



EA SPORTS **BC SOCCER PREMIER LEAGUE**



TECHNICAL OPERATIONS MANUAL

*Prepared by:
BC Soccer - Soccer Development Department
In conjunction with EA Sports BC SPL - Technical Sub-Committee
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Long-Term Player Development (LTPD)

LTPD is a vision for soccer player development, training, competition, and recovery based on biological age (i.e. physical maturity) rather than chronological age. It is player centred, coach driven, and administration, sport science, and sponsor supported.

LTPD:

- *Eliminates gaps in the player development system.*
- *Guides planning for optimal athlete performance at all stages.*
- *Provides a framework for program alignment and integration, from volunteer club coaches to national and professional teams.*
- *Follows scientific principles and practical coaching experiences.*

Benefits for players & parents:

- *Better understanding of what makes a good soccer program.*
- *More players learning at their level and having fun.*
- *Appropriate game and league structures (e.g. size of balls, goals, field etc.).*
- *More opportunity for players to realize their athletic potential.*
- *More coaches who are knowledgeable in leading safe, effective practices.*

Benefits for coaches & clubs:

- *Information and education on effective coaching and practice methods.*
- *Guidelines for appropriate game structures.*
- *Guidelines on appropriate competition levels.*
- *Established pathways for player development for all levels of ability and ambition.*
- *Affirmation of best practices for coaches and club administrators.*

Benefits for all:

- Competitive behavior is fostered in players, while over-competitive behavior is discouraged in adults (E.g. coaches and parents).
- Players, parents, coaches, and administrators understand that players are unique and therefore different in interest and aptitude.
- Players stay involved in the sport throughout their lives (as players, coaches, referees or club administrators).
- Soccer grows, and lifelong wellness is promoted for players of all ages, genders, and levels of ability and disability.





Recognized Pathway for Player Development

The game within British Columbia provides a number of unique challenges to the overall delivery of player development programming.

These challenges include the addressing of the geographical make up of our Province and the harmonization of player and coaching development.

The establishment of a recognized structure for the development of the game and it's participants within British Columbia is a key component to the delivery of the BC Soccer strategy for a "Player First" mentality to development. The creation of such a structure will assist the Soccer Development Department in becoming more efficient and progressive in implementing a Province wide Development programming.

It has become essential to the long-term success of Player Development within British Columbia that BC Soccer and its Soccer Development Department take the lead in establishing, guiding and monitoring a recognized path for development within the Province for British Columbia's players.

This initiative includes the partnering of our member Clubs, Districts and Professional Club (the Vancouver Whitecaps FC) into our overall Pathway of Development (*Please see diagram below*)





Mission Statement

It is the goal of BC Soccer to continue to be committed to a comprehensive approach to improve player development in British Columbia, ultimately, to make Canada a stronger soccer nation. Part of the broad-based plan is the creation and development of a High Performance League in BC supported by a technical sub - committee which will have the responsibility to guide and advise the league as it relates to all matters of a technical nature.

The members of this recognized sub-committee will include the technical staff of BC Soccer's soccer development department, a technical representative(s) of each member club and a member(s) of the Vancouver Whitecaps FC technical staff.

The EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League will deliver on the following key development initiatives;

- ✓ *Support CSA's "Player First" mentality and it's Long Term Player Development strategy*
- ✓ *Harmonize all elite level of programming*
- ✓ *Eliminates congestion and provides greater clarity for all stakeholders*
- ✓ *Works within existing and supporting structures*
- ✓ *Drives improvements to all aspects of elite soccer*

In addition the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League is built on the following guiding core principles of development;

Core Principles

1. *To allow players to further develop their skills in an environment, this includes other technically advanced players playing within a competitive and demanding atmosphere.*
2. *To enhance the technical and tactical components of the players game through extensive on and off field training and education.*
3. *To provide the players with access to certified and experienced and professional levels of coaching.*
4. *To provide the players specific guidance in the areas of diet and nutrition, mental preparation, physical fitness and post-secondary education.*
5. *To provide leadership and information on life skills and promote the importance of commitment to excellence and citizenship.*
6. *To provide a healthy and safe training environment to ensure responsible and sustainable development of the player.*



Development Objectives

- *Provide an elevated level of competition for elite players within BC*
- *Provide a strong contribution to player development for the Canadian National Team level of play*
- *Provide a recognized pathway for players to be identified for BC Soccer Provincial Teams Program, Canadian University, US Colleges and Universities and ultimately the Professional level of play with the Vancouver Whitecaps FC of Major League Soccer.*

EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League Structure

DEVELOPMENT PHASE 1	<u>UNDER 13 BOYS / GIRLS</u> <i>Provincial Teams Program National Training Centre Program Evaluation Vancouver Whitecaps FC Academy Program (Boys Only)</i>
DEVELOPMENT PHASE 2	<u>UNDER 14 BOYS / GIRLS</u> <i>Provincial Teams Program National Training Centre Program Evaluation Vancouver Whitecaps FC Academy Program (Boys Only)</i>
DEVELOPMENT PHASE 3	<u>UNDER 15 BOYS / GIRLS</u> <i>Provincial Teams Program National Training Centre Program Evaluation Vancouver Whitecaps FC Academy Program (Boys Only)</i>
DEVELOPMENT PHASE 4	<u>UNDER 16 BOYS / GIRLS</u> <i>Provincial Teams Program National Training Centre Program Evaluation Vancouver Whitecaps FC Academy Program (Boys Only)</i>
DEVELOPMENT PHASE 5	<u>UNDER 17/18 BOYS / GIRLS</u> <i>National Training Centre Program Evaluation University / College / Vancouver Whitecaps FC Academy Program (Boys and Girls)</i>



Coaching Development

Coaching Standards

All coaches should share and work towards BC Soccer's vision, values and competencies. Our shared aim is to use the power of soccer to build a better future.

As coaches:

- ✓ *Our values should be responsive to the needs of our players and soccer in general.*
- ✓ *We should be confident in our approach to show courage in our actions.*
- ✓ *We should be open to new ideas and be receptive of other views.*
- ✓ *Our work should be inclusive, encouraging everyone to enjoy and love our great game.*
- ✓ *Everyone must be accountable to those they work with and to soccer and the community at large.*
- ✓ *We should be challenging in our work and sessions to bring out the best in our players.*
- ✓ *We should be passionate for the game and pass on this passion, encouraging others to develop a life-long love of the game.*
- ✓ *Our shared competencies are those of leadership, taking responsibility and showing direction.*
- ✓ *Our shared competencies are those of leadership and using change to help us meet our vision.*
- ✓ *We should be able to communicate and influence those around us, taking ownership of the game.*
- ✓ *We should also demonstrate achievement and our way and contribution to the game.*
- ✓ *We should be innovative in our approach to this important role.*

Code of Conduct - Coach

1. *The Coach agrees to dress and wear appropriate attire whenever he/she is representing their EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member club on and off the field of play and must conduct themselves at all times in an appropriate manner.*
2. *Respect and consideration must be shown towards all BC Soccer staff, EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member club staff, public and all volunteers who are involved in hosting a game or tournament.*
3. *Coaches must adhere to any rules set out by the Soccer Development Department and the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League Operations Manual - Technical.*
4. *The use of tobacco, consumption or possession of alcohol and illegal substances is not supported and may not be consumed while performing EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League official club duties in the presence of minors.*



Scouting and Coach Communication Guidelines

All EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches agree to adhere to the following guidelines as they pertain to the scouting of potential players:

- 1. Unless contacted directly by players, EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League Coaches should communicate with Club Technical Directors and Head Coaches to discuss potential players prior to making contact with the player directly.*
- 2. All EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League Coaches must attend annual EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League Coaches meeting.*
- 3. All EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League Coaches must agree to sign EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League Code of Conduct agreement.*
- 4. All EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member clubs must submit contact list of Head and Assistant coaches to BC Soccer and the Soccer Development Department on an annual basis.*
- 5. Any direct contact with a player(s) must include EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member club Technical Director should include the knowledge of the parent(s) or guardian(s).*
- 6. Any contact with a player(s) will not take place prior to or following match play to conserve the integrity of the overall match preparation and recovery process.*

Head Coach, Assistant Coach & Team Manager

EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member clubs are responsible for the appointment of Head and Assistant Coaches. The selection of these coaches should be made on an annual basis for the recognized program years. A call for application for these positions will be made sixty (60) days in advance of the interview process.

It is recommended that all EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member clubs will include the following coaches and support staff within recognized program years;

- 1. Head Coach*
- 2. Assistant Coach*
- 3. Manager*
- 4. Trainer or Recognized support staff with standard first aid and CPR*
- 5. Access to Goalkeeping Program and Coach*
- 6. Program Apprentice Coach (Female Program Only)*



Qualifications

As the BC Soccer Premier League’s foundation is built upon a “PLAYER FIRST” mentality regarding overall Player, Team and Coaching Development, there is an essential requirement to identify appropriate coaching standards in the league which is supported by Long Term Player Development Plan (LTPD). This development league (U13-U18 Male and Female) hosts two of the stages within LTPD:

- *STAGE 4: Training to Train (U11-U15 Female / U12-U16 Male)*
“IDENTIFYING THE ELITE PLAYER”
- *STAGE 5: Training to Compete (U15-U19 Female / U16-U20 Male)*
“DEVELOPING THE INTERNATIONAL PLAYER”

LTPD’s recommendations for appropriate coaching certification standards are imperative in these stages of development. Understandably, due to the nature and realities of *new beginnings* within this league, there is a grace period to allow coaches to pursue their qualifications obtaining a successful pass on all formal examinable courses. To achieve the required coaching standard as measured through certification, the following table outlines the path of the coach whereby all coaching positions will have reached the entry level criteria by the start of the 2014 calendar year and moving forwards.

The *“minimum coaching certification standards for the 2014 season launch”* are as follows:

Head Coach - B License National

Assistant Coach - B License Provincial + Goalkeeping Diploma

Goalkeeping Coach - Goalkeeping Advanced Diploma + B Provincial

DUE DATE	HEAD COACH	ASSISTANT COACH	GOALKEEPING COACH
December 31 2011	B PRETEST ASSESSMENT	COMMUNITY COACH CERTIFICATE	COMMUNITY COACH YOUTH
December 31 2012	B LICENSE PROVINCIAL	B PRETEST ASSESSMENT	GK TEAM DIPLOMA + B PRETEST ASSESSMENT
December 31 2013	B LICENSE NATIONAL	B LICENSE PROVINCIAL + GOALKEEPING DIPLOMA	GK ADVANCED DIPLOMA + B PROVINCIAL



Head Coach Appointments

It is recommended that all Head Coaches meet the following pre-requisites prior to appointment:

1. *Experience coaching at the elite level of competition (Playing experience is an asset).*
2. *Working knowledge of the English language*
3. *Must be willing to submit to a criminal record check.*
4. *Head Coach must hold a valid passport.*
5. *It is not recommended that the Head Coach have a son or daughter participating within the age level which they are applying to coach.*
6. *Must be willing to work in conjunction with the Canadian Soccer Association, BC Soccer and the Vancouver Whitecaps FC pathway for player development and each organization's technical staff. This would include a commitment to CSA LTPD standards and philosophies as it relates to responsible youth development and coaching certification and ongoing education.*

Assistant Coach Appointments

It is recommended that all Assistant Coaches meet the following pre-requisites prior to appointment:

1. *Experience coaching at the elite level of competition (Playing experience is an asset).*
2. *Working knowledge of the English language*
3. *Must be willing to submit to a criminal record check.*
4. *Assistant Coach must hold a valid passport.*
5. *It is not recommended that the Assistant Coach have a son or daughter participating within the age level which they are applying to coach*
6. *Must be willing to work in conjunction with the Canadian Soccer Association, BC Soccer and the Vancouver Whitecaps FC pathway for player development and each organization's technical staff. This would include a commitment to CSA LTPD standards and philosophies as it relates to responsible youth development and coaching certification and ongoing education.*

Coaching Advancement Program

It is recommended that all Assistant Coaches successfully complete BC Soccer's Coaching Advancement Program set out by BC Soccer's Elite Service Plan and the Coaching Development Department and implemented through EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member clubs and their technical department.

The Coaching Advancement Program will be applied through the established conduit of the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League which provides an elite level of youth development in British Columbia. In this type of environment, Coaches have the ability to develop through relevant experiences, Head Coach Mentorship and receive guidance from the Soccer Development Department of BC Soccer and elite service plan.



Program Objectives

1. To target aspiring Coaches in this field who have career aspirations in the game and thereby are able to experience a hands-on opportunity to learn more about coaching.
2. To provide a positive, safe and challenging learning environment for Coaches.
3. To offer guidance through the involvement and the delivery of a Developmental Program through responsible and challenging task completion.
4. To establish the confidence and preparedness required for Coaches interested in continuing their Coach Education and the path of Certification.

Female Coach Development Program

It is recommended that all EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member clubs provide opportunities for a selected group of female coaches to work closely with coaches within the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League and gender specific program years.

The goal of this initiative is to create an atmosphere where by these coaches may learn in an elite, exciting, educational and safe environment. It is the hope this experience will encourage them to continue their path of development as a coach and make a commitment to a lifelong involvement in the coaching of players at all levels of play within British Columbia.

Goalkeeping Coach Development Program

It is recommended that all EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member clubs provide established goalkeeping development programming within their club.

Duties, Responsibilities and Term of Employment of Coaches

All duties and responsibilities for all Coaches will be set out by EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member clubs and their technical department. It is recommended that the Coaching appointments be for a term of no longer then two (2) years within a specific birth year.

Officially appointed Head Coaches should not have responsibilities for more than one (1) team within same division as a Head Coach within the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League.

Coaching Appointments

EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member clubs are responsible for the appointment of all Coaches. The selection of these coaches will be made on an annual basis for the recognized program years and meet the minimum standard set out for coaching qualifications.

Additional Recommendations

It is recommended where parent coaches are required that the inclusion of their own children within the specific age group they are responsible for is avoided.



Mandatory Policy Setting and Compliance

All recommendations as per the coaching standards will be reviewed in advance of the 2014 season with consideration given to mandatory compliance for all EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League Clubs as it relates to these currently recommended standards

Program Manager Appointments

EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member clubs are responsible for the appointment of Managers. The selection of these Managers will be made on an annual basis.

Qualifications

All Managers must meet the following pre-requisites:

- 1. Experience managing at the elite level of sport competition would be an asset.*
- 2. Working knowledge of the English language*
- 3. Must be willing to submit to a criminal records check.*
- 4. Manager must hold a valid passport.*
- 5. Must be willing to work in conjunction with BC Soccer's Soccer Development Department and its staff. This would include a commitment to BC Soccer and its overall Player Development Program, philosophies on youth development.*
- 6. Must hold strong communication, written and organizational skills.*
- 7. Experience in the field of business administration would be an asset.*

Duties and Responsibilities of a Manager

All duties and responsibilities for Managers will be set out by EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member clubs and their technical department.



Player Selection Policies and Procedures

The annual selection of players for all levels of the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League will be conducted through the following means;

1. *Ongoing Club Team Scouting and Training Program's*
2. *Scouting Recommendations*
3. *Provincial Teams Program Scouting*
4. *Annual Re integration of players; Vancouver Whitecaps FC Academy Program*
5. *Regional and MSL partner club Monitoring*
6. *Member Club Evaluation Camps (Open, Invitation Only and Final Selection)*

Evaluation Camps and Final Selection Camps

It is recommended all EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member clubs commit to supporting and promoting a responsible and progressive evaluation and assessment process for player selection as outlined above.

This would include the removal of the reference and promotion of the **"TRY OUT"** mentality within their club.

If required and to assist the coaching staff of the age groups within the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League and player selections, evaluation camps may be held throughout the season to assess the player's capabilities and potential selection for the following year's team.

If required EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member clubs may conduct three (3) types of evaluation camps within the process of evaluation and selection of players for the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League;

Open

- *This camp is open to any players who desire an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to participate within a EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member club*
- *A maximum number of players should be allowed at each open camp to provide for a more responsible evaluation process. It is recommended that this number not exceed thirty five (35) players*

Invitation Only

- *To attend an invitation only camp all players must have received an invitation from the age group Head Coach and Technical Director of a EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member club*
- *A maximum number of players should be allowed at each open camp to provide for a more responsible evaluation process. It is recommended that this number not exceed thirty five (35) players*
- *Players attending invitation only camps are not required to attend an open camp prior to receiving an invitation.*



Final Selection Camps

- *Following the completion of the open and invitation camps the age group coaching staff will potentially invite players into a final selection camp.*
- *Following this final selection camp age group, Head Coaches and their staff will select the final squad of players within the age group for the annual season.*
- *Maximum number of players to be invited to the final selection camp will not exceed thirty-five players (35) players.*

Player Eligibility

A player who is in good standing and registered within BC Soccer and is within the age categories as defined by BC Soccer and the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League constitution rules and regulations is eligible to participate within the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League.

Player Prioritization

- *Following the selection to EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League age group, all players must be aware that the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League takes priority over any additional soccer programming.*
- *Participating within supportive soccer development programming and additional sport development programming during the duration of that year's EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League is permitted if it meets LTPD standards as it relates to appropriate maturation of players. (See LTPD Stages of Development)*
- *If additional soccer and sport activities interferes with recognized programming and scheduling, participation is not recommended so to prevent and avoid the following:*
 - *Increase of Injury and Over Training*
 - *Annual Schedule Congestion*
 - *Adherence to the recognized periodization plan*
- *The exemption to this policy is the selection of a player to BC Soccer Provincial Teams Programming, CSA NTC, National Team Programming and invitation for an official trial or development opportunity at a recognized professional club as defined within the FIFA club membership. This will be recognized and supported by BC Soccer and all EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League Clubs.*

Under Age Player Policy

BC Soccer's Soccer Development Department and its Pathway for Player Development support the philosophy of continually challenging its member players. Players potentially moving up an age group within the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League will need to meet the following guidelines;



- **Technical Ability**

A player must demonstrate a high degree of individual skill which must be transferable to competitive match situations. In addition, a player's individual skill must meet or excel the technical abilities of other participating players within the age group the player wishes to participate with.

- **Physical Ability**

A player must surpass other players within their age group in physical strength, technical skill and speed, and have the ability to blend in with players of the intended age group.

- **Mental Ability**

Player must surpass other players within their age group in game awareness and general knowledge of the game. To include the mental strength that will be necessary when dealing with older and physically superior opponents.

- **Social Ability**

Player must be able to interact with players within the intended age group on and off the field (games, dressing room, training and social gatherings).

The selection of an underage player to the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League will be supported by the Soccer Development Department if the player meets these guidelines. The final selection of an underage player will be at the discretion of the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member clubs and their technical department and in conjunction with the Soccer Development Department.

Substitution Policy

- *U13 Age Group - Unlimited with no re-entry within the same half.*
- *U14 to U18 Age Group - Seven (7) substitutions within the match with no re-entry within the same half.*

Playing Time Policy

- *It is the policy of the Soccer Development Department and the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League not to enforce a rule as it pertains to the equal playing time for players participating within the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League. However, it is the policy of the Soccer Development Department the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League to implement a minimum playing time policy for participating players within the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League.*
- *This policy is subject to the discretion of the age groups coaching staff as it pertains to the health, safety and eligibility (code of conduct) of the individual player and tactical requirements of the team.*
- *This policy is set at **30%** over the duration of the entire program and not on a match by match basis.*



- No player's participate in match play should exceed the following:
 - U13 One hundred (100) Minutes per day
 - U14 and U15 One hundred and ten (110) Minutes per day
 - U16, U17 and U18 One hundred and twenty (120) Minutes per day

Player Pool Policy

- It is the responsibility of the Soccer Development Department to recommend a policy on an annual basis as it pertains to the number of players who will be participating within the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League at each of its age groups. The following are the recommendations for squad sizes and match rosters for the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League:

Squad Sizes (BC Soccer Youth Registration Rule)

- Minimum; sixteen players (16) - U13 through U17/18
- Maximum; Eighteen (18) U13 through U16 and Twenty (20) - U17/18

Match Day Roster Size

- Minimum; Fourteen (14) players - U13 through U17/18
- Maximum; Eighteen (18) - U13 through U16 and Twenty (20) U17/18

It is recommended that all age groups within the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League select two (2) goalkeepers within the pre-determined squad size.

It is recommended that all age groups within the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League select two (2) goalkeepers within their match day roster.

Player Guidelines

Successfully selected players for the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League must be aware they are representing their club and British Columbia within the league. Players will be judged based on their performances on and off the field of play, as an individual and as a member of a team. Their personal conduct, both in and out of competition, reflects upon the program and their Club Teams image and is the responsibility of the player to safeguard the reputation and pride of those who they represent.

1. The Player agrees to dress and wear appropriate attire whenever he/she are representing their respective EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League club and Province of British Columbia. He/she is to conduct in an appropriate manner at all times.
2. Respect and consideration must be shown towards all BC Soccer staff, EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member club staff, public and all volunteers who are involved in hosting a game or tournament.



3. *Players must adhere to any rules set out by BC Soccer, the Soccer Development Department and the coaching staff of any EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League club governing their participation*
4. *The use of tobacco, consumption or possession of alcohol and illegal substances is not supported and is prohibited while participating within officially sanctioned EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League matches and events. A **Zero tolerance as it relates to discipline is in effect.***

**It is the goal of BC Soccer, the Soccer Development Department and the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League to create an environment, which promotes Fair Play, Honesty and Personal Integrity.*

Summary

It is the ultimate goal of BC Soccer, its Soccer Development Department and the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League member clubs to achieve higher levels of performance through a properly mapped-out progression based plan which provides an organized training, evaluation and competition format.

This will eliminate the random approach and properly services the player.

This commitment will provide for the following development goals to be met;

- ✓ ***Impact the daily environment of the player...a critical element for improvement***
- ✓ ***Create an environment which provides for a meaningful and sustainable competition format***
- ✓ ***Talent identification***
- ✓ ***Develop and create players of international and professional standard***

All questions and enquires regarding the EA Sports BC Soccer Premier League should be directed to Board of Governors and the Soccer Development Department. Please visit the official website of BC Soccer at www.bcsoccer.net for additional information.