



1 Coaching

This section provides coaches with a guide to their responsibilities, and to the Club's expectations and philosophy/ general approach to coaching.

Our guiding principles as a junior sports Club are participation, sportsmanship and competitiveness.

Our main aims are to provide the best AFL experience that we can for our players, and to grow the game in our area.

The role of the Club's coaches come directly from these guiding principles, and from the Club's Coaching Philosophy and is pivotal to our success as a Club.

1.1 Our Club's Coaching Philosophy

During the 2010 season the St Ives Coaches met and discussed and agreed on what they see as the Club philosophy on coaching. The outcome was the following:

Item	What does that look like?
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing skills and capabilities of players at all levels. Coaching and mentoring of coaches, other club roles and parent involvement. Support for new players to the sport at all age group appropriate levels.
Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal rotations of players in games, unrelated to skill and experience. Maximum involvement in games for ALL players. Coaches and Managers facilitating maximum parent involvement and contribution in games, training and other Club activities.
Fun	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitation of high spirit, good team morale and enjoyment in the process rather than focus on the win/lose outcome. Social events for teams, age groups, parent groups.
Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Player sportsmanship for opposition. Player respect for each other, opposition, coaches and officials. Respect from parents, players and officials towards opposition parents, players and officials and umpires.

1.2 The Role of the Coach

Coaching an AFL team is a hugely rewarding role as well as a challenging one. Our coaches have access to a number of **resources** to assist them in their role. A list of resources is included at the end of this section.

All coaches are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the highly regarded **coaching courses** conducted each season by AFL NSWACT, and to keep their

accreditation up to date. These courses are well targeted and relevant, and provide a sound base of development for coaches. There is plenty to learn in these courses for everyone, from the most experienced past player to the novice. The club will generally cover the cost of coaching courses for our coaches and for parents who would like to become involved in coaching.

Research into children's sport suggests that children play sport primarily to have fun. Winning is on the list, but for most kids it is less important than having fun AND a number of other motives such as improving skills, playing with mates, making new friends, kicking a goal. By focussing on this element other Club objectives, such as greater player numbers due to improved player retention rates, and more word of mouth recruitment, will be enhanced.

While motivations may change as children get older, for example they may tend to become more competitive, even the most competitive players will not keep playing unless they are enjoying being a part of the Club and of their team. The 'fun' comes from the full package of social elements, training and games.

The role of all coaches includes coaching game skills and game sense, sportsmanship and the importance of being part of a team.

On game day coaches, including any assistant coaches are responsible for organising players and for ensuring that the Club's general playing philosophy is followed.

1.3 The Club's Expectations of Coaches

The St Ives Football Club has a long and proud history in Junior Football and Coaches have always been a big part of this success. Their role and the example which they set can have a lasting influence on players both on the playing field and beyond. This means that we need to be committed to modelling the types of behaviour and qualities which we espouse. The Club's expectations for our coaches include:

- The Role of the Coach as a Teacher – including the importance of developing all players' skills, knowledge and attitudes, acknowledgement that all players are unique and have their particular strengths and weaknesses
- Build self esteem by positively supporting and encouraging players for their efforts
- Equity of Opportunity – accept that all players should have the same opportunity to develop and enjoy their football.
- Lead by example, the players watch their coaches and the way they behave more than most of us may realise
- Work closely and collaboratively with other team coaches and team managers (this will make the job easier and a lot more enjoyable)

- Adhere to the AFL Coaches Code of Conduct. The following is an extract from the AFL Coaches Code of Conduct:
 - Promote the Laws and Rules of our great game.
 - Maximise enjoyment before winning.
 - Group players competitively and develop their confidence.
 - Avoid overplaying talented players just to win.
 - Ensure player safety and welfare as a priority – above winning.
 - Remember the age of your team – keep things in perspective.
 - Lead the way with respect for opponents, umpires and officials.
 - Attain and maintain coaching accreditation and keep up with new ideas.
 - Avoid aggressive behaviour and derogatory and insulting language – set the right example.
 - The consumption by coaching staff of alcohol prior to training and any match that St Ives Football Club is involved in will not be tolerated.
 - Communicate professionally with players' parents about their child's progress and areas that may require improvement.

Other AFL requirements include that;

- All coaches must sign a consent form for working with children.
- All coaches must be accredited to coach in the finals.

1.4 Coaching Accreditation

The following information is reproduced from AFL NSW/ACT's website:

AFL NSW/ACT offers a range of AFL coaching courses, and ALL coaches are required to have a current minimum Level 1 Accreditation. AFL NSW/ACT's website (<http://www.aflnswact.com.au/>) provides the current details of the AFL coaching courses and scheduled dates, however the following is a summary of the accreditation courses.

1.4.1 Level O course

Level O courses are designed as an introduction to AFL skills and provide parents with the basics of key AFL skills such as kicking, passing and handballing. They

usually run over an hour or two. Parents learn some of the drills and skill games that their players do at training or Auskick.

1.4.2 Level 1 Coaching Accreditation

There are three separate levels of accreditation for Level 1; Junior, Youth and Senior. To gain accreditation you must attend the relevant coaching course as well as complete an assessment component. All courses are competency based whereby the coach must prove he/ she is capable of conducting and communicating the basics of the game to players.

1.4.2.1 Junior – for coaches in Auskick/Junior Programs (up to Under 12)

The philosophy of the AFL Auskick Program is to provide the opportunity for building foundation skills in primary age children for playing Australian Football which is appropriate to their needs emphasising fun and safety. The course is designed for beginner coaches of children of primary school age. The target market includes parents, teachers, players, umpires, secondary and tertiary students.

Coaches must be 16 years of age on completion of all Level 1 requirements to be eligible for accreditation. The course is completed in two parts. All coaches must complete the online junior coaching course and attend one of the junior coaching courses. Accreditation is not finalised until both components have been completed.

1.4.2.2 Youth (13-17 year olds)

The philosophy of youth football is to provide an environment, which offers the opportunity for individuals to enhance their personal development and maximise their football potential. This will be an inclusive and supportive environment, which encourages youth players to continue their participation in the game.

This course is designed for beginner coaches of players between the age of 13 and 17 years of age generally competing in under-age competitions. The target market includes parents, teachers, players or umpires and tertiary and senior secondary students. This course, which runs for one full day usually from 9am-5pm, is designed to provide training for the large number of youth coaches involved in Australian Football, especially at community club level

1.4.3 Level 2 Coaching Accreditation

Ideal for coaches involved at a higher level (rep teams, development squads, etc.). The courses are for coaches with an aptitude and genuine interest in improving their coaching skills.

The Level 2 course is a 2 day course with an ongoing season long workbook to complete. The course focuses on preparing a coach to plan, prepare, conduct, review and adapt a year-long program of coaching. Coaches are assessed practically at training and in a match environment.

Coaches must have completed a level 1 course in youth or senior prior to gaining a level 2 accreditation. There are only a few Level 2 courses conducted annually in NSW/ACT.

1.4.4 Reaccreditation

An AFL coach accreditation is valid for four years from the date that the accreditation was granted. Those coaches that have current valid coaching accreditation, or coaching accreditation that expired less than 12 months previously can apply for accreditation as follows:

1.4.4.1 Level 1: Junior, Youth and Senior

To maintain accreditation, coaches must demonstrate that they:

1. Continued to coach during the four years (letter from club president/referee)
2. Are prepared to complete and sign a Coach Registration Form
3. Are prepared to sign the AFL Coaches' Code of Conduct when seeking reaccreditation
4. Supply a cheque for the amount of \$75 (current as of January 2011) payable to AFL NSW/ACT (administration costs and membership of the Coaches Association for a further four years)

1.4.4.2 Level 2:

To maintain a Level 2 or 3 accreditation, coaches must demonstrate the same requirements as Level 1 along with providing evidence of further coach development in the form of:

1. Courses undertaken, whether football specific or generic
2. Presentations made as part of other coaching courses
3. Articles written or submitted on coaching topics
4. Working within a Coach Coordinator role throughout the four year period
5. Mentoring other coaches
6. Any other evidence of coach development/improvement

Current details of courses and dates can be found under the [Coaching] menu option at www.aflnswact.com.au.

1.5 Coaching Resources

The following list of resources is intended to assist coaches in broadening their knowledge of the role they are undertaking. All coaches are encouraged to add to this list.

There is a wealth of experience within the Club. Coaches are encouraged to tap into this resource. People available to discuss issues and problems with include;

- Club committee members, especially the Junior Age Grade Coordinator and Youth Age Grade Coordinator, who are there to assist and mentor the Club's coaches;
- Team managers and other coaches. All coaches are encouraged to develop a strong and supportive 'sideline team'.

The following websites provide a range of useful information which may be useful to coaches:

- www.sportingpulse.com: Resource Centre contains lots of useful information, including AFL bylaws (**compulsory reading for all coaches**). This site also hosts a page for AFL (NSW/ACT) Coaches Association
- www.aflnswact.com.au: General reference site for all things AFL covering seniors, juniors, schools, umpiring etc.
- www.jetsafc.com.au/juniors/AFL: ground.htm has some useful information on player positions and hints.
- www.aflcommunityclub.com.au has a lot of interesting information for coaches.