

Under 13, 15, 17 & Girls U/15

Player Selection / Rotation Policy

Introduction

This policy seeks to provide clarity of the Club's approach to player placement through the competitive junior age group levels. Teams will be subject to formal grading, will play for premierships, ladder placement and compete in finals where successful.

Junior players mature and develop physically and mentally at different stages. In recognizing this transitional period, the club has aligned its team selection policy and guidelines to see the focus of involvement move from general participation in the modified rules age group, to a more competitive, skills and performance based selection process to apply across these age groups.

Player Placement / Team Selection Objectives

The key objectives underlying the Club's team selection process are:

- To encourage as many players as possible in the community to play football in a fun and safe environment.
- To provide players the opportunity to the best of their ability, and encourage them to reach their maximum potential. To provide and promote a culture of teamwork, selflessness, discipline and respect.
- To maintain open lines of communication and co-operation between team officials, players, parents/ guardians and Club Officials.
- To adhere to the Club's Junior Placement criteria, with players to play in their eligible age group.
- To achieve the ultimate team success whilst conducting a manner that instils pride in our club and its members
- To encourage and create opportunity for individual player and coach success in the respective representative programs when applicable.

Grading

All Clubs nominate a proposed division for their team/s at the start of the season. At the completion of the first four rounds, AFL Barwon will assess the results and may move teams up or down divisions depending on the results.

Every effort will be made to ensure that each player is placed in an appropriately graded team. Players should be given sufficient opportunity to demonstrate their ability which enables the coaches to make informed decision on that player's ability.

Team Structure

Under AFL Barwon rules, up to 23 players are able to play each week. If team lists extend past 23, players will be required to be rostered off each week during the season. If possible Coaches and Team Managers should give parents and players the opportunity to advise in advance, any times of unavailability to ensure these games missed are counted as games rostered off. Similarly Coaches can provide players and parents a rotating rostered block of games for parents and players to plan around. It is expected that all players will be rotated equitably. Accurate records of player selection are required as is dates when players were rostered off.

The Age Level Co-ordinator together with the Junior Co-Ordinator will work with the Coaches to determine the best team structure for the age group.

Selection criteria

Where more than one team is formed in the same age group and in different divisions, Coaches in consultation with the Age Level Co-Ordinator and Committee representative are empowered to select teams based on the Coaches judgement and will consider the following:

- Perception of the player's abilities on the Division the team is playing in
- Potential of the player
- Physical development
- Player's attitude
- Player's commitment
- Player's adherence to relative codes of conduct
- Player's adherence to team rules
- Player's attendance at training
- and the need for team balance.

Consideration will not be given to players' or parents' friendship groups. Consideration will also not be given to parental support roles. Appointed coaches should not establish their game day support team (trainers, runners, team managers etc. to the detriment of this selection criteria.

Where two sides are formed in the same age group and in the same division, it is the position of the Club that the two sides will be picked to form two equally competitive teams for that division. Team Name will no longer reference a Number (eg: 1,2,3) and will be identified as Blue, White or Red for the relevant teams in that division.

Coaches

The coach has complete discretion in determining whom and when players are on the field. This policy does not seek to restrict the choices that a coach makes in fielding a team by imposing rigid rules but instead seeks to provide strong guidelines.

Many factors may be reasonably considered when selecting a side and determining how much time a particular player spends on the field:

- team numbers
- strength of the opposition side
- discipline issues
- skills balance within the side
- player injury
- tactics employed by the opposition

The main role of the coach is to develop the football skills of his/her players. A coach who makes every effort to rotate all players fairly could not be criticised if a player does not achieve his quota of playing time by a small margin. On the other hand, if some players are regularly positioned where they won't get in the way then the coach will be asked to explain his/her actions.

Team Selection

During pre-season, all players will train together as one group.

Following practice matches and prior to the first grading match, initial squads will be developed based on the selection criteria listed above.

The coaching staff from all teams will work collaboratively during this process to ensure that each player is able to participate to their potential.

Player Movement

Players shall move up and down in teams in different grades over one season in order to field the strongest team and to ensure that all players are experiencing success. This movement shall be done in consultation between coaches.

Consideration will be given to:

- Performance of intended player to be moved
- Need of the type of player in the higher team
- Attendance and effort at training
- Attitude
- Communication as to why the movement is happening is of great importance

Training

To promote a one club philosophy where there are multiple teams in the same age group, the club promotes that these teams shall train together as a squad on the same night for a minimum of 30 minutes. This includes starting the session (warming up / stretching) and finishing the session (cooling down / stretching) together.

Coaches can break up players into groups for specialised training and/or drills. However intra-club matches should be between two evenly balanced sides and not for example, a Division 1 team vs. a Division 2 team.

Playing Time

Every effort should be made to ensure that all players can play as much football as possible in relation to:

- the number of games played in a season
- the on field playing time each week (50%+) ; and
- the opportunity to be involved in the game while on the field.

After the initial grading rounds the Age Level Co-ordinator and/or Coaching Co-ordinator will continually review the competitiveness of both teams, and performances will be discussed with Coaches if and when required. Player development should be continually monitored.

During the course of the home and way season each player is to be rotated through positions so that they can gain experience and learn how to play each position (i.e. Forwards, Backs, & Midfield). Further, the same player(s) are not to start on the interchange bench each week.

Assistant Coaches are to monitor the player rotations and complete rotation spreadsheet / apps. Where a player from a lower age group tops up in a higher age group, the lower age group player should not start the game on the field in place of player of the higher age group.

Consideration should be given to the "top up players welfare" as to his/her ability to play in that age group and commitments that player has fulfilled on that day.