APPENDIX 2: YOUTH GIRLS RULES

13-15 YEAR OLDS

12-A-SIDE OR 15-A-SIDE: AT AFL AUSKICK PROGRAM OR IN CLUB/SCHOOL COMPETITION

PURPOSE
To provide youth girl’s with a fun, safe and positive experience through a well structured match program that considers the level of maturation in motor, cognitive, psychosocial and emotional skill of adolescents in this age group.

The consolidation of basic game specific skills is still the focus at this age level rather than competition and winning, while further developing technical and tactical concepts. These concepts include position specific, and basic performance capacities – e.g. warm up, cool down, nutrition, hydration, recovery and goal-setting.

SPIRIT OF THE GAME
Prior to the commencement of play:
• all players, coaches and umpires should gather on the ground and shake hands
• the umpire and coaches should ensure that players are aware of the rules and procedures to be followed in the conduct of the game

The spirit of the game is to give all available players a game of football. Therefore:
• where difficulty occurs fielding full numbers, both coaches must agree to even up player numbers.
• excess players should be given to the opposition team if they are unable to field the required numbers.
• coaches should consider modifying the numbers per side to ensure all players participate (for instance, if planning 9-a-side but only 12 players in total are available: play 6-a-side. Or if 30 players are available, simultaneously play two games of 6-a-side, or one 9-a-side game with one 6-a-side game)

The umpire should at all times:
• endeavour to apply the rules of the games whilst preferring to award kicks to players in preference to calling for “ball-ups”
• understand that the spirit of the AFL junior match rules for this age group is to enable all players to gather possession and that “The player in possession of the ball should be given every opportunity to kick or handball”. For this reason, restrictions are placed upon body contact (refer to Contact/Tackling).
• attempt to involve all players as the opportunities arise, particularly when indicating which players are to receive a “free kick” upon the ball being kicked out of bounds and ensuring the effective rotation of players through the three zones of play
• enforce the “full possession rule” at all ball-ups (see following page).
In relation to all ball-ups, the full possession rule applies as follows:

- A player contesting a ball-up may not grab the ball and play on
- The player must knock, palm or punch the ball to a teammate or open ground, and may not play the ball again until it has either been touched by another player or hits the ground.

**THE GAME - PREMIERSHIP POINTS COMPETITIONS**
The football match program to be offered to youth girls 13-15 years of age must comply with the modified match program presented in this document. Premiership points, finals, ladders and representative teams are allowed.

**PLAYING GROUND and OFFICIALS**
The playing field is approximately 130m x 80m
This field size is the optimum size and flexibility is often needed, in particular, smaller field sizes may be required depending on the number of players per team, age and ability level.

A field umpire is needed.

There are no boundary throw-ins (no boundary umpires) but two goal umpires are required.

**THE BALL**
A synthetic or leather size 3 football made specifically for this age group should be used.

**THE TEAM**
Twelve to fifteen players participate. There are no rucks or rovers. Reserves: max of 5 recommended. To ensure maximum participation, if numbers of players are such that two teams can participate in a game of 12-a-side, this should be considered. Where this is impracticable, sharing of players with other sides should occur.

Interchange may take place at any time, but all players must play at least ¾ of the match.

Equalise the teams and opponents as much as possible (match sizes, abilities).

Rotate players every quarter to provide opportunities in several positions.

**PLAYING TIME**
AFL Junior Fixture – Maximum of 4 x 15 minute quarters with no time on.

**START OF PLAY and RESTARTING AFTER A GOAL**
When all players are in their own positions, a ball-up is conducted between two centre players of similar height as nominated by the umpire in the centre of the ground.

Only centre line players attend centre bounces. (20 metres clearance from all other players). The umpire is to enforce a similar 20-metre area for field bounces.

No more than three players from each team shall be closer to the ball-up than approximately 20 metres (Full Possession Rule Applies).

(Note: there is no requirement to have a centre square marked on the ground).
SCRIMMAGE and FIELD BALL-UPS
Conducted between two players of equal size selected by the umpire. Before the throw up, the umpire should clear the area by sending players back to their positions. No more than three players from each team shall be closer to the ball-up than approximately 20 metres. (Full Possession Rule Applies).

OUT OF BOUNDS
A free kick is awarded against the player who last kicked the ball.

If there is doubt, or if the ball came off hands or body, the umpire shall call a ball-up 5 metres in from the boundary.

Full possession at the ball-up is not permitted. (Full Possession Rule Applies).

BUMPING
As per the Laws of Australian Football.

TACKLING
“The Wrap Around Tackle”
A player in possession of the ball may be tackled by an opponent wrapping both arms around the area below the top of the shoulders and on/above the knees. The tackle may be from either side or from behind providing the tackle from behind does not thrust forward the player with the ball (That is push back the player in the back).

- A player in possession of the ball, when held by an opponent applying the wrap around tackle, should be given a reasonable chance to dispose of the ball by kick or by handball, or by attempting to kick or handball, otherwise a free kick shall be awarded to the tackler for holding the ball.
- The Field Umpire shall conduct a ball-up when the player with the ball has the ball held to the body by an opponent, unless the player has had a reasonable time to dispose of the ball prior to being tackled, in which case a free kick shall be awarded to the tackler for holding the ball.
- The Field Umpire shall allow play to continue if the ball is knocked out of a player’s hands by an opponent.
- A player not in possession of the ball, when held by an opponent, shall be awarded a Free Kick.
- No player shall be deliberately dumped / thrown to the ground by a tackle.

BARGING
No barging or chopping past opponents is allowed. A free kick is awarded. Fending off, with an open hand to the body (not above the shoulders or in the back), is allowed.

MARK
Any player catching a ball directly from the kick of another player, provided the ball has travelled at least 10 metres, shall be awarded a mark.
BOUNCING THE BALL
No more than two bounces are permitted.

DISTANCE RUN
While a player in possession of the ball is moving, the player must bounce the ball within 15 metres, irrespective of whether that player is running in a straight line or otherwise. As above – two bounces only, then dispose for the ball.

KICKING OFF THE GROUND
Not permitted except when accidental.

DISTANCE PENALTY
A player can be awarded a 25m advancement towards their goals if, after a mark or free kick the umpire is of the opinion that an opposing player hinders that player. This includes: overstepping the mark; wasting time; using abusive language/behaviour; etc

ORDER OFF RULE
To be applied at the umpire’s discretion (or the Controlling Body where applicable). Bad language, poor sportsmanship and disputing umpiring decisions should be actively discouraged.

COACHES
The coach is not allowed on the ground. Messages may be delivered by a Runner. However, the Runner must abide by the procedure of going directly to the player involved, delivering the message and returning directly to the coaching bench.

At the end of the game all players and coaches should gather on the ground and shake hands. The umpire should also take this opportunity to address the players.
HOW TO STRUCTURE MATCH PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH GIRL’S COMPETITIONS

16-18 YEAR OLDS:
15-a-side or 18-a-side: Community club and school competitions.

PURPOSE
Learning how to train and the consolidation of basic skills is the focus at this age level. Advanced technical and tactical skills start to be introduced, including decision making through games and training, position specific skills (competency in a position), and basic performance capacities – e.g. warm up, cool down, nutrition, hydration, recovery, goal-setting, pre and post match routines.

It is important for players in this age group to feel an essential part of the team to develop self efficacy, self worth and identity formation within the community (club/team). Commitment and loyalty to the club/team, social responsibility on and off the field in accordance to quality adult standards should be engendered and acknowledge.

SPIRIT OF THE GAME
Prior to the commencement of play:
• all players, coaches and umpires should shake hands.
• the umpire and coaches should ensure that players are aware of the rules and procedures to be followed in the conduct of the game.

The spirit and intention is to ensure that all games are played in a competitive and fair manner in an environment that:

• permits a player whose sole objective is to contest and gain possession of the ball, to do so in a safe and fair manner.
• rewards and acknowledges commitment and loyalty to the team, club and or school.
• allows all players to feel an essential part of the team while enabling each individual to develop self-efficacy, self-worth and an identity within the community (team/club/school).
• engenders and reinforces community values and social responsibility.

The player whose sole objective is to contest the ball must be permitted to do so. Ethically it is the responsibility of coaches to provide the best possible teaching and learning conditions; therefore the use of negative defensive tactics where the opposing players’ sole objective is to prevent a player from gaining possession is strongly discouraged at this age level. Tactics such as tagging and flooding are elements of the modern game; however they are detrimental to the philosophy of providing an environment that maximizes the desired fair, fun, fast, skilful and competitive elements of the game at this level.
Umpires should at all times:

- endeavour to apply the laws of the game whilst preferring to award free kicks to players in preference to calling for “ball-ups”
- understand that the spirit and intention of the laws is to ensure that a match is played in a fair manner and to protect players from sustaining injury. For this reason restrictions are placed upon tackling for this age group.

At the end of the game all players and coaches should shake hands.

**LAWS OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL**

The “Laws of Australian Football” apply to all AFL Youth Girl’s competitions at the 16-18 age level with the following modifications:

**THE BALL**

A size 4 leather or synthetic football made specifically for this age group should be used.

**TACKLING**

Tackling is permitted as per the Laws of Australian Football however:

- No player shall be deliberately slung, dumped or thrown to the ground via any tackle.

**KICKING OFF THE GROUND**

Not permitted except when accidental.

**ORDER OFF RULE**

To be applied at the umpire’s discretion (or the Controlling Body where applicable). Bad language, poor sportsmanship and disputing umpiring decisions should be actively discouraged.