



Barwon Heads Football Netball Club

Email: netball@barwonheadsfnfnc.org.au

Netball Playing Policy

Purpose

To clearly articulate the decision-making guidelines and best practice principles for player selection, team allocation, junior development and other related netball program requirements.

Target Audience

Barwon Heads Netball Club prospective and current players, junior player caregivers, club coaches, selectors and committee members.

Responsibilities

Final accountability for implementation of this policy rests with the Barwon Heads Football Netball Club (BHFNC) Netball Committee. The committee can review and update this policy at any time to reflect netball program requirements.

Policy Application

This policy becomes active once released publicly to the club members and remains in effect until revoked by the netball committee. Any exceptions or requests to vary to this policy are to be directed to the relevant senior or junior coordinator for consideration, further endorsement may be required from the Netball Director for policy exemptions.

Introduction

BHFNC places a strong emphasis on participation, teamwork, sporting resilience, development of skills, game play awareness and overall fitness – and of course, having fun. Our aim is to provide a culturally, emotionally and physically safe and inclusive netball playing environment for all.

BHFNC provides a netball program within the AFL Barwon league competitions. This includes registering teams in the Bellarine Football Netball League (BFNL) played on Saturdays and the Geelong Junior Netball (GJNL) competitions played on weekdays across winter ('club netball').

The BHFNC netball committee may also offer club affiliation for teams interested in the AFL Barwon social summer netball competition held on weekdays across summer ('social netball') as a secondary club activity.

Our club seeks to be recognised as a competitive, community, value orientated, and professional sporting club, equally admired for on-field and off-field achievements. The BHFNC netball program is run by club and community volunteers, and we acknowledge the generosity and support of our volunteers in providing this function. Our players are also expected to volunteer within the club and support the netball program to be successfully delivered.

We also warmly acknowledge the Wadawurrung people as the traditional custodians of the area that we gather on to connect as a community and to play our sport. As a club, we recognise that we walk in the footsteps of those First Nations people who came before us, and who, like our club, continue to have a rich and enduring connection to community and country.

Child Safety requirements

All players and (for junior players their adult caregivers) and club affiliates must be aware of and comply with the club's and the state netball Child Safety Policies. These policies and protocols are viewable on the club website [Netball Policies - Barwon Heads Football Netball Club \(barwonheadsfnfnc.org.au\)](http://barwonheadsfnfnc.org.au)

PART A – CLUB NETBALL

The BFNLC winter netball is a 'home & away' style competition currently held between March to September each year and is considered the predominant netball competition for BHFNC.

The Club can currently register up to 12 teams in this Saturday competition across Senior and Junior grades as follows:

- Seniors: A,B,C,D,E and 19&Under
- Juniors: 17&Under - sections 1 & 2
15&Under - sections 1 & 2
13&Under - sections 1 & 2

Where the club has capacity or demand, we also register teams in the GJNL fixed venue competition across

- 11&Unders – as many sections as required that play Tuesday nights.
- 13&U, 15&U, 17&U and 19&U – as many sections as required, that play Friday nights.

Section 1: Player Selection and Team Allocations

1.1 Policy Exemption

- The executive netball committee reserves the right to make any adjustment to team allocations and development opportunities as necessary to support the continued success of the club or the wellbeing of any player. Any decision will be undertaken in consultation with the coach and affected player.
- Final decision making resides with the Netball Director to resolve any disputes or requests that may arise in relation to this policy or its application. The Netball Director reserves the right to seek advice from the BHFNC Club Committee or a relevant expert to aid in decision making.

1.2 Selection Panels

- The BHFNC Netball Committee is responsible for appointing a suitably qualified selection panel to assess players across pre-season trials for all teams, with the exception of the 11&Under group.
- Typically, the Selection Panel will comprise of a minimum of three (3) adult assessors. The Netball Committee will endeavour to have at least one (1) independent selector from either outside the club or who is a non-player or non-parent for each grade / age-group to support an un-biased approach to selections (subject to availability).
- Conflicts of interest by the selection panel will be declared to the BHFNC Netball Committee in advance of trials, and a review of Team Selections by the Netball Director may occur where legitimate concerns are identified.

1.3 Team selection guiding principles

- In all selection decisions, coaches and selectors are expected to balance the desire for equal participation of all players with the goal of on-field success for the club.
- This is achieved through a strengths-based approach to team selection and individual player development opportunities; where coaches and selectors focus on utilising the strengths of individual players to field teams that are harmonious and successful.
- For junior players, the coaches and selectors will also consider the importance of enabling all young people to participate in netball as part of a 'fair-go' approach to inclusivity and skills development.

1.4 Selection Expectations

- Player selection in a team is dependent upon uninterrupted availability for trials, training and matches (unless prior arrangements have been made), this is equally applicable for junior and senior players.
- If selected, it is a club expectation that a commitment to the team will be given priority over other pursuits.
- Commitment to BHFNC is required across the whole season from pre-season trials through to end-of season activities. This also extends to attendance at club information sessions or sports training clinics and supporting major club social/fundraising/volunteer events in addition to game days.

Important: All prospective players (and/or their caregivers) are expected to maintain a professional sporting attitude in accordance with club and league Codes of Conduct and comply with all club Health and Safety policies or protocols, including Child Safety Standards when participating in our club activities.

1.5 Selection standards matrix

All players will be assessed against the below criteria and in accordance with section 1.3 guiding principles.

TEAM	ASSESSIBLE CRITERIA
A Grade	Based on trial participation and assessment of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • netball skills and experience • position and/or player versatility • game play and strategy awareness • leadership and teamwork strengths • overall player attitude and team compatibility • commitment to upholding club values and adherence to policy.
B Grade	
C Grade	
D Grade	
E Grade	
19&Under	
17&Under	Based on trial participation and assessment of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • netball skills and experience • position and/or player versatility • teamwork strengths • gameplay and strategy awareness • leadership characteristics • overall player attitude and team compatibility
15&Under	Based on trial participation and assessment of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • netball skills and experience • player and/or position versatility • teamwork strengths • team compatibility
13&Under	Based on trial participation and assessment of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • netball skills and experience • teamwork strengths • team compatibility
11&Under	Based on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • birth year; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bottom age players must be at least 8 turning 9 in the current year. - Top age players must be 10 turning 11 in the current year. • assessment of skills and experience by coaches and/or netball committee where required. • schooling or peer group factors; whilst every effort is made to allocate teams with school-based peer groups, this may not always be possible.

1.6 Selection process

- Players interested in playing netball for BHFNC must submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) online during the open EOI period to ensure trials can be coordinated. Late EOIs will be accepted at the sole discretion of the Netball Committee executive.
- Selection trials will occur over at least two (2) sessions of 1 hour each in duration with the exception of 11&Under age group. Additional trial sessions may be undertaken at the committee's discretion or where potential player numbers are significant enough to warrant more player assessment time.
- Players will be assessed during all stages of the trial sessions including warm-up, training drills, game play and post-session debriefing.
- Players will be given opportunity to play in their preferred positions during trials as nominated in their EOI forms. Players may also be asked to trial in other positions or in other grades at the discretion of the selection panel. We ask that all players adopt a flexible and professional approach to these opportunities.

1.7 Selection for multiple teams

- Senior players will only be offered a position in a single grade. Players listed in B Grade will be expected to fill-in for A Grade when required.
- Players in the 17&U and 19&U age groups may also choose to trial for a position in a senior team. Junior players intending to trial for a senior teams **MUST** also complete a separate senior EOI to enable them to be considered for selection.
- If selected to play in multiple teams the player will prioritise their age-group/primary team first in negotiation with the coach. However, the player must be able to commit to training with both teams.

1.8 Junior selection into multiple teams

- In certain circumstances, junior players may be selected into teams across more than one junior age group, although this is considered a rare policy exception due to the high numbers of junior players each year and our 'fair go' principles.
- Playing in a second (higher) grade can only be offered where there is an opening in a team and/or where it meets a skills gap for that team.
- The club takes several things into account when offering multiple team selection:
 - the age and development needs of the player.
 - compatibility with and needs of the higher grade team.
 - the player must first commit to playing in their age group division and prioritise their age group team first. This includes attending training each week.
 - we encourage caregivers and junior players to consider the netball commitment required playing in two teams for a child's physical, social and emotional well-being needs. This also should include impacts on household schedules before agreeing.
- The Junior Coordinator or Netball Director will have responsibility for approving multiple team selection for any junior players.
- A Player has the right to decline playing multiple games for the club, without fear of missing out on future development or selection opportunities.

Section 2: Squad and/or Team Allocations

2.1 Squad Allocation

Depending on player numbers, trials may result in the selection of provisional squads from which preliminary teams will be determined prior to Round 1. Players can be assigned to the following squads:

- A & B Grade
- C, D & E Grade
- 19s
- 17s
- 15s
- 13s

2.2 Provisional Team Allocation

- Once trials conclude (and/or squads have been selected), players will be notified of their provisional team allocation. Teams will not be finalised until Round 3 of the competition and players may be rotated across teams during this time at the coach's discretion.
- During this period coaches will continue to assess player suitability to inform final team selection. Players should strive to demonstrate their commitment to personal fitness, participation, and other club leadership activities during this time, as this can impact final team allocations.
- Players will be notified directly by their coach in advance of any team adjustments. Teams may change based on player suitability, team skills gap requirements or to meet player availability requirements across the season.
- Coaches will endeavour to ensure the least amount of disruption to teams as possible during this period and players will need to adopt a resilient and professional sporting attitude to team allocations.
- The committee will formally notify players, via email, of their provisional team allocation / trial outcomes.
- Feedback on trial performance will only be offered to players that have not been selected in a BHFNC team upon request to the netball committee via netball@barwonheadsfn.org.au.

2.3 Final Team Allocations

- BHFNC aim to have a maximum of 10 players per team.
- Team selections will prioritise filling the Saturday club netball requirements (for BFNL) before seeking to appoint teams in other (weekday) netball competitions (GJNL).
- Any shortfall in team numbers will be managed by the coach/selectors (and at their discretion) with the option to select a player from another team or age group to fill vacancies so that the club can field competitive teams. Coaches will individually notify players via text message or email if there any changes to final team allocations.

Section 3: Game time and player positions

BHFNC strives to ensure all players are treated fairly and afforded playing opportunities that reflects their efforts and abilities.

For junior player's this also means ensuring their developmental needs are considered along with fair playing time principles.

3.1. Defining Team Success

The club expects senior teams and coaching staff to prioritise fielding competitive teams that ultimately seek to secure a position in finals (finishing in the top five). Although this does not absolve coaching responsibilities to treat players fairly. Our club acknowledges that all players 'pay to play' netball at BHFNC and may have individual circumstances that impact performance or participation from time to time.

For junior teams the club expects team success to focus on demonstrated skill increases, game play strategy awareness, improved netball confidence, as well as encouraging players to be competitive enough to secure a position in finals (top five finish).

3.2. Assessment by coaches

The process by which playing ('game time') decisions are made by coaches include:

- Assessment of a player's skill level;
- Assessment of the best position for a player to contribute to team success;
- Consideration of a player's past playing positions;
- Commitment to ensuring playing opportunities are shared amongst players.

Coaches will use the below criteria with reference to all sections of this policy and the club's playing principles to inform their decisions.

Assessment Matrix

TEAM	GAME TIME AND PLAYING POSITIONS
A Grade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playing time and position is determined by the coaching staff assessment of the player's skill, performance level and attitude towards team/club commitment; and• Team success requirements.• During finals, position and court time decisions will be at the coach's discretion.
B Grade	
C Grade	
D Grade	
E Grade	
19&Under	
17&Under	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playing time in positions will be based on<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ demonstrated netball skill and team success requirements,○ ensuring individual player development opportunity occurs.• During finals, position and court time decisions will be at the coach's discretion
15&Under	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playing time in positions will be based on skill and team success requirements and ensuring fair player development occurs.• During finals, position and court time decisions will be at the coach's discretion
13&Under	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Players rotated across several (attacking and defending) positions to boost skill development.• Players allocated equal court time.• During finals, position and court time decisions will be at the coach's discretion.
11&Under	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All players rotated across all positions to ensure skill development.• All players allocated equal court time

3.3. Eligibility Responsibilities

- All players must be financial members of BHNC by the commencement of Round 3 of the season. Payment plans can be arranged for players who require additional time to meet financial commitments. Any player not considered a financial member will be unable to take the court on game days.
- All players and coaches must have evidence of netball sport insurance cover (Netball Victoria Membership / VNA) for the current playing season.

- Participation in training throughout the season (at least once per week) is mandatory. Consistent avoidance of participation or performance issues at training will impact how coaches apply 'fair' court time.
- Any planned absences or unforeseen events which result in the player's absence from the team for frequent or extended periods, requires the player to notify to the coach/team manager as soon as possible so as not to disadvantage the team or coaching efforts.

3.4. Fill-in Players

- The committee must be notified if a player is filling in for another team as soon as practical (Thursday night) as teams are entered into the game day administration system (PlayHQ) on a Thursday night.
- Players from other teams (including juniors) are not to take the place of a senior player to boost the team's chance of success when the team already has fit and able senior players available.
- Junior development opportunities must be carefully managed to not adversely impact senior player opportunities. Junior players can be listed as a reserve (on the bench) but should only take the court in the event of an injury, illness or absence and provided there is not another player in the team who can take the position. Unless a specific development opportunity has been negotiated between the junior and senior coaches.

Section 4: Junior Development

Junior players may occasionally be rotated into higher grade teams or senior teams across the season to support skill building and strategic game play development. This will be done carefully to balance all the well-being and developmental needs of the junior player and that of other players / teams.

Attendance at the club pre-season training session is strongly encouraged for players aged 14 years and above.

4.1 Playing Up

- Where a junior player receives substantial or frequent game time in a higher grade or senior team, their usual coach may consider reducing game time in their primary team (age-group team). This will ensure other junior players are afforded 'fair' court time and the junior player being developed has suitable recovery time.
- 17&U and 19&U players may also be selected to participate in a *Club Junior Development Program (JCDP)*. Players are selected into this program by way of a collaborative decision made by the netball committee and relevant junior and senior coaches. Players can join the development program at any time throughout the season.
- The JCDP opportunity includes
 - Training with senior teams as a 'training partner'
 - Potential playing time in a senior game; it is by exception that the junior will be afforded game time. Game time is at the senior coach discretion and must be in line with Section 3.4 such as where there is injury or absences. This means that the junior may be invited to 'sit on the bench' for a senior team without actually being offered game time.

4.2 Young player development

- BHFNC requires that junior teams follow a practice of rotating junior players across multiple positions in 11&under and 13&Unders as part of building netball confidence and skills.
- This is to ensure that players who may be smaller or have less experience at a young age do not miss out on crucial development opportunities, and similarly, that players who may be more skilled or experienced at a young age are not restricted to a singular position.
- Opposition teams should, but in practice may not follow this principle. This may result in short term losses for a team but given the club places significant importance on retention and development, this should not sway BHFNC teams from sticking with the rotation policy.

PART B– SUMMER COMPETITION (approx. September – March)

AFL Barwon summer netball is a 'fixed venue' style competition currently held between September to March each year and is considered a secondary social netball competition for BHFNC junior players.

Section 6: AFL Barwon Summer Comp

BHFNC can offer club affiliation to those players interested in playing in the 'off-season'. There is no limit to the number of teams that can be registered in the junior summer netball competition.

5.1 Registration and Expressions of Interest

- Teams and interested players must contact the netball committee by 15th August to lodge their interest in registering a team for the AFL Barwon Summer competition. Teams are to email netball@barwonheadsfnfnc.org.au or complete the online TEAM EOI form when available.
- Acceptance of late expressions of interest will be subject to competition capacity as directed by AFL Barwon.
- Teams will be required to supply their own coach/team manager and primary carer before the club will consider registering the team.

5.2 Summer Team selection

- Players are encouraged to create their own teams through their social networks or peer-groups.
- The BHFNC netball committee will have no role in assisting with team selections for summer competitions, unless asked by individuals to help them connect with available teams.

5.3 Game time and player positions

- As summer netball is considered a social activity, the club has no role in directing player game time or positions. This is reserved for each team to resolve.
- The netball committee will also be limited in the support to manage fill-in requirements for teams that are short on players. The committee or the Summer Coordinator can create a communications channel on the netball 'Facebook' page for teams and players to connect across the summer competition.

5.4 Team Administration

- There must be at least one of the player's adult care-giver's willing to assume overall responsibility for the team. This includes being the club's primary contact for the team should any management or administration queries arise. This person will also be responsible for collecting team payments and reimbursing BHFNC any summer comp registration fees payable.
- They will also have responsibility for ensuring team sheets and any competition requirements are met (Ie. Updating PLAYHQ) and validating players have netball sports insurance (Netball Victoria Membership).

5.5 Child Safety requirements

- All players and their adult caregivers and affiliates must be aware of and comply with the club's and AFL Barwon's Child Safety Policies. These policies and protocols are viewable on the club website [Netball Policies - Barwon Heads Football Netball Club \(barwonheadsfc.org.au\)](http://barwonheadsfc.org.au)
- Each team will be required to ensure all coach's and/or team manger's and primary carer's have a valid Working With Children Clearance and supplies a copy to the club prior to Round 1 of the summer competition commencing.

