

LEAGUE TEAM NOMINATION, GRADING AND CLUB TEAM FORMATIONS POLICY

Key Principles & Objectives

In accordance with the AFL Australian Football Match Policy the LEAGUE TEAM NOMINATION, GRADING AND CLUB TEAM FORMATIONS POLICY aims to provide the necessary framework that provides the best possible environment for junior players to maximize participation, skill learning and development.

The grading of even competitions by the League provides the opportunity for participants to develop their skills appropriate to their age and stage of development. It is important that the match environment in junior football is one of encouragement, learning and development over a focus on 'winning'.

The **LEAGUE TEAM NOMINATION, GRADING AND INTERNAL CLUB PLAYER MOVEMENT POLICY** aims to provide the guiding principles in line with the Australian Football Match Policy for the nomination, grading and make up of teams within the South East Juniors (SEJ).

Policy Review

This Policy shall be reviewed by the League annually and in line with the Australian Football Match Policy. Members clubs will be given an opportunity to provide feedback during the review period.

In doing so, the policy will remain current and in line with the objectives of the AFL, AFL Victoria and SEJ.

League Competition Structure Process

The League Competition Structure Process shall consist of the following stages:

- Promotion & Relegation (**December**)
- Team Nominations (**1st March**) & Club Submissions (**close after Round 2**)
- Assessment Rounds (**Round 1 - 4**)
- Home and Away Season (**Round 1 – 12 or 14**)

Promotion & Relegation

As part of the team nomination process club Registrars/Secretaries will have access to a list of teams in the competition management system for the upcoming season including the age group and division that each team will commence the season in with the following criteria being used to determine that make up;

- The team that won the grand final will be promoted to the next available higher division.
- The team that finished on the bottom of the ladder will be relegated to the next available lower division.
- A team that plays off in the grand final and is the runner up will also be considered for promotion to the next available higher division.

- A team that finishes on top of the ladder after completion of the Home & Away season but does not play off in the Grand Final will be considered for promotion to the next available higher division.

**** Please note that a Club may apply to have a team remain in the division that it finished in the previous season if the teams average winning margin is 30 points or under the average winning margin for that competition. All applications are required in writing to the Operations Manager by the Club Secretary. ****

Team Nominations

1. In accordance with By-Law 5.3 “All Affiliated Clubs shall advise the Football Operations Manager no later than 1 March in each year by using the competition management system, the number of teams it intends to field in the coming season in the appropriate age group”.
2. Nominations for new teams will be required to be in writing and approved by the Operations Manager. The League will need to be satisfied the team has been created in line with the Leagues policies and by-laws and not to the detriment of another team or club.

Nominations shall include the following:

- a. Age Group and Division for which the team has been placed in line with the promotion and relegation process.
- b. Name of the team (consistent with team’s previous name)
- c. Team nominations with less than 16 players registered as of March 1st will not be accepted. Where a club has a team with less than 16 players, the League will work closely with the club to form a team with players from other clubs or find a position for the players at another club.
- d. Team nomination deposit to be dealt with as follows:
 - i. Clubs will be invoiced \$150 per team. Note this is a non-refundable.
 - ii. League Team fees will be invoiced, less the \$150 deposit.

League Competition Structure

1. The promotion & relegation shall apply to;
 - a. all competitions except for the U8, U9 and U10 age groups.
 - b. age groups with multiple divisions only.
2. Non-Competitive age groups shall not participate in the Assessment Rounds, however due consideration shall be given to creating even fixtures for the non-competitive age groups. In determining the fixture the League may take into consideration written submissions from clubs or use the competition management system to review the team’s previous playing history.
3. U11’s Competition
 - a. The League shall determine the position of teams based on the unpublished results and standings of the previous year.

- b. Written submissions from clubs may also be considered.
4. The League shall meet at the conclusion of Rounds 1, 2, 3 and 4.
5. At the conclusion of Round 4 the League will review and assess the performance of each team in each competitive age group and division. Adjustments may be made taking in consideration the following;
 - a. The team's performance over the first four rounds
 - b. Club submissions
 - c. Where practicable, division sizes will be not less than 7 teams (8 team draw), and not greater than 12 teams
 - d. Byes will be eliminated wherever possible providing it does not affect the competitiveness of a team. Where a bye is necessary, it will preferably be allocated to a lower division.
6. Clubs should alert the Operations Manager in writing of any concerns regarding the placement of their team by no later than the commencement of the 2nd round of the assessment period. This will allow the Grading Committee time to observe and monitor any areas of concern.
7. Any movement of teams will be finalised immediately at the conclusion of round 4. The League shall publish all team movements immediately prior to the publishing of the Home and Away fixture.

Home and Away Season

- The League shall immediately re- fixture competitions effected by promotion and relation
- This will take place after Round 4 and will take effect for Round 5 and beyond.
- Will be based on team performance in the first four rounds

Percentage adjustment after regrading

A percentage adjustment will be applied to any team that has been regraded into another division or played a regraded team where the final margin is more than 30 points.

What happens to your percentage?

Percentages will be limited to a maximum 30 point difference. This is calculated by adding 30 points to the losing score in the match.

Games to which the percentage adjustment applies.

The percentage adjustment only applies in the first 4 rounds to games that:

- Include a team that has been regraded, and
- The winning/losing margin is greater than 30 points.

Example:**Score before regarding Round 1:**

Team A 2.6.18 v Team B 10.3.63

Note: Difference is greater than 30 points so percentage adjustment applies

Percentage Adjustment Round 1:

Team A 2.6.18 v Team B 7.6.48

The losing team's score was 18, so 30 points is added to that score, which then becomes the winning team's score, in this case $18 + 30 = 48$.

Club Team Formation

In accordance with the AFL Australian Football Match Policy the following will apply where clubs have enough players to form two sides in the same age group;

U8 – U12 Age Group

In these age groups the emphasis is placed on participation and enjoyment of the game and providing a structured environment for players to continue to develop their fundamental football skills.

When forming a new team (most likely in the U8 or U9 age groups) clubs shall create even teams and place children in teams where there is an even spread of;

- player height
- player ability
- player numbers

Once the team is formed players will remain in that team from season to season. Clubs can submit an application to the League to move a player from one team to another where the following exists;

- Players are not returning to the team and therefore team numbers are low
- Special family circumstances

Before submitting the application clubs must ensure that the player and the parents are engaged in the decision-making process.

U13 – U18 Age Group

To ensure that the League can endeavour to provide quality competitions, so all players can develop and enjoy their football, once an initial team is formed (most likely in the U8 or U9 age groups) if 16 or more players from that team register each season those players are to remain together.

In these age groups it is important that players are given every opportunity to further develop their skills but more importantly to gain a level of competency in different positions on the field as they

progress through the junior pathway to senior football. Studies conducted by Deakin University on behalf of the AFL have shown that young people in these age groups do not enjoy their football when;

- There is an over-emphasis on winning applied by parents, coaches and others;
- They don't get enough playing time
- They don't have enough fun
- They can't play with their friends because of imposed grading systems
- They are made to feel uncomfortable
- They are frightened of being hurt
- They are not as good as they want to be
- The coach is overly authoritarian, and
- There is high praise for the best performers and little acknowledgement of others

These studies further show that while players in these age groups agree winning is fun, they are more concerned with the quality of the competition.

Clubs can submit an application in writing to the League to move a player/s from one team to another where the following exists;

- Players are not returning to a particular team and therefore team numbers are low
- Special family circumstances
- In the best interest of the player concerned

Below are examples of team formations in the U13 to U18 age groups where there are multiple teams in those age groups.

Example 1

Team A has 24 players register from the previous season and Team B has had 18 players register, the club can submit an application to move players from Team A to Team B to even out the numbers.

Example 2

Team A has 20 players register from the previous season and therefore has 4 spots available, the club should be determining whether players within the club could move into that team to assist with their development before offering those spots to transfer players.

The following examples relate to the U17's and how to form teams with top age and bottom age players.

Example 1

An U15 team from the previous season had 24 players and all 24 players have registered for the coming season and none of the players wish to move out of the team, the club would leave those players together.

Example 2

Two U17 teams from the previous season had 21 players each, however as players have aged out of the competition only 12 players are left in each team and all have registered for the coming season. As the teams do not have 16 or more players, the club is free to use those teams

as a base and add additional players to each team without having in submit an application, unless the players are coming from another team that has 16 or more registered players.

Before submitting the application clubs must ensure that the player is engaged in the decision-making process.

When considering applications the league will take into consideration the impact on the team and the potential impact that the player movement may have on the competition structure.

Sanctions

Clubs who move players from one team to another without the prior authorization of the League will be considered to be playing an ineligible player and will face sanctions in accordance with by-law 4.2.