



YOUTH FOOTBALL

Parent Information 2024



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Introduction

The following document outlines the structure of Lakes FC Youth Football for 2024. The aim is to provide clarity for participants in this space including players, parents, supporters, coaches, managers or officials.

TWO PATHWAYS

Within the youth space, Lakes FC has two pathways – our Talent pathway, and our Community and Development pathway.

The goals for each are slightly different.

Community and Development Pathway

The goal of the Community and Development Pathway is to provide teams and a structure for players that:

- Want to play locally or within the Bay of Plenty.
- Would prefer to play in a less competitive environment.
- Will find the challenge points in this pathway the best place to develop this year.

Talent Pathway

The goal of the Talent Pathway is to provide teams and a structure for players that:

- Desire to play at the highest possible competitive level.
- Have the necessary attitude and ability to meet the challenge points presented in order for this to be the best development space for them.
- Are able to commit to training multiple times per week in and out of trainings.
- Are happy to travel across the federation to play (Bay of Plenty and Waikato).



Youth Pathways

The table below shows the teams that make up our two pathways. Importantly, no individual is stuck in a pathway and movement between the pathways happens every year due to a variety of factors. Teams are either mixed gender (open to boys and girls) or girls' only, with different competition structures for each.

Community and Development Pathway

Mixed 12th/13th grade and 14th/15th grade play locally in Rotorua on Saturdays. We also have a mixed U19 team competing in the Western BOP school and club competition on Saturday (games in Rotorua and across the Western BOP). U14 and U19 Girls teams play on Saturday in the Western Bay Girls Competitions.

Dates: These competitions start in on 4th or May 11th and finish September 7.

Selection: There is no selection for these teams. We try to create teams of an equal standard, keeping friends together. The mixed U19 team may have a trial should there be a surplus of players.

Talent Pathway

This is made up of teams in mixed gender U12, U13, U14 and U16 grades who play across Waikato and BOP on Sundays (U12s play across BOP on Saturdays). U14 and U19 teams who compete in the Western BOP competition on Saturdays.

Dates: These competitions start April 28 and finish during the October school holidays with Tournament play.

Selection: Teams are selected at ID sessions and those successful train as part of the Lakes FC Academy.

YOUTH FOOTBALL	Community and Development Pathway			Talent Pathway			
	12 th /13 th Grade	Rotorua Competition		Grade 13	Federation Y League	Lakes FC Academy	Weir Rose Bowl
	14 th /15 th Grade	Rotorua Competition	Club Tournaments	Grade 14	Federation Y League	Lakes FC Academy	McCartney Tournament
	U19 Mixed	WBOP Schools/Club Comp	Club Tournaments	U16 (15 th /16 th)	Federation Y League	Lakes FC Academy	McCartney Tournament
				U17	No Competition		National U17 Tournament
	U14 Girls (13 th /14 th)	WBOP U14 Girls' Comp	McCartney Tournament	U14 Girls (13 th /14 th)	WBOP U14 Girls' Comp	Lakes FC Academy	Weir Rose Bowl
	U19 Girls	WBOP U19 Girls' Comp		U19 Girls	WBOP U19 Girls' Comp	Lakes FC Academy	National U19 Tournament



Team Formation

FUN EVENINGS

We start the season with three fun evenings of activities and games. These are FOR EVERYONE and are no pressure evenings of mini games to get everyone back on a ball and for coaches and players to get to know each other. These are not trials and no judgements are made – it is pure fun!

ID SESSIONS

For those who want to trial to play in the Talent Pathway Academy teams for 2024. We send out a google doc link and you can sign up prior to the trials. The ID sessions are held over 3 sessions, and we urge players to make at least 2 so that they can be assessed alongside the other players. The selection process follows on a separate page. Teams are named 2 days after the last session and training starts the following week.

COMMUNITY PRE-SEASON TRAINING AND TEAMS

For those players that choose not to trial, pre-season training continues each Thursday until the season starts. Community teams are named once season registrations close (end of March).

SQUAD SIZES and AGES:

COMMUNITY AND DEVELOPMENT TEAMS

U12/13 Mixed	9aside	Squad Size: 14 max	BORN: 2012,2011
U14/15 Mixed	9aside	Squad Size: 14 max	BORN: 2010,2009
U19 Mixed	11aside	Squad Size: 16 max	BORN: 2005/2006/2007/2008/2009
U14 Girls	9aside	Squad Size: 14 max	BORN: 2010,2011
U19 Girls	11aside	Squad Size: 16 max	BORN: 2005/2006/2007/2008/2009

ACADEMY TEAMS

U12 Mixed	9aside	Squad Size: 14 max	BORN: 2012
U13 Mixed	11aside	Squad Size: 16 max	BORN: 2011
U14 Mixed	11aside	Squad Size: 16 max	BORN: 2010
U16 Mixed	11aside	Squad Size: 16 max	BORN: 2008/2009
U14 Girls	9aside	Squad Size: 14 max	BORN: 2011/2010
U19 Girls	11aside	Squad Size: 16 max	BORN: 2005/2006/2007/2008/2009



Mixed Team Pre-season Dates

Pre-season FUN Evenings:

- Thursdays 8, 15, 22 February
- Linton Park 4:30-6:00pm
- 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16-19th Grade Mixed

ID Session Dates:

1. Tuesday 27 Feb
2. Thursday 29 Feb
3. Tuesday 05 March

Academy Squads Named:

- Thursday 7 March

Community Squads Named:

- Community and development teams are named after registrations close at the end of March.

Academy Trainings begin Tuesday 12 March

Community Train-on Squads begin Thursday 14th March and every Thursday until the season.

Season Starts

- All Mixed Community teams – May 11
- Academy 13/14/16 Grade – April 28
- Academy U12 – May 4



Mixed Team ID Session Evenings

LOCATION: Linton Park

February 27th , 29th , and March 5th

4:00 – 5:00pm

- 12th Grade Mixed

5:15 – 6:15pm

- 13th Grade Mixed
- 14th Grade Mixed

6:30 – 7:30pm

- 16th Grade Mixed
- U19s Mixed



U14 GIRLS (Girls born 2010 and 2011)

THE COMPETITION FOR U14 GIRLS

Western BOP U14 girls competition

Our U14 girls play in the Western Bay of Plenty U14 girls competition. This competition is split into two divisions, Kaimai and Koru divisions.

Kaimai Division

The Kaimai division is the premier WBOP division for this age. Regular games are played on Saturday mornings with two additional mid-season cross over days where we play teams from the equivalent Waikato division.

The Koru Division

The Koru division accommodates teams in the next level of competition. Regular games are played on a Saturday, but there are no cross over games with Waikato teams.

U14 GIRLS' PRE-SEASON TRAINING

Thursdays, 4.30pm - 6pm, Linton Park
From Thursday 8th February

All welcome for some fun sessions and games!

U14 GIRLS' ACADEMY TEAM ID SESSIONS

Tuesday 27th February, 4pm - 5pm

Saturday 2nd March, 10am - 11am

Tuesday 5th March, 4pm - 5pm



U14 GIRLS (Girls born 2010 and 2011)

LAKES FC U14 GIRLS TEAMS

Lakes FC U14 Girls' Academy team

The Lakes FC U14 Girls Academy team will be identified through a process of ID sessions.

The team will:

- Train under the Academy structure (detailed on page 11)
- Play in the Kaimai Division of the Western BOP U14 Girls competition.
- Attend the 3-day Weir Rose Tournament (Cambridge) in October.

Lakes FC U14 Girls' Development teams

In addition to the Academy team we anticipate an additional two development teams (dependent on registration numbers) to play in the Western Bay U14 girls competition. There will be no trials for these teams. The Lakes FC U14 Girls'

Development teams will:

- Play in the Koru division of the competition
- Attend mid season tournaments
- Have the opportunity to trial for the end of season 3-day McCartney Tournament (Taupo).

To create a depth in the girls' space, some players from the development teams will be invited to attend additional training sessions with the Academy team. These players will remain with their regular Saturday team, but will be exposed to the additional challenge points offered at these sessions.



U19 GIRLS (Girls born 2005 and 2009)

THE COMPETITION FOR U19 GIRLS

The U19 girls play in the Bay of Plenty 19 Girls League. The League is split into two divisions.

LAKES FC U19 TEAMS

Lakes FC U19 Girls' Academy team

The academy team will play in the first division of the BOP U19 Girls' Competition. While it may seem daunting to be a 15 year old playing in an U19 league, in actuality many girls of this age play in this grade alongside less developed older players and it is a great stepping stone in their pathway. The Academy Team will train under the Academy structure detailed on page 11.

Lakes FC U19s Development Team

An U19s Development team will play in the 2nd division of the BOP U19 Girls' Competition.

SCHOOL AND CLUB FOOTBALL

Many girls play school football on Wednesday afternoon and club football on Saturdays. The coaches of all First XI's girls' teams in Rotorua are associated with Lakes FC. This enables us to manage the physical workload of our players through the season. If you want an introduction for your school, please contact the club.

SENIOR WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

Some of the players who are further along their football journey may consider senior football. The minimum age for Senior women's football is 16, but the club can apply for dispensations when players turn 15. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis in discussion with players and parents and as per our dispensation policy. As part of individual development, some of the academy team players are given a taste of senior football, playing as reserves for the Senior Women's teams.

PRE -SEASON TRAINING

Please check the Lakes FC Facebook page for details of U19 Girl's and Women's Pre-season training.



ADADEMY TRAINING STRUCTURE

Training: 3 trainings per week – Players are expected to make at least 2 of these trainings.
32-week season from March until October tournaments. At least 72 trainings for the season around school holidays, AIMS games, NZ Secondary Schools tournaments, and periodised rest weeks.

Registration: Wait for selection to be announced and then all information will be given.

Cost: \$To Be Confirmed

This includes:

- All 72 trainings.
- Full WaiBOP Federation/BOP-wide season – game days plus preseason/preparation games/festivals
- One session per week on applying our Lakes FC principles of play to game situations, improving skill development and game understanding to find and exploit space.
- One team session per week on specific game situations.
- One 1 v 1 /position specific skills and small sided games indoor session per week to improve decision making, combination and individual play, ball mastery, creativity and improvisation.
- Individual development plans
- Age-appropriate mobility, functional movement, and strength and conditioning working alongside a professional S&C trainer from high performance environments.
- Focus on player welfare, injury prevention and physiotherapy support.
- Seminars, and educational workshops based around specific areas important to health, character, mental preparation and confidence, and other areas important for sporting performance.
- Video support
- Feedback loops with players to enhance learning.
- Weir Rose Bowl, McCartney (mixed grade), National U15/U17/U19 Tournament teams will be selected first from these players.
- Goalkeepers offered one of the sessions per week in specific goalkeeper training sessions.



COMMUNITY TRAINING STRUCTURE

Training: 1 training per week
22-week season from March until September.

Cost: \$To Be Confirmed

Includes:

- 14 game season plus any additional tournaments
- Trainings with other community teams
- In-club monthly skill competitions
- Opportunity to attend weekly Skill Centre with academy coaches - signup on club website.

Some teams may have additional practices and games if attending mid or end of season tournaments. This can vary from teams to team and grade to grade.



ID Sessions Process

The Process:

1. Three fun game evenings to get used to coaches, players, ground, the environment. Important for coaches to build familiarity with new players (to reduce similarity bias). Relaxed, low pressure, music, turn up and play.
2. Those who want to trial can come to ID sessions run across three nights – sign up via google doc emailed to all. Multiple coaches per age group to select Academy squads including neutral coaches – clear assessment criteria provided by DOF.
3. Coaches confer with each other after each session – robust discussion about what they saw. Plan for next session – what/who do they need to see to reduce confirmation bias? What activities are needed to bring out what they need to see?
4. After first session coaches map ages in the trialing group to ensure there is an understanding of developmental age and to try and negate relative age effect in the group. Analyse this alongside how long they have been playing football to reduce football-age effect. No mapping of positions until U16s.
5. Sessions include a mixture of skill/technical and physical challenges as well as different types of game-based scenarios to identify the various strengths of each individual.
6. If not part of the selection process, coaches are to speak with previous coaches to try and understand each individual (to reduce point-in-time performance as a factor). Ideally former coaches attend at least one of the sessions.
7. If an individual looks like they may benefit from playing up or down a grade an analysis of the 4 corner model in relation to the individual is completed and the whanau spoken with. The final decision for dispensation lies with the DOF. Certain players who have missed the squad may be invited to train with Academy squads as an extra to their community team training.
8. After the final trial, all 4+ coaches hold rigorous discussion, analyse all of the information above and form squads.
9. Players and whanau are notified – process to be confirmed.



Missing Selection for Academy

Sometimes we have players that aspire to play in our Talent pathway but miss selection for our Academy teams. This could be down to a number of factors including:

- A limit on squad sizes as imposed by NZ and WaiBOP Football.
- Academy coaches and selectors believing that the best place to develop this season is in the Community and Development Pathway.
- A need to develop one or more of the 4 corners of development (technical/tactical/physical/mental).

Missing selection can be tough on an individual at any time, but particularly during these ages. Development is not linear, and we understand that players may improve and develop given time, focus and training. We try to do our best for every player and we certainly want to continue to support their development.

In order to help those who may miss selection keep developing we have the ability:

1. For certain individuals on the cusp of making the Academy teams we may invite them to train with the academy once or twice per week, while they also train with their community team once per week. This would mean that they develop across two spaces and could potentially play some games in the Academy teams due to illness or injury.
2. For anyone to attend Skill Centres – an extra weekly session run on Monday nights by our Academy coaches. Anyone can attend these to keep developing and signup is through Friendly Manager on our website prior to each term.



Dispensation Policy

It may be that an individual benefits from playing up or down a grade. It must be noted that dispensation will not be granted just because a parent or player wants it. Lakes FC has to apply to WaiBOP for dispensation and they hold the final decision on whether to grant it or not.

Lakes FC's goal is to do what is right for each individual's development. If coaches feel during the selection process that a player should perhaps play up or down a grade then they will follow the process below to ensure the player is being placed in the correct development space.

1. An analysis of the 4 corner model in relation to the individual is completed. The four corners focuses on their:
 1. Technical and Tactical ability and understanding.
 2. Physical level of development.
 3. Mental and psychological level.
 4. Social ability to enjoy and adapt at the proposed level
 - The proposed grade must be the right space for the individual to develop EVERY corner for the dispensation to be granted.
2. The whanau are spoken with to ensure the decision meets their needs and that they are supportive of the move.
3. Dispensation is applied for. The final decision for dispensation lies with the Director of Football for the club application and then with WaiBOP.