

East Sandringham Zebras – Hampton Rovers Alignment Policy

Since 2014 the East Sandringham Junior Football Club and the Hampton Rovers Junior Football Club have been (1) loaning each other players, and (2) entering joint teams in the older years of the SMJFL competition.

The Clubs have learned a lot from these years - it hasn't all been smooth. But as part of the Clubs' commitment to ensuring as many local kids as possible can play footy in a team at the appropriate grade for their level of development thereby increasing their enjoyment in playing football and encouraging them to keep playing for longer, the Clubs remain committed to this alignment.

To formalise this alignment, provide clarity to parents and maximise the benefits that come to our kids from this alignment the two Clubs have now signed the "East Sandringham - Hampton Rovers Alignment Policy".

The full policy can be downloaded here:

<http://www.gozebs.com/documents/EastSandringhamHamptonRoversAlignmentPolicyFinal.pdf>

Briefly, the Policy ensures that the Clubs will enter joint teams in the U16 and U17 mixed competitions and at the end of each season discuss this possibility to enter a joint team at the U15 level.

With the growth of girls football still in its infancy, this Alignment Policy will not apply to girls football but will remain under active consideration by the Clubs. In the meantime, and consistent with our joint objective, if there are cases where one Club is unable to form a girls team, then the Clubs will discuss the potential to "loan" players to the other Club.

It is hoped that having agreed such a policy players and parents will better understand why our Clubs align, how it works and what it means for them!

For all players and parents impacted in 2019, there will be the opportunity to discuss the policy in greater detail prior to the end of this season.

The Alignment Policy is supported by the SMJFL. Sarah Loh, SMJFL CEO congratulated the Clubs on their focus on giving footy opportunities to older kids "this is a great example of two of our member Clubs living our value - It's About the Kids".

The Policy is managed jointly by an Alignment Subcommittee and is reviewed each season. A future development will be the formal inclusion of female footy in the Alignment Policy. Both Clubs are working together to ensure all our girls have the opportunity to play footy. As ongoing levels of participation are better understood the Clubs will formalise the work that is already underway.

A significant amount of time and effort have been spent by a number of people to develop the policy. Jason Nicholl, President of the Hampton Rovers and Rick Bierens, President of East Sandringham would like to jointly thank the past/current players and parents who have paved the way for this Alignment Policy over recent years. We'd also like to acknowledge the efforts of our current Committees who have been instrumental in formalising this Alignment Policy - in particular, Paul Carrigan and Richard Bowen from Hampton Rovers, and Brad Langdon, Tony Pucella and Matt Touhey from East Sandy.