



AFL RISING STARS PROGRAM





AFL Rising Stars Program

13-18 years

The AFL talent identification and development program is formalised in the NAB AFL Rising Stars Program. The development program operates from grass roots through to the elite AFL level. It provides recognition and a clearly identifiable direction for a player's career. The program incorporates the:

- › NAB AFL Rising Star;
- › NAB AFL Draft;
- › NAB AFL Draft Camp;
- › AIS-AFL Academy;
- › NAB AFL Under-18 Championships; and
- › NAB AFL Under-16 Championships.

NAB AFL Draft

The NAB AFL Draft is the only process through which a footballer can become an AFL player. It is the most equitable way of distributing the available talent to AFL clubs. Players gain access to clubs by nominating for the draft and can only move to other clubs through the draft process. The draft is critical to the AFL's objective of developing an even competition because:

- › it gives the lesser-performed clubs in a season first choice of the available players;
- › it gives clubs the option of exchanging draft choices, players or a combination of both; and
- › uncontracted players can change clubs by nominating for the NAB AFL Pre-season Draft.

Clubs can also maintain a rookie list of up to 6 developing players between 18-23, although these players are not eligible to play in the AFL premiership competition except as an injury replacement. A separate Rookie Draft is conducted for this purpose. The following components of the NAB AFL Rising Stars Program lead directly to the Draft.

NAB AFL U16 & U18 Championships

The NAB AFL Under-16 and Under-18 Championships are played annually between state and territory teams in 2 divisions, incorporating teams from South Australia, Western Australia, Victorian Country, Victorian Metropolitan, New South Wales/ACT, Northern Territory, Queensland and Tasmania.

AIS-AFL Academy

The AIS-AFL Academy is a joint program of the Australian Sports Commission, the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) and the AFL to enhance the sporting, personal, educational and vocational opportunities for Australia's best young footballers.

Each year the AIS-AFL Academy offers 30 12-month scholarships to young athletes eligible to represent their state or territory at the NAB AFL Under-16 Championships but ineligible for the draft in that year.

Scholarship holders remain in their home states but gather together for 3 national camps and other training programs during the year. Squad members are also given the opportunity to represent Australia at under-17 level in the International Rules Series against Ireland or on a tour of South Africa.

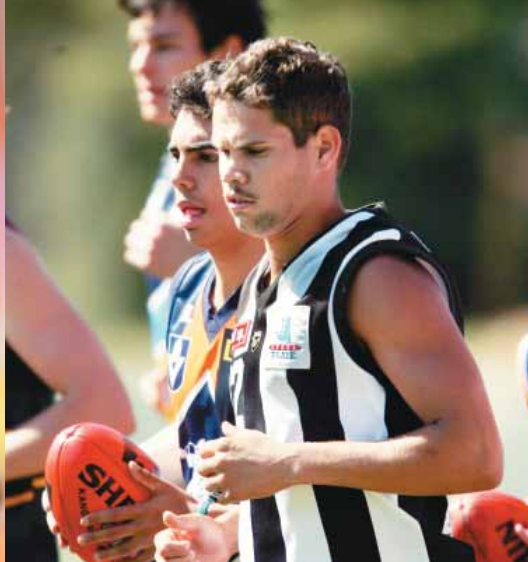
NAB AFL Draft Camp

The NAB AFL Draft Camp has become an integral part of the talent identification process for AFL clubs. The process has been refined and improved and the AFL invites about 70 players to the annual camp at the AIS in Canberra and a further 100-plus prospects to shorter testing programs in their home states.

Information is the AFL club recruiting managers' greatest tool and insights gained through the draft camp and the AFL recruiting reports is invaluable to clubs as they consider which players to draft. Key elements of the draft camp include medical screening, physical and psychomotor testing, formal and informal interviews with AFL clubs and skills sessions.

Players are organised into 7 positional groups for camp operations and testing – small midfielders, medium midfielders, medium forwards, medium defenders, tall forwards, tall defenders and ruckmen.

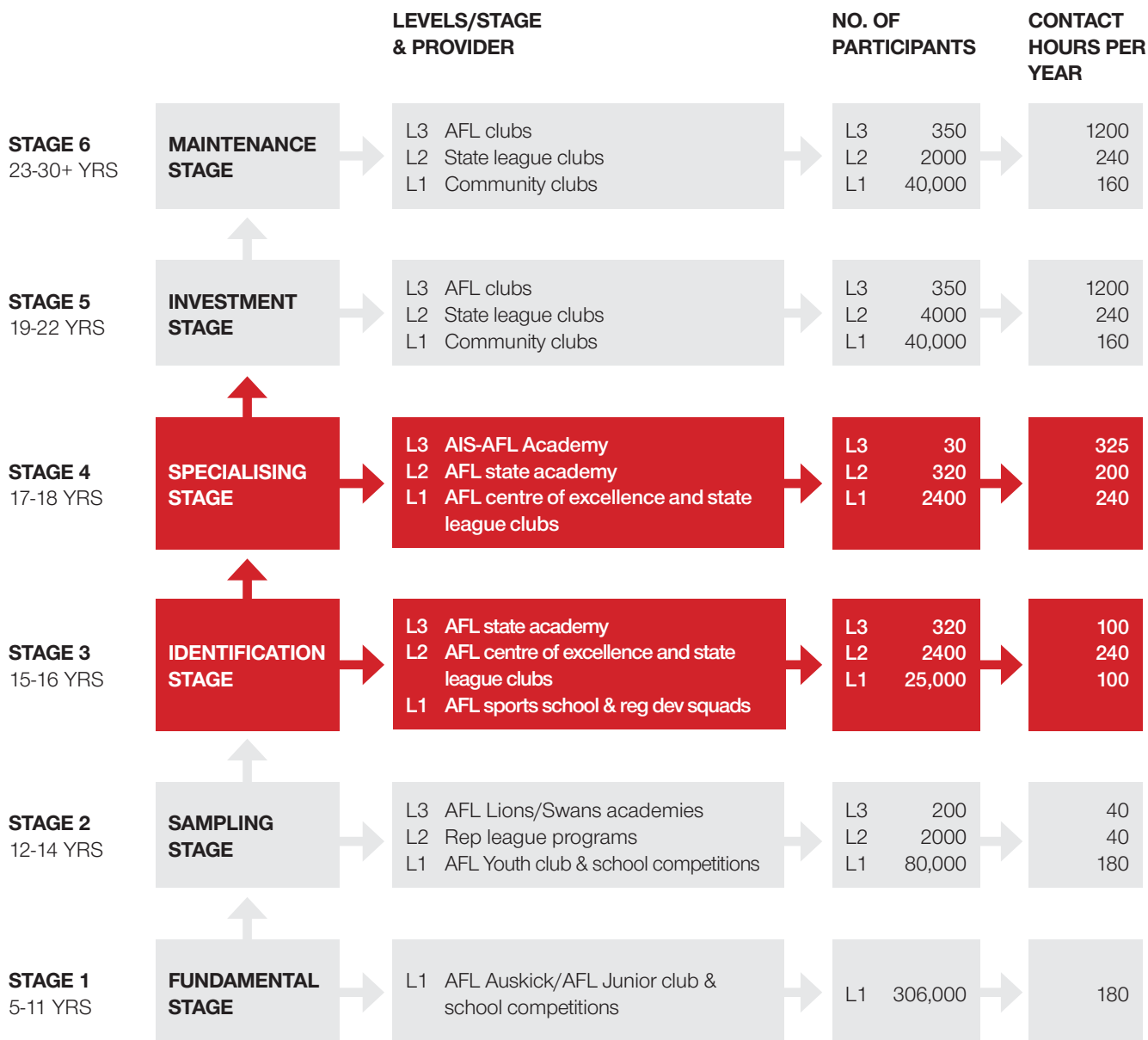
Some of the test protocols used for the draft camp, including speed, agility, vertical jumps and endurance tests can be found in the AFL Youth Coaching Manual. Coaches who wish to use formal testing with their youth players can obtain further information from AFL regional development offices.



Talent development structures

The talent development structure is being further developed to ensure the transfer of the philosophy and curriculum of the AIS-AFL Academy through AFL state academies, AFL centres of excellence and AFL sports schools.

The curriculum is delivered through the following structures:



Minimum standards will apply within each level

AIS- AFL Academy Squad	AFL State Academies	AFL Centres of Excellence
Participants 30 AIS scholarship holders	Participants Up to 40 per age level in each state for a total of 640 players nationally (under-16 and under-18)	Participants 4800 players participating in elite state league competitions
Staffing Level 3 coaches AFL-standard service providers Adherence to AFL philosophies, practices and code of conduct	Staffing Level 3 coaches State-league-standard service providers Adherence to AFL philosophies, practices and code of conduct	Staffing Level 2 coaches Accredited support staff Adherence to AFL philosophies, practices and code of conduct
Facilities AFL-standard playing and training facilities	Facilities State-level playing and training facilities IT (Champion Data) standard practices	Facilities State level playing and training facilities IT (Champion Data) standard practices
Curriculum 325 hours contact time Best-practice curriculum Documented game plan and team rules Personal development plans for all participants Delivered using AFL-standard IT practices including video and other performance analysis techniques	Curriculum Minimum face-to-face contact hours, 200 at the under-18 level and 100 at the under-16 level Documented game plan and team rules Personal development plans for all participants Adherence to nationally established development curriculum Delivered using cutting-edge educational and IT practices	Curriculum Contact time not less than 240 hours Documented game plan and team rules Development plans for all participants Adherence to nationally established development curriculum Delivered using cutting-edge educational and IT practices
Competition International tour	Competition State academy match program is the NAB AFL Under-16 and Under-18 National Championships	Competition Participation in state league competition

The curriculum will have 6 core components

Physical Preparation	Skill Development	Nutrition & Recovery	Personal Development	Athlete & Career Education	AFL Policy
Medical screening	Learning style	General education	Psychological profiling	Computer skills	ASADA-AFL policy
Fitness testing	Kicking technique	Food diaries	Mental toughness	Individualised assessments	Respect & responsibility
Conditioning	Running technique	Individualised reviews & food plans	Stress minimisation	Monitoring performance	Race & religious vilification
Profiling	Game sense	Losing/gaining weight	Goal-setting	Study skills	Drafting & the AFL pathway
Prioritising	Game knowledge	Hydration	Positive self-image	Time management	
Program assessment	Game balance	Recovery practices	Personal growth/life skills	Educational support	
Heat & training	Decision-making	Practical sessions	Public speaking	Welfare issues	
Reading your body	Team rules/ game plan	Drugs & alcohol	Media training		
Immunisation	AFL player profiling		Etiquette		
	Basics of the game		Leadership		
	Competition performance		Drugs & alcohol		
	Performance analysis		Travel		

Enhancing the identification, attraction and development of talent

Major improvements to generate better talent outcomes include:

AFL to take more direct role in monitoring/managing second-tier issues:

- › the objective now specifically encompasses state leagues: “to develop the talented player pathway and enhance second-tier competitions to capture and develop talented players.”

Transfer the philosophy/curriculum of the AIS-AFL Academy through a structure of:

- › AFL state academies (e.g. AFL Tasmania Academy);
- › AFL centres of excellence (pilot 2008);
- › AFL sports schools (pilot 2009).

Enhance the NAB AFL Under-16 Championships

- › Series extended by 3 days to allow for one cross-over match for Division 1 states to play against Division 2 states and for every participant to be screened.
- › Finals for Divisions 1 and 2 played on AFL Grand Final Day.

Enhance the NAB AFL Under-18 Championships

- › Division 2 becomes a qualifying series to be played separately in May.
- › The top-two finishers qualify to enter the Division 1 draw that follows later in the year.
- › Division 1 becomes a 6-team, 5-match championship.

