

Hawks Tryouts

Hawks Lacrosse believes that there is an optimal team for every lacrosse player – one that maximizes the player’s enjoyment and growth. Playing on a skill-appropriate lacrosse teams allows coaches to create practice plans that help each player develop at a healthy pace. Hawks Lacrosse strives to find that perfect team for each of its players.

AYL has three levels of competition in each age group: Elite/Red (advanced; U10-U15), White (intermediate; U9-U15) and Blue (basic; U8-U15).

Hawks Elite/Red teams are formed by tryouts conducted in the fall/winter before the coming spring season. Every player who wants to play on an Elite/Red Hawks team must attend a tryout for that team. Coaches may conduct individual or “mini” tryouts for players who are unable to attend formally-scheduled tryouts.

Players who are not selected to play on an Elite/Red level team will still have a Hawks team to play on. It is important to note that if a player tries out, but is not selected for, an Elite/Red team in an age group above his natural age group, he will be placed on a team in his natural age group (not in the older age group).

Hawks realizes that not all players strive to compete on an Elite/Red team. Hawks conducts skills assessments every spring to help place each player who is not playing on an Elite/Red team on a team that aligns with the player’s abilities. Players who do not attend tryouts or skills assessments will likely be placed on a Blue team in their natural age group.

Parents should understand that playing on an Elite/Red team involves an increased level of commitment to the sport, including additional in-season and off-season practices, extensive home practice and, in some cases, tournament travel time and expense.

To be very clear, playing on an Elite/Red Hawks team is not a guarantee that a player will go on to play lacrosse in high school. Similarly, playing on a Blue/White team does not mean that a player will not have a very successful high school or college career. The varsity lacrosse teams at Parker-area high schools include many players who never played on an Elite/Red youth lacrosse team.

If possible, tryouts will be conducted on Parker-area fields. Parents will remain outside the boundaries of the tryout field at all times. Hawks asks parents to refrain from cheering or coaching their children during the tryout.

Tryouts will typically provide players an opportunity to demonstrate their skill in many of the following areas:

- Cradling: proper hand placement, protects stick adequately, cradles at eye/shoulder level, avoids flat cradle in traffic.

- Ground Balls: player gets low with two hands on stick, with top hand on or near head of stick, scoops through the ball, brings stick to face/ear, runs through.
- Passing: player has proper mechanics, foot placement, follow-through, consistent accuracy.
- Catching: player presents target, calls for ball, accepts pass with soft hands on both sides of body.
- Dodging: player shows proper set-up, footwork, stick orientation for split dodge, face dodge and roll dodge.
- Defensive Footwork: player is able to run hip-to-hip, stick-to-hip with opponent, takes drop-step to adjust to changes of direction.
- Checks: player uses a variety of stick checks, poke, lift, slap and knows how to bump-and-recover with body.
- Team Offense: player sees the field, creates 2 v 1 opportunities, moves off-ball (without ball) to create opportunities.
- Team Defense: player picks up opponent quickly (inside-out), positions to see man and ball, makes adjacent slide, talks and listens.
- Specialties: Goaltending will be assessed separately and evaluators may also consider face-off, long-stick middle, etc. specialties depending on the needs of the particular Elite/Red team.
- Following Directions and Moving to Stations: Players will be rated on their ability to follow instructions and move to drill stations.

Hawks Lacrosse understands that all players may not have been taught all of the skills listed above, or taught them improperly. Evaluators will also consider a player's effort, natural athletic ability, potential and enthusiasm.

Hawks' goal is to provide notice of tryout results to players who attended tryouts within two (2) weeks of the tryout date.

While preliminary team rosters will be assembled from tryout results, Elite/Red team coaches may re-evaluate players on or before the first week of spring practice to ensure every player is placed on an appropriate team.