

LILYDALE JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB



TEAM SIZE & SELECTION POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear understanding of the process of team sizes and selection processes. LJFC is committed to Fairness, Transparency and Equity. The Club adopts an approach which recognises that teams vary in size, skill and ability but that all players are entitled to be treated fairly.

NON COMPETITIVE PLAYING SIDES - UNDER 8s, 9s & 10's

Team Sizes

At LJFC, we are committed to ensure that any child who wishes to play football is able. Ideally the team size for Under 8's & 9's is in multiples of between 11 & 13. EFNL states a team can play with a minimum of 7 players. Under 10's the optimal team size is 22- 24 players.

Team Selection

It is the Club's intention to field at least two teams, and possibly 3 or 4 subject to numbers.

Team selection will be determined after registration day, although in the non-competitive age groups it is expected that teams will be based on school groupings. Generally the Club will seek rotating players between the teams within their age group. This will ensure we foster a connection with all the kids playing together prior to the Under 10s season.

The teams shall be the Blue team, Gold team and if a third team is established a White team. The EFNL does not grade the Under 8, 9 and 10 competitions, hence the players shall play across each team within its age group. The teams should aim to have an equal number of players to ensure that all players in the age group have access to equal playing opportunities.

Depending on player numbers, the Club may need to alter the make up of the Under 10 teams from those that existed in Under 9s. For example where three Under 9 teams existed, it is most likely that they will need to be consolidated into a Under 9's team & a Under 10 team which may result in some changes, so as to ensure two equally sized teams.



COMPETITIVE PLAYING SIDES - Under 11s to 17.5's

Team Size

The LJFC has capped the maximum number of players in any team at 24 (11-16 & 30 players for u17.5's). Should a team request further players to be registered, this would be a request made to the Football Operations, who will raise with the Committee.

Team Selection

It is the Club's intention to field a team in each age group.

Where there are enough players to form two teams in an age group, the players will be graded based on their skills, size, confidence and football maturity.

The players will then be split into two teams having regard to the suitability of the players to participate in the relevant divisions and the Club's desire to field two teams. The higher graded team shall be referred to as the Blue team, the second team shall be referred to as the Gold team.

The teams will operate as separate teams (i.e. the Blue and Gold teams shall not be considered 'reserve' teams). Notwithstanding this, it is expected that the teams will train together for preseason until the teams are separated. The Gold team is not a feeder team for the Blue Team and during the season, the Blue team can not pull from the Gold team for top ups unless no other options are available to field the Blue side. (EFNL Bylaws states higher side is required to play)

A Selection panel will conduct the evaluation of the teams during preseason in order to separate. This selection panel will include (but not limited to), Football Operations, Coaches for both sides & members of the committee. An independent 3rd party will also be involved in the selection process.

Following the separation of the teams, Culturally, it would be hoped teams socialise and mix as one whole age group, negating the barriers between what is seen as a top and bottom sides, and encouraging the one club mentality (potentially training at same times and doing warm ups together before breaking into team specific trainings).

Ideally, the teams should have an equal number of players to ensure that all players in the age group have access to equal playing opportunities. However, in order to field two or more competitive teams within each age group, and in consideration of the EFNL's grading system for age groups registering two teams (placing one team in A grade and one team in D grade), the number of players in each team may require flexibility to ensure players participate in the most suitable divisions for their ability level.

In order to determine the formation of multiple teams, the Selection Panel should:

- observe all players during the pre-season 'try-out' period;
- take into account the player assessments prepared by the previous year's coaches;
- liaise with the previous year's coaches (if possible);



- agree the proposed composition of the two teams, and
- forward the team lists to the Committee for approval.

It is important that players play in the most appropriate division having regard to their abilities and the competitiveness of our teams. In recognition of this and the fact that players develop at different rates (both physically and ability wise) all players will be assessed during the pre-season 'try-out' period each year to determine the most appropriate team to be placed in.

The coaches will not disclose the composition of the recommended teams to any players or parents until the teams have been approved by the Committee.

End of Season Assessment

At the end of the season, the coaches must provide the Club with a simple player assessment addressing: size; skills (kicking, marking, handball; positioning and reading of play); confidence (to attack the ball under pressure, tackle players etc.); maturity; and the recommended team for the following year.

These assessments will be used in subsequent years to assist in the selection of teams where we have multiple teams in the Under 11s - 17.5s.

The assessments are confidential documents and will not be released to players or parents.

Once the teams have been selected our Football Operations will review the teams against the previous year's assessments.

Team Support Staff

The Club greatly appreciates the time and effort of our many volunteers, including the coaches and their support staff (i.e. assistant coaches, team managers, runners and trainers).

Where a single side exists in an age group, the support staff should be confirmed as soon as possible and definitely prior to the commencement of the season.

Where multiple teams exist, it is important that coaches take in establishing support staff having regard to the likely and most suitable team for their players. Supporting staff roles should not be finalised until the teams are selected - players should not be selected based on the roles their parents may undertake in the Club, or indicated they will undertake within a specific team; rather they should be selected based on the team most suitable for their skills and ability.



Timing

It is anticipated that the teams will be finalised two weeks prior to the first game.

Grievances

Team selection is not an exact science and requires consideration of a range of factors.

Any person who feels aggrieved should first raise the matter with the relevant coaches and or team managers. If the matter can not be resolved at that level, the matter may be referred to the Club Secretary at lilydalejnr@efnl.org.au

Summary

LJFC aims to provide clarity and understanding of team sizes along with the process that is in place for team selections.

Policy last reviewed	October 2025
Consultation	September 2025 Travis Switzer - Culture Vate
Approved by	LJFC Committee
Next Review Schedule date (2 years)	October 2027