



## GEELONG WEST GIANTS TEAM SELECTION PROCESS & POLICY

The purpose of this document is to clarify the team structure selection process at Geelong West Giants Junior Football. This refers to the original make-up of teams in their respective age groups. It does not relate to weekly selections or “line ups”.

The policy outlines the framework that will guide coaches, players, parents and the committee in ensuring the aims of each age group are met and that each player is given the appropriate opportunity to actively participate and enjoy their football.

### Team Selection Objectives

Geelong West Giants Junior Football aims to provide an environment that nurtures and develops players from the youngest participants in the Under 9's through to those representing the club at Under 18 Girls. The club's development strategies during these formative years will largely influence and determine the young players' future in Australian Rules Football.

The objectives of the team selection process are:

- To provide players every possible opportunity to reach their maximum potential.
- To ensure that the selection policy applies equally to all players.
- To aim for continuous improvement of all players and teams.
- To maintain open lines of communication and co-operation between coaches, players, parents and committee.
- To achieve success whilst conducting a manner that instills pride in our club and earns the respect of opponents and the community in general.
- To have in place a suitable process to handle issues arising from the team selection.

## Team Selection Primary Focus

The primary focus of the Giant Juniors is to provide our players with every opportunity and assistance to develop to their full potential in an enjoyable and supportive environment. This will in turn provide the club with maximum opportunities for on-field success and the individuals a nurturing environment in which to experience and develop.

It is generally accepted that as a player's age increases so too does the competitive nature of players and the competition. On-field success becomes more significant as it provides a source of player pride, greater enjoyment, and satisfaction and builds respect for team mates and the club.

It is recognised however, that young players mature and develop physically and mentally at different rates and times. In recognising this transitional process the club aims to develop selection policies which see the focus of involvement move from the enjoyment and full and even participation in the Under 9 age group to the more competitive skills and performance based culture in the older age groups.

## Initial Team Structure – All Age Groups

Many variables exist that make it inappropriate for the club to set 'strict' guidelines for individual age groups. These include player siblings, family, friendship, schools and other considerations. Whilst recognising these are important factors, personal requests and preferences, although taken into account, may not always be accommodated.

### Non Competitive (U 9's /U/10's/ U/11's & U/12Girls)

For the Under 9's, 10's 11's 12Girls there is an emphasis on participation and development (no premierships, finals) where more than one team exists due to numbers, the initial team structure is developed to maintain evenly balanced teams as much as practicable and possible.

For Under 10's, 11's and Under 12 Girls, the competition is graded over the first four rounds. AFL Barwon do this to limit "blowout" games (so as not to dishearten or discourage the players) and to encourage a more even competition. While the creation of a "better" team and an "other" team may result in an increased chance of on-field success, it is not the policy or desire of the Geelong West Giants to disadvantage any player or team when the emphasis is on junior development and participation in junior football, at the expense of possible success.

### Geelong Junior Football (U/13s – Under 15s –U/ 15 Girls- U/18 Girls)

These age groups play in a highly competitive competition where on-field success is the main aim. Teams are initially graded to determine in which Division they will play. At this level it is paramount to afford the club every

opportunity of attaining participation at the highest level (division) possible.

Where numbers warrant more than one team, the selection of players in each team will be based on merit. In considering *"merit"* the following will be taken into consideration

- Player's ability
- Player's physical development
- Player's attitude
- Player's adherence to relative Codes of Conduct
- Player's adherence to team rules
- Player's attendance at training

It is important to remember that the initial standard grading process objective is to ensure that all teams will be competitive in their respective divisions.

## New Players

New players are always welcome at Geelong West Giants. If the new player was not able to attend Registration Day, inquiries must be directed to the relevant Junior Coordinator who oversees existing team structures on behalf of the coaching staff and junior committee.

Allocation to a particular team will depend on individual circumstances taking into account age, school, friendships etc. However, as stated above, the personal request or preference of the new player may not be accommodated due to issues such as but not limited to player numbers, ability or development which in turn may affect other team structures, balance, competitiveness or dynamics.

Should a new player at their top age join midway through the season, the new player's involvement will not come at the expense of a bottom age player who has been regularly participating in the same team.

## Movement Within Team Structures

Once selected, it is expected that all players in all age groups will remain in that team for the season unless some obvious anomaly or extenuating circumstance occurs eg. extended absence, injury, illness or imbalance of team numbers.

Should such a circumstance arise, it must be referred to the relevant Junior Coordinator who in conjunction with the coaches, team managers, parents and junior working group will attempt to resolve the situation for the best outcome of all concerned.

## **Movement Within Age Groups**

Occasions will arise when players will play higher than their true age groups, usually but not limited to parental request, assisting with team numbers and player development.

### Parental Request.

Should a parent request their child play up a level from their true age group, they will be required to complete the request form provided by the club clearly stating a valid reason why this should occur. The Junior Coordinator in conjunction with the parent and incumbent team coach (true level) will discuss and confirm the approval of the move up. Only after approval from the Junior Coordinator will the player be able to take the field at the requested level. Should the move up not be approved, valid reason will be given to the parent.

### Assisting with team numbers.

If numbers are short at any age group, fill-in players must be drawn from the immediate lower grade only (if under 11s are short, players from the under 10 group will be sought). In the interests of safety, players should be ideally of fair physical size and ability. Permission from the incumbent coach must firstly be obtained and the parent will give permission. The Junior Coordinator is then to be notified. Only after these requirements are met will the player be allowed to take the field.

For under 11s filling in at under 13 level, when there are two under 13 teams, the above will apply, with the players filling in only being permitted to play in the "B" or lower division team.

### Player Development.

As part of our coaching program the club will at times ask some players to play up a level to enhance their development as footballers. This will more often occur at the competitive levels. As per above such players will only be permitted to play in the "B" or lower division team. Permission from the incumbent coach must firstly be obtained and the parent will need to give permission. The Junior Coordinator is then to be notified. Only after these requirements are met will the player be allowed to take the field.

These guidelines are developed in the interests of player safety and our duty of care as a club for player welfare. They are to be adhered to at all times.

## **Weekly Team Selections**

In accordance with AFL Barwon Junior Football guidelines, the input of weekly team selections (Sportingpulse) are the responsibility of the coach and team managers