

		Under Age Player U11 – U18
Status: Active Policy Jan 2008		Revised: March 2009

Background:

The issue of “playing up” has been a topic of conversation and considerable discussion within the Club for the last few years. Our existing policy stated that in order for a player to “play up” at the **competitive** levels, they had to be evaluated as being in the Top 5 players in ability for the team they were selected. Over the last few years this policy has been loosely followed, with the selecting coaches being the determining evaluators as to the player’s ability in relation to the rest of the team, or in some cases simply ignored. In creating the original policy we tried to strike a balance between the extremes (no playing up versus a completely open system). Our application of the existing rule has created several difficulties. Coaches have been placed in conflict with one another over who will sign specific players and “playing-up” applicants or parents don’t necessarily fully understand the demands of the program and the commitment required, to name a couple. Although a policy of not allowing any players to “play-up” is easy to manage, we feel the majority of coaches; parents and players would prefer a system that allows players to “play-up” under specific conditions.

In order for this policy to be successful it must be based on a clearly defined set of criteria that can be understood and communicated to all parents, players and coaches.

Policy:

- ❑ The Port Moody Soccer Club policy is that players will play within their respective age group in order to create equal opportunity for all members. **This does not preclude exceptions being granted to fill out a team roster or place players who may not otherwise have an opportunity to play, or due to competitive reasons move a team to a higher division.**
- ❑ Periodically, a player may be identified as being significantly ahead of their peers from a skill development and maturity perspective and would benefit from advanced opportunities available only in an older age group.
- ❑ The issue of “playing up” will be focussed on the benefits to the player (not the team). In determining what is best for the player, the “Under Age” Player Committee will make the final determination to allow an **“exception”**.
- ❑ For U11 thru U18 age players, unless an **exception** is being requested, all players are required to try-out and play “in-age” for each age group division. **The Club will only grant exceptions for teams playing at the highest level offered.** The highest level offered at U11 and U12 is Select; U13 is Gold; U14 thru U18 is Select (or Gold if Select not offered).
- ❑ A Port Moody Soccer Club coach who is approached by an “Under Age” player or their parent/guardian to try out for their team must advise the player and their parent/guardian of our process, and refer them to “Under Age Player U11- U18” policy found on our website, or have a copy of the policy available at tryouts.

Process:

1. A **Committee** charged with making recommendations on exceptions will be formed by March 15th of each season to review these requests. The Committee will consist of three members and will include the Vice President, Director or delegate from both the Boy’s and Girl’s Divisions, and the High Performance Director or delegate.
2. Any players seeking an **exception** must be identified at the start of the tryout and the independent assessors assigned to the tryout must be informed so that they are able to adequately assess the player’s skill level.
3. All requests to select an under age player **exception** must be made via email or letter by the Coach, and sent to the attention of the respective Vice President (Boys / Girls) within one week of the conclusion of the tryout. This request should include information on the skill and maturity of the player, confirmation that both the Coach and the Club’s independent assessors agree that the player meets the criteria to be considered an **exception**, and the Player’s parent or guardian is aware of the request.
4. The player must have played for one full year at the highest level offered within our Club or an equivalent program (as determined by the Committee); and / or the player must have been training for one session with the Port Moody High Performance Program or an equivalent program (as determined by the Committee).
5. “Under Age” exceptions must be evaluated and ranked in the Top 4 players on the team for U13 thru U18 and in the Top 3 players for U11 and U12.
6. **Approval of an “Under Age” exception will be made within one week of receiving the request. The coach and Parent will be advised of all decisions in writing. All “exceptions” are valid for only one season.**
7. If approval is granted, the Coaches(s) at the player’s proper age group will be notified by the appropriate Vice President.

Exceptions – an exception to playing “in-age” may be offered to a player who has demonstrated the highest level of soccer skill and maturity and approved by the “Under Age” Committee.

Committee – group made up of the appropriate Vice President, Director or delegate Boy’s and Girl’s Program, and High Performance Director or delegate.