

U17 SQUAD TEAM SELECTION

1. AUTHORISATION

This policy was reviewed by the Aberfeldie Junior Football Section in October 2016.

2. REVIEW DATE

This policy / guide shall be reviewed again in November 2018.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to committee, players, coaches, coordinators and parents.

4. RELEVANT VALUES

This Club is committed to:

- Fielding competitive teams in each division;
- Maximising the opportunity for as many U17 boys as possible and practical to continue to play football;
- Minimising the number of rest games players may be required to take during the course of the season if numbers exceed the EDFL maximum of 24 per team.
- Selecting teams that will allow each player to develop and play footy in an enjoyable and supportive environment.
- Encouraging players and parents to appreciate that U17 football provides a flexible environment that hopes to maximise opportunities for both individual and team development, while creating a culture that sees everyone's efforts supporting the entire squad and club.

5. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Inform all members of the process and criteria for team selection, both at the start and during the course of the season.
- Endeavour to provide a fair, consistent and manageable system for determining team selection at this level.

6. BACKGROUND

Team selection is a complex process based on many factors and the process of allocating up to 450 players across 21 teams is full of challenges. Our guiding principles are to field competitive teams in each division, ensure players have fun and develop their skill levels.

At the U17 level, the club faces a number of challenges unique to this age group:

- Four teams of U15 players need to potentially fit into three U17 teams.
 - Some U15 players decide not to return to U17 football, but there is usually too many for three teams but not enough for four teams.
 - The EDFL discourage players transferring between clubs at U17 level, so there is no opportunity to recruit to make up a 4th team, nor do we expect the EDFL to approve a 4th team;
- Players are at an age when they are more injury prone and likely to have commitments to other teams, sports, part-time work or study.

7. KEY CONSIDERATIONS IN TEAM SELECTION DURING THE COURSE OF THE SEASON

- **Players per team:**
 - The Team A side will have a squad of 24 players
 - The Team B & C sides will evenly split the remaining number of players.
- **Process of Selection**
 - Previous coaches, coordinators and assistant coaches in conjunction with current coaches, assistant coaches and coordinators will determine where players are selected at the start of the season.
 - The selection process will consider each player's skill, experience, physical maturity, size, age and fitness, as well as team balance.
 - Once draft squads are developed, players will be assessed on their current form both at training and in intra and inter club practice matches.
 - Players will not be penalised for maintaining commitments to cricket during the pre-season.
- **Team A (Nominally Division 1)**
 - Competitiveness of all Team A teams is a major consideration in team selection.
 - The U17 Team A is selected to ensure competitiveness and players are picked based on their ability.
 - Team A will endeavor to play 24 players every week, supplemented from the other teams when required, to further minimise rest weeks across the squad.
 - Team A will have first choice of players.

- **Rest Weeks**
 - Team A
 - Whilst players from Team A will not be rostered to rest, we are assuming given the intensity of the game at this level and the likelihood that some of these players will have additional football commitments, that a fair number of players from this division will be unavailable as a matter of course during the year and the balance will be equitable across the entire age level.
 - Teams B & C
 - Players may be required to have a rest week(s) in Teams B & C.
 - The number of rest weeks players will experience will be largely dependent on the number of gaps across the entire squad as the season progresses.
 - Every team will endeavor to play 24 players each week (including Team A) and players will be required to back fill for a player in their own team or in another division if they were previously rostered for a rest week.
 - It is expected that rest weeks will be minimised when players are required to fill in for those with injuries/illness or other commitments such as school footy, Calder Cannons and other representative footy, study commitments, part time work and work experience, school camps, holidays etc.
 - If players know they will have other commitments during the course of the season, they are expected to advise the coaching staff as soon as possible, so that where possible, these games missed can be counted as games rostered off.
 - Players asked to rest will be encouraged to contribute to the team on game day by helping out with any of the game day duties such as running water or keeping stats.
- **Movement between Divisions**
 - U17 footy is generally more competitive than lower age divisions.
 - It is important that when possible a full complement of players is selected to play each week, starting from the top team and flowing down, to ensure more players get to play each weekend.
 - Players will move up and down divisions if the opportunity arises and their form warrants re-evaluation of what level they are selected to play.
 - When the players are selected for Round 1 this does not mean they will remain in that team for the entire year.
 - A player may start the season in Team C and be elevated to Team B and then elevated to Team A if they are able to demonstrate they have the ability and desire to play at that level.
 - Alternatively a player who was selected in A or B may be moved to B or C to regain form and confidence.
 - This process applies to all players in all divisions and is not the choice of the player. A player who is asked to move between the divisions is required to comply with this club policy.
- **Rotation During Games**
 - At the U17s level there is a greater scope for varying playing time for individual players
 - The coach will have some discretion over:
 - the length of playing time that individual players will have on the field; and
 - the position a player is best suited to play in for team balance.
 - Where possible the coach is expected to ensure each player has an equal amount of playing time.
- **Finals Selection**
 - The coaches, in consultation with a selection panel will determine the players most deserving to play finals. Team will be selected to allow the greatest opportunity for team success.
 - Coaches will consider players performance/games played/training. Where players are of similar ability in Teams B & C a preference may be given to top age players and those that have been at the club for period longer than the current season.

7. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITIES

The Committee is responsible for:

- Overseeing the team selection process;
- Providing coaches and coordinators with player details required for selection; and
- Receiving and endorsing recommendations from coaches and coordinators regarding team line ups.

Coordinator & Coaches are responsible for:

- Working collaboratively to select teams in accordance with these guidelines and those in the general 'Team Selection' policy.

Coaches are responsible for:

- Working collaboratively on a weekly basis to select teams so as to minimise the size of the 'rest' group across the squad;
- Maintaining records of players rest weeks to ensure an equitable spread where possible.
- Ensuring any player movement between divisions considers the skill set of players and consent of parents;
- Encouraging players to move between divisions when the opportunity arises so as to develop their skills and sense of clubmanship.

Coordinator is responsible for:

- Overseeing the weekly selection of teams, ensuring the necessity to rest players is minimised where possible, consulting with parents, coaches and players regarding movement between divisions as required.

Parents and players are responsible for:

- Alerting Coaches to any known weeks when they will be unavailable during the season so that where practical, these can be counted as weeks rested.

8. GREIVENCES

Parents with questions, concerns or grievances about the selection process should discuss this with the Coach first, then with the Coordinator if unresolved. Should the matter still be unresolved, parents may then contact the committee via the Junior President. All contact details are on the website.