



# **MOUNT ELIZA NETBALL CLUB**

## ***GRADING AND MATCH COMMITTEE POLICY & PROCEDURE***

Year 2023

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*Mt Eliza Netball Club enables all members to strive to achieve their best through fostering a love of netball in a safe, fun, family- friendly and supportive community, inclusive for all ages and abilities.*

#### ***1. THE PURPOSE OF GRADING AND THE MATCH COMMITTEE POLICY***

In keeping with its Mission Statement, Mount Eliza Netball Club (MENC) is committed to providing a safe, enjoyable, inclusive environment to maximise individual participation in netball. Our Club believes that playing netball should be a positive experience which contributes to a life-long love of playing sport as well as providing a sense of community.

Grading and team selection are conducted in order to create MENC teams to participate in the Frankston District Netball Association (FDNA) competition, which runs from approximately March until mid-September.

#### ***2. THE PRINCIPLES OF THE GRADING AND THE MATCH COMMITTEE POLICY***

The principles behind this policy are to:

- a) Enhance the enjoyment of each player's game and development. It is acknowledged that players may like to be on teams with existing friends but also that netball teams provide the opportunity for new friendships, particularly for those who have recently joined our community;
- b) Ensure all players feel valued as MENC members, regardless of previous experience or personal characteristics/attributes, such as gender or disability;
- c) Establish balanced teams of similar skills and abilities;

- d) Allow teams to play in a suitably competitive environment;
- e) Allow MENC to be represented in all areas and grades (A to CR); and
- f) Allow opportunities for players to pursue FDNA Squad Representation.

### **3. THE MATCH COMMITTEE**

A Match Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee. The Match Committee shall grade players and select playing teams. The Match Committee shall comprise a minimum of five (5) members plus 2 independent graders.

It is acknowledged that in making use of the expertise we have within our Club for the benefit of all, conflicts of interest involving the Match Committee will occur. The grading and team selection of some players will unavoidably involve one of their parents. Such conflicts will be noted and managed by the President and reviewed by the Executive Committee, in order to ensure that the child's final team selection is objectively justifiable.

### **4. THE GRADING PROCESS**

In order to form teams, the Match Committee will consider all the following factors:

- The previous season's Coach's Evaluation (where available);
- Performance at the Practical Skills Assessment (approx. 3 weeks of scheduled training prior to season commence – for U11 and up)
- Grading Day (U13 and U15 only);
- Court position and team balance;
- Friendship requests received prior to the Practical Skills Assessment/Grading Day(lessor, for A/A Reserve teams);
- A good-sporting attitude and commitment (including at training);and
- The number of players registered within each age category.

### **5. GRADING OF EACH AGE GROUP**

#### *NON- COMPETITIVE*

##### **NetSetGo**

These players play by competition rules, but do not accrue competition points nor play a Final series.

Players playing NetSetGo are not graded and are placed in teams based on age category, friend requests and any prior experience.

#### *COMPETITIVE*

##### **Open Age Group– (FDNA Seniors)**

Players moving into Open Age Groups will not participate in grading. In the case of senior players wishing to submit a social team to play in the Saturday season, ideally nine (9) players will be submitted as a team. FDNA Squad Rules of only 4 squad players per team do not apply.

## **11&U**

These players play by competition rules, but do not accrue competition points nor play a final series.

## **13&U to 17&U**

Players in 13&U and above play by competition rules, accrue competition points and play a final series. FDNA Squad Rules apply (maximum of 4 Squad Players per team)

### **Players playing out of their age category**

The general policy for the FDNA and MENC is that all players play within teams of their own age category. However, on occasion, there may be exceptions to this rule.

During grading, individual players may be selected on merit to play in a higher age category. Alternatively, should MENC have insufficient player registrations in adjacent age categories to form full teams, players may be requested to play in a higher age category. In both such instances, the selections will be based on these players being of similar ability to the other players in the team in which they are intended to be placed. The parent and player will be approached in order to discuss and obtain consent to any final team selection, in these circumstances.

A player may initiate a request to be graded in a higher age category with players in the same year level at school, or for their own other reasons such as for skills extension. These requests will be considered, having regard to the team numbers in both the correct and higher age category. If the respective age category numbers cannot justify accommodating such a request, it may be declined.

Any requests of this nature should be made **prior to the Practical Skills Assessment/ Grading Day** via email to: secretary.menc@gmail.com

## **6. PRACTIAL SKILLS ASSESSMENT/GRADING DAY**

Grading Day shall run to a time schedule with specific times during which players in each age category shall be assessed. The Grading Day schedule shall-

- i Be developed by the Match Committee and proposed to the Executive Committee;
- ii Following approval by the Executive Committee.

Players in each age category shall be assessed jointly by a minimum of two (2) members of the Match Committee and 2 independent graders. To the extent possible, the Graders shall assess all players at least once on grading day.

To be eligible for grading and selection on Practical Skills Assessment/ Grading Day, players must-

- (i) Be registered and financial playing members at the close of Registration Day; and
- (ii) Either attend the Practical Skills Assessment/ Grading Day during the time allocated for grading of their age group or notify the Secretary prior to the allotted Grading time of their inability to attend.

The bulk of the time on the Practical Skills Assessment/ Grading Day will be spent in actual on-court play. Players may be asked to trial in positions other than their preferred position, either to make up a team or because the Match Committee would like to see how they perform in those positions.

For several reasons, it may not be necessary for all players to play an identical number of quarters during the Practical Skills Assessment/ Grading Day. For example, if a player is new to the Club, more court time may be allocated to them.

## **7. GRADING CRITERIA**

In assessing a player, the Match Committee will consider:

- Ball-handling skills
- Defending skills
- Game-sense
- Attacking skills
- Positivity, including being a 'good sport'
- Movement (footwork, speed, agility)

## **8. TEAM SELECTION**

Due to the size of the Club, MENC may have the opportunity to form a team or teams to be graded in A/A Reserve grades in all the 11&U to 17&U FDNA age categories.

***Each year when you are Registering, you will be asked to:***

- Indicate the player's main motivations in playing netball; and
- Nominate two preferred positions.

**Friendship requests are to be submitted at time of registration via NetballConnect. This is the only way a friendship-request will be received and considered by the Match Committee.**

*NB Where a reciprocal friend request has been made- and there are two friends/players who would otherwise be placed onto different teams due to their grading- the parent(s) of the higher grading player will be contacted prior to team selection.*

**\*\*Please note that there is no obligation to nominate preferred positions nor to make a 'friend request'. These are optional.**

It is envisaged that most players should be able to be placed in a team that includes at least one friend, if requested prior to the Practical Skills Assessment/ Grading Day. Friendship requests will be given the least weighting/consideration, when forming the A/A Reserve teams in all age categories.

As a general guide it can be noted that players in A/A Reserve grade teams are usually taken from the second- year of an age category unless exceptional talent is identified in a first-year player. Players can expect the other grades will be mixed as to age.

When forming all teams, the aim shall be to achieve strength and balance within the team. Where possible, a team shall consist of nine (9) players. However, due to variables in the number and ages of MENC registered players, some teams may have eight (8) to ten (10) players. Although the player's preferences with regards to court positions may have been provided, this does not mean that when placed in a team the player will play in, or only in, these positions.

The Match Committee shall select teams on the Practical Skills Assessment/ Grading Day, after which they will be reviewed and finally confirmed by the Executive. Teams will be announced **after** they have been entered for competition with the FDNA.

Age groups will train as squads in the weeks between the Practical Skills Assessment/ Grading Day and before teams are announced.

Members of the Match Committee and Executive Committee shall keep all selection decisions and deliberations confidential from all other parties until:

- the Executive Committee has approved teams; and
- Approved teams have been entered to the FDNA for competition; and
- The entered teams have been communicated to players.

Anyone wishing to play but who did not meet the eligibility requirements for grading and selection on Practical Skills Assessment/ Grading Day may subsequently request to be selected to a team. Such requests will be considered on the following conditions:

(1) All teams selected and approved following Practical Skills Assessment/ Grading Day have been communicated; and

(2) A vacancy exists on an existing team of suitable age and grade; and

(3) All players in the same age group who did attend Practical Skills Assessment/ Grading Day met eligibility requirements have first been placed in a team; and

(4) The player requesting selection, if and when selected, shall within seven (7) days, and in any event before joining the team in training or in competition, meet all the requirements to become a Financial Playing Member of the Club.

The Match Committee shall consider such requests and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee, which shall at its discretion decide the response.

## **9. FDNA SQUAD RULES AND RESTRICTIONS**

FDNA has requirements and restrictions with regards to Representative Squad players' participation at Associated Clubs (e.g. MENC) which are subject to change and are relevant for A/A Reserve grade team composition. These can be found in the FDNA Bylaws, FDNA Grading Policy and the FDNA Representative and Qualification on their website.

**There is a limit of four (4) squad players in any one team in all Age Groups.**

## **9. TEAM SELECTION APPEALS**

It is hoped that players and parents appreciate the challenge of grading and allocating hundreds of players to teams and accept the judgment and good intentions of the Match Committee. However, an appeal as to team selection may be made.

An appeal may be made **once** only via email to [secretary.menc@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.menc@gmail.com) within seven (7) days of team notification. The email should include:

- The allocated team;
- The issue with the grading/ team selection; and
- The solution(s) sought by the appealing parent/ player.

Parents should be aware that any change for their child, will usually necessitate changes being made for other players in teams already submitted to the FDNA, as required by our By-Laws.

The Match Committee shall consider such appeals and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee, which shall at its discretion decide the response. The decision made in response to the initial appeal is final.

Players shall play for the teams to which they are selected or be liable to disciplinary action by the Executive Committee. Should a player wish to withdraw from a team and therefore MENC, their Registration will be refunded provided the FDNA season (inclusive of grading) has not yet commenced.

Whilst the Match Committee determines team-grades based on their assessment, these are only recommended grades for FDNA nomination purposes. Ultimately, FDNA will determine the final grading of a team.

Any changes to team selection-due to the departure of a player or for any other reason during the season-must be ratified by the Match Committee or Executive Committee.

## **10. A FINAL NOTE...**

MENC is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all volunteers including our Match Committee, Executive Committee, Coaches and any independent selectors. All communications with any volunteer of MENC should reflect the underlying principles of the Victorian Government's 'Fair Play Code' i.e. integrity, respect, responsibility, fairness and safety. Rude, aggressive or disparaging communications about grading and or team selection towards any of the MENC volunteers will be tabled at the next Committee meeting.

Players and parents are urged to be objective and reasonable in their expectations, and to encourage children to be happy in their chosen sport no matter what team they are placed in. Please bear in mind that many hours of time and care are volunteered for grading and team selection by fellow parents and netball community members. These individuals give up their time and resources to facilitate the enjoyment of competitive netball and deserve your support. An 'attitude of gratitude' and even a word of thanks to those involved, would be much appreciated!

The grading process is reviewed annually by MENC Committee, having regard to the applicable Club By-Laws.