



Player Rotation Policy

Introduction

The Research Junior Football Club has experienced significant growth over the past few years. In season 2008 the club fielded 10 teams as well as a thriving Auskick program. Due to the high number of player registrations in several teams some players were not given the opportunity to play every week.

Whilst the club wants to be competitive and reach optimal success in each of our grades contested, we realize that this needs to be fair and in line with our club values so far as:

- Respecting the talent, potential, developmental stage and goals of each player so that they are able to realize their full potential.
- Respecting the rights, dignity and worth of every player regardless of their ability, gender, cultural background or religion.
- Building the character of players, as well as their skills and promoting good sportsmanship.

Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this Player Rotation Policy is to provide guidelines to ensure players have fair game time by defining what is expected of the players, coaches and club.

If any given team is short or has up to 24 players this is not an issue, however as the squads get bigger, finding the fairest balance between everyone's needs becomes more difficult and is the reason that a policy of this nature becomes increasingly important.

It is difficult to please everybody all of the time, therefore the aim should be to be as fair as possible within the parameters of this policy.

Who this Policy applies to

This policy applies to all players, coaches and officials of the Research Junior Football Club.

Player Rotations

The fair rotation of players throughout the season is important in giving players the opportunity to develop their skills and experience the roles required in different positions within the team. All players regardless of their ability should be rotated as fairly as possible throughout the season. They should also be given the opportunity to experience a variety of positions in accordance with their established goals as set in conjunction with their coaches. As the team approaches finals, the coach has the right to settle his strongest side and will always play his best available side.

Expectation of Players

For players to be considered for selection, they are expected to attend all training sessions and arrive on time. If they are unable to attend a training session or will be late, they are expected to contact the Coach/Team Manager in advance to let them know why. They are also

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expected to arrive at matches on time and dressed appropriately. Players are expected to show commitment and good behaviour at all training sessions and matches.

Expectations of Coaches

The coach has complete discretion in determining who 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 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 team
- Player commitment and behaviour
- Skills balance within the team
- Player injury list
- Tactics employed by the opposition
- Ladder position approaching finals

The most important factor is communication; firstly he must clearly communicate his and the club's policy on player rotation at the start of the season before the first round of matches. Then during the season (and particularly as finals approach) he must communicate constantly with players who will not be selected giving reasons and doing all he can to give them a positive focus.

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

Expectations of the Club

In accepting a player registration, the club assumes responsibility for the development of that player as a footballer. The club ensures that coaches are suitably accredited and that they abide by the club's conduct agreements. However, a further obligation in promoting football development is ensuring that the player plays a fair share of the game. No one can develop as a footballer by sitting on the bench. The club must emphasise the need for coaches to accept this responsibility in the same way it does with conduct agreements and other policies.

Implementation

In reality, player rotation and game time will depend on the circumstances of the game. There may be a good reason why the policy is not adhered to on a particular day. For example, it is unreasonable to put a small player into a position against a much larger opponent. Similarly fair game time may be relaxed if the player will play a second game that day. However all

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opportunities should be used to implement the guidelines. For example, when a team is expected to dominate the opposition, it is a good opportunity to rest key players. Implementing the policy to the letter does not necessarily address the issue of fairness. On-field time is not necessarily equal playing time. A player placed in a field position where he would not touch the ball for the entire game would get neither fair game time nor wider experience. The spirit of the policy is more important than the measured outcome.

Organizational Responsibilities

The Research Junior Football Club will:

- Publish, distribute and promote this policy
- Monitor and review this policy annually
- Work closely with Coaches to ensure its implementation

Individual Responsibilities

Individuals bound by this policy are responsible for:

- Making themselves aware of the policy and complying with the requirements

Breach of this Policy

Breach of this policy will be addressed by the Executive Committee of the Research Junior Football Club and may result in disciplinary action.

Date Introduced	Last Review Date	Next Review Date
October 2008	April 2012	March 2013

