



AFL Barwon

Colac Junior Football Review – Final

AFL Barwon | September, 2018

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Feedback Process

The junior football competitions review has been designed to examine the structure and format of all junior competition structures, and junior pathways and design and recommend a model for the future.

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The Colac Junior Football Review has been put in place to help examine the format of the Colac region junior competition structures, junior pathways and design and recommend a model for the future.

Currently there have been some issues identified such as; Number of available players in the region, Competition Age Groups, retention of Under 17.5 into senior football, Under 12 Auskick Competition and Auskick lower age groups.

The junior review will strategically ensure that there continues to be participation growth for a diverse range of participants with a focus on club sustainability. It will also look to ensure junior pathways are effective to maximise the participants development and enjoyment. Other key focuses will be to maximise use of facilities, create family friendly fixtures, create a regional approach to talent programs and creating stronger relationships with clubs and schools.



The junior football competitions review is to examine the structure and format of all junior competition structures, and junior pathways and design and recommend a model for the future.

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The junior review will align with the G21 and AFL Barwon Regional Strategy that provides a framework to support the future development, governance and growth of football and club based netball throughout the region over the next 10 years.

The strategy is a collaborative planning project between government authorities in the G21 region, AFL Barwon, AFL Victoria, Netball Victoria and other key stakeholders.

The strategy document identifies six strategic priorities across the region, with the first one to “support the capacity of the building of clubs and their people”. This priority includes – support club development and policy development; review competition structures; and continued implementation of Club Health Checks



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PRIORITY 1

Support the capacity building of clubs and their people

One of the many roles of the AFL Barwon Football Development Managers (FDM's) is to coordinate training and education programs aimed at building the capacity of volunteers. However, the significant gaps in volunteer capacity and understanding of administration cannot be addressed by the FDMs alone. The FDMs require access to a suite of professional partners to support clubs with governance, financial management, strategic planning and general administration.

To further address gaps in governance processes and volunteer capacity, investigation into paid administration models is also essential. Options for part time employment, traineeships or shared roles between clubs needs to be provided for club consideration with AFL Barwon offering guidance on recruitment and general employment conditions.

Clubs also need to be supported to capitalise on participation growth opportunities in NAB AFL Auskick, youth girls, access all abilities programs and AFL 9's. For example, linking to schools to access facilities, offering a summer NAB AFL Auskick competition (particular for clubs with weaker junior numbers to recruit junior players) or creating pathways for female players from NAB AFL Auskick to senior ranks, provide options for clubs to grow their player and member base. However, a clubs' capability to capitalise on these opportunities is again dependent on volunteer capacity and ability to strategically plan for expansion both on and off the field.

Any club development and expansion of the game must include support to game officials. This includes umpire recruitment and retention policies and programs, provision of appropriate training facilities, support for umpires schools programs, review of umpiring financial structures and umpire payments, expanding development pathways and encouraging club involvement in developing umpires.

The structure of football and netball across the region will also need to change if the sports are to continue to grow. As identified in the AFL Barwon Strategic Plan, consideration needs to be given to Sunday competitions, offering junior programs over the summer months, changing match schedules for junior games, and sharing of players between clubs.

At the junior level, participation trends across clubs vary with several clubs glutted with numbers while others struggle to attract new players.

Ensuring equality in numbers of players across junior ranks and the introduction of a salary cap and/or points system to discourage mass importation of players were identified by AFL Barwon Clubs through their Club Health Checks as two options to grow participation.

Competition equalisation is a priority for AFL Barwon. The competition and club structure is currently under review and it is the intent of AFL Barwon to support and retain all existing clubs whilst achieving this equalisation. The introduction of a salary cap and/or points system to remediate disparity between clubs is also being investigated by AFL Victoria. This is through a state wide strategic initiative that includes representation by the AFL Barwon General Manager.

Strategic directions to support the capacity building of clubs and their people.

- 1.1 AFL Barwon to complete strategic review of current club and league structures and work with key stakeholders to assist club sustainability and competition equalisation. Review to consider movement between Divisions to ensure club competitiveness.
- 1.2 AFL Barwon to support clubs to develop five year strategic plans to improve operational performance and guide business objectives around facility and asset management, financial planning and club participation and growth.
- 1.3 AFL Barwon and Netball Victoria partner to review competition structure to include night / alternate days matches to accommodate growth in participation and maximise use of existing grounds, courts and facilities.
- 1.4 Establish models for sharing of players and transitioning players between clubs across junior grades to ensure equity in participant numbers.
- 1.5 Continued Implementation of Club Health Check process on an annual basis to measure club development and identify governance, volunteer capacity and administration gaps and implement training and support to address these gaps.
- 1.6 Engage a network of professional partners to support FDMs to address club governance gaps and club volunteer technical understanding of strategic and financial planning.
- 1.7 Support GFUL and CDUA umpire recruitment and retention policies and programs including establishing development pathways and identifying initiatives for clubs to actively promote umpiring to their member base.
- 1.8 Provide education to clubs that encapsulates policy and procedure needs for implementing both healthy sports environments and improved governance processes.
- 1.9 Investigate options for paid administration models and traineeships, providing guidance to clubs on general employment conditions and facilitating opportunities for clubs to share administration costs.



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1.1

AFL Barwon to complete strategic review of current club and league structures and work with key stakeholders to assist club sustainability and competition equalisation.



Project Objectives

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This project shall provide AFL Barwon, with quantitative statistical data, informed local knowledge and a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing football in the area to guide the establishment of appropriate recommendations.

- The following areas have been discussed with all stakeholders:
- Participation statistics (football and community)
- Competition structures and the current level of competitiveness
- Player Pathways including NAB AFL Auskick to junior club relationship status
- Fixturing
- Age Groups
- Facility use and allocations

- Junior players match loads
- Impact of the points system on junior football structures
- Coaching, Recruiting and Training practices
- Umpiring, both CDFUL & Club
- Representative Football, CDFL Interleague, V-Line Cup, CDFNL Academy, Falcons, Next Generation Academy (GFC), Multicultural Academy
- School relationships and programs

This project has been identified as a priority project with significant implications to AFL Barwon responsibilities and is consistent with the AFL Barwon's strategic direction of managing the future of football in the region.

Clubs were asked to provide formal feedback via an online survey at the start of 2018. Each club was then contacted to have a face to face meeting to discuss their responses....

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COMPETITION STRUCTURES

- The majority of clubs believe that playing numbers are the biggest issue for junior football in the Colac region
- 90% of completed surveys said “No” to capping of players
- Only 33% of responses were in favour of having 3 junior teams per club after the online survey. This rose to 90% after the face to face meetings.
- The preferred competition model was Under 18, Under 15 and either Under 13 or 12



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Player Numbers and Retention

- All clubs agreed that they allow their junior players more than one game per weekend.
- 50% of the online responses believe that the league should have the ability to restrict junior player movement.
- Clubs agree for the betterment of the game and club survival that clubs should work together to ensure games of junior football are always played (loaning players, reduced on field numbers).

Permits

- 75% of the survey responses believe Colac region clubs should have the ability to permit players to other clubs.
- All of these responses also added that there needs to be strong local rules around Match Day Permits.



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SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS

- 50% of clubs indicated that they have a strong relationship with schools.
- The same 50% utilise school ovals for training.
- The majority of clubs agreed that AFL Barwon should educate clubs on establishing school relationships.

NAB AFL AUSKICK RELATIONSHIPS

- Other than those running their own Auskick Centre, the majority of others said they had limited to no involvement in an Auskick Program.
- The responses for relationships between club and the new Under 12 competition mirrored the above response.
- Majority of clubs without an aligned NAB Auskick Centre said it wasn't in theirs or the regions best interest to run their own centre.

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JUNIOR PLAYERS TRAINING AND MATCH LOADS

- There was very limited support for mandating training loads across all age groups although there was some support for the lower age groups adopting the AFL Victoria guidelines as policy. Coach education was seen as a critical element of this.
- There was very limited support for capping the number of games a participant can play in one weekend.

IMPACT OF THE POINTS SYSTEM ON JUNIOR FOOTBALL STRUCTURES AND JUNIOR RECRUITMENT

- Clubs strongly supported the introduction of the player points system as it has led to a greater focus on junior pathways and development.
- Clubs acknowledged that they had strong concerns about their players being poached by other clubs.

UMPIRING, BOTH CFUL AND CLUB

- Clubs were in overwhelming support for additional club umpiring education sessions.
- 100% of responses say that their coaches and officials show the correct level of respect towards officiating umpires.

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COACHING

- 60% of clubs believed there should be more education for coaches in the Colac region.
- The same respondents agreed this education should be mandatory.
- Only 33% of clubs indicated that they have the same coaching philosophy throughout the club.
- Respect, participation, development and fun were the key messages to each clubs junior coaching direction.

REPRESENTATIVE FOOTBALL

- There were no major concerns with representative football in the Colac region.
- 90% of clubs are happy with the level of Talent ID in the region.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- Only one club is aware of the Junior Match Guide.

Clubs were asked to provide formal feedback via an online survey at the start of 2018. Each club was then contacted to have a face to face meeting to discuss their responses....

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Colac Region Player Numbers 2018

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
41	80	84	94	95	79	84	86	75	54	71	61	76	22

Colac Region Penetration Rates

Male Junior 8-12 years of age

Male Youth 13-17 years of age

Region	AGE GROUP	2016 CENSUS	2017 PARTICIPATION	PENETRATION RATE (%)	No. OF POTENTIAL PLAYERS
Colac	Male Junior	386	220	56.9948187	166
Colac	Male Youth	458	216	47.16157205	242
Colac Region	Male Junior	201	95	47.26366816	106
Colac Region	Male Youth	231	134	58.00865801	97
Otway	Male Junior	80	39	48.75	41
Otway	Male Youth	100	70	70	30

COMPETITION STRUCTURES

- Change Age groups for 2019 to Under **18, 15 and 13 (CDFNL)**.
- AFL Barwon to develop Under 13 Competition Rules according to AFL Barwon Juniors Under 13 competition rules
- This aligns with talent pathways (Geelong Falcons/Interleague/AFL Barwon Juniors).
- **Colac Otway Under 11 Competition (non club aligned)** - This will be played as per the AFL Junior Match Day Policy rules.
- Raising from Under 17 ½ to Under 18 will allow 31 players (from this year) stay in the system as players. This equates to a full team.
- 245 registered players across 11 teams in 2018 would be eligible to play Under 13's in 2019.

FIXTURING

Colac & District Football Netball League 2019 Game Day Timetable

8.45am	Under 13	4x 12 minute quarters
9.50am	Under 15	4x 15 minute quarters
11.10am	Under 18	4x 20 minute quarters
12.40pm	Reserves	4x 20 minute quarters
2.10pm	Seniors	4x 20 minute quarters plus time on

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PLAYER PATHWAYS INCLUDING AUSKICK TO JUNIOR CLUB RELATIONSHIP STATUS

- Colac Otway Junior Committee (NAB Auskick and Colac Otway Under 11) to help the transition process for all participants. The initial committee will be Ian Seuren, Simon Dewar, Ashley Melville and Ashley Borch
- Colac Region to apply the AFL NAB Auskick 2.0 model to all NAB Auskick Centres (Kinder, Prep, Grade 1 and Grade 2)
- Colac Otway Under 11 to be established, Non club aligned teams. All games to be played in grids as per AFL Junior Match Day Policy (Grade 3,4 and 5). Registrations as per 2017 Colac Otway Under 12 Competition

SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS

- AFL Barwon to introduce the Clubs to the School Ambassadors in their region
- All Colac region clubs to be invested in ALL local schools
- AFL Barwon Game Development Officers to run football clinics through ALL Colac Region Primary Schools in Term 1 2019

PERMITS and POINTS SYSTEM

- Sub-Committee to be set up in 2019 for 2020 with representatives from ALL stakeholders (CDFNL, Colac Tigers and AFL Barwon) as further work needs to be completed to ensure appropriate measures are put in place.

COACHING

- Annual Junior Coaching sessions will be set up regionally
- AFL Barwon to develop on-line Coaching resources and education in addition to COACH.AFL
- AFL Barwon to help clubs set up Coaching Co-ordinators in each club so coach education can come from one contact person within the club

UMPIRING, BOTH CFUL AND CLUB

- Under 13 CDFNL Competition to be officiated by club based umpires
- Online education for club umpires to be made available
- Regionalise club umpire education sessions

REPRESENTATIVE FOOTBALL

- Current interleague program to continue and align with Colac Academy
- Talent Academies to continue with Geelong Falcons, Geelong Cats and AFL Barwon teaming together
- Boys age groups Under 13 / 14 / 15
- Girls age groups Under 13 / 15
- Under 15 Academy to lead into the V-Line Cup each September for Boys & Girls
- Each program will run 8-12 weeks



Timelines

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- Thursday 20th September
- Friday 5th October
- Mid October

- Monday 5th November
- Wednesday 14th November
- Thursday 15th November

7:00pm Central Reserve Club meeting

Feedback from clubs (2 weeks)

Working party to consider feedback and make any changes at a meeting on.

Final ratification on from the AFL Barwon Commission.

Presented at CDFNL AGM

Official community release