

Oakleigh
WARRIORS



SELECTION POLICY AND GUIDELINES



OVERVIEW

In my time with the Oakleigh Warriors representative program we achieved significant success in its short existence. A major contribution to that success, has been the way teams have been selected, coaches appointed and players and the program has been developed. This document looks to give an outline to how this is done and achieved so players, parents and coaches are aware of their own position and progress within the new "Oakleigh Warriors" program.

This document is not to be used for parents or players to judge other selections or used to justify or object to their child's placement.

One of the key ingredients of this program has been its independence in selection. No parents, family members or committee members are involved in this process. This leaves out any scope for influence or favouritism as has been the case with other representative programs. Our selection is based simply on a player's ability, attitude, work ethic, punctuality, past record and the ability to focus listen and learn what they are being taught.

In reference to a player's past record, we are talking about players already involved in the Warriors program. Players trying out for the first time obviously start with a clean slate. A player's performance from past seasons can and will be a determining factor in what squad they make and what opportunities they are given, whether that is good or bad. At times this may mean a player is not given the opportunity to represent the Warriors the next season.

Playing for the Warriors in representative basketball is a privilege not a right. It involves plenty of work, commitment and dedication from players and parents alike. Those who participate in the program properly and realise the privilege that has been presented to them will be the ones set to gain the most from it. Parents or players who abuse this privilege of representing our Association risk losing that privilege.

From representative basketball you can go onto higher levels and standards of this sport. In spite of this we do not care to over inflate our players and parents with hopes of professional or even College careers. The truth is that the vast bulk of players who participate in the representative program, will not achieve the status of playing at the highest levels.

The privilege of playing representative basketball is what every young person should strive to experience. The effort to work together in a team environment to achieve both individual and team excellence to the highest standards that they are capable of achieving. If they can achieve this whether it gets them to a higher level or not instils values and character traits in our youngsters that will hold them in good stead for the rest of their lives. These include:-

- Responsibility,
- work ethic,
- communication,
- sacrifice,
- support of others,
- respect for authority whether that be coaches, teammates, referees, parents or administrators,
- the significance of striving to do your best,
- to discover what resolve lies within themselves to face adversity and disappointment and to overcome them.

All these characteristics greatly assist a youngster to develop into a well rounded person.

If we embrace this privilege and help our youngsters learn and develop from this experience, then we all can quite rightly feel a sense of accomplishment in making our community as whole a better and stronger place to be a part of. In the end that is what the true essence of sport is all about.

TEAM SELECTION OUTLINE

When selecting sides we use a flexible method with parameters in mind to help implement consistency in what we are trying to achieve with individual and team development. As a consideration for selection we combine both short term ambitions with an overall eye on the long term development of players as individuals.

In doing this we ensure the development of the greatest number of players to their best potential by the end of their junior careers. In achieving this, we then have the goal of them continuing onto open age levels through our BIG V program. If managed well, our junior program should ultimately be producing ready made players able to commence playing open age competition at a high level of skill and with an all round ability and understanding of the game.

With this in mind it is important to select players in squads that are best suited to their development and standards as well as recognising their commitment to things such as training, self development and work ethic. In doing this players may fluctuate between number one squads and development squads on their journey through their junior career. It is not uncommon for a player to spend a number of years in development squads before finishing their last year or so in a one squad.

Below is a guide to selection policy that we take into consideration during tryouts. It should be noted these are not strict guidelines and are intended as a guide. It can be dramatically effected by the makeup of an age group in ability and the percentage of top age and bottom player in that age group. For example we may have a mixture of players to form one top age team and three bottom age teams in a given year making the criteria below impossible to achieve.

ONE SQUADS

Number one squads are simply the best standard squads we can field in an age group. In these squads we will pick the best 8 to 10 players capable of representing the Warriors at the highest level. Unlike other squads we don't take top age and bottom age players into consideration, the best group will be picked for these squads. In nearly every instance we will combine our best bottom age players with our best top age players. This always ensures a core group of players in each squad with at least one years experience at the highest levels possible.

TWO SQUADS

Where we have more than two teams our two squads can be made up predominately of top age players, or players on the verge of one squad selection, but were not quite ready at the time of selection. Alternatively, we simply may have had too much depth in one sort of player type, such as guards and there simply are not enough places available due to team balance considerations. Two squads will be selected with an eye to achieving the highest level outside the one squad.

THREE AND FOUR SQUADS

These squads are considered purely "development squads" where the emphasise is entirely on developing players skills and knowledge of the game. It should be noted that this doesn't necessarily mean teams cannot have winning seasons, it is just not the emphasise of the season. These squads will normally be selected along top age and bottom age lines. It is also important to note that by naming a squad a three or four squad does not always mean that this is an indication of those squads abilities. A three squad could be predominately a top age squad and a four squad could be a bottom age squad. This can mean that the four squad may have more ability as a whole than a three squad and finish in a higher level of competition than a three squad. What grade these teams play in however is irrelevant, since the emphasise is on the players and team's development and what they can be taught during the course of a season.

INDIVIDUAL SELECTION OUTLINE

There is a number of criteria that we look at when assessing individual players. This obviously differs from players who have been in the program already (current players) and new players who come into the program for the first time (new players).

CURRENT PLAYERS

Players who are already in the Warriors program will be well know to the coaching staff. Their performance from the previous season wether good or bad will be taken into account when selection is considered. This can effect wether they are offered a spot in a one squad, a two squad, a development squad or in some instances offered an opportunity again at Rep level. The following criteria is generally what we would use.

Ability

By ability we are talking about the standard of basketball a player has developed to be able to compete at higher levels. Players who have done the work to develop their individual and team skills will always be rewarded with a spot in a one or two squad. Players may also be in a period of transition from a developing player to a high level player and during this transition we would also look to recognise their progress.

Commitment

An important factor in selection considerations for current players will be their commitment towards attending training and matches from the previous season. Players who have attended training in a consistent and punctual manner will be looked at for reward. Players that don't attend training on a regular basis will not be considered for a one or even potentially a two squad. A similar consideration will be taken towards players who miss matches regularly. A combination of both would see players not being considered for selection at all.

Attitude

Players attitude towards teammates, coaches and behaviour at training is another important factor in selection considerations. Players who have demonstrated a supportive attitude to teammates, a respectful attitude towards their coaches and are not disruptive at training and attend training sessions with an energetic, enthusiastic approaches to those sessions combined with a willingness to learn, will greatly enhance their chances of achieving selection to the squads they want.

Team Ethos

It is crucial that we develop teams that are made up of players who understand that for a TEAM to be successful each player in it understands their obligations towards it, what teamwork actually involves and means, their roles within that team, and their support for their teammates and coach.

Ability to work on their own

Current players will also be assessed by their ability to work on their game in their own time. All players will be given individual drills and tasks to be able to do in their own time to improve their individual and team game. Players that complete these tasks and improve their individual game will be given priority in selection.

Parents

Our parents are obviously a vital resource for the program to function. On the whole they are the backbone of the program. However there can always be a small percentage that not only fail to assist in the smooth running of the program but for whatever reason create friction and tension within the program and hinder the programs ability to meet it's full potential. For these reasons parents are a consideration in selection.

Players with parents that are supportive of the program, responsible with meeting their financial obligations, responsible with meeting their team duties and direct concerns, complaints and problems in an appropriate manner, will have no problems in this area. On the other hand parents who cause conflict within a team, between players, undermine coaches, players, the program or administrators or make unnecessary and unwarranted attacks on such people within the program shall have their positions in the program reviewed and in all likelihood not be invited back at the next tryouts.

NEW PLAYERS

Players who are trying out for the first time will be judged on predominately their potential, ability and work ethic they show throughout tryouts. There will also be players that have been scouted through our domestic competitions that will be invited to tryouts who would be able assessed based on the criteria set out in those listed for “current players”. For these players who have been scouted and for totally new players from other clubs or domestic players who come of their own volition the following apply

Ability

We would look at a number of things here, a players athletic ability, their height and size, speed and skill level. Players would not need to possess all these attributes but would certainly need at least one if not a combination of some of these. While these are important they are not the only areas we judge potential players by.

Work Ethic

New players work ethic will be a crucial ingredient in assessing a players suitable for representative basketball. All players are required to demonstrate a strong work ethic, players who may be lacking the ability level described above can certainly increase their chances of selection considerably by demonstrating a strong work ethic.

Attitude

New players who demonstrate a supportive attitude to teammates, a respectful attitude towards coaches and are not disruptive during tryouts and attend tryout sessions with an energetic, enthusiastic approach, and demonstrate they are capable of listening and have the ability to learn greatly enhance their chances of selection.

Team Ethos

Players in many tryouts (at times with the encouragement of parents) come into tryouts with a belief that they need to score points to ensure selection. This results in a selfish attitude in these sessions. Players that demonstrate this behaviour will greatly reduce their chances of selection. Players that show they know when to take and when not to take scoring opportunities and can show they understand the concept of teamwork will have a great chance of being rewarded with selection.

Parents

Parents for new players need to understand what is required from their child to participate in representative basketball at Oakleigh . This includes their child having to play with a domestic team/club in the MBA’s domestic competitions, their financial obligations and their obligations in regards to training and development and support of players, coaches, administrators and the program as a whole.

TEAM BALANCE

Team considerations can be significantly different from individual ones. The way we group and select our squads takes into consideration a number of factors. These are listed below.

Bigs & Smalls

In basketball you have positions within a team that can be generally split between what we call Bigs and Smalls. Despite these categories there are exceptions to the rule. Smalls fall into the following criteria.

Point Guards — A Point guard is the best ball-handler in the team and is responsible for bring the ball up the court and setting up plays and team-mates for scoring opportunities as well as looking to score themselves

Shooting Guards— Shooting guards are predominately considered a “small” and they are guards who can back up the point guard with ball-handling duties, but whose main duties are to look for scoring opportunities

Team Balance

Where possible we look to select squads with a proper balance of Bigs and Smalls or if you prefer guards and forwards. Depending upon on the numbers in the team we would ideally look to pick a team with a balance of more bigs than smalls. A good balance is two smalls a medium to tall size player and two bigs, wether that be two forwards, two centres or one of each.

In a ten man roster we would like a starting five mentioned as above with a bench of five to relieve them. In an eight man roster you would hope to have the above line-up with one small and two bigs off the bench. In a nine man roster you would have two smalls and two bigs or even one small and three bigs.

Ultimately you want a balance throughout the squad with a greater spread of medium to bigger size players while having a good nucleus of smalls and ball carriers.

It should be noted that on occasions a taller player can develop excellent ball handling and passing skills, as well as shooting and scoring ability. In these situations it gives the coaching staff the ability to select a predominately tall squad.

This section is purely given as a guide to balance in a squad and that balance will be entirely dependant upon players available for selection. As a guide we would select squads of up to 10 players for VC competition and squads of between 8 and 9 for other grades. Where the number of players available for squads is below 8 players, the formations of those teams will be decided on a case by case basis.

Number of teams

Our goal in selection is to place all available players with the ability or potential to play representative basketball and who possess the required work ethic and characteristics into a Warriors team. Considering it takes 12 months for many players to acquire the skills and knowledge to feel comfortable with our structure and systems and be able to compete at this level, it is important to have players placed into the program to complete their development work as early as possible.

Alternatively it is important we don't have “open door” selection, so players who are not capable or ready to play this level are selected. If we allowed this that players team's performance would be hindered and that players confidence would regress rather than be built.

COACHING APPOINTMENTS OUTLINE

The appointment of our coaches and their development is a crucial part of the Warriors program.

Recruitment

We recruit the bulk, if not all, of our coaches from players who have graduated out of our junior Cougar program. We also look to recruit coaches from the playing ranks of our BIG V and even U/20 teams. The reason for this is all these players are well drilled in our structure and system and are able to teach and demonstrate the skills and techniques required to efficiently execute our structure and style of play on the court.

This also gives a legitimate link between our BIG V squads and junior program ensuring junior players are aware of the pathway available to them within the club and basketball in general.

Where we do not have enough coaches through this resource we will look at domestic coaches, outside the Association and as a last resort at Parents willing to assist with their child's team. This last option is an absolute last resort as it is our preference to not have coaches coaching their children or siblings due to conflicts that can occur whether legitimate or not.

Working as a team

The vast bulk of our coaches work on a voluntary basis and all of them have school work and family commitments that from time to time make them unavailable for training and game commitments. It is vital that our coaches work as a team and work to help each other out when these occasions occur. It is also vital they have a thorough understanding of our program, its structure and its development processes for both individuals and teams. In doing this, our coaching structure can be flexible and adaptive to ensure all teams and players are given the appropriate training, development and education.

Working to a program

We have a proper program that puts in place a structure that encourages and promotes the development of the individual, the team and the program as a whole. It's crucial that all our coaches have a thorough understanding of the development guidelines for individuals and teams and their responsibilities in that regard. We have specific techniques and goals in our drills and training, from individual ball handling skills through to complex quick hitters. It is important that individuals and teams are progressed at an appropriate and planned rate and players and teams can be assessed at the completion of a season as to what point that have reached in that progress.

Coaches may or may not continue coaching a team from one season to the next. Very rarely do they get the opportunity to coach a team with exactly the same composition of players from one season to the next. A crucial part of our chances for success is that we are able to mix our teams with players familiar with the individual and team concepts that we are trying to implement. This transition needs to be as seamless as possible. If coaches can coach to a program, be open to be assessed, supervised and mentored our chances of achieving that increase dramatically.

Coaches of lower age teams need to be mindful of what they are trying to introduce and teach to their players to ensure our kids have all the tools and skills to make the transition to higher age groups and indeed higher standard teams. Coaches of higher aged and higher standard teams need to have a good grasp of where their players are in their progression in their development in regards to individual and team skills and knowledge. If our coaches can work to a program, work together and assist each other in their endeavours, our program ultimately will progress significantly as a whole. This includes coaches meetings, courses, seminars and idea exchanges.

Understanding their commitments

In appointing a coach they need to understand their commitments and obligations to their players, teams and the Warriors program. This includes, their dress, attendance, punctuality, commitments to the program and fellow coaches and other teams within the program other than their own and meeting their obligations and responsibilities such as working with children checks.

If we can work to these selection guidelines then our program will have the foundation in place for a successful club that will be able to compete and ultimately win at the highest levels of the sport in the state. While this document gives an outline to our thinking in regards to selection of players, make up of teams and appointment of coaches, it should be remembered that significant allowance be given for flexibility in regards to this, as every year we have different potential within our juniors and our program dependant upon players and coaches available.

This document however should give all parties involved a clearer picture of what we are trying to achieve through our selection process.