



Malvern Tigers Basketball Club, Inc. Junior Team Selection Policy & Process

Objective

The Club organises teams to play in competitive basketball games against other clubs, primarily with the Waverley Basketball Association (WBA) and occasionally with other associations. The WBA runs two competitions – Girls and Juniors – which are arranged around age groups (Under 8, Under 10, Under 12, etc.). Each age group can have a number of sections (1, 2, 3, etc.), with 1 being the highest standard. This is done so that teams play against other teams of a similar standard, and players are developed to the maximum of their ability.

The Club aims to offer basketball in a fun and safe environment, fostering an enjoyment and knowledge of the game while developing a sense of team spirit, positive self-esteem and good sports behaviour, through equal participation.

Competitions and Age Groups

Malvern Tigers teams are currently grouped as follows:

- Saturday Juniors (boys and mixed boys/girls) - Under 8 to Under 14
- Sunday Juniors (boys and mixed boys/girls) – Under 16 & Under 18
- Saturday Girls - Under 8 to Under 12
- Tuesday Girls - Under 14 to Under 18

The Malvern Tigers are committed to promoting strong and sustainable Girls and Juniors competitions at WBA. Accordingly, the Club expects that players will play in the age group and competition for which they qualify. The Club may, however, permit players to play in a higher age group, and for girls to play across in a mixed team in the Juniors competition, either in a second team or under exceptional circumstances as set out in this Policy.

Player Commitment

Once a player registers for a season, he/she makes a commitment to be reliable and attend all training sessions and games for their team, unless for some unforeseen circumstance, such as sickness, injury or special family function. Choosing to play another sport where it is known that training or game times conflict with basketball commitments is not an acceptable reason for absence. Unreliable players may be penalised at the coach's discretion by reduced or no court time.

A player should notify their Team Manager as soon as they become aware that they will be unavailable for a particular training session or a game.

Policy

As children progress through each age group, coaches assess them to ensure they compete in a team that will best help their basketball development and enjoyment. Teams are selected by balancing the following criteria:

- Player ability – general skill level, attitude and motivation;
- Team balance – having a good mix of tall players, skilful ball handlers, goal shooters and defensively skilled players; and
- Friendship – requests can be made on the registration form, but these must be reciprocal.

The optimal number of players per team is eight in most circumstances. All efforts will be made to ensure there are no less than six and no more than ten players per team.

Situations that would result in a departure from the policy, such as requests for a group of players from the same school to be selected as a team, and other special requests not covered by the policy, must be approved by the Executive Committee.

Application of the selection policy for the junior groups is as follows:

Under 8

Friendship is one of the main criteria for selecting Under 8 teams, with teams assessed at the earliest opportunity to ensure team balance and encourage player development.

Under 10 and older

Under 10s and older are selected depending on the number of Malvern Tigers teams in the age group. Where there are multiple teams, all teams will be graded in accordance with the WBA competition to help the development of each player to the best of their ability and so teams compete against teams of a similar standard.

For teams graded to play in higher sections (e.g., Black, Red, Yellow and White teams graded to play Sections 1 through 3), children are primarily selected based on player ability and team balance (e.g. so that there is a balance of centres, forwards and guards and not a team of 7 guards). For teams graded to play in middle sections (e.g., teams graded to play Sections 4 and 5), friendship requests are considered but cannot be guaranteed. For teams graded to play in lower sections (e.g., Sections 6 and lower), teams are selected based on team balance and friendship.

Process

The process of selecting teams is a difficult exercise requiring balancing the often competing criteria of player ability, team balance and friendships.

1. Player eligibility for selection

The Membership Officer is responsible for registering members to play for the upcoming season, and advising the Age Group Coordinator, relevant Senior Coach(es) and Coaching Coordinator of the players eligible to play.

To be eligible for team selection, players must have officially registered as members and paid their subscriptions in full by the due date. Late registrations will be considered on a case by case basis and may not necessarily result in the player being selected in a team. The primary criterion for allocating late registering players to teams is player ability and team balance, not the date of receipt of the registration. Friendship requests (for U8, U10 and new players only) will not be considered for players who register late.

2. Player assessment

The Coaching Coordinator is responsible for coordinating player assessments.

Toward the end of the current season, the Coaching Coordinator will request team Coaches to provide a written evaluation of the abilities of each player within the age group, which provides input into the selection process. The evaluation will rate the player on specific technical basketball skills as defined by the Coaching Development Officer, as well as commitment to team training and games, and attitudes and behaviours.

Player assessment may or may not include an on-court Assessment Session, depending on the number of new or returning players. Logistics for Assessment Sessions will be coordinated by the Age Group Coordinator. The Assessment Sessions themselves will be led by the relevant Senior Coach(es), supported by Coaches and Junior Coaches, and observed by the Coaching Coordinator and members of the Executive Committee.

The Coaching Coordinator will also obtain player statistics from the current season, sourced from Waverley Basketball Association's Club Express application with the assistance of the Administration Officer. These statistics help determine the accuracy of the player assessments. If any abnormalities are apparent, the Coaching Coordinator will follow up with individual Coaches.

3. Parent requests

The Age Group Coordinator is responsible for reviewing friendship requests and any other parental requests (e.g., training slots), and ensuring these requests are appropriately considered in team selection in accordance with this Policy.

As part of the membership registration process, parents of U8, U10 and new players may provide a written request that two players be selected in the same team on the player's registration form. Where these requests are reciprocated, the Age Group Coordinator will consider whether the players could be placed in the same team at a level that reflects the standard of the lesser player. Both players must have registered and paid by the due date, and the request must be in writing on the registration form. If the request is one-sided, it will be ignored. Age Group Co-ordinators may also consult Coaches and Team Managers for further information about players.

Children normally play in a team in the age group and competition for which they qualify. Under exceptional circumstances a player may be permitted by the Selection Panel to play in a team in the next higher age group, or a girl may play across in a mixed team in the Juniors competition. Friendship or convenience (e.g., car pooling) is not considered to be an exceptional circumstance. An example of exceptional circumstances is where a player has exceptionally high basketball skills, evidenced by playing in a high level Representative team, such that the development of both the player and his or her team mates is jeopardised by playing in the age group or competition for which they qualify.

Provided that they continue to play in a team in the age group and competition for which they qualify, players may request to play in a 2nd team in a higher age group, or girls may request to play in a 2nd mixed team across in the Juniors competition, where approved by the Coaching Coordinator of both age groups/competitions (as applicable). This provision is intended for players that are relatively older within their age group, whose development would benefit from being challenged by play for a second team against older, larger players.

Requests for players to play in a higher age group, or for girls to play across in a mixed team in the Juniors competition, must be made in writing at the time of registration and must state the basis for the request. Parents should understand that their child may be playing against children who are older and more physically and/or emotionally developed so formal acceptance of this risk is required.

4. Selection Panel

The Age Group Co-ordinator is responsible for convening a Selection Panel for each age group. The Selection Panel will comprise the Age Group Co-ordinator, the relevant Senior Coach(es) and other Coaches for the age group, and the Coaching Coordinator. The Selection Panel may be attended by members of the Executive Committee (only) as observers. Parents of players may not attend the Selection Panel unless in one of the above-mentioned roles.

The Selection Panel is responsible for selecting the teams for their age group for the upcoming season in accordance with this policy. The Selection Panel selects teams considering the following information:

- Player evaluations prepared by team Coaches;
- Performance at player Assessment Sessions;
- Statistics from Club Express; and
- Selection Panel participants' personal experience with players in the age group.

The Selection Panel is obliged to select teams that fairly represent a balance of player ability, team balance and friendship requests, consistent with this policy.

By their nature, the Selection Panel involves robust conversation and challenge, and the Club expects participants to adhere to the applicable Code of Conduct in fulfilling the Selection Panel obligations.

If the Selection Panel is unable to reach agreement on the selection of teams, the Coaching Coordinator may intervene and arbitrate with the objective of resolving the matter(s) impeding finalisation of team selection. If the Coaching Coordinator is unable to attain a satisfactory resolution, the matter(s) will then be escalated to the Executive Committee for final resolution by majority vote.

The Age Group Coordinator submits the draft teams to the Membership Officer using an Excel format defined by the Coaching Coordinator that is consistent across every age group.

5. Team finalisation

The Membership Officer is responsible for processing the draft teams into team sheets, for selecting and allocating Team Managers to the final teams, and then distributing the team sheets to the Executive Committee for review and approval.

The Executive Committee will review the team sheets by whatever process it sees fit, including allocating specific age groups to specific Executive Committee members for detailed review. The Executive Committee shall form a view whether the draft team sheets fairly represent a balance of player ability, team balance and friendship requests, consistent with this policy. The Executive Committee may seek additional clarification from the Selection Panel participants in forming this view.

Team selection is not final until the draft team sheets have been approved by a majority of the Executive Committee.

6. Team communication

The Membership Officer is responsible for communicating the final team sheets to the members. Team selections remain confidential until formally communicated to members by the Membership Officer.

When the final teams and training times are published, Team Managers must ensure that any queries, issues or concerns from parents are quickly passed to the Age Group Co-ordinators in the first instance. The Age Group Coordinator will seek to resolve the issue or concern in conjunction with the relevant Senior Coach(es) and Coaching Coordinator. This may result in minor adjustments to the published teams.

In the event a parent is dissatisfied with the Club's response to a particular issue or concern, the parent has a right of appeal to the Executive Committee (refer below).

Grading Games

At the beginning of each season, teams play a number of grading games (usually five). The results from grading games are used by WBA to ensure teams are in the most appropriate section for their skill level. Grading games are also used by the Age Group Coordinators and team Coaches to make further assessments of each child's abilities, attitude and motivation.

During this time, requests may be made to move children to other teams or to move teams to other sections. These requests must go to the relevant Age Group Co-ordinator, who will assess and respond to the request in conjunction with the relevant Coaches. When a move is to be made, the Age Group Co-ordinator will notify the Membership Officer, relevant coaches, Team Managers and parents. Requests to move a team to a different section are made to WBA by the Club Secretary.

Ideally, notification of any changes must be done at least a week before a child actually moves to another team to allow for at least one training session with the new team before the next game. Training time conflicts must be considered, as well as any potential uniform number clashes.

At the end of the grading games, a team may be moved to another section. If this happens there may be further adjustments to teams in that age group to help team balance.

During the season

Ongoing assessments are made during each season and on rare occasions there may be a need to move a player between teams. This can be due to player injuries or a family leaving or arriving at the club mid-season. These requests must go to the Age Group Co-ordinator for assessment and notification as outlined in the previous section.

Parents are encouraged at any time to discuss any issues or concerns with their coach, Team Manager or Age Group Co-ordinator.

Right of Appeal

The Executive Committee has the authority to adjudicate on team selection decisions that cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the Selection Panel in accordance with the objectives of this document. An appeal to the Executive Committee must be initiated in writing and addressed to the Vice-President.

Team Names

Saturday Under 8 teams are named after the surnames of prominent Australian women and men basketball players.

All other teams are named by colour. The sequence of allocation of colours to teams in each age group is as follows. This sequence is indicative of the relative initial grading of the team by the Selection Panel (i.e.. Black should be the best team in the age group, Red should be the second best, etc.), but does not necessarily indicate the actual skill level of the team once they take to the court.

For example, where there is a group of players of a similar age and capability, 2 or more teams may be evenly matched, such that lower ranked teams may beat higher ranked teams. It is often the case that lower ranked teams play in sections above higher ranked teams because they perform better than anticipated during the grading games.

1. BLACK	2. RED	3. YELLOW	4. WHITE
5. GREEN	6. ORANGE	7. BLUE	8. BROWN
9. PURPLE	10. MAROON	11. GREY	12. AQUA
13. STRIPES			

This naming convention is an important feature of the Malvern Tigers selection policy, and helps the coaching staff monitor the development of individual players through the Club's basketball development program. Any departure from the above team naming policy must be approved by the Executive Committee prior to implementation.