



# Ginninderra Rats Basketball Club

## Junior Coaching Policy

# Table of contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1 History	3
1.2 Values	3
1.3 Purpose	3
1.4 Basketball ACT policies and by-laws	3
<b>2. Expectations of coaching staff</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 Role of the coach	3
2.2 Equal opportunity	4
2.3 Professional conduct	4
2.4 Code of Conduct	4
2.5 Support	5
<b>3. Club Policies, Guidelines and Procedures</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 Player selection and placement (grading) policy	5
3.2 Out of age policy	6
3.3 Player selection and rotation guidelines	7
3.4 Grievance procedures	8
<b>4. Training arrangements, sharing courts and training times</b>	<b>8</b>
4.1 Court bookings, change rooms, closures, equipment	8
<b>5. Coach resources and coach development</b>	<b>8</b>
5.1 Coach accreditation	8
5.2 Club coach meetings	8
<b>6. Club and team functions</b>	<b>9</b>
6.1 Sponsorship	9
6.3 Annual award night	9
6.4 Team photographs	9
<b>7. First aid, health and safety requirements</b>	<b>9</b>
7.1 Physiological considerations	9
7.2 Providing a safe environment	9
<b>8.0 Game day procedure</b>	<b>11</b>
8.1 Match day officials	11
<b>9.0 Property management</b>	<b>12</b>

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 History

The Ginninderra Rats Basketball Club (the Club) has a long and successful history of which we all can be proud.

Formed in 1978, the Club has aided the development of many junior players into the Premier League and even into the NBL and NBA, in the case of Luc Longley.

The Club has been successful over the years and remains strong today because of the great people who have volunteered their services over the years. The coaches, managers and volunteers of today hold the baton of the next era of the Ginninderra Rats Basketball Club.

### 1.2 Values

Our coaches play an important role in fostering and promoting our Club's values:

1. **We are inclusive:** Our club welcomes all people regardless of cultural background, gender identity, sexuality, religion or ability.
2. **We are good leaders:** From board members to administrators, coaches, managers and players, we lead with vision, courage and integrity.
3. **We work as a team:** All members of our club have an important role to play. To perform at our best, we will collaborate, listen to new ideas, support each other and work together as a team both on and off the court.
4. **We are a community club:** We value participation as much as winning and we actively work to develop a sense of community within our club and a connection to the community around us.
5. **We are good sports:** We are honest, fair and respectful to team mates, referees, fans and members of other clubs.

### 1.3 Purpose

The primary purpose of this policy to provide guidance to people in our Club who coach or are considering coaching junior teams, right from U8s, through to U19s. The policy can also be used as a reference guide for Board members, club administrators, basketball players, parents and friends, who are interested in understanding coaching related decisions, expectations and behaviours within our Club.

### 1.4 Basketball ACT policies and by-laws

If any advice in this policy contradicts Basketball ACT (BACT) policies or by-laws, Basketball ACT policies and by-laws take precedence.

## 2. Expectations of coaching staff

Through the Ginninderra Rats Basketball Club, we endeavour to teach and support our players not only on the basketball court, but also in their daily lives. To do this we need to be committed to modelling the types of behaviour and qualities we espouse.

### 2.1 Role of the coach

- The development of all player skills, knowledge and attitudes.
- Acknowledgment that all players are unique and have their particular strengths and weaknesses, which need to be addressed.
- *Positively* support and *encourage* players for their efforts helping to build self-esteem.

## 2.2 Equal opportunity

Every effort should be made to ensure that all players have the opportunity to play as much basketball as possible. That means, subject to injury or illness:

- **Every player should play in every quarter of every game.**
- Playing time should be roughly equal for all players across a season.
- Players should have the opportunity to learn the skills to play all positions on the court.
- Endeavour to give players the tools that they will require to advance to become good sports people.

## 2.3 Professional conduct

- Coaches should speak to players in a positive, encouraging and controlled manner.
- Offensive language is unacceptable.
- Cultural, sexist and racist references are unacceptable and should be reported to the girls or boys registrar.
- Coaches must treat all officials, opposition coaches, players and spectators respectfully.
- Coaches should only speak to officials to ask a question and they must accept the answer, not debate it. If further clarification is needed, this should be taken up at another time through the appropriate channels.
- are not to involve themselves in negative dialogue with opposition, coaches, officials, players, spectators or umpires.
- Coaches and team managers should encourage players, parents and supporters to behave in a responsible manner, accepting the decisions of umpires and officials and treat all players on both teams with respect.
- Coaches are required to report any member of the Ginninderra Rats Basketball Club who they believe is behaving in a manner that reflects poorly on the Club as soon as possible.

## 2.4 Code of Conduct

The Ginninderra Rats Basketball Club's full Junior Code of Conduct is attached as an appendix.

**Coaches** have the responsibility for supporting, encouraging, training and directing the players within the spirit of the game. The coach should set the standard for acceptable behaviour for both the players and the spectators. A coach's positive attitude and behaviour towards their team, the opposing team and the umpire creates a sportsmanlike environment under which the game can be played and enjoyed.

- Remember that children participate for fun and enjoyment and that winning is only part of their motivation. Keep winning in perspective.
- Never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake or losing the game.
- When managing demands on young players' time, energy and enthusiasm, take into account their other commitments, including school, work and other teams. The Club acknowledges that school is more important than Club basketball, so players or their parents may discuss missing specific training sessions when school or study commitments need to take precedence. Players in ACT representative teams are allowed to miss Club training in peak preparation time for national championships. A player will be expected to miss training if sick. The Club has no expectation for sick children to be sitting on the sideline and interacting with the team. An injured player will attend training at the parent's and coach's discretion.
- The length and timing of practice sessions should take into account maturity levels. Whenever possible group players competitively according to size, skills and maturity.
- Plan and prepare fully for practice sessions to provide variety, enjoyment and skill development.
- Avoid overplaying the talented players. All players need and deserve equal time and opportunity.
- Be positive to your players and treat them equally and with respect.

Ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to age and ability levels.

- Develop team respect for the ability of opponents and for the judgement of officials and opposing coaches.

- Recognise the importance of injury: follow the advice of a physician when determining when an injured player is ready to recommence training or competition.
- Keep up to date with the latest coaching practices and the principles of the growth and development of children. Attain coaching accreditation.
- Abide by the Laws and Rules of the game, ACT Basketball and the Club.
- Teach your players to follow the rules. Remember rules are mutual agreements which nobody should break.
- Set a good example. Demonstrate good sportsmanship and ensure your behaviour is acceptable, and avoid derogatory language.
- Be supportive of the Club, Club officials and the Club's Code of Conduct.

## 2.5 Support

Boys and girls coaching coordinators will provide support to new or existing coaches to meet the expectations outlined in this policy and to gain confidence to coach in a way that meets the individual and collective needs of each individual team.

## 3. Club Policies, Guidelines and Procedures

### 3.1 Player selection and placement (grading) policy

The following policy sets out the basis for administering player selection and placement (grading) within the Ginninderra Rats Basketball Club.

Effective grading aids player development by matching the size, skills and abilities of players with players of similar size, skills and abilities. Bigger, older and more developed players will be matched against similar strength players to challenge them. Smaller, younger and less developed players will be matched against players of similar skills and will therefore have the opportunity to be more involved in the game and hence further develop their skills.

#### Allocating players to divisions

The criteria for the allocation of players between divisions within an age group are:

1. **Player safety** – Player safety is the paramount consideration. The Ginninderra Rats Basketball Club recognises it has a duty to ensure that players are not placed in teams and standards of competition where they face an unreasonable risk of injury;
2. **Player enjoyment** – Ensuring players enjoy their experience with our club is an important objective for the Ginninderra Rats Basketball Club. This applies to team groups as well as individual players.
3. **Player development** – Effective grading expands the opportunities to promote skills development and confidence for both more and less developed players, and the Ginninderra Rats Basketball Club wants to make use of these opportunities in the interests of players.
4. **Team numbers** – The Ginninderra Rats Basketball Club considers it is in the best interests of all concerned if team numbers are kept reasonably equal across all teams within a division, with no more than 9 players on each team.

Allocation of players to divisions within an age group will involve an assessment of the following factors:

- Age – player's age in relation to the age group.
- Size and maturity – whether or not a player is well developed physically and mentally for their age. The assessment will take account of whether the player will be put in an unsafe environment playing against larger players or alternatively playing against smaller opponents putting their safety at risk.
- Skill level – whether a player has good skills or is in a development stage. Skill levels are important and can determine how often the player will get the ball during a match and whether he or she can make use of it. Lack of skills and not getting the ball much during games can lead to lack of confidence.
- Other factors such as team balance, player motivation and discipline that could determine where a player is placed.

- Team placement will be offered to Ginninderra Rats juniors first. Players transferring from another club will only be offered a place after all Rats juniors have been allocated to a team in their appropriate division; if the number of Ginninderra Rats teams does not exceed four teams and if sufficient coaching and management resources are available. The Club will consider player transfers in line with what is best for the player, the Club and the competition.

### Development players

- Movement between divisions must be monitored as game limits apply and once these are reached, players are restricted to the higher grade and can only play finals in the higher grade.
- Club coaching coordinators, in consultation with club coaches will nominate players for development status.
- Development players gain the experience of playing some games at a higher level which assists their development.
- Movement between divisions also aids the development of players who may be struggling at the higher level to step back to a lower division to gain confidence by getting more of the basketball.
- Players who play in a minor position in Division 1 can benefit from the experience of playing a key position role in Division 2.

Refer to [Basketball ACT Development Player Policy](#) for more information.

### Training

The Club aims to have teams within the same division of a particular age group train on the same night and at the same venue as much as possible. By training together friends and former team-mates in different teams can still maintain contact. It is important to note that due to court availability this aim may not always be possible.

### Reconsiderations

Any player who is unhappy with the division they are allocated to, should discuss the matter with the girls or boys coaching coordinator. If dissatisfied with the outcome, a player may seek reconsideration of the decision through the club's grievance processes.

## 3.2 Out of age policy

This policy sets out the basis for considering applications to play out of age group within the Club.

Any approval to play out of age group will apply for one season only. Players wishing to play out of age in subsequent years will need to reapply.

### Criteria

**Player safety** – Player safety is the paramount consideration. The Club recognises it has a duty to ensure that players are not placed in teams and standards of competition where they face an unreasonable risk of injury;

**Player enjoyment** – The Club recognises that it is important for players to have fun and enjoy playing basketball. For some players who have the ability, playing out of age can enhance their motivation and enjoyment of the game.

**Player development** – Playing out of age provides opportunities to promote skills development and confidence for more talented players.

**Team numbers** – Team numbers vary across age groups and divisions, and excessively small and large numbers can adversely affect the enjoyment and competitiveness of the players involved in individual teams. The impact of players playing out of age on both younger and older age groups will therefore be considered.

**Transition to seniors** – Players selected to play in the Premier League Division 1, are encouraged to play in the U19 Club Division 1 team, but if they are having trouble balancing their various commitments, and they receive permission from the boys or girls coaching coordinator, they do not have to play in U19s. The coaching coordinator will only approve if current BACT by-laws and policies allow for players not playing in the local junior competition to be eligible for junior representative teams. If dissatisfied with the decision, players can seek reconsideration of the decision through the Club's grievance processes.

Junior players selected in Premier League Division 2 are expected to play in and prioritise U19s. If they are concerned about their ability to balance their commitments, they should not play Premier League Division 2.

In general, the Club does not support players eligible for U16s to play in the Premier League. However, it may be allowed in exceptional circumstances, where the player, parents, junior Club coach, coaching coordinator and BACT approve, and where it is in the best interests of the player, rather than a need to fill spots in the senior team.

**Age** – the difference between the player's age and those playing in the older age group will be taken into consideration. Development opportunities will be given to players of the same age group, before offering the opportunity to players from a younger age group. For example, a player from 16B2 will be considered for a development opportunity in 16B1, before a player from 14B1. This is to ensure that teams are not built with younger age players at the expense of older players and ultimately growth in recruitment and retention.

**Size and maturity** – whether or not a player is well developed physically and mentally for their age. The assessment will take account of whether the player will be put in an unsafe environment playing against larger players.

**Skill level** – whether a player has good skills. Skill levels are important and can determine how often the player will get the ball during a match and whether he or she can make use of it. Lack of skills and involvement in the game can lead to lack of confidence.

**Other factors** – such as team balance, player motivation, discipline and specific requests, such as, to play up full-time or part-time.

## Process

Consideration of a player's wish to play out of age will involve the following steps:

1. The player concerned and their parents must lodge a signed application form with the Girls or Boys Registrar. Applications should state whether the player and their parents are applying to play out of age on a full-time or part-time basis.
2. The application will be considered by the boys or girls coaching coordinator. Coaches from relevant age groups will be consulted as part of this process.
3. The Club President or Vice President is required to approve the application.
4. The application and approval will then be forwarded to ACT Basketball for final decision.
5. The player's coach or coaching coordinator will inform the player and their parent of the outcome, and if requested, the reasons for the recommendation.

## 3.3 Player selection and rotation guidelines

The Club provides an equal opportunity for all boys and girls to participate in basketball. This policy seeks to address the issue of reasonable game time and define what is expected of players, coaches and the Club.

In accepting a player's registration our Club assumes responsibility for the development of that player as a basketballer. To ensure a player develops their basketball skills and knowledge the Club must give the player a fair share of game time. No player can develop as a basketballer by sitting on the bench. Player development cannot be predicted and can improve dramatically if given fair game time along with instruction and confidence.

In junior age groups the emphasis is placed on participation and enjoyment. The main goals are the acquisition of basketball skills and the nurturing of physical and emotional development and wellbeing.

Accordingly, all junior players should get on the court in every quarter of every game they play, except where injury, illness or unacceptable player behaviour has been a factor.

### Player rotation

The rotation of players through a variety of positions is important in their basketball development. It gives players the opportunity to develop different skills and to experience the different roles that are required in different positions.

Players should be rotated through a variety of positions over the season, especially in grades up to and including U16. It is important to give players the opportunity to develop skills and to experience the roles required in different positions.

## Coaches

Many factors need to be considered when determining how much time a particular player spends on the court in each quarter. Factors to be considered include:

- player commitment and effort during training and games
- skills balance of the team
- strength and tactics of the opposition, plus the significance of the game
- team numbers, injury and absenteeism
- disciplinary action
- attendance at training.

The coach should make every effort to regularly rotate the bench. No player is to be excluded from a game at the coach's discretion. If a coach would like to exclude a player from an entire game, they need to seek approval from their coaching coordinator. If BACT advises that a player should be excluded from a game, the coach can follow that direction, without first seeking approval from the coaching coordinator.

### 3.4 Grievance procedures

If parents have concerns or grievances about a coaching related issue, they should discuss it with the team manager or coach in the first instance, where possible. If it is not possible, or they are not satisfied with the response they may raise the issue with the coaching coordinator. The issue should then be resolved based on the Club's relevant policies and procedures.

## 4. Training arrangements, sharing courts and training times

The Club endeavours to schedule training times that suit the coaching staff, however, with the size of the club, and the large number of teams, a great deal of pressure can be placed on our training venues, and as such we cannot guarantee coaches preferences. It is important that we are aware and respect the training needs of all teams within the club.

### 4.1 Court bookings, change rooms, closures, equipment

- The club books venues for training for all teams. Basketball court hire is very expensive, so please inform the club of any variations in your training schedule.
- Change rooms are to be left clean and tidy.
- Occasionally, training venues are unavailable due to venue operator requirements. On these occasions, an email will generally be sent around to all coaches.
- Equipment provided by the Club needs to be kept in good condition.

## 5. Coach resources and coach development

### 5.1 Coach accreditation

As a Club we encourage all coaches to complete the Community Coaching Course. The Club will pay the fee for an Club coaches who have not yet completed the course.

Coaches are strongly encouraged to pursue higher levels of accreditation. The club will support coaches in this activity and assist with the expenses where possible.

### 5.2 Club coach meetings

The club may conduct a coach meeting each year. The purpose of such meetings is to address issues and challenges faced by coaches, share resources, reinforce the policy, thank coaches for their efforts, provide an opportunity for coaches to network and get to know each other, and highlight coaching best practice.

## 6. Club and team functions

### 6.1 Sponsorship

Offers of team or individual sponsorship need to be directed to the Ginninderra Rats Basketball Club Committee for approval. It is important that the Club is aware of all sponsorship to ensure sensitivity and maximum benefit for all parties.

### 6.3 Annual award night

Annual awards nights will be held at the completion of the winter season finals series to celebrate the participation and commitment of all involved in the Club.

### 6.4 Team photographs

The club encourages teams to arrange photographs as a record of your team in the ongoing history of our club. Where parents have provided permission, coaches should send a photo of the team to the Rats Communication Coordinator.

## 7. First aid, health and safety requirements

The Club aims to provide a safe environment for all participants. Accordingly, Club officials need to:

- take into account the ways in which the physical and emotional maturity of a junior/youth differs from that of an adult
- take into account any long term or short-term medical condition participants may have ensure that facilities and equipment are appropriate and safe
- ensure players wear appropriate protective equipment
- ensure participants are properly prepared through quality coaching
- encourage and support coaches to gain adequate first aid knowledge.
- promote a safe and enjoyable environment and ensure adherence to the Club's Code of Conduct.

Injuries do occur as basketball is a contact, running sport with constant competition for the ball. It's features such as running, incidental bumping, jumping, changing direction at high speed and in a relatively small space all carry an element of risk. Coaches, managers and officials need to be aware of the considerations and precautions that can make basketball safer.

The Club has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for players, coaches, officials and spectators. The Club has a legal duty of care in that it is responsible for the safety of individuals that belong to the Club. Clubs are required to take reasonable care and reasonable steps to protect members and minimise the risk of injury or harm. These guidelines outline some safety practices that can be put in place to ensure a safe environment.

### 7.1 Physiological considerations

Warm-up and cool-down exercises should accompany all training sessions and games.

Players should be matched as closely as possible for any training drills with a high level or chance of contact.

Children have immature sweat glands and are more susceptible to heat loss or heat gain. Sessions should be restricted in hot or humid conditions. Coaches should provide at least 2 drink breaks during a one hour training session.

### 7.2 Providing a safe environment

Many basketball injuries can be prevented by players, coaches, officials and clubs by giving prior attention to safety issues.

## Preseason

- Players are encouraged to undertake appropriate preseason training to raise fitness levels.
- All players should make any medical condition known to the team manager and coach.
- Appropriate clothing and sports shoes should be purchased, including shorts with no pockets and shoes with good grip for indoor courts.
- Players, officials and parents should be made aware of the Club's Code of Conduct.

## Pre-game

- Players should warm up before each game, gradually increasing intensity.
- Players should ensure they have adequate fluid intake.
- Officials should check the surface of the court and any potentially injurious objects should be removed (rubbish, dust, water).
- Officials need to be aware of phone numbers for emergency services.

## During the game

- Players may choose to wear a mouthguard
- Precautions should be taken for players with a history of injury (protective headgear, taping, etc.)
- All players should ensure that they drink adequate water.
- Players must not share water bottles that require contact with the mouth (see Hydration and Water).
- All bleeding players should be removed from the court until the bleeding is stopped (see Blood Rule).
- Spectators and non-fixed objects (seats, prams, eskies etc) should not be too close to the court to avoid any collision hazard.
- Injured players should not return to the court unless cleared to do so.
- Injured players should seek prompt medical attention.
- If serious injury occurs or is suspected, the game should halt and an ambulance called.

## After the game

- Encourage players to warm down.
- The coach should encourage any injured players to seek medical attention.
- Encourage players to take the time they need to fully recover from injury before recommencing training and games.

## Hydration and water bottles

Children are at greater risk to dehydration, which can contribute to fatigue, cramps and heat stress. All players should be advised to bring their own water bottle to training and games. Players should be encouraged to drink water at regular intervals.

To prevent the spread of any infectious disease the sharing of water bottles between players must not occur.

## Mouthguards

Players may choose to wear a correctly fitted mouthguard. Mouthguards are the best protection for the teeth. Mouthguards should fit the mouth perfectly to allow natural breathing and speech. A custom fitted mouthguard fitted by a dental professional using a special shock absorbing material is best. The mouthguard should be obtained preseason and used at training sessions.

## Blood rule

A player who is bleeding or has blood on their body or clothing must leave the court for immediate medical attention. Before returning to the playing court they must ensure that bleeding has stopped, any wound is dressed and there is no blood on their clothing.

At the direction of any officiating referee, the game will be stopped and any player with blood on their body or clothing should leave the playing court and be replaced by another player through the substitution bench. If a player refuses to leave or leaves slowly they can be reported for misconduct. If a replacement player is slow getting into position, the game can be recommenced before he does so.

Any person treating the wound should use disposable rubber gloves. Any item with blood on it (singlet, towel, dressings etc) should be placed in a sealed container or bag. Singlets and towels should be washed in hot water and detergent. Other items should be correctly disposed of. Any surface that had any blood spillages should be thoroughly cleansed.

### **Court Inspections**

The Club has a duty of care to ensure that the playing surface, both during matches and at training sessions. Safety inspections of the playing surface should be carried out prior to any game. Any potential injurious objects (e.g. Rubbish, dust, water etc) should be removed.

### **Serious injury and concussion**

If concussion or serious injury has occurred the player must be examined by a doctor immediately. If unconscious, pain is felt in the neck or lower limb movement is restricted, the player should not be moved.

The game should be immediately stopped and an ambulance called. Concussed players must not return to the game and should not play until cleared to do so by a medical practitioner.

### **Coaching for injury prevention**

Coaches should provide training targeted towards injury prevention. This includes skills development and awareness of the rules.

### **Adverse weather conditions**

There are dangers playing basketball under adverse weather conditions e.g. high temperatures, extreme cold or wet and electrical storms. Under such conditions training sessions or games should be cancelled or postponed to reduce the risk of injury. For example, if the gym floor is wet or the lights are not working, teams are not to train. Encourage regular hydration in hot weather.

### **Medical considerations**

Some children have medical conditions that may affect their participation. The Club, coaches and other team officials need to be aware of any medical problems particularly any long-term conditions (e.g. asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, heart disease). Coaches need to be aware of each child's specific needs and treatments.

### **Player welfare**

All players have the right to expect fair treatment and an environment free from discrimination, harassment and abuse. The Club has a responsibility for the overall welfare and well-being of team members. Coaches, officials and players should follow the Club's code of conduct and no unfair treatment or abuse will be tolerated. The Club will respond promptly and fairly to all complaints brought to its attention. ACT Basketball has an independent Member Protection Officer who can be approached by any member that suffers abuse or harassment.

## **8.0 Game day procedure**

The club relies on continual parent support to ensure that all official duties are carried out. There are several duties that required fulfilling at on game day.

### **8.1 Match day officials**

Organising officials for each game is the responsibility of the team manager. Usually two people will be required to do bench duty for each team. On occasion teams will also need to provide a referee to officiate the game.

The team manager can draw up a roster so parents and supporters know when they will be on bench duty; or the team manager may choose to take it week by week, and identify who will be on bench duty for each game when sending the weekly email is sent out reminding the team of the game time and location.

Team managers should identify any parents or sibling show may be able to help referee at the start of the season and then call on them when the need arises.

## 9.0 Property management

When budget allows, the Club will endeavour to provide a kit with the following gear to new coaches.

- Basketball
- Training cones
- Pump
- Coaching board.

If coaches will not be continuing to coach for the Club, they should return all property to the Boys or Girls registrar at the end of the season.

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