

## **Competition Coaching Philosophy**

The aim of the Junior Championships competition is to develop young footballers to the maximum of their ability. To achieve their potential players are to be coached in such a way that develops:

- The skills, physical attributes and football knowledge, and the
- Personal characteristics and self esteem of each player

AFL Victoria believes that the above development can be maximized in an environment that:

- Emphasises individual player development rather than team success
- Emphasises individual contribution as an essential component in a team environment
- Considers the players' long term participation in football at a variety of levels
- Promotes a balanced approach to the players' lifestyle

## **Coaching Practices**

AFL Victoria has adopted the following Coaching Practices Policy to assist in the development of players. Coaches are required to implement the policy in their coaching practices. AFL Victoria takes very seriously breaches to its coaching practices and philosophies and will impose the appropriate disciplinary actions.

### **Sliding/Rolling/Press/Zone**

For the purpose of our own rules a sliding/rolling/ press/zone can be defined but not limited to a standard formation like a 12 man or more zone that keeps its shape in relation to the ball movement of the opposition, with the defensive intention to slow play down and minimise space. For kick-ins only a 12 man zone can be employed.

### **'Taggers'/'Run Withs'**

'Taggers' whose sole aim is to stop the opposition player from gaining possessions are not to be used in the Junior Championships. It is acceptable however that 'run withs', who seek to gain possessions themselves whilst maintaining close checking of their opponent, are used. The same players are not to be used as 'run-withs' each match

### **Development of 'Talls'**

Coaches should be very conscious of the special developmental needs of tall players and make every effort to give such players maximum match time on the ground. Junior Championships Coaches are required to make every effort to play taller players in positions that they may be able to play at the AFL level, thereby giving preference to tall, but perhaps less skilled players, in the ruck and midsized talls in key positions, rather than in the ruck where they are unlikely to play senior football.

### **Positional Rotations of Players**

Coaches are required to give players the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency at playing in a variety of positions and players should be used in a number of roles throughout the season.

### **Interchange Bench/Rotations**

The interchange bench is to be used for the purpose of player welfare and development consistent with the Coaches Philosophy. AFL Victoria does not condone the use of the interchange bench to

solely gain a game day advantage. In other words, an unreasonable number of rotations through the midfield would be contrary to the spirit of the use of the interchange bench in the Championships.

### **Extra Player in Defence**

'Flooding' the opposition's forward line or midfield (i.e. the practice of moving multiple players to fill space in the opposition's forward half) is not to be used in the Championships. It makes it very difficult for forwards to develop, does not encourage accountability for mid fielders, and reduces the skill development of back line players.

For Junior Championships purposes 'Crowding' is defined as having two or more additional players positioned permanently on the defensive side of the ball in the opposition's forward fifty-metre area. 'Flooding' is the proactive practice of moving multiple forward line players into the opposition's defensive half of the ground with the aim of restricting space and retarding the fluent delivery of the football to the forwards. At centre square bounces, teams are only to have 6 players in the defensive half.

One additional player positioned on the defensive side of the ball in the opposition's forward fifty, and, additional players running into defence with their opponent in transition are not considered to be flooding in general play. Crowding and Flooding as defined above are not permitted in the Junior Championships as it is contrary to the development philosophy of the competition. Crowding and Flooding do not assist the development of the:

- Midfielders for the attacking team who can gain many uncontested possessions and who will have many uncontested disposals;
- Defenders of the defending team who are receiving support from additional team members;
- Attacking team's forwards who are being crowded by additional defenders and not therefore able to develop their skills as effectively as otherwise possible, or the
- 'Crowders' or 'flooders' and their accountability for an opponent

### **High Density Football**

When the ball enters an oppositions forward half coaches are required to ensure that a **least five players remain inside the opposite half of the ground** delineated by an "imaginary" line across the centre of the ground. Furthermore, two (2) of those five players must be inside the fifty (50) metre arc. This will be an expectation on all kick outs as well.

### **Style of Play**

Coaches must emphasize a style of play that requires players to be disciplined when their opponents have the ball, at boundary throw-ins, ball ups, etc., and where players are accountable for an opponent in such circumstances. Whilst wanting to encourage the initiative and creativity of players it is considered essential that players can demonstrate to AFL clubs that when required they are able to be accountable for their opponent. Coaches should encourage players to develop the skills and behaviours that are relevant to the requirements at AFL level notwithstanding compromising the development of all players without 'crowding' and 'flooding'.

### **Use of Runners**

AFL Victoria believes that having two runners on match days is an important assistance in the development of players. Club Managers and Coaches are to ensure that runners are to be physically

capable of doing the runner's job and not to be 'standing stillers', 'walkers' or 'joggers' but are to deliver the message as quickly as possible and return after giving the message immediately to the coaches box. Runners are to be messengers, not coaches.

### **Coaching Behaviour**

Coaches and players are role models within the competition and swearing or over the top aggressive, intimidating actions will not be tolerated in the Junior Championships. Coaches are to be controlled in the coaches' box due to the audibility of their coaching with the small crowds that are in attendance at matches and players shouldn't be coached in a way that results in them swearing, being excessively aggressive etc, before or during play.