



Albury Basketball Association Albury Cougars Squad and Team Selection Policy

ALBURY COUGARS JUNIOR REPRESENTATIVE PROGRAM

APPENDIX B: SQUAD AND TEAM SELECTION POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy statement is to articulate the process, principles and stakeholder responsibilities in the annual process of determining the size and composition of the Albury Cougars Junior Representative squads and teams to support the program objectives in a sustainable manner.

Background

Albury Cougars has a proud history in participation in a variety of competitions, including leagues and tournaments in both NSW and Victoria, leveraging our location to maximise opportunities for junior basketballers to compete and develop.

The representative season generally commences in early October with squad selection processes, and then progresses into the Country Victorian tournament schedule, before focus moves to the BNSW Junior Waratah Leagues and associated competitions. There are a number of factors that influence the size and scope of the program for any given year, including:

- Size and makeup of the player talent pool;
- Availability of accredited coaches and referees;
- Training venue availability and capacity.

As with all junior sport, there are naturally fluctuations over time and between various age cohorts, reflecting participation of players and families as circumstances change. A key objective of this policy is to ensure the sustainability of the program and maximizing of opportunities for players throughout their junior representative career.

Policy

Squad Size and Composition Selection Principles

1. In order to maximise the opportunities for junior players to compete at the highest level appropriate and to provide a solid foundation for senior level representation, the ABA aspires to maintaining a minimum of two teams in each age group and gender up to and including U18s in each representative league season.
2. In order to meet this aspiration, it is important that squad sizes in younger age groups are structured to maintain continuity and flow of players that are impacted by factors such as:
 - a. The blend of top-age and bottom-age players in each cohort year-to-year;
 - b. The impact of attrition of existing players from the program and
 - c. Potential addition of new players to the program which varies between age groups.



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3. The ABA does not seek to mandate a specific cap on the number of teams and/or opportunities it provides in any given year. Instead, the program will be guided by both the number and ability of athletes trialing for the program, as well as availability of resources to support its implementation.
4. Where there is an excess of players that meet the selection criteria beyond that which can be supported as a league team, it is expected that (contingent on sufficient supporting resources), these children be given the opportunity and formally invited by the coach to train as part of the squad throughout the representative season to promote their basketball development.
5. Wherever possible, these athletes should be provided with the opportunity to form a development team to represent Albury at appropriate tournaments, such as the Albury Junior Invitational*(November), Wodonga Tournament (first weekend of February) and Benalla tournament (late Feb). These teams also provide an opportunity for the ABA to promote and attract future potential players, by selectively inviting domestic competition players who did not trial to supplement the team as an introductory experience to the program.

Squad Selection Process

1. At the conclusion of the formal trial sessions, the lead coach appointed to each age group is responsible for submitting a recommended list of athletes to form the playing squad from those who applied to trial. In doing so, they can consult with other ABA coaches and appointed members (including the Operations Manager and ABA Board members) and other trial observers, particularly where extenuating circumstances exist such as injuries or unavoidable absences.
2. A Coaches Committee (consisting of Representative Lead Coaches) will act as a review body for the list, prior to its submission to the Junior Representative Committee for final endorsement, including ensuring that:
 - a. due process has been followed including management of any real or perceived conflicts of interest relating to selections and/or non-selections to the squads; and
 - b. the recommended squads can be adequately resourced and supported for the season ahead.
3. Final approval for the endorsed lists rests with the ABA Board, who have responsibility for ensuring that they are satisfied that the proposed squads align with the associations overarching aims and objectives and support the longer-term sustainability of the program.
4. To enable prompt announcement of the trial outcomes, the Board will be provided with a summary brief for electronic endorsement ASAP after the conclusion of trials, after which squads will be published.



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Managing Replacement Players and Age Group Allocations

1. All players must play in their actual allocated age group first.
2. If required and all age group players are unavailable, players from a lower age group may act as a 'fill-in'. This opportunity must be made available to all available players, and no assumptions must be made.
3. If players are required for long-term replacement due to injury or withdrawal, they must first come from the trial group.
4. If more players are available than positions are required, a small trial may occur.
5. A three-member panel must approve all player movements between teams and age groups. This panel will consist of the Albury Basketball Operations Manager, the Representative Committee Board member, and a third impartial member from either the Board or Representative Committee to ensure a majority decision is reached.

Team Selection Principles

1. **Team Composition and Player Caps:** All representative teams will consist of at least 9 players. For the Under 12 and Under 14 age groups, which play 4 x 8 minute quarters, teams are expected to be capped at 9 players to prioritize holistic development. However, team sizes may vary depending on squad numbers to ensure as many players as possible are given the opportunity to develop and compete.
2. **Player Development Focus:** Team selections prioritise player development, ensuring that athletes are placed in environments that challenge and foster their growth both individually and as part of a team.
3. **Merit-Based Selection:** Players are selected based on skill level, trial performance, attitude, and potential. Consistent effort, teamwork, and dedication, along with technical and physical abilities, are key factors.
4. **Team Balance:** Coaches aim to create balanced teams with a mix of skills, positions, and experience levels to maximise the group's effectiveness and competitiveness.
5. **Age Group Allocation:** Players will be allocated to teams that correspond to their age group, though movement between age groups can be considered under exceptional circumstances and with approval from the appropriate panel.
6. **Transparency and Fairness:** The selection process will be fair and transparent, ensuring that all players are given equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills during the trials.
7. **Commitment to Representative Program:** Players must demonstrate a commitment to the representative program's training schedule, team culture, and competitive expectations.

Team Selection Process

1. Teams will be announced prior to Christmas Break
2. Coaches will assess players in game-like situations, focusing on skills, team balance, positional needs, and chemistry to determine the final team structure. To ensure fairness and reduce conflicts of interest, all evaluations will be conducted with transparency and oversight from multiple coaches.
3. Coaches from both within and outside the immediate group will assist in the selection process.
4. All selections must be ratified by the Representative Committee and Board for final approval.



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Squad Size Composition Matrix (U12-18s)

<u>Number of Suitable Squad Members</u>	Teams Composition	
	<i>Waratah Teams (JPL/SJL)</i>	<i>Development Teams</i>
15 or less	1	0 <i>At coach discretion a development team for Nov/Feb if teams can be balanced/top-ups identified?</i>
16-20	1-2	0-1
20-25	1-2	0-2 <i>If squad quality/depth means only 1 Waratah team, then up to 2 Dev. teams of 7-8 to maximise experience</i>
26-30	2-3	0-1
31+	2-3	0-2 <i>If squad quality/depth means only 2 Waratah teams, then up to 2 Dev. teams of 7-8 to maximise experience</i>