WORA Regional Player Rotation Guideline

At the Regional levels and in concert with LTAD (Long Term Athletic Development) principles, players are encouraged to play each position as part of their development. Player rotation furthers the growth and understanding of each position, as it relates to the sport and better prepares them for Intermediate gameplay as they progress (i.e., first 3 In, penalties, etc.).

In addition, no player in a Regional program should be made to play extended portions of the season exclusively in a position they do not enjoy. There should always be a balance between player enjoyment and focus on skill sets.

The following guideline outlines steps that coaches are strongly encouraged to take to ensure fair rotation across the team.

A sample rotation tracker is available at this link.

Exceptions

- There are situations where a player might not feel comfortable playing a certain position (i.e., centre). At the **FUNdamentals and U12** levels, outside of practices, the coach should look for opportunities in gameplay to either provide that player with shifts in that position to learn the position, and/or leverage exhibition games to give the player a no-pressure opportunity to learn the position. In practices, coaches should look to work with those players to close the skill gap and introduce situational gameplay.

- Towards the end of the season (end-February) based on game and tournament schedule, coaches can set positions for the final rotation before heading into the end-of-year tournament. This allows players adequate opportunity to focus on the position and set themselves up for success. If this decision is made, it needs to be clearly communicated and discussed with parents.

- It is strongly recommended that coaches discuss any other exceptions with the Regional Director.

Tournaments

- It is recommended that if a team is doing multiple tournaments in a season, the coach works to ensure that players get fair rotations between tournaments (i.e., playing Tournament A as defence, Tournament B as Forward, etc.), irrespective of progress within the tournament.

- In preparation for a tournament, coaches may want to play set positions the weekend before (league games) to give players familiarity with their role, and set them up for success going into the following weekend.

- Coaches are not required to rotate players mid-tournament if they reach semi-final and final games; however, these additional games should be taken into consideration in reviewing player rotation.

FUNdamentals (FUN2 - FUN3)

- Players at the FUN level are in the FUNdamentals phase of skill development and should have the opportunity to play all positions as indicated below.

- The goal at the FUNdamentals level is to ensure players have an opportunity to attempt and learn the skills of each position.

- Coaches should ensure the player playing goalie has at least one practice as a goalie before going into a game situation to learn the basics.

Level	Rotation	Goalie
FUN2	There are no positions at this level of play. Shifts are kept between 90s to 120s and changed via buzzer.	Every player is strongly encouraged to play goalie in a regular season game and/or tournament at least once during the season.
FUN3	Players should rotate positions every 3 - 4 league games. Tournament rotation is handled separately. Shifts are kept between 45s to 90s and changed on the fly (no buzzer).	After all players have tried the goalie position at least once, teams might have a set of players that are very interested in playing in this position more often. In the second-half of the season (starting December 15th), if a team has a subset of players (i.e., 2 or 3) that have a desire to play goalie on an ongoing basis, they are allowed to rotate among this smaller group of players for the remainder of the season to provide them further opportunity to play in that position.

Intermediate

- Players in U12 are in the Learn to Train phase of LTAD and should still be encouraged to rotate positions (albeit at a different ratio).

- Players in U14 and above are learning to become more focused around their preferred positions as they enter the Train to Train phase.

- At the Intermediate level, coaches should balance rotation guidelines with established players comfortable in certain positions, and new players joining the sport that require more mentoring.
- It is strongly recommended that coaches obtain feedback from players on their preferred positions (i.e., 1, 2, 3) to help with aligning priority at the beginning of the season to identify positions. (The sample rotation tracker helps with this).

- A full-time goalie can play in nets the entire season, otherwise, standard rotations across a few players (or the entire team) applies. Coaches should look to their own roster first before calling up substitutes from other teams.

- A new player at the C level might prefer to focus on only one position as they learn to develop skating and learn the game. It might be less "stressful" for certain players to focus on one position; coaches can weigh their rotation time in that regard to build confidence and success.

- Coaches should check-in with the player and family regularly, and encourage the player to try new positions.

- Providing in-game opportunities to rotate through other positions, for a few shifts at a time, is a great path for a player to try a position out.

Level	Rotation
U12 B/C	Players should rotate positions every 3 - 4 league games in the first half of the season. At the start of the second half of the season, coaches can modify rotation from 50/50 splits to 75/25 to provide players better opportunity to focus on positional skills (again discussing with the player and family).
U14 B/C **U16 B/C** **U19 B**	Players might have preferred positions; in the event of conflicts (e.g., everyone wants to be forward), the coach should ensure preferences are balanced between the team and efforts are made to give players fair time in their preferred positions. Players that want to try a new position should be given the opportunity to do so.