



Team Selection Policy

Purpose

This document outlines the process South Morang Football Netball Club (SMFNC) will follow to select teams when the club is able to field **more than one team at a particular age group or has more than the allowable number for one team.**

The policy aims to provide a clear and detailed framework with the objective that the team selection process is conducted openly, fairly, effectively, and collaboratively and in a manner that considers the best interests of the individual, team and club.

Scope

This policy applies to committee members, players, coaches, football operations and parents. It only applies where the club has multiple teams in the same age group or has more than the allowable number for one team.

Culture

SMFNC culture principals are based on four pillars that all players, officials, members and supporters can bring to the club:

- **RESPECT** – Always for each other, for our club, for our jumper, for our opponents and for ourselves.
- **GROWTH** – Embrace the process, chase the improvement and strive for greatness
- **STRENGTH** – Train hard, push limits and build resilience
- **PRIDE** – Represent the jumper with honour, compete with heart and leave it all on the field

Guiding Values

When developing a team selection policy, it is impossible to foresee every challenge and have a documented plan in place to deal with it. Hence, the values that underpin the process are a vital tool and will act as a reference point where a decision needs to be made.

These values are as follows:

- Ensuring first year U9 and U10 players and, where possible, new players in older age groups have a minimum of 1 friend in their team.
- If multiple teams in an age group, the goal will be to ensure players play at the most appropriate level that best suits their ability.
- Offering all players opportunities to develop and extend skills and friendship groups while working together for the benefit of the team and club.
- Fielding teams in multiple divisions.

Team Selection Process

SMFNC will have the following staged process on grading & selection of children to a relevant team.

1. All coaches U9-U10 must accept a maximum of 20 players in each team.
 2. All coaches U11-U17 must accept a maximum of 26 players in each team.
 3. Should the coach wish to have more than prescribed 26 players on the list it will be at his or hers own discretion.
- Pursuant to NFNL by-laws - 26 players can only take the field in finals should team make it and all 26 players have qualified. 24 players max for home and away games.

Key Considerations in Team Selection

Team selection is a complex process based on many factors. Whenever there are multiple teams in an age group or too many for one team to field, there will always be challenges to overcome and sometimes there will be a need for compromise and flexibility.

When selecting teams, the club will take the following into consideration:

- SMFNC does not encourage or support the building of teams **solely** around particular friendship/school groups.
- While we try to accommodate parent and friendship requests in all age groups, we cannot guarantee we can achieve this.
- **The child of the coach/s, assistant coach/s will always be selected to play in the team that their parent is involved with.**
- U9 and U10 teams will not be based on skill or ability. The focus will be on balancing numbers, friendships, talent and birth years across the group as best as possible.
- Where there are multiple teams in the same age group from U13 upwards, when selection decisions are made, the aim will be to ensure all teams in that age group be competitive in their respective division.
- The SMFNC goal around team selection is for all players to play in the appropriate division based on the teams abilities
- Selection will happen each year to ensure all teams stay competitive and allow for teams to improve and move up through divisions
- There are sometimes other extenuating or other confidential circumstances that need to be taken into account during the selection process. We will consider these on a case-by-case basis and try to ensure we deliver outcomes that are in the best interest of the child or family.

Policy (Under 9s to U12s)

Where the club is able to field multiple teams in these age groups or there is more than allowed for one team, team selection should be undertaken with an emphasis on enjoyment and participation with friends.

U9

The emphasis at this level is on the development of basic game skills and fundamental game-play concepts. When working with teams in this age group, coaches should aim to conduct training collaboratively.

Where the club can field multiple teams, team selection should be undertaken with an emphasis on enjoyment and participation with friends. However, please note that friendship groups are often based around school groups that may include players of different ages (i.e., children turning 7, 8 or 9 during the playing season). Therefore, when selecting teams at U9, the impact on subsequent years will also be considered.

U10

The emphasis at this level remains on the development of basic game skills and fundamental game-play concepts. When working with teams in this age group, coaches should aim to conduct training collaboratively.

Where the club can field multiple teams in this age group, team selection should be undertaken with an emphasis on enjoyment and participation with friends.

U11 – U12

The emphasis at this level should be on a combination of:

- participation with friends
- enjoyment
- the consolidation of basic skills, and
- further development of technical and tactical gameplay.
- prepare all players to provide the opportunity to develop their football skills and play in the highest level within the NFNL.

All Coaches should be actively involved in the process of team selection and will be supported by the Football Operations Manager and Junior President.

Policy (Under 13s to U17s)

The emphasis in these age groups should be on learning how to train and consolidate the basic skills. Players will begin to be introduced to advanced technical and tactical skills, including:

- decision-making in games and training,
- positional skills (competency in a position)
- basic performance-enhancing techniques, e.g., warm-up, cool-down, nutrition, hydration, recovery, goal setting, pre and post-match routines.

At SMFNC, we want to provide the opportunity and environment for players at all levels to be both competitive and continue to develop their football skills. We are committed to grouping players at similar levels of development, which will allow them to achieve specific individual goals that we believe will lead to increased self-esteem and long term participation in the game.

Where we are able to field multiple teams in the same age group or have too many to field one team, we will implement an approach to team selection that ensures all players are placed in an environment that provides them with the best possible opportunity to develop. For some, this will mean giving them the opportunity to play at the highest level possible, develop new skills and test them in a highly competitive and supportive environment. For others, this will mean providing a supportive environment in which they continue to develop their skills in the appropriate division while retaining and growing their love for the game.

Rostering Off : U11 – U17

When there are more than 24 players available and players need to be rostered off, the following guidelines should be applied:

- Under 11's - 13's inclusive: Rostering should occur evenly across all players with no players being rostered off a second time before all other players being rostered off at least once.
- Under 14 - 17's: Rostering off should be at the discretion of the coach but no player should be rostered off for consecutive games.

Exceptions to rostering off may occur in the event of injury, illness, or misconduct on the part of the player concerned.

All players will be eligible to play finals if the team qualifies as long as the player has played the minimum game requirements set by the League.

How teams will be selected

At these age groups, players will be assessed on the following criteria during preseason:

- Team Balance (e.g. for instance, there is little point in selecting 26 players who are all midfielders - each side needs a ruckman, backs, forwards and ball getters);
- The previous season's performance (votes, general performance, attitude, attendance at training (advice can and will be sought from the previous season's coach).
- The ability of the player. This is not just a consideration of skill alone but also their in-game confidence and decision-making
- What position(s) they play/or wish to be considered for
- Whether the player may be better served playing at a lower level to improve their skills, confidence or decision-making, or perhaps just play in their preferred position.
- The player's:
 - o Overall ability to contribute to the team at a particular level
 - o Work ethic
 - o Fitness
 - o Commitment

The player's skills will also be assessed through a combination of skills work, small sided games and possibly short intra-club friendlies.

Players and parents should also note that the team selections may change from year to year—the success of a team in a particular year does not necessarily mean they will remain together the following year. Due to the nature of change, new registrations and the differing development rates of all players from season to season, player movement in and out of such teams may still occur to ensure the teams remain competitive at their respective levels.

The selection process

Where the club is able to field multiple teams in a particular age group or there are too many for one team, the selection process for teams will begin at the start of pre-season (early February) and conclude no later than any intra club or practice games that have been arranged.

According to NFL bylaws, a player can still move between teams if they have played less than 5 games, so any adjustments to the make-up of teams can still be made during the early grading games of the season, should they be necessary.

The selection panel

When selecting teams, we feel it is important to strike a balance between past performance and the requirements of the team for the coming season. We are also committed to selecting teams through a fair and transparent process. The team selection panel will therefore include:

- Last season's coaches
- Current season's coaches (if different)
- The football operations manager or their nominee (can be an external party)

From time to time, the club may also invite independent representatives to assist with the team selection process.

New Players/Player Transfers

If the new registration occurs prior to the team selection process, they will go through the same process as existing players.

If they register too late to join the process, they will be assessed during the early games of the season and may be moved to another team if the team selection panel feels they should be playing at a higher or lower level.

Communication to Players

Players will be formally advised via a meeting which team they have been selected in.

Where there are too many players for one age group and not enough to field two teams, after selection process has been completed, the player/s will be notified that they haven't been selected in a team. There may be opportunities for the player/s to still be involved in a non playing role should they be interested.

Game Time Entitlements Matrix

- Under 9 & 10 Minimum 3 quarters per week rotated equally amongst players
- Under 11 - Minimum 3 quarters per week.
- Under 12 - Aim of 3 quarters per week with an overall balance of 70% game time over the season.
- Under 13 - Minimum of 2 quarters with the aim of 60% game time over the season.
- Under 14 - Minimum of 2 quarters with the aim of 60% game time over the season.
- Under 15 - Minimum of 2 quarters with the aim of 60% game time over the season.
- Under 16 & 17 - Minimum 2 quarters per week

Parents

Parent inquires/complaints regarding any of the above policies should be, in the first instance directed to and addressed by the child's Coach, and secondly Football Operations or Junior Executive Committee representative.

Should an inquiry/complaint not reach a resolution with Coach or Football Operations manager it will be escalated to the Executive Committee where their decision will be the outcome.

Version Control

Approved by the SMFNC Executive Committee

Date – 12th January 2024