

## 'BOMBER WAY'

The 'Bomber Way' is a document designed to support our junior coaches in the training, selection and playing of our teams from U8 through to U16.5 levels. It was developed a number of years ago and has appeared in a number of written forms however in 2013 we adopted it as policy and as such is a requirement for coaches whom work with us.

### APPROACH THROUGH THE GRADES

#### Under 8s

Our sole purpose for our U8 sides is for the children who play for us to have fun and learn to play footy. Accordingly we have adopted the following rules:

- All children will get equal game time irrespective of ability
- Children will be rotated through forwards, mid-field and backs on a quarter by quarter basis
- Scores can be kept informally but will not be used as a key motivator
- Best player awards will not be provided
- Rewards will be shared across the team. Friday night awards will be provided each week.
- The focus for the awards will be those whom have applied skills learnt in training.

#### Under 9s & Under 10s

The focus of the U9 & U10 sides remains on fun and participation. The three-zone oval rule applies to U9 but is no longer used in U10. Normal positions are adopted for U10s as a result. Modified tackling is in place and the following rules apply to our U9 & U10 players:

- Children will get equal game time irrespective of ability
- Children will change positions each quarter in U9s and in U10s rotations will occur with an expectation children will spend no longer than a half in one position
- Scores can be kept and advised but not emphasized
- Best player awards are not generally provided although outstanding efforts at this level may be recognised
- Rewards will be shared across the team

#### Under 11s-13s

We recognise that at this level children are transitioning through football and tackling is included. Premiership points may come into the game during the carnival environment late in the season for U11s and the U12s and U13s play for premiership points for the full season. They may also be fortunate enough to play finals. The game will be physical and our emphasis will be on playing the ball.

The following rules will apply to our U11, U12 and U13 players:

- Children will get equal game time irrespective of ability
- Children will begin to be schooled in positions while the expectation remains that they will spend no longer than a half in one position. This is particularly important where the game is one sided – players will be moved so that for at least half of the game they are involved in game activity
- Every player should experience playing on each of the five lines of field position over a three match period. Positions should be varied and not just straight up and down the "spine" or only on the left or on the right side of the field
- Where we have enough players to form two teams at a certain age group, these teams will be selected to be even in strength and play in the same division where possible. Both teams will be offered the same resources.
- Scores can be kept and notified and used as a motivation
- Best player awards are not generally provided although outstanding efforts at this level may be recognised
  - Rewards will be shared across the team

#### Under 14s, 15s and 16.5s

Once children reach these age groups the emphasis shifts from players rotating through all positions on the ground to them gaining a level of competency in different positions.

Our belief is that these grades are development grades and that premiership if they come are a bonus that will

be celebrated. We believe that our development process is key to our long-term success and that the chase for junior premierships above other factors works against our requirements for success at a higher level. Accordingly we have adopted the following positions with respect to these sides:

- Where numbers make it possible we will create distinct squads for each age group and strive to keep the number of players moving up to older groups to a minimum.
- Where we have enough players to form two teams at a certain age group, these teams may, following discussion with coaches and the football coordinator, be divided into a stronger "A" team to play in a higher division, and a second "B" team.
- If this is the case, the aim will be for the full age squad to train together and the teams to BOTH be picked with good chances of being competitive and having a rewarding season
- Both teams will be given the same resources and levels of coaching.
- Some players may shift between the A and B teams subject to form and team requirements.
- We will NOT contrive to have outside players qualify for a squad at the expense of regular players, including in the Finals
- Best player awards are provided at the end of the season and outstanding results and improvements are recognised during the season

## **Coaching**

It is expected that at these older year levels:

- Development will be a key component of our approach. Coaches should explain the positional requirements of players when learning to play in different positions, particularly from U/11 level upwards
- Whilst clearly looking to win games we will provide players the opportunity to play in a number of positions over the course of the year
- When the opportunity arises i.e. when the games are lopsided we will move the sides around to create a better competition and provide opportunities for players to get involved in the game
- Players in minor round games will be on field for at least half a game
- In finals ALL players will be on field for at least a quarter of a game and preferably a half

## **TRAINING TIMES – U8 to U11**

All U8s, U9s, U10s and U11s will train on a Friday night between 6pm and 7pm Training will conclude at exactly 7pm to be followed by presentations in the club on most nights.

## **TRAINING TIMES – U12 to U16.5**

Training times to be negotiated with coaches and subject to oval availability. Many players have other football commitments with school or SANFL teams and one club training session a week in most cases may be sufficient.

## **FINALS**

Brighton junior squads will be formed with the aim of giving most players a game each week, ideally below the maximum allowed by the SANFL of 28/32 players a team. However, when teams qualify for finals, tough decisions will inevitably need to be made. Players who miss out, and their parents, will be disappointed and need to understand how selections are made.

The following guidelines attempt to balance our commitment to giving all boys/girls the thrill of playing a finals game with the aim of remaining competitive against clubs where the culture makes winning more of a priority. Selection decisions will be left in hands of team coaches and managers, in discussion where necessary with the junior coordinator or other club representative. Where a dispute exists, the club will have the final say and take responsibility for that decision.

Different teams and different circumstances mean rules need to be flexible but the following guidelines should be followed. These need to be considered alongside the SANFL Juniors rules.

- Regular members of a team during the season have priority over players that may have been brought in for a few games - even if they have played enough games to qualify. A 'regular member' includes a player who has missed games due to injury, SANFL or State commitments.
- Coaches should adopt a finals selection strategy that enables as many players as possible in their squad the chance to experience finals football. A coach should endeavour to make at least 2 changes from final to final if the team progresses beyond one final.
- In a Grand Final, the coach can name the strongest possible team provided regular members are given priority.
- Barring injury, all selected players in a final should be given at least half the game on the ground.