



Youth Development Plan Under 13 Squad 2016

Philosophy

We will provide an environment in which players, parents, coaches, supporters and sponsors are proud to be associated with our organisation. We believe in open communication and try to ensure that everyone has fun, works hard and enjoys each season. The object is to provide our players and parents with an extremely positive experience while developing elite football players and playing competitive football.

For our players, the environment will be challenging, motivating, and fun. It will require a serious commitment on the part of players and parents.

Our goal is to prepare our players for the future, both on and off the field. We will teach them the critical fundamentals of football. Ball handling skills, passing, and positioning on the field will be stressed over and over again, as these techniques are critical in all levels of play. Equally, if not more importantly, we will reinforce non-football specific skills such as communication, teamwork, time management, responsibility, discipline and respect for all players. The goal is to grow each of our players as individuals and as football players.

Our belief is that solid, committed players who benefit from positive coaching, an atmosphere of respect and teamwork, and strong parent support will ultimately result in a high-performing program. It is our belief that with strong commitments from our players and parents, not only will our club grow but we will produce footballers for State and National level competitions.

Playing Philosophy

All youth teams will play a 1-4-3-3 formation

Fundamentally, we recognise that at youth level a short-term focus on winning can be detrimental to long-term player development.

As a consequence, the objectives of the Ballarat Eureka Strikers Under 13 squad will all relate to skill development (4 core skills, communication, positioning, Perception-Decision-making-Execution) of the team and the individual players.

Our aim is to prepare players who at the end of the SAP have the skills to be able to enact the following playing style that:

- is 'pro-active' rather than 're-active' – starts with a plan to score goals rather than avoid conceding

- is 'possession-based' rather than 'direct play' – with an emphasis on 'effective possession'
- employs a quick counterattack
- allows/fosters creative combination play in order to break down defences
- provides scope for unpredictable individuals to develop their creativity and decision making
- employs pro-active defending – employing a team-wide press

In order for this style to be effectively implemented toleration of mistakes and using them as learning opportunities will be a fundamental underpinning of the club-wide approach to coaching.

Coaching Philosophy

The Ballarat Eureka Strikers are committed to a 'holistic' approach to coaching football. This requires the planning and execution of training programs that develop the players' technical, perception/decision-making skills and fitness in conjunction with each other instead of developing them in isolation.

In order to develop the players' perception, decision making and execution all drills must have relevance to the big picture, and the focus of the drill needs to be clearly communicated to the players.

Coaches will be required to appreciate that the best model for learning is doing, with the coaches' role being as a guide and facilitator; therefore time on task must be maximised in any training session.

Coaches will specifically design sessions that address the key priorities for their team's development based on evaluation and analysis of match-day and previous training performance.

Coaches will adopt Carol Dweck's approach to fostering a growth mindset in players; essentially, this involves praising effort rather than talent; welcoming failures as learning opportunities, encouraging players to be challenged and operate beyond comfort zone.

Sessions will follow the recommended FFA National Curriculum format appropriate for the age group.

Each training session will have 3 components:

1. Skill introduction, this is the warm-up as well as an introduction to the designated core skill for this session. This is the only part of the session where drill-type exercises should be used, but the creative coach can include elements of decision-making. - Flow, no 'stop-start coaching'.

2. Skill training, this is the part of the session where conscious teaching and learning of the designated core skill takes place. - Lots of repetition in game realistic scenarios! - Task-based coaching - Effective feedback - Use of questioning (ask players 'why did you choose that option?', 'where do you think there might be more space?', etc.)

3. Skill game, a game where as much as possible all the elements of the real game are present but organised in a way that the designated core skill has to be used regularly. - Skill games are preferably small sided games to stimulate the number of repetitions/touches! - The players play, the coach observes if learning has taken place - all the Game Specific Resistances are present (team-mates; opponents; goals; direction; etc.) the Skill Game also provides an ideal opportunity to gradually establish the basic principles of the team tasks during the main moments of the game (e.g. 'make the field small' when defending; 'try to face forward' when attacking).

Key team Principles

- Effective Possession
- Combination Play
- Individual Skills

Individual Developmental Focus

- First Touch
- Running with the Ball
- 1v1
- Striking the Ball
- Positioning
- Communicating

Hidden Learning – not the focus of coaching points but automatically built in through 1 v 1 and small-sided game contexts

- Pressing – win the ball back ASAP, deny time and space
- Marking
- Intercepting
- Tackling

Position specialisation is to be avoided in the Under 13 squad; players will be provided with the opportunity to experience various positions. Match day will be used to start developing insight and understanding into basic team and player tasks but training will be focussed on skill development.

Under 13 Game Day Arrangements

We want to focus on developing the girls to be risk-takers, so central to that is to provide an environment where they can make mistakes and learn from them.

Parents can assist us with this philosophy by not attempting to 'coach' on match day. We want the girls to be provided with encouragement, but not instruction (we completely understand the urge to do this but we would ask you to try not to). There are two reasons for this:

1. Developing decision making is key to developing players and instructing players what to do can have a negative impact on this.
2. If the instructions coming from parents do not align with instructions from coaches this can cause some confusion for the players.

Arrangements on Match Day

Tessa and Lulu to be in the Technical Area – responsible for coaching the team including rotations, feedback to players as they come off the pitch.

Anita and Carsten – responsible for analysis to assist with the evaluation of training sessions and planning sessions moving forward.

Playing Time

All players to receive reasonable playing times but that will not necessarily be perfectly equal in each game – decisions to be made based on needs of players

Positions

Players are to be played in multiple positions throughout the season.

General principle – stronger players should be rotated more frequently throughout the season vs. players who are earlier in their development (i.e. players who are being 'taught' a position need to be given time to consolidate their understanding of that position before moving on; while players who have 'reasonable mastery' of a role should be extended and challenged by being taught different roles.)

Rationale – players need to develop the core skills, and certain positions provide greater opportunity to master those skills than others – e.g. playing central midfield develops the player as a 360 degree player, where first touch is under greater pressure. Playing wide forward or wide defence provides greater opportunity to learn running with ball because of the increased opportunities to do so in those positions.

Similarly, strong left and right footers should be played on the opposite side to develop their non-preferred foot. This is because players are expected to be able to play with both feet if they are going to make it at higher level – we need to ensure that we are not developing 'right-footed' and 'left-footed' only players.

Attitude to Winning

We are not saying that wanting to win is bad – or that there is no desire to win.

However, when a decision is being made if a choice offers a 'short-term' gain at the expense of 'long-term' cost then we are avoiding those options.

For example, playing a strong player at central defence all season may help avoid conceding goals but would be detrimental to the long-term development of that player.

Or, instructing players what to do constantly throughout the game stops them from developing decision making skills – we need to let them make decisions themselves so that we can assess their level of understanding and give them instruction in this area.

Attendance at Training and Matches

While attendance at training and matches is expected we understand that from time to time absences cannot be avoided.

All availability problems need to be recorded on TeamApp, so that coaches are able to take these into account in their planning,

Injuries

It is essential that even minor injuries are reported to the coaches.

The Ballarat Eureka Strikers has an ongoing relationship with MC Physio who will provide discounted treatment fees. MC Physio also provide updates direct to coaches. The use of MC Physio is not mandatory, we understand that some may have existing physiotherapists.

Equipment Required for Practice/Games

It is important all BES players, wear the appropriate clothing and equipment for practices/games. All players must wear protective shin guards while playing. Astros are ok while playing on the Astro turf but soccer boots are required on grass pitches. Plenty of water is also advisable. Although not required, a mouth guard is recommended along with sports glasses as applicable. Uniforms (Home & Away Strip and shorts) will be provided by the Club. Socks (Home & Away) can be purchased via the Club.

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****When booking an appointment, ask for Adam Collyer***