



Grading – Parent Information

Junior Player Grading Parent Information Sheet

It is not a requirement of the South Coast Football Association that teams be graded into divisions according to their ability.

However, Helensburgh Thistles Football Club now has a Grading Policy and Grading Procedure. The aim of this Grading procedure is to place players in a division/grade best suited to their ability.

To ensure an unbiased selection of players, an independent grading committee is appointed by the Club President and prospective Coaches are also asked for their input.

There are some advantages in not grading players, such as maintaining friendships and family social groups etc. however this soon becomes an issue in several ways.

- Peer pressure – Other players will soon let their feelings be known when it comes down to ability and this often does more damage than any ill feelings resulting from the grading itself.
- Exodus of talented players – Players of above average skills and their parents become frustrated and eventually leave for another club that does grade their players in the hope their child is put into a better team.
- Reduced enjoyment – Players who play in a grade significantly above their skill level will often feel left out as the more skillful players take control of games. Often this can result in the less skillful player leaving soccer in search of another sport.

To not grade the children based on ability would take away the opportunity for some to progress to representative soccer at a later stage.

Soccer is a competitive sport. If you would like your child to play at a less competitive level then ask the grading committee if they can be placed in a lower grade when grading is conducted at the start of the season.

Playing a competitive team sport teaches children lessons which they can use right through life such as persistence, team play, friendship and fair play. Helensburgh Thistles Soccer Club aims



to give all players a fair go and the opportunity for them to play to the best of their ability and to be good sports.

It's heartbreaking for the Grading Committee to decide between several players of near equal ability knowing that some will be separated from their friends. We cannot however, make exceptions based on friendships as this will undermine the whole procedure. Children at this age tend to make new friends quickly and this also means that they extend their circle of friends who they eventually go to high school with.

An integral part of grading is the information available about the player from his or her coach in the previous year. The grading committee has asked that each coach complete an end of season report assessing player attributes and playing ability. This information is used to help grade the players at the start of the next season.

Grading is conducted at the beginning of the season so as not to disadvantage those players that practice during the off season. Players also grow at different rates. Some become more awkward. Any new players also need to be graded at the start of the season. Last year's coaches and/or prospective coaches are invited to take part in the game play part of the grading process as they are more aware of how players performed last year.

The more practice a player does the more they are able get out of the game and the more they enjoy soccer. Eventually they will improve enough to progress to a higher grade or to representative soccer

Grading day schedule.

There will be a Skills test and Game Play situation where the following will be evaluated:

Skills Testing:

1st touch, dribbling, Striking the ball and 1v1's

Game play:

All skills combined along with interaction with team mates, positional play, play-making and tackling ability.

A copy of the Junior Grading Policy and Procedure is available at WWW.xxxxxx.com.au



The Grading Procedure is reviewed each year based on suggestions from parents, coaches and the grading committee. Our aim is to continually improve the procedure to make it as fair and equitable as possible.

Team announcement

Announcing teams can be a very stressful time for Players, Parents and the Grading Committee. Sometimes the Grading committee will have problems placing a select few players into the correct team. So rather than be rushed into a decision on the grading night. Some players will be placed into the lower team so they can be watched in their first trial game before a final decision is made. Parents of these players will be notified when teams are first announced on the grading night.

Late Registrations

For all kinds of reasons we have new players arrive late, just like any other player they get an equal opportunity to try out for the higher division team provided the team has room for an additional player.

Balancing of Team Numbers

Balancing of team numbers in the first few weeks directly after grading is sometimes required due to players dropping out of soccer or changing clubs for various reasons. At times there is no easy answer for this problem and the Club would prefer this did not happen but it does and needs to be addressed fairly for both teams.

Opting out of the Grading process

A player can elect not to be graded but will automatically be placed in the lowest division team.

****Important note****

If a player elects to be graded, they will need to remain in the team that they are graded into and will need to apply in writing to the Club President to have their case for re-grading considered.



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