



"THIS IS OUR GAME"

FOR THE CONDUCT OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL FOR JUNIOR PLAYERS

AGED 11-12 YEARS

(These rule changes are moving towards coming in line with AFL Policy)

PHILOSOPHY AND MATCH PROGRAM

2014

TEAM COMPOSITION

Reduced numbers allow individual players to have more frequent and longer contact with the ball whilst play is more open, even when played on a reduced size oval.

ROTATION OF PLAYERS

Children should experience playing in a variety of positions. The practice of rotating players through different positions and the interchange enables the development of a solid foundation and adds variety and interest to the matches.

CONTACT

Deferring the introduction of full tackling is based upon the need to provide players with the best possible conditions to learn develop and improve their disposal skills by reducing congestion and pressure on the player in possession. All skills are eventually taught and learned, but there is an appropriate sequence for doing so.

The physiological and emotional readiness of children's bodies to resist the pressures of tackling also needs to be recognised in assessing when to introduce tackling. The "age of readiness" will vary from child to child, but generally is recognised as being around the 11-12 years age group.

MARKING

Awarding marks over any distance in the development phase recognises that many youngsters cannot consistently kick the ball beyond 10 metres.

BOUNCING

Restricting the number of bounces prevents players running excessive distances with the ball, encourages disposal skills and enhances team play.

KICKING OFF THE GROUND

In a players development years, the ability to enhance the skill of picking the ball up takes precedence over the need to kick it off the ground.

THE COACH NOT ON THE GROUND

The coach to provide praise, teaching and feedback when warranted from the sideline

PREMIERSHIP POINTS COMPETITIONS

The match environment in junior football must be one of encouragement, learning and development over a focus of "winning".

Where winning overrides such aims, and encouragement is replaced by a fear of failure, the program for children is inappropriate.

AWARDS

Any awards should not replace or detract from the fun and enjoyment gained by participation in the program and the learning that is an integral part of it.

Under 11's & U12's

PURPOSE

To provide children with a fun, safe and positive experience through a well structured match program that considers the level of maturation in motor, cognitive, psychosocial and emotional skill² of children in this age group.

The consolidation of basic game specific skills is still the focus at this age level rather than competition and winning, while further developing technical and tactical concepts¹. These concepts include position specific, and basic performance capacities – e.g. warm up, cool down, nutrition, hydration, recovery and goal-setting.

SPIRIT OF THE GAME

Prior to the commencement of play:

- all players, coaches and umpires should gather on the ground and shake hands
- the umpire and coaches should ensure that players are aware of the rules and procedures to be followed in the conduct of the game

The spirit of the game is **to give all available players a game** of football. Therefore:

- where difficulty occurs fielding full numbers, both coaches must agree to even up player numbers.
- excess players should be given to the opposition team if they are unable to field the required numbers.
- coaches should consider modifying the numbers per side to ensure all players participate (for instance, if planning 18-a-side but only 30 players in total are available: play 15-a-side)
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NEMJFA Bylaw 49

Applies to all Premiership Grade Competitions

Member Club's can field 24 players in any match of The League.

- A minimum of 14 players per team must take the field to constitute a match.
- Each team must play with an equal number of players (14 – 18 on field) during the minor round.
- If a player leaves the playing field due to injury and there is no replacement player available, at the next quarter time break the opposing team is required to remove one of their players from the playing field to ensure the number of players on each team remains the same. This clause does not apply when a player is sent from the field by the umpire or reported.
- Teams must play even numbers even in finals round matches regardless of the opposing Member Club's playing numbers.
- It is optional to lend players and it is optional to rotate the loaned players quarter by quarter or provide them to the opposition for the full match
- If the team with the lower number of players refuses to accept players offered by the other team then the team with the higher numbers will not be limited and can play up to 18 players.
- It is optional to lend players and it is optional to rotate the loaned players quarter by quarter or provide them to the opposition for the full match
- Any team that refuses to even up sides will lose their points for winning the game.
- Players who play for the opposition must be listed on the opposition team sheet

The umpire should at all times:

- endeavour to apply the rules of the games whilst preferring to award kicks to players in preference to calling for "ball-ups"
- understand that the spirit of the AFL junior match rules for this age group is to enable all players to gather possession and that **"The player in possession of the ball should be given every opportunity to kick or handball"**.

MATCH PROGRAM

- also see NEMJFA LAWS Matrix Chart

THE BALL

A synthetic or leather size 3 football made specifically for this age group should be used

PLAYING GROUND and OFFICIALS

A full size field is allowed unless the dimensions are clearly unsuitable for the number and skill level of the players involved.

A field umpire is needed.

THE TEAM

Eighteen-a-side means: 6 forwards, 6 midfielders, 6 backs + reserves

Interchange may take place at any time, but all players must play at least half of the match.

Equalise the teams and opponents as much as possible (match sizes, abilities)

Rotate players every quarter to provide opportunities in several positions.

PLAYING TIME

AFL Junior Fixture – Maximum of 4 x 15 minute quarters with no time on.

SCRIMAGE AND BOUNDARY THROW-INS

Full possession at the ball-up is not permitted. (**Full Possession Rule Applies**).

CONTACT / TACKLING

Full tackling rules as per the laws of Australian Football can be applied.

BARGING

No barging or chopping past opponents is allowed. A free kick is awarded. Fending off, with an open hand to the body (not above the shoulders or in the back), is allowed.

BOUNCING

Players are allowed a maximum of 2 bounces.

DISTANCE PENALTY

A player **can** be awarded a 25m advancement towards their goals if, after a mark or free kick the umpire is of the opinion that an opposing player hinders that player. This includes: overstepping the mark; wasting time; using abusive language/behaviour; etc

ORDER OFF RULE

To be applied at the umpire's discretion (or the Controlling Body where applicable). Bad language, poor sportsmanship and disputing umpiring decisions should be actively discouraged.

COACHES

The coach is not allowed on the ground. Messages may be delivered by a Runner. However, the Runner must abide by the procedure of going directly to the player involved, delivering the message and returning directly to the coaching bench.

At the end of the game all players and coaches should gather on the ground and shake hands. The umpire should also take this opportunity to address the players.