

Hawks Lacrosse Play Up Policy

Each spring, Hawks Lacrosse receives parent requests for players to “play up” to the age group above their natural age level. After gathering input from our coaches over many seasons, we have concluded that most players in our program are best served by playing at their “natural” age level.

Hawks Lacrosse has discovered that a couple misconceptions exist about playing up. First, some parents believe that playing up will make a player “tougher.” In our experience, players who play up are, in many cases, intimidated by facing older, bigger and more mature opponents. This often results in promising players performing below their potential and, sometimes, leaving the sport altogether. Second, some parents believe that players who play up will be better suited for intense competition when they are older. We have found the opposite to be true: playing up can often stunt skill development because younger players rely on and ingrain bad habits in order to compete with their older teammates and opponents.

Our overarching goal is to place every player at the level best suited to maximize his enjoyment and develop his lacrosse ability. We believe that this happens most frequently when players are grouped with other players of similar physical and lacrosse ability.

As a result, Hawks Lacrosse has instituted the following policy regarding play up requests:

In order for Hawks Lacrosse to grant a parent play up request, one of the following conditions must be fully met:

(A) The player is in a school grade level above the majority of his peers in his natural age group. For example, a player whose natural age group based on birthday is U11, but who is in 6th grade during the then-current lacrosse season would be permitted to play up into the U12 age group.

(B) The coach of the most competitive team in the older age group confirms to Hawks that he has accepted the player onto his roster.

Notwithstanding the foregoing policy, Hawks Lacrosse understands that the age cutoff changes made in 2013 separated many players from their original teams when those teams moved to an older age group. Hawks Lacrosse will consider play up requests from such players separately from this policy.

We appreciate your understanding and your support of our efforts, including the use of this policy to determine whether a player's request to play up will be granted.