



AFL CANBERRA DOUBLE AGE PROGRESSION INFORMATION PAPER*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

AFL Canberra's primary objective is to provide a quality experience for all involved, where players enjoy their participation in junior AFL, grow personally by being involved in a team sport and enhance their skills.

We are committed to increasing participation, raising the overall standard of play and supporting the development of our talented players.

2.0 DOUBLE AGE PROGRESSION

The current single age, one division structure of the competition has been in place for many years and has served the junior AFL competition well. It has limitations however that are restricting growth in numbers. For clubs with enough players to field more than one team, both teams must play against each other in the same division. It has also led to a competition that at times is unbalanced and can be intimidating for new or developing players. Clubs struggling for numbers, or with a developing player group, are forced to play against much stronger teams.

Consequently a double age, multi-division competition will be implemented in the upper age groups in the junior competition in 2007.

3.0 THE NEW STRUCTURE

The structure will be:

- Under 16 Division 1 (upper age limit 16.years and 6 months)
 Division 2
- Under 14 Division 1
 Division 2
- Under 12 One division (unless numbers warrant consideration of two divisions)

The intention is for players with higher ability and stronger physical presence to play in Division 1, allowing those players who are still developing or of smaller stature to play in Division 2. In the Under 16 age group players who are 16 and above at the eligibility date (up to 16 and 6 months) must play in Division 1.

The same arrangements that applied previously will apply to the Under 12.age group and below. Any change to the Under 12 age group will be dependent on numbers and further advice to clubs.

4.0 TEAMS

4.1 Nominations

Prior to the commencement of the 2007 season clubs will be asked to nominate teams in the various age divisions.

* Note: This information paper is to be read in conjunction with the AFL Canberra By-laws which provide a more comprehensive explanation of the rules applying to junior AFL.

- Where a club can only field one team in an age group involving a double age progression, it will initially be left to the discretion of the club as to which division the team is nominated for.
- Where a club wishes to enter two teams in an age group involving a double age progression, it will be expected to nominate a Division 1 team and a Division 2 team (rather than both teams in Division 2).
- In the event that a club wishes to enter three teams in an age group involving a double age progression, the strongest team should be nominated for Division 1 and the other teams nominated for Division 2.
- During the first four rounds, teams will be assessed on their performance and a decision taken by AFL Canberra Junior Operations, in conjunction with the Junior Operations Committee, to either confirm the team in the division in which it is playing, elevate it to a higher division or relegate it to a lower division.

4.2 Number of Players

Clubs are expected to avoid excessive numbers in one division and balance player numbers between divisions. They are also expected to establish as many teams as possible in an age group. For example, if there are 30 players nominating for Division 1 and 16 for Division 2, clubs would be expected to nominate two teams of around 23 players.

4.3 Double Age Restricted List

Where clubs have two or more teams in the one double age group, clubs will be required to submit a restricted player list that includes the names of the top 10 players in the age group. Restricted list players must play in Division 1 and are ineligible to play in a lower division.

By way of guidance it would be expected that the list would include players who:

- participate in AFL Canberra Development Squads;
- represent the ACT in PSSA or SSSA teams;
- talented players who join teams from interstate at the beginning or during the year and have not yet participated in ACT representative duties;
- other talented players who choose not to participate in representative activities.

Special exemptions will be considered if a club believes a player, who falls within the criteria for the restricted list but whose date of birth puts him in the bottom half of the age group, should not play in Division 1.

All other players will be free to play in any division but will be subject to finals eligibility criteria.

5.0 GENERAL

Given 2007 is the first year of implementation of the double age structure there will inevitably be teething problems. Accordingly AFL Canberra's Junior Operations Committee will be adopting a flexible approach to ensure a smooth transition, particularly where the best interests of players are involved. It is expected however that clubs will abide by the principles of the double age progression and support AFL Canberra in achieving the objectives set out at the beginning of this paper.

February 2007