team formation. If Club Associations have the ability to defer starting the Competitive and Community structure until **2020-2021**.

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What changes can I expect in the 2020-2021 season the following changes will be implemented into Ringette BC's Competition Framework:

1. ***The U14 division will follow the new Club and Zone guidelines, which will see a merger of the U14A and U14AA divisions to form a U14 Zone Representative Division throughout the province.***
2. U16 and U19 Divisions will be formed following the Club and Zone Guidelines for the divisions.
3. U16 and U19AA teams will follow the new Selects program and participate in the Pursuit of Excellence stream.

What is the U12 Competition Introduction Program?

The U12 Competition Introduction Program is a regional program run by leagues, with some assistance from Ringette BC. This program offers U12-aged participants the opportunity for additional skill development through an introductory experience of the Competitive (Zone) pathway before deciding whether to opt-in at U14.

The goal is to provide more formal development opportunities for this age group.

What is the wrap up event for the U12 Competition Introduction program?

Participants in the U12 Competition Introduction program will attend a wrap up event where they will compete against all of the regional programs in BC. The event will be a Championship-style competition format and allows the athletes from each of the regions to compete in a tournament against one another.

When is the U12 Year End Event?

The U12 Year End Event will be hosted on the third weekend in March of 2020. The event generally coincides with the first week of spring break and St. Patrick's Day.

Where can I find the U12 Division Guidelines?

- The U12 Division Guidelines can be found by [clicking here](#).
- The U12 Competition Introduction Guidelines can be found by [clicking here](#).

Where can I find the U14 Zone Division Guidelines?

- The U14 Zone Division Guidelines can be found by [clicking here](#).

Are you taking away U14AA under the new competition structure?

The short answer is no Ringette BC is not removing U14AA. We are defining the sport participation context and merging U14AA and U14A into a single competitive division. To some degree that is what is happening today as double carding requires that AA players play within their Home Associations as well as with the single League AA team.

Under the new U14 Zone guidelines, the U14 Competitive Division will merge together U14AA and U14A. As there is currently generally only one U14AA team in each of the Leagues, more athletes will be given the opportunity to participate in a competitive division under the new guidelines.

Why is U12 is no longer tiered? My child was looking forward to playing A this season.

- Experts do not recommend tiering 10 and 11-year old children and have identified this as a reason that athletes leave the sport. Ringette athletes begin to peak at age 17, and players improve *dramatically* at 10 and 11 years old.
- During the 2018/19 season there were 6 teams that tiered "A", 2 that tiered "C", and 21 that tiered "B" at U12. Removing the tiers at this age will provide more meaningful competition and an enhanced experience for the athletes.
- The Competitive Introduction program is intended for athletes that are looking for additional development opportunities and should appeal to the athlete that is interested in following a high-performance pathway. The program is 14-week skill-based training program the finishes with a wrap-up championship-style tournament.
- All U12 athletes are evaluated. Athletes that are outliers in their evaluation scores and that have already participated in a Competitive Introduction program may apply to move up to U14. Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Ringette BC will also provide further development opportunities for competitive minded second year U12 players and first year U14 players through a mini BC Winter Games style tournament. Stay tuned for more details on this inaugural event coming this winter.

Where do the U14 Zone Division players train and compete?

As per the U14 Zone Representative Division Guidelines, all U14 Zone Division teams will be zone based. Zones boundaries will likely include two to three Club Associations. The teams will practice and train within their zone to help limit travel across the regions.

The Club Associations within the zone will provide ice and cover the cost of officials proportional to the number of athletes from their Club Association that are participating on the U14 Zone team.

- For example, if 45% of players come from Club Association A and 55% from Club Association B, each Club Association would allocate ice for practices and games following these proportions.

The teams will be able to compete in exhibition games against the other Zone teams in their region as well as participate in a Provincial Competitive League which will require the teams to travel to a tournament or play weekend in each of the Leagues during the season.

The teams will also have the option to attend out of province competitions should they wish.

What is the cost of U14 Competitive?

After evaluation and team formation, athletes who are selected to the U14 Zone team will be responsible for team fees that are in addition to Club Association registration fees. These fees will cover additional team expenses such as team apparel, additional ice, dryland training, tournament registrations and any other relevant team costs that are not covered by the standard registration fee charged by the Club Association. We estimate these fees to be roughly \$1,200 per player.

The Club Associations within the zone will provide ice and cover the cost of officials proportional to the number of athletes from their Club Association that are participating on the U14 Zone team.

Who governs the U14 Zone Representative Division

Ringette BC will be responsible for program oversight, creation of program guidelines and enforcement of policy. The Leagues will be responsible for player evaluations, organizing a Coach and Team Staff Selection Committee and general scheduling. Club Associations will secure ice and facilities and will work with the Leagues to ensure standardization of player evaluations.

Why do the teams have to put up a \$5,000 deposit for the season?

Under the U14 Zone guidelines, there is a requirement to compete against other U14 Zone teams in the province through the season and to attend Provincial Championships with a goal of representing BC at the Western Canadian Championships.

Teams will be required to attend a minimum of one tournament in each league that hosts a U14 Competitive Zone team

The \$5,000 deposit for each team at the U14 Competitive level is to ensure that the competition requirements of the program are met. It will be refunded back to the team once the team has fulfilled its competition requirements that include attending a minimum of one tournament in each of the leagues hosting a U14 Competitive Zone team, Provincial Championships and Western Canadian Ringette Championships (if applicable).

What is an affiliate player?

- The Zone Team may pick-up players from the Community Division as replacement for injury or relocation under a designated affiliate model.

- An affiliate player is a player pick up designated by the Competitive Zone team to participate on the Zone team when players are injured or absent. Affiliate players must be registered on a Club team. At the discretion of the Head Coach, an affiliate player is able to practice and train with the Zone team as long as it does not conflict with their Club team.
- Affiliate players/goalie are limited to participating in a maximum of 10 games in a season, not including participation in Western Canadian Ringette Championships.

How will the new U14 zone program change coaching and refereeing?

Referees that are officiating at the U14 Zone Division level will be able to achieve a 4C level rank evaluation on these games.

Coaches at the U14 Zone Division level require CI Certification as these coaches must be qualified to coach at the Western Canadian Ringette Championships. Preference will be given to coaches who come from the geographical zone of the team they are applying to coach.

How will male participants be integrated into the new pathway?

Under the new Athlete Experience model, male participants seeking competitive ringette will be given the opportunity to participate in the Competitive Pathway of Competition starting at U14. At U14, Ringette BC will facilitate male only and female only zone teams. All Club Division teams from Fundamentals to Adult Ringette (18+ and Masters) will remain co-ed.

The ringette structure I have known is changing. Why is this necessary?

- 60% of athletes quit our sport between ages 11 and 16, which is before the athletes even peak in the sport.
- Ringette BC carried out a comprehensive survey in the fall of 2018. Respondents came from all over the province in all of the divisions. The survey identified the need for change. The Strategic Plan and Athlete Experience Pathways were developed out of the survey findings.
- Female players in the youth and children divisions are down by 30%. Experts have been telling us for years that this is related to competition structure. If we do not make changes, we will continue to lose athletes. This is not an option anyone should want to consider.
- The Ringette Canada Competition Review made over 60 recommendations on enhancing the sport to fix the competition model. Our new model incorporates a number of recommendations from Ringette Canada.

Is Ringette Canada in favour of these changes?

Yes. Ringette Canada is very supportive of these changes.

Is Ringette Alberta in favour of these changes?

Yes. Ringette Alberta is making similar changes (<https://yourringette.ca/home/>) and will be collaborating with Ringette BC on the Pursuit of Excellence Program guidelines, among other initiatives. .

I enjoy competing in Alberta. Some of these changes seem counter intuitive to this. Please help me to understand.

- We want to keep players playing our sport. Creating player pathways that are athlete-centric will help to keep more kids in the sport. By involving more kids at U12 and U14, we will build a larger base of players. Under the new competition structure, when the current U12-aged group reaches U16, we expect to have a competitive provincial team that is accessible, for the first time, to athletes around the entire province.
- Meaningful competition is a major contributing factor to a team's performance. The new model creates meaningful competition at all age levels. This will lead to better out of province results overall.

How competitive is the Club division? Is it going to be like a "beer league" hockey team?

- Absolutely not. Athletes will decide which pathway they wish to participate in. Many very gifted and competitive athletes will choose to play in the Club Division because they are multi-sport athletes or choose not to spend money on travel and see Club as their ideal option.

My U14 aged daughter may not make a zone team this fall, but she is serious about ringette. What options are available to her?

Ringette BC encourages local Club Associations, Zones and Leagues to provide development opportunities. Many Club Associations are already doing this. This may be your opportunity to get involved as a parent and/or Coach.