



## JUNIORS AND MINIROOS TEAM FORMATION POLICY

### Purpose

To enable team formation in order to place children in a team environment/grade in which they can develop their football skills, enjoy playing and be challenged in a fun and inclusive environment. In placing players, consideration will be given to players' age, team balance, skill level (where applicable) and maximising on field playing time with as few substitutions as possible.

### Our Vision and Mission Statement

Our vision is that all women and girls are active, healthy and empowered through football.

Our mission is that our club is a safe and inclusive place for women, girls and gender-diverse people to access and enjoy football.

We are committed to developing our football capability both as individuals and a club.

Our club junior environment;

- Seeks to positively develop all players' self-esteem
- Emphasises the importance of learning cooperative skills within a team environment
- Promotes a sense of being a good teammate and respecting the rules of the game
- Is accessible to all regardless of ability or background
- Encourages all players to develop their sporting skills to their fullest potential
- Promotes active, healthy living amongst young people

### Team Selection Group

The selection group will be made up of age group team coaches, Junior Coaching Coordinator and supported by members of the committee where relevant.

### Squad Sizes

Miniroos				Juniors			
Team	Year of birth	Squad	Max Squad	Team	Year of birth	Squad	Max Squad
U8s	2016	7+4 Subs	11	U12s	2012	9+5 Subs	14
U9s	2015	7+4 Subs	11	U13s	2011	9+5 Subs	14
U10s	2014	9+5 Subs	14	U14s	2010	11+5 Subs	16
U11s	2013	9+5 Subs	14	U15s	2009	11+5 Subs	16
				U16s	2008	11+5 Subs	16

## Team Formation

Team formation will:

- Place players in their correct age group as a starting premise;
- Determine the number of teams that can be formed in an age group from the number of players registered.

Depending on age groups, each team should have a squad that reflects the playing numbers of the age group.

This is to allow for a bench and absences due to illness, injury and other commitments.

- If an age group does not have an appropriate number of players for a straightforward allocation of teams (for example, more than is manageable for one team, but insufficient for two teams) then consideration will be given to allowing players to play up or down an age group to create teams with manageable numbers across the club.
- In considering whether a player should play up or down an age group, consideration should be given to 'basis for player selection' outlined below. The players and parents or carers in question will have the circumstances and reasons explained to them by the Selection Committee and are involved in the final decision.
- When there are sufficient numbers for two teams in an age division, players will be allocated to the appropriate team as outlined below in 'player selection'.
- Starting point for the following year is point 1 above, which is your correct age group.

## Team Selection Guiding Principles

In assessing the appropriate team for a player the following are key considerations:

- Age group.
- Motivation/reason(s) for playing: social, competition, development of skills.
- Previous team formations
- Availability for games throughout the season.
- Core skills: 1v1, 1st touch, running with the ball and striking the ball.
- Knowledge and understanding of football.
- Social groupings of players may be taken into account
- Occasionally there will be confidential issues raised by a player which will be relevant to their team allocation.

The application of these principles may mean that:

- some players may not be playing with their existing friends, particularly where they are not all at the same skill level; and / or
- some players may be playing with people they haven't played with before, or in a team which is different to the one they played with in the previous year.
- players may have to play at a higher or lower level to make the squad sizes more balanced, ensure that the club can field teams and do our best to provide as many children the opportunity to join a team.

The club recognises that, for some players, their interest in playing may be heavily impacted by their social groupings. Care will be taken to ensure that the specific needs of these players is also a part of the selection process.

We anticipate that players adhere to our club's standards and demonstrate respect and consideration towards their teammates, coaches, game officials, and the club as a whole. Failure to meet these expectations may result in the club transferring disruptive players to another team or, if warranted, rescinding any offers of team placement. In such instances, the Junior Coordinator, the Junior Coaching Coordinator, and the Swifts Executive Committee would oversee the management of these matters.

## Playing outside of the age group

The club anticipates that the vast majority of players will be playing within their own age group. However, in some circumstances, a player may be suited to playing in an older (or younger) age group.

The Team Selection Group will consider the ability, commitment and desire of the player, taking into account the physical and social factors relating to playing at an older (or younger) age group, before considering a player to be a candidate for playing outside of their own age group. As always, the decision should be guided by what is in the best interests of the player.

Football Victoria does not allow a player to move down a grade within an age group when they have played five games in that division. For example, having played five games in U13s, that player cannot play in U12s or lower for the rest of the season.

## Squad Capacity Limits

There will be some instances where players cannot be accommodated due to the availability of squad places. The Maribyrnong Swifts will do our utmost to form an appropriate team for all registered players, however on the occasion that we cannot, we will refund any registration money paid (before the beginning of the season). Prior to this happening the Junior Coordinator/s will maintain regular contact with impacted parents.

While the club welcomes late registrations from players to help us fill a squad, if squad capacity limits have already been reached, we will hold a waitlist for players interested in playing and if enough to form a squad, register a team (if possible) with Football Victoria.

## Appeals

Players or parents who have questions or concerns about the application of this selection policy with respect to their team selection should raise the matter with the Junior Coordinator in the first instance. If the concern cannot be resolved, the Junior Coordinator will work with the relevant coach and the Junior Coaching Coordinator. If this issue still cannot be resolved then the issue will be taken to the Swifts Executive Committee.

## Our Values and Expectations

As our club continues to grow please remember team formation is not an exact science. It will be undertaken in good faith and with the developmental needs of the player in mind and balance of teams for the club.

We ask our members to remember that junior sport teaches great life skills of compromise and flexibility and provides opportunities to develop and extend both skills and friendship groups while working together for the benefit of the team and club.

Any change can be challenging and the Maribyrnong Swifts want to be very transparent about our selection policy. This policy has been developed to provide a fair, consistent and manageable system for determining team selection.

**Parents:** please help us by fostering your child's resilience. Any short term disappointment arising from their placement in any given team will, over time, be replaced by the joy of playing the game at a standard which is appropriate to them and the opportunity to develop new friendships among their playing group.