

Colleges United Soccer Club



Policy 01 – Equal Playing Time

Colleges United has a strong focus on player development rather than a "win-at-all-cost" approach to the game. In keeping with this philosophy **we strongly advocate equal playing time for all junior players regardless of ability or gender.** Girls and boys play in mixed teams, with equal time on the field for all players, regardless of skill level. There are no best and fairest awards and all children receive a trophy on Presentation Day. The idea is to participate, have fun, get some exercise, improve skills and make some new friends.

For players in teams in the under 11 and older age groups, equal playing time is very important, however, not necessarily for each and every game. In some games, due to the superiority of the opposition, one or two players may struggle to compete which could lead to a loss of confidence or, worse still, a risk of injury. This may cause the coach to give greater playing time to some players for these games with the time being made-up for the others against weaker opposition. The net result over the entire season should be equal playing time for all players in the team including equal starts on the field for all players so no players are constantly 'benched' at the beginning of games.

Note however that there may be exceptions to the equal playing time rule as follows:

- When a child is injured or does not want to play for whatever reason
- Some players may be given extra playing time because they are prepared to play positions the rest of the team are not interested in (e.g. goalie and full back)

It is very important that at the very start of the season, coaches make the players and parents aware of how the equal playing time rule will be managed throughout the season in their team as it is often the greatest source of frustration and disappointment for players and parents alike.