

## Junior Cricket at STC

Junior cricket at STC endeavours to foster the social, physical and emotional development of all players, coaches and families. We recognise that cricket is a competitive pursuit, but that above all we play and participate to enjoy ourselves, make friends and to strengthen our communities. Therefore, STC is a strong supporter of Cricket Australia's 'Spirit of the Game' principles and the Eastern Cricket Association's Code of Behaviour for junior cricket.

The Junior Operations Committee ('JOC') is responsible for managing junior cricket at STC in accordance with the STC Junior Cricket Philosophy.

### 1. STC Junior Cricket Philosophy

At STC, our philosophy and approach to junior cricket is structured according to six core values:

- **Active participation:** for all cricketers, regardless of their ability, achieving one's potential relies on opportunities to actively participate in both training and games. It is everyone's responsibility to encourage participation because this is integral to our club's spirit of inclusiveness, equality and teamwork.
- **Sportsmanship:** learning and displaying the principles of fair play and respectful competition is the guiding ethos for all junior cricket teams at STC. Respecting the 'Spirit of the Game' should therefore be embraced by all players and coaches. While winning is important, it should never be prioritised over good sportsmanship.
- **Player enjoyment:** players and families should enjoy their experience with STC. This enjoyment can take many forms including fostering new friendships, developing new skills, and achieving personal and team success.
- **Player development:** skill and personal development are best achieved in a safe and supportive environment. In such an environment, players are guided how to improve the technical and competitive aspects of their games and are encouraged to share their abilities with club-mates, in order to support the skill development of others. The club encourages and supports junior players to pursue representative cricket if they wish to do so, while also providing pathways to participate in STC's senior teams
- **Club affiliation/Player retention:** the junior cricket program is integral to the culture of the club. STC strives to provide a safe and welcoming club environment in which players and their families can enjoy their experience, whether it is by playing cricket, or being a part of the STC community. A key objective is to retain junior players for multiple seasons and, ideally, to be long-term players and contributors to STC.
- **Child Safety:** all roles that interact and deal with children (e.g. coaches, team managers) are required to provide their WWC number; complete the Play By the Rules course; and to monitor compliance with any transportation safeguards that have been communicated by the parents of their team members. Coaches and team managers are also required to comply with the '*ECA Code of Behaviour for Coaches and Team Managers*', which includes a prohibition on the consumption of alcohol and/or tobacco products while in charge of junior players.

## **2. Guide to team selection/allocation**

### **2.1 Grades**

STC enters teams in the ECA Under 10 and Under 12 Saturday morning competitions and the Under 14, Under 16 and Under 18 Friday night competitions (subject to having enough player numbers).<sup>1</sup> STC may share players with other local clubs (e.g. Ashy Willows) in order to enter teams.

In the interests of providing balanced competition for all players, the ECA provides graded competition from U12 level onwards.

STC will apply to the ECA regarding the grading of teams at each age group level. Application for specific grades (A, B or C) is based on an assessment of what grade shall provide the appropriate level of competition for each of the teams.

While the club may request specific grading for teams, the ECA ultimately determines final grading after considering all club applications. The ECA generally requires STC to field an 'A' grade team in each of the Under 12's, Under 14's and Under 16's to manage parity of competition with other clubs of similar size.

### **2.2 Composition of Teams**

As our junior players progress through the age groups, STC recognises that their development and motivations to play cricket can change. Generally, teams will vary in composition each season according to the numbers of players available at each age group and the skill development requirements of each player.

The key principles outlined below provide guidance regarding the nomination of grades to the ECA and the composition of STC teams.

2.2.1 Maximise participation.

2.2.2 Optimise development opportunities for junior players at a level where they can perform credibly and without compromising the safety of developing players. Wherever possible, the club will enter teams in 'nine player a side' competitions to foster development e.g. ECA U12C and ISEC U13B.

2.2.3 Create an environment where players are most likely to enjoy their cricket.

2.2.4 Wherever possible, ensure teams are balanced in terms of skill (for the grade) and with an appropriate spread of players across batting, bowling and fielding disciplines. Best endeavours will be made to ensure that players can play with at least one nominated friend.

2.2.5 STC does not have a policy of promoting or demoting players during the season. However, in the interests of player development and managing that teams in the U14-U18 age groups have eleven players for each game (preferably twelve players for each two-day game), the club retains the flexibility to facilitate switching players between grades or age groups.

Whilst the selection of grades and teams seeks to optimise the aforementioned principles, it is ultimately guided by what combinations STC deems to be in the best interests of the club.

---

<sup>1</sup> STC may also enter teams in the ISEC Under 13, Under 15 and Under 17 competitions.

## **2.3 Playing Up**

It is expected that players will play within their applicable age groups, but players can apply or be asked to play for a team in a higher age group or in a higher grade within their age group, either on a regular or fill-in basis.

- 2.3.1 Players may be permitted to play with their school year level cohort in an older age group.
- 2.3.2 Players may be permitted to play in an older age group to advance their development. Permission is unlikely to be granted if the older age group has an excess of players, or the applicable age group has a shortage of players.
- 2.3.3 If a player qualifies to play finals for teams in two different age groups and there is a scheduling clash, the default position is that the player will play finals for the older age group. The exception is where the team in the younger age group is short of eleven players in which case the player will play finals for the younger age group, provided that this does not leave the team in the older age group with less than eleven players. If a player is required by two sides, the coaches of both sides plus the Junior Vice President (or a neutral club member arranged by the Junior Vice President) will make the selection decision (to be applied for the whole of the finals) based on the Philosophy and taking into account the best interests of the Club, the teams and the impacted player(s).

## **2.4 Team Size Limit**

- 2.4.1 The ECA rules stipulate that the number of players for an 'A' grade team should not exceed twelve players. The ECA team size limits for U18, U16B, U16C, U14B, and U14C grade teams is fifteen players. Wherever possible, STC team sizes should not exceed 12 players (for an eleven player a side competition), particularly where other STC teams are short of players (i.e. STC may use player rotations between teams to manage player numbers). The same "+1" team size limit applies where the competition is for less than eleven players a side.
- 2.4.2 Priority should be provided to past players on the proviso that they register for the upcoming season by the requested date. Once the size limit for all teams is attained, new registrations can be placed on a waiting list until there are enough players for an additional side.
- 2.4.3 If STC does allow an STC team to play with numbers higher than the +1 maximum for a particular year, that should not be seen as setting a precedent that STC will allow that team (or any other team) to play with more than the +1 maximum in a succeeding year.

## **2.5 Relevant ECA rules impacting team selections**

- 2.5.1 **Age exemptions:** *Schedule C: the ECA may approve player age exemptions in various circumstances including where the club has no team options in the next level up. In the Under 18's, one overage player is allowed, subject to prior approval from the ECA.*
- 2.5.2 **In-season 5 match 'lock-in':** *ECA 44.1: Once a player has played five matches during the current season in the Under 18 competition that player may play only in the Under 18 competition for the remainder of the season. ECA 44.2: Once a player has played five matches during the current season in the Under 16A, 14A, and 12A competition that player may play only in the Under 16A/14A/12A competition in the Under 16/14/12 age division for the remainder of the season.*
- 2.5.3 **Finals:** *ECA 27.1: To be eligible to play in semi-final or grand final matches, a player must have played with his club as a registered player in the team concerned in at least four matches in that grade in the home-and-away matches prior to the semi-final match. A player who has played at least four matches at the age level, albeit in a higher grade, will be eligible to play in a lower grade if the higher graded team or teams are participating in the same round of semifinal or grand final matches. ECA 27.6: notwithstanding 27.1, a player in a lower age level competition shall be eligible to play in a semi-final or grand final match, provided he has played in at least three matches prior to the semi-final in the current season.*

### 3. Participation Policy

- 3.1 In keeping with our Philosophy, STC's objective is to ensure opportunities are provided to meet the development needs of all players. The practical application of this policy differs at each age group level.
- 3.2 In the competitions up to U14As, STC teams will deploy a rotation system that seeks to provide equal opportunities for players to bowl and bat and test their skills in different positions.
- 3.3 From U14As, players often begin to specialise in a particular discipline. In these cases, teams will seek to provide opportunities for players to develop that skill, so long as it does not consistently inhibit the skill development of other players. Coaches are accountable for balancing the development needs of individuals and the team via their batting and bowling plans. **The objective is that each player has a meaningful role.**
- 3.4 Whilst the reality of the game dictates some players will participate more than others each match day, the coach will endeavour to provide parity of opportunity over the course of the season. In finals, coaches will endeavour to provide each player with the opportunity to have a meaningful contribution, taking into account the match situation.
- 3.5 If a player is not happy with their level of participation, they should discuss this with their coach and/or team manager. If the matter cannot be resolved, it should be elevated to their Age Group Manager.
- 3.6 STC Team Managers/Coaches are requested to observe the following, so as to maximise opportunities for players within the team:
  - 3.6.1 **Retirement of batsmen:** batsmen can be retired at any time to share opportunities. If batsmen get within five runs of the compulsory retirement score, they should be immediately retired. This means that the batsman retires not out which enables either 12 players to bat or the retired batsman to return to the crease at the fall of the 9<sup>th</sup> wicket to support the not out batsman. For example, if the retirement scores are 55 for one-day games and 105 runs for two-day games, as soon as the batsman passes 50 or 100 runs, they should be immediately retired.
  - 3.6.2 **Completion of Games:** For in-season games, where a first innings result has been achieved prior to the scheduled finishing time, STC teams should seek to play as many overs as possible, in good spirit, up until the scheduled finishing time (*notwithstanding that ECA rule 43.3.14 provides that the games may finish early, if both team managers agree*). This facilitates participation opportunities from those players that would otherwise have missed out, due to the early game finish.

## 4. Representative Cricket Selection Policy

Each ECA club is strictly limited on the number of players that can be nominated to trial for representative cricket in U12, U14, U16s and U18s.<sup>2</sup>

- 4.1 All age group representative nominations will be made by the Junior Talent Development Manager.
- 4.2 Selection of players will be based on the below criteria.
  - 4.2.1 MyCricket statistics from the previous season
  - 4.2.2 Circumstances in which the MyCricket statistics were accumulated (e.g. in what grade and age group were the statistics accumulated)
  - 4.2.3 Likelihood of the individual being selected (e.g. if STC is already selecting two batsmen, getting a third batsman into a representative cricket squad may have a low likelihood and hence a bowler should be considered)
  - 4.2.4 Availability and desire of the individual to attend all trials and both train and play over the relevant representative period
- 4.3 The ECA requires that players MUST play a minimum of 3 games in that season to be eligible for selection. As long as the player plays enough games to qualify, it doesn't matter what STC age group they play in, but they must trial to play rep cricket in their correct age group. With U18 rep, players who no longer play juniors may still be nominated, but that rule only applies to the U18s.

---

<sup>2</sup> The limits which applied for 2020/21 were:

- A grade team 5 nominations.
- B grade team 3 nominations (U12Bs 2 nominations).
- C grade team 0 nominations. Clubs who feel that they have a boy in a C Grade team that is worthy of a place, can discuss this with the ECA's Representative Cricket Manager.

## **5. Appointment of Junior Coaches, Team Managers and Captains**

### **5.1 Appointment Process**

The appointment of Coaches and Team Managers is done by the relevant Age Manager ('Manager U14: U18' for the U14 to U18 age groups and 'Manager U10: U12' for the U10 to U12 age groups).

All coach appointments must be approved by the Junior Vice President. STC may exercise its discretion to pay the Club Coach - current pay rates are \$25 per training session and \$50 per match day (i.e. \$100 for a two day game).

The appointment of Captains is done by the Coaches of the respective teams, with the approval of the Team Manager. The appointment of Captains for the U18, U16 & U14A teams is to take account of leadership and cricket achievements not just at STC but also in Representative and school cricket.

### **5.2 Paid 'Playing Coaches'**

If the Coach is a paid 'Playing Coach', the Coach's priority must be on player development and seeking to maximise every player's game involvement.

Hence the paid Coach plays as a 'Restricted Player', which means that (on a no-exceptions basis):

- If there are eleven or less players, the paid Coach does not bowl more than one over in one-day games and two overs in two-day games and bats only in the range from 7-11 (in deciding where to bat in the range 7-11, the paid Coach must base the decision on what will best maximise the game involvement for all players in the team).
- If there are 12 or more players, the paid Coach plays as the 12<sup>th</sup> man and can field, but not bat or bowl.
- These restrictions are to be applied strictly on a no-exceptions basis (i.e. irrespective of the game situation and whether or not the game is a final or a lead-in to a final).

## **Further information**

Should any parent be concerned that the policies and philosophies above are not being adhered to, they are encouraged to discuss the matter with the Junior Vice President and/or the Senior President of the club.

Please refer to Appendix A for details of the STC Junior Operations ('STC Junior Ops') structure.

## STC Junior Operations ('STC Junior Ops'): structure

Role	Responsibilities
Junior Vice President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Executive member: STC Committee</li> <li>- ECA Junior Delegate</li> <li>- Policy Administrator: STC Junior Cricket Philosophy</li> <li>- Coaches / TMs Guide</li> <li>- Compliance with ECA Admin rules</li> <li>- Liaison with Senior Cricket Selector(s)</li> <li>- Home ground applications</li> <li>- ECA Turf Sunday afternoon (development team with the majority of the team to comprise U14: U18 junior players)</li> </ul>
<b>On-field Management</b>	
Manager U16: U18 Manager U14s Manager U10: U12	Registrations/Team nominations/communications (appt of team coaches/managers) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PlayHQ support</li> </ul>
Manager Cricket Blasters	Oversight Cricket Blasters Manage transition of players from Cricket Blasters to U10: U12
Girls Cricket Manager	Manage all facets of the Junior Female cricket program within the cricket club <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recruitment</li> <li>- Communications</li> <li>- Training</li> <li>- Gameday</li> <li>- Uniforms, Merchandise</li> <li>- Equipment</li> </ul>
Junior Talent Development Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rep Cricket Selector &amp; nominations: ECA U12, U14, U16 &amp; U18.</li> <li>- Approve STC junior team A grade selections</li> </ul> Initiatives: talent pathways for advanced players
<b>Off-field Management</b>	
STC Child Safety Officer	Manage STC's compliance with <b>Australian Cricket's Framework for Safeguarding Children &amp; Young People</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintenance STC Child Safety Register</li> <li>- Attend Senior Committee meetings as necessary</li> </ul>
Manager Awards	Manage awards process; maintain Junior Awards Policy; Host Presentation night <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Weekly callout of the key junior player achievement(s)</li> <li>- Individual awards for each of the teams</li> <li>- Club Champion (U14: U18 players): collate votes on a weekly basis</li> <li>- Junior Person of the Year award</li> <li>- Update Junior Honour Boards</li> </ul>
Equipment Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure each Junior team has a complete Training and Gameday kit according to their needs</li> <li>- Ensure all Ground equipment is stored, available and up to date</li> <li>- Responsibility for keeping Junior equipment room tidy and ground setup equipment is closely monitored on a weekly basis</li> <li>- Manage the allocation of game balls to each team</li> </ul>
Uniform, Merchandise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manage all Junior Club uniform orders: Gameday shirts, Caps</li> <li>- Manage and order all Junior Merchandise apparel: currently Hoodies</li> </ul> Initiatives: Gameday coloured Polos with numbers
Kiosk Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure Kiosk is supplied with Children's age saleable items - liaise with Senior Committee member responsible</li> <li>- Assign Kiosk attendants when required e.g. for Awards night, Wednesday night Girls Cricket, Friday night cricket (if multiple games @ Nettleton Park)</li> <li>- Keep a record of attendants with RSA certificates</li> </ul>