



## Cannons Grading Policy

### Background /Regulations:

- Baseline age groups in DBA competition are determined by the age that the player turns that calendar year prior to 31<sup>st</sup> December.
  - o E.g. if a player turns 14 this calendar year, they play in the under 16 competition.
  - o A player turning 15 this year is also in the under 16 comp.
  - o But a player that is turning 16 this year will be in under 18.
- Relevant DBA By- laws
  - o 5.3 : .3 Grades and Divisions – Juniors
    - (i) Junior players must play in their own age group if they are registered with a club or individual team unless a permit is requested of competition management. Refer to By Law 7.3
    - (ii) Players who register for a particular club are eligible to play with other competitions grades within their club, provided they only play in consecutive competition grades within the DBA competition structure.
    - (iii) A player may also play for another club/team in a different competition grade provided they obtain a permit. (refer to By Law 7.2)
    - (iv) A junior player can play up to four (4) games per week in DBA competition, with a maximum of two (2) junior games and two (2) senior games.
    - (v) Once a junior player plays their third game in any division of a competition in any one season, they are no longer entitled to play a lower division in that same season. (vi) Once a junior player plays their 3rd game in a team within a division the player cannot play for a different team within the club in the same division.
    - (vii) Juniors who play in League are not permitted to play Division 2 in any junior age group.
    - (ix) The penalty for any breaches of this By Law shall be forfeiture of the lowest division competition game in accordance with By Law 12.

### Cannons Approach to Grading and Team Placement

- At all times the primary concern is the happiness, wellbeing and development of our junior players.
- Correct placement of players into teams and correct placement of teams into grades will help ensure happy and successful teams.
- Teams with players of the same age group will result in teams not being constantly broken up as players change age groups.
- Forming teams with players of similar skill / ability levels will make the job of teaching and developing players more successful and rewarding for players and coaches.

### Grading Policy

- Grading of players will be objective, seeking to triangulate information from prior performance, player satisfaction and developmental potential.
- In order to affect this triangulation, grading will take into account parent and player feedback in the last season, previous coach assessment and objective Club development coach views.
- Where a parent is the team coach, grading of their child will need consideration for the potential for conflict of interest or natural bias, with conversations supported by Committee Exec as required.



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- Coaches, team managers, coordinators and parents should discuss grading issues and possible player movements *before* junior players are notified or involved.
- Primary consideration should be that players are of similar playing ability. Often it is possible to run a team with a wide range of skill levels.

### Process:

- A formal period of grading will be announced.
- Current players will be invited to a grading session with the nominated development coach to assess developmental potential.
- A grading meeting will be held including input from the current game day and squad coaches and Club development coach, with a Committee member present. The mix of teams and divisions will be decided to best grow individual and team potential and club capacity.
- Following this meeting parents or players will be informed of grading decision.
- Where a parent disagrees, they will be invited to speak with a member of the grading team.
- Vacancies in teams will be advertised externally with a grading session of new players held prior to the season.
- In undertaking grading the following questions will be considered
  - o *Is the grading of the team putting any weaker or smaller players in danger of injury?*
  - o *Are there dominant players who restrict the "ball contact" of the majority of the team?*
  - o *Are there weaker players who do not receive their fair share of "ball contact" due to the higher skill levels of the rest of the team?*
  - o *Are some players ready to learn new skills that other players in the team are not capable of?*
  - o *Is the coach spending significant amounts of time teaching basic skills to some players, to the detriment of the rest of the team who already have these skills?*
  - o *Are there ways to support development of weaker or stronger players that will allow them to remain in their current team.*
- Consideration can also be given to player friendships, parents requests etc. but these should be considered secondary to opportunities for development

Approved Cannons Committee 13 Oct 2024