



## PLAYER GAME/PLAYING TIME POLICY

The aim of the Heathmont Jets Junior Football Club is to maximize game time for all registered players, whilst at the same time aiming to field competitive teams that cater for players of varying abilities and background.

- The Club has a strict requirement of **"MINIMUM GAME TIME"** for all registered players in the **non-competitive age groups of Under 8's, 9's and 10's**, as well as the **competitive age groups of Under 11's and 12's**.
- At the **competitive age groups of Under 13's, 14's and 15's** there is an **"MINIMUM PLAYING TIME"** requirement which takes into consideration the developmental needs, ability and safety of players as they grow and develop as players.
- At the **competitive age group of Under 17** there is a **"REASONABLE GAME/PLAYING TIME"** requirement which takes into account the maturity of this age group.

The requirements outlined in this policy reflect the need to ensure a balance between participation and competitiveness. The policy consists of three parts:

### **PART 1 - "MINIMUM GAME TIME"** in the **non-competitive age groups of Under 8's, 9's and 10's and the competitive age groups of Under 11's and 12's:**

- Subject to injury or extenuating circumstances, each player selected to play on game day in these age groups during the "Home and Away" season will play a **minimum of 75% (3 quarters) of game time**, with coaches aiming to provide all players with approximately equal game time.

### **PART 2 - "MINIMUM PLAYING TIME"** in the **competitive age groups of Under 13's, 14's and 15's:**

- Subject to injury or extenuating circumstances, all players in the team over the course of the "Home and Away" season will receive an equal amount of playing time. This should equate to a **minimum of 75% of playing time across the course of the "Home & Away" season**.
- Therefore, this does not require the coach to give all players the minimum amount of playing time in each game, although coaches should endeavour as much as practicable to give every player **"adequate and reasonable game" time each week (as close to 75% game time as possible)**.
- Coaches are granted discretion as to how they administer this requirement based on:
  - the calibre of the opposition from week to week
  - the safety of the player concerned
  - the status of each game
  - the status of the player.

- Notwithstanding the above, coaches should bear in mind that every player in the team wants to play as much as possible in every game, and that parents also want to see their child play as much as possible. Parents may well tell you that it is good that the team won, but their number one interest is to see their child participate. With this in mind coaches should be conscious of not just letting the less talented players play against weaker opposition or simply giving them game time in the last quarter when the score is lopsided and the game already decided. Aim to “sprinkle in” all of your players throughout the game. That way, every player will come out of the game knowing — win or lose — they helped contribute to the team’s performance.

### **PART 3 - “REASONABLE GAME/PLAYING TIME” in the *competitive age group of Under 17*:**

- Subject to injury or extenuating circumstances, each player selected to play on game day will be given “**adequate and reasonable**” game/playing time. As a general rule coaches should endeavour to ensure that all players play a minimum of **50% (one half) of game time**.
- Over the course of the season, coaches should endeavour to give all players as close to **75% playing time as possible**.
- Coaches are granted discretion with regard to the selection of players and the amount of game time they play in any particular week having regard to:
  - the preparation of the player (including attendance and commitment at training)
  - the performance of the player (including commitment to the game)
  - the calibre of the opposition
  - the safety of the player concerned
  - the status of the game.

### **Record Keeping**

To assist Coaches and Team Managers in the implementation of this policy a mandatory tool for recording game time will be provided prior to the start of the season. Records of how many games each player plays and the amount of game time a player receives each week must be accurately recorded and maintained on a weekly basis.

### **Ethical Considerations**

As a final commentary on this policy, Coaches at the Heathmont Jets Junior Football Club must be aware that many of their decisions and actions, as well as their aims and goals, have ethical implications. It is natural that “winning” constitutes a basic concern/desire for many Coaches, particularly those at the coaching in the competitive age groups. However, the Policy requires that as Coaches of junior football teams, Coaches at the HJJFC must disassociate themselves from a “win-at-all-costs” attitude.

### **Effective Date and Review**

This policy is effective from **1 December 2014** and will be reviewed annually in August of each year.