

CONNECTICUT WOLVES
LACROSSE

CLUB
MANUAL



CONNECTICUT WOLVES LACROSSE

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Mission Statement

To provide lacrosse training and tournament teams that will enable players to reach their full, age appropriate, athletic potential in order to compete for playing time at the youth, high school and collegiate levels.

History

The idea to start the Connecticut Wolves Lacrosse Club was a response to the need for a fresh approach to the way Fairfield County lacrosse clubs were being operated. We are a for profit organization owned and operated by lacrosse professionals who have played and/or coached at the Division I level and elite High School level. Our club is guided by an executive board of directors, committee board members and numerous volunteers. Our teams are led by former college lacrosse players with coaching experience and assistant coaches who are either current or former college lacrosse players. In addition, each team is assisted by a mentor coach and a team administrator.

A happy byproduct of playing team sports is that it prepares players for the game of life.

Wolves Lacrosse Club players will receive the highest level lacrosse coaching, practice and game experience at a reasonable price in a friendly, yet challenging environment in order to have the opportunity to play against teams from all over the country and be seen by college coaches from all of the country.

Wolves Lacrosse Club teams compete at some of the biggest tournaments on the East Coast. This exposure enhances their chances of being seen and recruited by college coaches at the DI, DII, DIII and level.

Wolves Lacrosse Club encourages a family-friendly lacrosse environment that assists student athlete from a wide-range of area elementary, middle and high schools. The club looks to improve the student athlete's life skills and lacrosse skills while showcasing them to college coaching staff members.



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Wolves Lacrosse Club is NOT just about the business of lacrosse. We feel that lacrosse should be one part of a student athlete's middle and high school experience and not the focus of it. Competing in other high school sports, meeting the demands of school course loads and having free time to spend with family and friends is very important in shaping a player's character. We emphasize the ability of a player to lead a balanced life because experience tells us that colleges appreciate the well-rounded student athlete.

Wolves Lacrosse Club strives to strike the balance with our level of tournament and practice participation. We understand that family involvement not only makes the experience more enjoyable but is a necessity if the player is going to continue their lacrosse career into the collegiate ranks. Therefore, we strive to have family members involved.

Wolves Lacrosse Club players, coaches, and parents are expected to adhere to the highest levels of good sportsmanship.

Wolves Lacrosse Club builds on a reputation of polished players, competitive teams, excellent coaches, and gracious parents.

Wolves Lacrosse Club is committed to support lacrosse competition at the local and national levels.

Head Coach

A Wolves Head Coach is an experienced coach, ideally having played the sport of lacrosse themselves, who is available to coach their team year round.

A Wolves Head Coach abides by the expectations of the club in coaching their team in an informative, challenging yet respectful manner, being sure to teach the club-wide structures of offense and defense.

A Wolves Head Coach maintains clear communication between coach and player and coach and parent so that all parties are on the same page. They provide feedback to their players so that they know their strengths and weaknesses and take questions and concerns from parents and bring them to the board.



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A Wolves Head Coach abides by all tournament rules and respective policies, maintaining the Wolves name as one that values sportsmanship, respects referees and opponents, and maintains order on their sideline.

A Wolves Head Coach focuses on both team improvement and individual player improvement, while defining success within those realms, rather than wins and losses only.

A Wolves Head Coach is present for all team events (practices and games) barring any excusable absence and comes to all events planned and prepared with practice outlines, game line ups, and a tool for taking notes during these events.

Player

A Wolves Player is selected by coaches and board members through the tryout process as showing ample talent needed and potential expected of that specific age group

A Wolves Player is respectful of all coaches, opponents, referees and teammates in all settings. This includes in the school setting and in social media.

A Wolves Player shows class, respect, work ethic and commitment to the needs of the team over themselves.

A Wolves Player plays for their appropriate age/grade group in accordance with tournament policies.

A Wolves Player has a desire to play lacrosse, improve in the sport, and do what is necessary both during scheduled team practices and at home to increase their core skills and IQ.

A Wolves Player adheres to the attendance policies and expectations and understands the importance of their presence at team practices and tournaments.



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Developmental Practice Player

Developmental Practice Players will participate in ALL team events except playing in tournaments. (i.e. practices, team bonding, club bonding, etc.)

Developmental Practice Players are welcome to attend all tournaments, dress in whatever Wolves gear they have, and stand on the sideline with the team under the understanding that they will NOT play in the tournaments and/or be put on official rosters unless there is a spot open due to injury.

This developmental practice role will be held throughout our entire calendar year (fall through summer) when the player can tryout again for the team and either earn a spot or be offered another developmental practice player option for the year.

Should a player on the team get injured and coaches feel the need to bring up a developmental practice player to play on the team that is up to the coach (after running it by the board) and certainly allowed.

Assistant Coach

An Assistant Coach has experience coaching and/or playing lacrosse.

An Assistant Coach is the assistant to the assigned Wolves head coach and works to make sure that the administrative requirements of the coach are being fulfilled, that communication between parents and coach is clear, and that any concerns are being communicated to the coach and board.

An Assistant Coach can step in to coach their team if we are unable to find a year-round experienced coach to coach the team during the fall, along with substitute for the head coach should an unexpected conflict arise.

A mentor coach cannot overpower the assigned head coach during the summer and fall.



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Parent Liaisons

Parent liaisons are the point of contact between the board/director and the team when it comes to logistical information.

Parent liaisons help set up an email chain for the team to pass on critical information to their team.

Parent liaisons assist in organizing team and club activities.

Board Members

Wolves Board Members are voted onto the board by current board members.

Wolves Board Members are committed to being involved and present at Wolves events.

Wolves Board Members hold specific responsibilities in accordance with their board position, although they may take on additional responsibilities in order to help the club continue to thrive.

Wolves Board Members maintain an active working relationship with players, parents and coaches at club events to make sure the club goals are being met and communication lines are open.

Wolves Board Members attends all board meetings.

Wolves Board Members are committed to the constant self assessment, improvement and development of the club.

Wolves Board Members have professional experience that they bring to the club to help enhance its efficiency.

Wolves Board Members participate in all of the club's main decisions and thoughtfully approach solutions to the situation with the club's best interest in mind.



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Coach's Contract

Be 10 minutes early to practice and arrive 45 minutes prior to every tournament.

In the case of an emergency, sickness or traumatic event, the Coach must notify the Director or Assistant Director of Coaching.

Be present at all practices and tournaments barring any emergencies, sickness or traumatic event. In the case of an excusable conflict, Coach must notify the Director or Assistant Director of Coaching.

All Coaches are expected to uphold club policies and structures outlined by the Wolves Lacrosse Club Board. These policies include practice times, teaching club-wide schemes, playing time, etc.

Coaches must also uphold the mission of Wolves by being player centered. This is reflected in their manner of coaching, their management of time in practices and games, their communication with parents and players both logistically and through feedback/report cards, and the respectful treatment of all players, opponents, coaches and referees.

Always conduct yourself with passion, effort, class and pride

Player Contract

Be 10 minutes early to practice and 45 minutes early to a game/tournament.

Play and practice with a positive attitude.

Listen while a coach speaks to you. When you are being spoken to, look them in the eye until they are done. NEVER interrupt your coach. When they are done speaking, if you have a question, you can ask it.

Be "coachable". Pay attention and focus on learning. When a coach instructs you, try to do what you were told on your very next repetition while it is still fresh in your mind.



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Communicate only in a positive manner to teammates. NEVER yell at a team mate for making a mistake. Communicate with teammates that you don't know well.

Give your best effort at all times at home, in school or on the field. We don't ask that you be perfect in execution, we ask that you be perfect in effort.

Understand that every position and role is critical and every player must do their job for the team to succeed.

Be a role model on and off of the field. Set the example for your teammates and friends.

THINK through every drill or situation before you run it.

Never "chirp" at opposing players. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated whether it is on the field or off.

Believe in yourself and your team. You can do anything that you work to achieve!

Show pride in yourself and your team. Present yourself in a positive manner.

Challenge yourself. Find a way to improve on something on every play on every day. If you successfully do just one small thing a little bit better every day, just think how much your game will have improved at the end of the season. Don't settle for staying the same.

CONDUCT YOURSELVES WITH PASSION, EFFORT, CLASS & PRIDE AND SUCCESS WILL FOLLOW!!

Parent Contract

Let the players play, let the coaches coach, let the officials officiate. Be a supportive, involved parent but keep your emotions under control. Support your players in a positive manner. Stay at least 5 yards away from the sidelines during games and on the opposite side of the field from the benches.

Role Model good behaviors, respect all participants, encourage all of the players, and keep the proper perspective of youth sports.



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Avoid an overly competitive attitude. Winning IS NOT the number one priority, learning the skills and building a love for the game is our primary focus.

Don't allow poor sportsmanship in someone else to cause the same in you.

Please be on time with any monetary commitments. Special arrangements can be made if needed. We will always attempt to work things out.

Bring your child 10-15 minutes early for practices and pick up your child promptly after.

Players/parents must give prior notice if they will miss a practice or game.

Encourage and Inspire. Build confidence in your player.

Respect and abide by your Coach's decisions.

Refrain from offensive comments toward anyone for any reason. Spectators exhibiting disruptive behavior, not following instructions from the head coach or officials will be asked to leave the grounds immediately. Legal action will be taken if necessary.

Support a drug free environment. Alcohol (even in camouflaged cups) and tobacco are strictly prohibited on County Property and most tournament sites. Violators will be asked to leave immediately.

Never approach a coach with a question or concern about game happenings immediately following the game. Always give at least 24 hours before approaching a coach.

General questions or concerns may be addressed to your players head coach or one of the Wolves Club Officers listed on the Wolves website

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Coaching Structure

We will strive to have consistent head and assistant coaches for each age group.



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Coaches are hired after sitting down and meeting with a Coaching Director or Board Members after their coaching styles are observed and assessed.

If at any time a coach is proving inconsistent with the mission and policies outlined by the Wolves Lacrosse Club they are subject to removal as decided by the Board.

Playing Time

Our primary goal is to prepare your player to compete at the next level. Part of that preparation is to get your player accustomed to competing for playing time. High school and college teams have one goal – to win games. That means putting the best players on the field at all times and sitting the rest. Because our primary goal as a lacrosse club is teaching and our secondary goal winning, our policy is that if your player is good enough to make the team then they are good enough to play in games. We do not subscribe to a zero playing time policy or an entirely equal playing time policy as neither serves the purpose of teaching your player how to play the game and how to compete at a higher level. If your player is not on the field then they are not learning. On the flip side if they are guaranteed equal playing time, regardless of effort, then they are not learning either.

Our policy is that all players will play a substantially equal amount of time during regular tournament games except for what we call “crunch time.” Crunch time is the last ten minutes of a close regular tournament game or anytime during a playoff game. Our coaches have the discretion to play those players who they feel have earned the playing time either through their play during a tournament or during practice the previous week. Players may earn time by working hard during practice and displaying those attributes that will earn playing time at the high school or college level. Conversely, players may also lose playing time during crunch time by missing practices, not working hard and doing those things that lose playing time at the high school or college level. Our coaches have full discretion to penalize violations of team rules through loss of playing time whether during crunch time or during regular time. The ultimate goal is to prepare your player for what lies ahead in high school and college.



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The key to resolving playing time issues is open communication and not letting things fester. We encourage an open dialogue at all times between players and coaches. If a coach is making a conscious decision to not play a player during crunch time, then the Club expects that coach to communicate with the player. A coach, however, may not always be aware there is a problem. Sometimes playing time issues arise that are beyond the control of the coach – shortened games, lengthy injury timeouts, general game flow, etc. Sometimes in tense games it is simply an oversight on the coaches' part. Our coaches are human too. If there is an issue with playing time and a coach has not communicated with your player do not assume the worse. Encourage your player to speak with the coach first before jumping to conclusions. Our coaches are approachable and will gladly help your player correct any problems. That is part of the learning process and is crucial at higher levels. During tournaments, it is your player's responsibility to approach the coach and discuss when there is an issue. Only your player may approach a coach during a tournament and only in a respectful manner. We understand children, especially pre-high school, are sometimes afraid to talk to a coach and thus a parent may stand by their player's side but it is up to the payer to do the talking. The goal here is to teach your player to self advocate and stand up for themselves which we believe to be an invaluable skill in both the classroom with teachers as well as on the field with lacrosse coaches.

A parent may only approach a coach 48 hour following the end of a tournament. Most issues correct themselves by the conclusion of the next tournament game and/or require a "cooling off" period to allow for a more productive conversation. A parent may never approach a coach during a tournament. Further, any contact with a coach shall be made in the same professional manner that a parent would use in approaching his or her boss at work. If a parent is not satisfied with the response from a coach, the parent may then contact any Board member. A Board member will not get involved in the assessment of a player's skills. If the coach feels a player is not hustling, for example, then the Board will defer to the coach. The Board will only get involved in situations where the coach's response is not consistent with club policies. The Board will also serve as a mediator to help facilitate communication between the parents, player and coaches.



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Excusable Absences

Excusable Absences include lacrosse related showcases, prospect days and/or camps, family illness or tragedy, personal sickness and the like. Don't lie to make an unexcused absence turn into an excused absence. It is expected that player have 100% attendance in the summer and that any conflicts are communicated to the coaches at the first practice.

Club Fees

Annual fees and payment options will be communicated upon having been notified your player has been offered a spot on their age appropriate team. Failure to make a payment without notifying the board for the reason could result in removal from the team. If a player chooses to leave the club at any time, a refund of club fees paid thus far will NOT be issued. If a player is injured mid-season and cannot finish the season out, please speak to the Board about possible refund opportunities. There is no guarantee for any player refund due to an injury. A Scholarship Fund has been established to provide financial assistance for families / guardians of players who meet our "needs based" criteria. Interested parents/guardians are encouraged to request eligibility guidelines and documentation required to begin the process to review and approve.

Required Equipment

Wolves Lacrosse Club members must provide their own stick, helmets, mouth guard, cleats, cups, chest /shoulder pads, elbow pads and gloves. Goalies must have throat protectors and appropriate goalies chest pad.

Practices

Fall Practices

Fall practices will be held on weekends (generally Sunday) beginning AFTER Labor Day weekend and run until the last Sunday before the first scheduled



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tournament. Fall practices may include inter-club scrimmages or friendly scrimmages with local clubs. Fall practices are not optional, *but excused absences in the fall include fall sport or school conflicts.*

Summer Practices

Summer practices are twice a week and are mandatory. Summer practices start the Monday after CT State Championship (High School) and/or CONNY Youth season ends and go through the team's last tournament. Summer practices will be held in a centralized location club-wide. Summer practices are fashioned around the needs shown from each tournament prior and include a variety of drills from skill-centered, to small sided, to scrimmaging, with conditioning incorporated into the practice through drills and runs.

Tournaments

Fall Tournaments

Elementary/Middle School Teams – Our elementary/middle school teams will participate in competitive tournaments in New England and from time to time Mid Atlantic states. Every year we reassess these options. Our Middle School teams participate in 2-3 tournaments in October-November.

High School Teams – Recruiting tournaments are the priority for our high school teams. We will always try and follow where the college coaches are and our fall schedule is dictated by those patterns that we reassess each year. Our High School teams participate in 2-3 tournaments each fall, over the course of weekends in October-November.

Summer Tournaments

Elementary/Middle School teams – Our Elementary/Middle School teams are entered into 3 or more tournaments each summer. Most tournaments are over the course of a weekend. We consider a variety of key factors when selecting tournaments for our teams: 1) Competition – we want to send our teams to the most competitive tournament settings where they are playing the strongest clubs in the country. This is reassessed each year. 2) Organization – we look for tournaments that are well-run and are organized based on graduation year



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rather than rec-league age groupings. We also value tournaments that are credible for a successful history where we know that the level of refereeing and structure are prioritized. We generally do not put our elementary/middle school teams into recruiting tournaments due to the pressure of those tournaments that is not necessary for our younger teams at this point.

High School Teams – Our High School teams participate in 3-4 tournaments each summer, prioritizing the best recruiting opportunities for our players. Again, we go where the college coaches go and this is reassessed each year.

Tryouts

Tryouts are mandatory for ALL club members. If you are unable to attend the officially scheduled tryout you can request that your player be put on a Supplemental Tryout List which the club, at its sole discretion, may choose to draw from in the event that any roster spots become available.

Who Should Tryout

Anybody interested in playing year-round lacrosse with dreams of playing at the high school or collegiate level is encouraged to try out. We also happily encourage players who love the sport and want to improve and learn while contributing in a team environment to try out, and accept them happily so long as they are of the level required to make their appropriate team

How are tryouts conducted?

Tryouts are run by our team coaches and club directors/board members and consist of a series of skill-based drills and scrimmaging. Players should come to tryouts ready for play and with a positive attitude and strong work ethic. We look for players that are not only skilled, but show inherent athleticism, hustle, respect, dedication and positivity!

Tryouts

Where

Tryouts are generally conducted at our practice location for the summer, which can vary from year to year.



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Fee

Set on an annual basis and available to review prior to registration.

When

Tryouts are held annually in July and August, after the conclusions of our summer season. At the conclusion of the Tryouts we will send out roster spot invitations for the upcoming fall and following summer tournament seasons.

Recruiting Services

Wolves Lacrosse Club is dedicated to walking our high school players through the complexities of the recruiting process. As part of your membership with the club, Wolves offers recruiting advice to all high school players and parents. In addition, our coaches will work with the players to make sure all players are on top of sending out emails to college coaches in the appropriate format and timing. Wolves will also create players bios which can be accessed via our Wolves Lax Club website so college coaches can retrieve player statistics and player contact information before attending our tournament games. We will continue to keep in contact with area coaches, at all levels, for recruiting timelines, changes in NCAA rules and general recruiting strategies.

