



ROTATION POLICY – 9's to 12's

Rev 04.11.2008

Introduction

This policy seeks to address the issue of equitable game time by defining what is expected of players, coaches and the club. All junior clubs and coaches are accountable to the WAFC for ensuring that the Equal Opportunity/Player Rotation Policy is applied.

Scope

The policy applies to coaches and players in nines to twelves grades.

Game Time

Each player should spend equal time on the field for each game. The policy is based on the premise that all registered players are entitled to a fair share of game time. Where team numbers make it too difficult to provide equal time during a game then the equal time may be provided on an average basis. In any case, all players must spend at least three quarters of each game on the field.

Player Rotation

The rotation of players through a variety of positions in each game and through the season is important in giving players the opportunity to develop skills and to experience the roles required in different positions. The following are minimum requirements.

9s and 10s - all players must be rotated:

1. through 3 positions per game,
2. through the five lines of field position over three games,
3. through all positions over the season.

11s and 12s - all players must be rotated:

1. through 2 positions per game,
2. through the five lines of field position over five games (but should not spend a whole game in the same line),
3. through all positions over the season.

Implementation

In reality, rotation and game time for a particular player will depend on the circumstances of the game. There may be good reason why the policy is not adhered to on a particular day. It is unreasonable to put a small player into position against a much larger opponent. Similarly, equal game time may be relaxed if the player has played a second game that day.

However, all opportunities should be used to implement the guidelines. For example, when a team is dominating the opposition it is a good opportunity to play less talented players in key positions.

Implementing the policy to the letter does not necessarily address the issue of fairness. On-field time is not necessarily equal playing time. A player placed in a field position where he would not touch the ball for the entire game would get neither fair game time nor wider experience. The spirit of the policy is more important than the measured outcome.

Coaches

The coach has complete discretion in determining whom and when players are on the field. This policy does not seek to restrict the choices that a coach makes in fielding a team by imposing rigid rules but instead seeks to provide strong guidelines.



Many factors may be reasonably considered when selecting a side and determining how much time a particular player spends on the field:

- team numbers
- strength of the opposition side
- discipline issues
- skills balance within the side
- player injury
- tactics employed by the opposition

The main role of the coach is to develop the football skills of his players. A coach who makes every effort to rotate all players fairly could not be criticised if a player does not achieve his quota of playing time by a small margin. On the other hand, if some players are regularly positioned where they won't get in the way then the coach will be asked to explain his actions.

Players

Any nines to twelves age group will have players with all different levels of skill and commitment. At these ages, however, there is very little flexibility in applying this policy for disciplinary reasons. It is permissible that a player should not start on the field if he is late for a game. Twelves may be held accountable for their behavior at training by reducing their game time but this should only be used as a final sanction.

Club

In accepting a player registration the club assumes responsibility for the development of that player as a footballer. The club ensures that coaches are suitably accredited and that they abide by relevant codes of conduct and football policy. However, a further obligation in promoting football development is ensuring that the player plays a fair share of the game. No one can develop as a footballer by sitting on the bench. The club must emphasise the need for coaches to accept this responsibility in the same way it does with codes of conduct and other policies.

Managing the Bench

Ideally, field positions for each quarter should be planned before the game and adhered to as closely as possible. These records can then defend any complaint from a parent or player about fair treatment.