

SPRINGWOOD UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB INC.

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GRADING POLICY NFA COMPETITION TEAMS

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Overview

Springwood United Football Club Inc. (SUFC) will grade all junior competition teams and selected Senior Teams prior to the start of each football season in accordance with this policy.

Junior Teams and selected Senior Teams will be graded for participation in the Nepean Football Association (NFA) competition. For the purpose of this policy, junior competition teams are defined as Under 12 to Under 18 inclusive. The grading policy will also extend to Under 11 (non-competition), Intermediate Men's and Intermediate Women's teams up to and including Under 21's.

All other Senior Teams will only be graded if the Football Committee determines that there is a requirement for that season for the Club to conduct grading for any particular division within All Age Men's, All Age Ladies, O35's and O45's. Prior to this occurring the relevant Coaches and Managers within those age groups will be consulted by the Clubs Football Manager and relevant Player Coordinator of the Clubs Football Committee. Any such consultation and decision to grade teams within All Age Men's, All Age Ladies, O35's and O45's must occur within 1 week after the Clubs first (1st) online registration window closing, if not before.

Purpose of Grading

The grading of young players is seen as an important step in their football development and their ultimate enjoyment of the game.

This grading policy is designed to ensure that grading of SUFC teams is undertaken in a consistent manner and that the players, coaches and parents have an expectation of the outcome of grading. In grading players into teams SUFC will show commitment to promote fairness, consistency and transparency in the selection process. It is therefore the objective of SUFC, where possible, for all players to play in a team for their age and in a division best suited to their ability.

Grading of players will:

- Arrange players of similar skill level into appropriate teams.
- Define teams into the division according to player strength (in accordance with NFA guidelines and directions).
- Challenge their ability and enhance a player's enjoyment of the game (have fun).

Grading Schedule

Grading will be scheduled to commence after the Football NSW (FNSW) representative trial windows and in accordance with any relevant football governing body regulations and policies. SUFC will communicate the grading schedule via the Clubs website and player registration database that is current at the time the schedule is announced.

Train-On Squads

SUFC may elect to form Train-On Squads by way of separate grading sessions for competition teams seeking to commence pre-season training prior to registration and the clubs grading window of the following season.

The Grading Co-Ordinator in conjunction with the Football Committee and Grading Committee will determine the viability of Train On Squads prior to the commencement of each season and will advertise the grading dates and process within 21 days of the scheduled grading date.

Where possible, Coaches will be appointed to nominated Train On Squads and will assist with the grading process, with players being notified as soon as practical in order to allow pre-season training to begin.

Division 1 teams will be formed from the pool of players selected in the age based Train-On Squads, however new registrations to the club will still be given the opportunity to grade for these teams after normal club registration window closes.

Selection into a Train-On Squad does not guarantee the player a position in the final Division 1 team. Final team selections will be communicated after the clubs grading window for all teams has concluded.

Process

Grading will be managed by the SUFC Grading Coordinator, appointed by the SUFC Football Committee. The Grading Coordinator, with the assistance from the Football Manager and Competition Secretary, will select a Grading Committee which will be responsible for grading nominated age groups.

Best efforts will be made for the grading of each age group to be managed by an independent coordinator. However, this will be subject to the availability of suitable volunteers. Assistance may be provided during grading sessions by previous season coaches applicable to the age group, if considered appropriate by the Grading Committee. Coaches may also be used during the grading process to consult with and provide advice on the performance and skills of individual players.

Grading will be undertaken over a number of grading sessions involving a combination of skill sessions, small-sided games, and where possible and considered necessary, trial games. Note that the number and mix of these sessions will be determined by the Grading Committee and may vary depending on age group, number of players and the skill level of the players involved.

The Grading Committee shall conduct the necessary skills, drills, small-sided games and if necessary full sized games appropriate for the age group that will suitably assess the competency of the players.

As a guide, a typical grading session may consist of:

- Stretch/Warm up;
- Skill based drills – passing, ball control, dribbling, heading, shooting etc;
- Small-sided game/s (players rotating);
- Competitive game appropriate for the age group
- Specialist goalkeeper trials – this will be a specialist position for all competition teams. Players selected as goalkeepers must play the majority of game time in that position.

- All players for the age groups to be graded must participate in grading to be graded into a team, including both new and existing members of the club.

- If a player for whatever reason is unable to attend grading, then he/she will be placed in a team deemed appropriate by the Grading Committee.

- Any absences from grading by a player trialling for a place in Division 1 MUST be notified to the Grading Coordinator in writing via email to grading@springwoodunited.com.au
Note that absences may have an effect on the final placement of a player into a team.

- Players wishing to be considered for Division 1 are requested to attend ALL grading sessions; this may involve independent grading from the rest of the age group.

- Players must wear boots and shin pads to be eligible for attending grading regardless of age group. Players that attend any trial, grading or training session and do not have a set of shin pads to wear will be stood down for that session and will not participate in grading until they have a set of shin pads to wear. Note this will effect a player's placement into a team and may be seen as an example of a player's level of commitment to the team not being suitable for Division 1.
- **Throughout attendance at the grading process, players are not permitted to wear any representative attire or any training attire that identifies them as belonging to a particular team.**
Note: This is consistent with FNSW Policy.
- **Only players who have registered and paid registration fees will be graded into a team.** When teams are selected any player that has outstanding registration fees must pay all outstanding fees or make an arrangement with the Clubs Treasurer to go onto a payment plan before they will be placed into a team. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in a players spot in a team being offered to the next most suitable player identified during the grading process, and for Division 1 teams the offer for the players spot in the team may be withdrawn.
- **Please note that during any grading sessions parents are not permitted to instruct or approach their child, nor stand around the areas where the grading sessions are being conducted.**

Selection of teams

The basis of selection will be the combination of:

- 1. Merit – the application of both individual and team skills in the game of football in grading trials as detailed above.**
- 2. Team balance with respect to player positions.**
- 3. Grading reports submitted by team coaches at the end of the previous season.**
- 4. Attitude of the player to grading and training.**
- 5. Willingness and ability of the player to receive instruction.**
- 6. Team spirit.**

The objective of the selection of teams is to group players of similar ability in that age group together so that teams are able to be placed in appropriate divisions.

New players to SUFC will be evaluated by the Grading Committee and will then be placed with groups of players of similar experience and ability.

Upon instances where the number of players in an age group does not allow the formation of equal numbers of players in each team, the Grading Committee will endeavour to allocate the higher numbers of players to the lower division team(s). Provided it is in the best interests of the age group it will allow players to be promoted should there be withdrawals, and minimise the need for players to be relegated to lower grades prior to the commencement of the competition.

Pre-Season Training

The Football Committee **must** be advised in writing if any Junior Team/s or Coach/Coaches wish to conduct any form of off season or pre-season training. The notice must be received within two (2) weeks prior to the commencement of the training sessions.

Any off season or pre-season training must be approved by the Football Committee and be inclusive of all players within the nominated age group wishing to train. Training must not be conducted during the Clubs Trial/Grading period. Any training conducted during the Clubs Trial/Grading period may result in the Club placing sanctions upon an individual/s and/or team/s.

In accordance with the Football Governing Body insurance requirements all Players (Parent and/or Guardian for a Junior Player) must complete and submit a 'Player Trial Form' if they are participating in SUFC Trials, Grading or Training activities prior to being registered with the club. The relevant form will be made available by the Club as a download on the clubs website. Details on submission will be updated each season on the form.

Requests to Play Above Age Group, in Specific Team or with Friends

Players may request to play above their age group, in a specific team or with friends. Reasonable endeavours will be made to accommodate such requests. The Grading Coordinator must be notified in writing via email to grading@sprinwoodunited.com.au **before grading commences.**

Requests to play together must be received from EACH individual player (or parent/guardian thereof) – No player or parent/guardian can make a request on behalf of another player. If such a request is made the following is to apply:

1. The Grading Coordinator will only consider placing a player in a lower division, another age group or specific team if it does not impact upon the team, division or age group for which the player would have played (for example leaving insufficient numbers to form a team).
2. Team balance (in terms of goalkeepers, defenders, midfielders and attackers).
3. The Grading Coordinator may refuse a player from playing above his/her age group or in a requested team if it is the opinion of the Grading Coordinator that it would be detrimental to the player's performance or development, or to the team's performance or development. Players requesting to play above their age group do so on the clear understanding that the following year they may be required to return to their appropriate age group.
4. Players making specific requests to play with friends will be graded to the level of the lowest graded player within that team. If this is seen as detrimental to a player's performance or development, or to a team's performance or development, the Grading Coordinator may refuse the request.

As soon as possible after the final grading of all players for each age group;

1. Players shall be notified of their grading and team.
2. Nominations for coaches and managers will be finalised.
3. Team lists will be supplied to the Coaches and Managers.

Grievance procedure

If any player or parent is not satisfied with the grading the player receives, they can make a submission in writing to the SUFC Grading Coordinator requesting a review of the player's grading, outlining why they think the grading is not correct. The SUFC Grading Coordinator will consider this submission in consultation with the Grading Committee and Competition Secretary to make a final decision on whether or not to change the player's grading.

Should a player not accept this decision and decide to withdraw from SUFC, paid registration fees will be refunded, less a reasonable administration fee (to be determined prior to the commencement of each season's grading).

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