

Development & Transition Plan 2023-2026



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Purpose

This Development and Transition plan has been developed in consultation with all our sporting divisions with the aim of providing a written guide to ensure all our coaches and players (and parents), understand the club's approach to developing skills and attitudes from tee-ball through to senior softball or baseball.

The document objectives include:

- Define the club development strategy and transition through all stages of the club:
 - Subjunior → Teeball → Junior Softball/Baseball → Senior Softball/Baseball
- Identify a unified club approach and philosophy.
- Demonstrate the different performance pathways a player can strive for with Kalamunda (in line with FTEM/Softball junior pathway equivalent, State League, etc.)

The desired outcomes of this are:

- Increased player and coach retention across all divisions.
- The growth of our junior divisions incorporating all diamond sports.
- Increased competitive ability at higher levels of play, including but not limited to graded competitions, State Championships, and increased involvement in representative teams.

This document also provides guidance as to the transition of players through to higher levels of play, the options available and factors that will be considered associated with dual registration in order to maintain the integrity of all divisions, not overplay or oversubscribe teams and stay within regulation restrictions.

Club Mantra

Our Values

Family

More than just a community, Kalamunda Rangers provides a family environment, a place where our members feel not just welcomed but loved and accepted for who they are, yet are still challenged to grow and develop to be the best they can be. We acknowledge that all families face challenges and are not always perfect but, at the heart of everything, we strive to work through our differences and support. We aim to be the family our members choose, not the family they inherit.

Integrity

The core of being a Kalamunda Ranger and integral to our club's ethos. We build up, not put down ; we applaud effort not just awesome plays and not just from our own team ; we question but don't undermine; we recognise officials help us play and deserve our respect; we understand everyone is out there to have fun not win at all costs.

Growth

Our club embraces development, not just for our individual members but for the club as a whole. We provide multiple avenues for all our members to learn and challenge themselves, not just restricting these options to players but are available to all our members, including but not limited to Coaches, Umpires, Scorers and Administrators, both professionally and personally.

Support

Our club recognises we're all human, we make mistakes and learn from them. Our members understand this and boost each other up rather than pull others down. We recognise that none of us would be able to play without the support of volunteers, for which we thank all of them, wholeheartedly.

Our Vision

To be the club of choice where everyone has a place to

Grow

- Grow the abilities of all players within Kalamunda Rangers of all age groups.
- Facilitate the ease of transition from lower grades through to higher levels of play in all sports.
- Develop strategies appropriate to the level of the participant and their nominated age group.

Learn

- Establish correct technique of fundamental skills for improved safety and performance.
- Support, develop and mentor coaches at all levels in correct methods of player and skill development.
- Encourage members to continue to seek to learn across all ages and sports.

Unite

- Generate group participation in club growth through collaborative learning, i.e., mSquad training, club events, etc.
- Volunteer involvement and engagement.
- Diverse and inclusive membership, encouraging participation and involvement of all ages and backgrounds.
- One for all and all for one mentality.

Enjoy

- Retention of members for ongoing club development.
- Members share wins and losses, both on and off the field.
- Embracing the challenge and daring to try.

Practice doesn't always make perfect, but it does make permanent. We want our players to adopt correct habits and techniques from the start so that all the time and effort they put into practice reinforces good behaviours, not bad; strengthens techniques that will help them develop and improve their skills into the future, not land them in hospital.

No player should ever be considered too young or too old or too experienced to practice these skills or to exhibit these actions.

Safety

- Helmets are to be worn by the offensive team, including:
 - At bat
 - In the on-deck circle
 - As a base runner
 - As a base coach
 - In the batting cages
- Catchers must always wear a protective helmet and facemask and cup when receiving a pitched ball, regardless of the age/grade/gender of the player including *seniors can use a facemask/skullcap combo):
 - On the mound
 - in the bullpen
 - Coaches during awrmups, between innings or in bullpens
- Bats are only to be swung within the field of play in the batter's box or on-deck circle
- Be prepared for the ball to come your way at all times of the game
- Preservation of youth arms through club arm and throwing program.
- Club, coaches and players to be aware of pitch counts and frequency of pitching.

Etiquette

Playing the Game

- Always warm up before playing as a team.
- Keep the bench area clear and tidy.
- Hustle during play and on and off the field between innings.
- Pay attention to the game – even while sitting on the bench.
- Always cheer on your teammates.
- No use of profanities or offensive language directed at players, officials, or spectators.

Sportsmanship

- Remember it's a game, it's supposed to be fun.
- Learn from mistakes – don't dwell on them.
- Respect your coaches and teammates.
- Always give your best effort.
- Cheer on and encourage the other players – from both teams.
- Shake hands with the opponents after every game.
- Thank the umpires and scorers after every game.

Before and After the Game

- Arrive at the designated time before games to set up the field.
- Pack up the club equipment before your own. If you're the home team, this includes packing up the diamond before your own equipment.
- Throw away your own garbage and throw way any other garbage laying around.
- Be sure you have all your own gear.
- Check with the coach before leaving the field.

Transition Programs

The transition programs at Kalamunda Rangers demonstrate our club mantra put into practice with the directive of outlining the Fundamental skills required for players to advance through all the divisions of diamond sports the club offers.

Club-run programs can be run over a single day, a few weeks or be ongoing and have been proved to be key drivers for helping players find the confidence to move from tee-ball to baseball or softball.

These programs include:

Subjunior Teeball

- Created with recognition of the inherent risks associated with 3- and 4-year-olds playing organised/competitive sport*
- Research recognises that sporting activities should provide the opportunity for youngsters to develop fundamental skills (throwing, catching, running, hitting) in a fun, freestyle playing format rather than highly structured, competitive activities.
- Our Subjunior Teeball program promotes:
 - Fun
 - Good technique



utilising play-based activities for the first eight weeks before a gradual introduction of game play.

Transition to Moving-ball Competitions

Our club recognises that players transitioning to moving-ball sports at an older age take longer to catch up as the development and gradual exposure to new skills is limited in the older divisions, and the attrition rate of these players is higher. However, we also recognise that some players have a physical requirement or desire to continue playing teeball 'just for the fun of it' and with no intention of moving through to baseball or softball. Therefore it is at the discretion of the player/parents when players chose to transition from teeball through to the moving-ball options (i.e., softball and baseball). The option to apply to our affiliate organisations for dispensation to play down an age division remains available to assist older players meet the development and participation targets (i.e., 13 yo participating in Little League—no lead-off, no balk, smaller diamond, increased options to pitch/catch), albeit with restrictions on participation at higher levels of play (i.e., Charter competitions).

Players are encouraged to continue in any sport at the level they wish to play as long as they age qualify and in line with game rules, club and affiliated organisation bylaws; there is no requirement to move to a different sport unless the age limit has been reached. However, as per club bylaws, younger players shall not displace an older player who also age-qualifies.

Players are encouraged to participate in competitions appropriate to their age to facilitate the development of skills and game knowledge, and avoid displacement of older players who also age-qualify by younger players who wish to 'play up'.

*Emotional and psychological burnout, injuries, increased risk of dropping out at a younger age. Increased participation in a modified version of competition/organised sport leads to boredom if commenced too early. *Emilea Mysko (Flinders University.)*

It is strongly recommended that players who have never been exposed to diamond sports at any level, and who age qualify, participate in at least one season of teeball before moving on to Machine Pitch or Little League, or higher.

Rookieball

Rookieball, also known as modified Machine Pitch (or Coach Pitch) is run over the last 2 to 4 weeks of the season for Intermediate and Senior Teeball divisions.



The club will provide access to resources in the leadup to the games to prepare players, including individual coaching, bootcamps. Coaches and players are encouraged to avail themselves of these

Coaches are provided with the opportunity to practice new skills required with guidance from players/coaches from moving-ball sports and are encouraged to commence training and practice of these skills and with the new equipment at least two weeks prior to the Rookieball fixtures.

Machine Pitch & Little League

Machine Pitch continues the development of players and exposure to the moving ball concept. It helps build confidence in batters as the balls are consistently pitched within the strike zone at a constant pitch, thereby helping players overcome fear of being hit by a thrown ball.

Dual Registration ± Fill-in Players

Dual registration is encouraged for player capable of playing multiple levels of competition for which they age qualify, including but not limited to:

- Teeball-Teeball (i.e., Junior and Intermediates, Intermediates and Seniors levels of competition)
- Teeball and Machine Pitch/Little League/Pony
- Little League-Intermediate League
- Intermediate League-Junior League
- Junior League-Senior League
- Senior League-Big League/Adult
- Junior Softball-Senior League/Adult

Dual registration allows players to thrive in the familiar while they challenge their skills at the next level of moving ball divisions of diamond sports.

Players should be aware that dual registration comes with increased training and game commitments and they dual register understanding this requirement.

Placement of players into teams and the consideration of dual registration shall be done with reference to the number of players registered for each competition, the age of each player and player development needs, and is at the sole discretion of the selection panel/s for each sport.

To ensure ongoing integrity of existing competitions, ensure player safety and in line with club and affiliated association bylaws:

- Once teams have been formed (nominally 1 October each year), any player who subsequently dual registers must continue to play in the original competition for which they had registered to play. Withdrawing from competitions once teams have been formed to focus on one/another competition has the potential to compromise teams and has rebound impacts on fixturing and other player rosters.
- Teams who require additional players to fill in in order to field a team must obtain authorisation from the Executive Committee with regard to whom they may approach to fill in before arranging for fill-in players to ensure no rules or bylaws are contravened.
- Fill-in players shall not participate in primary fielding positions to the exclusion of a suitably qualified existing team member (i.e., not pitching/catching in lieu of existing players in team).

Female-only Options

The Club recognises the importance of providing choices to allow our female members to select female-only options, with the aim to increase inclusion, participation, and confidence, with a focus on increased retention of girls in sport. We are also proudly a Pathway Club within the Baseball WA Pony Programs. Currently, the options available are:

- Teeball participation in the Natalie Bakanrich Carnival.
 - A full-day carnival for all-girl Teeball teams played one Sunday at the end of November each year. Divisions are nominated according to player interest and at no cost to the players.
- Pony Girls Futures (PGF) - Aged 10-13.
 - Modified game environment with only infielding positions being occupied to maximise player involvement
 - Games are held in Term 1 each year (occasionally Term 4 start), with two sessions per week, one of which occurs
- Pony Girls League (PGL) - Age 13-16.
 - Provides teenage girls with a competitive game environment in which to compete, participate and develop.
 - Games run from mid-November and before Easter and are played on a Sunday afternoon, with occasional midweek games.
- Baseball & Softball Open Competitions – women's only teams during the summer season

Off-season Options

Off-season options are becoming increasingly requested; however, with the reducing availability of grounds, options are limited. Several options currently exist for players to participate during the off season, either under the Kalamunda Rangers banner or one of our affiliated organisations, including

- Junior Softball (U13) played on Saturday mornings
- Senior Softball (both men's and women's competitions available across various grades)
- Senior and Junior Baseball program (open competitions only)
- Throwing program (commences early August). This program is primarily aimed at juniors but older players are welcome to attend and occurring on a Saturday morning at Maida Vale Reserve.
- Preseason Baseball Training
 - commences mid-August for higher grades, lower grades commence early September

With the installation of our revamped batting cages/undercover training area, options will increase in future years.

Training

Squad Training

Where possible, teams within the same level of competition train as a squad.

Squad training

- provides concentrated training and guidance to players from coaches with specific skills such that all players benefit from the best knowledge available from all coaches, rather than an average understanding of each aspect.
- provides learning opportunities that support new and developing coaches understand the finer nuances of the game, skillsets, etc.

Advantages:

- Players get more reps in through focused stations and guided by coaches with a specific knowledge base/skill set.
- Training is planned together by all the coaches and development officer which keeps the skills taught and language the coaches use similar throughout the club, making transition easier.
- Facilitates succession coaching and the ability to use all resources to upskill and support our coaches.
- If some players are unable to attend training for whatever reason (school commitments, illness, etc), there are still enough players available to run drills.
- Provides the opportunity for players of different skill levels at a particular skillset to break off into groups to focus on a particular drill and target training to individual player needs.
- Allows for collaborative coaching and shared knowledge so players can learn the same skills at their own pace.
- Players are interested and engaged in the other Kalamunda teams' progress and development.
- Facilitates ground and facilities use and access, enabling more players to use increasingly limited availability of grounds.

Challenges

We recognise the challenges squad training creates in that individual teams do not get the opportunity to get together and learn each other's strengths and weaknesses. This is especially recognised in the younger age divisions. In order to accommodate these needs:

- Machine Pitch train for the first 3 weeks in their teams, thereby providing the opportunity for players and coaches to establish and create the relationship groundwork before moving to squad training.
- Senior (± Intermediate?) Teeball teams will move to squad training after the Christmas break. This will also facilitate the transition to Rookieball, providing centralised resources for players and coaches to learn the new skills required, as well as prepare players for the change in coaching structure in subsequent seasons should they transition through to baseball/softball.

Participation

The Club-ball approach

- Selection committee utilised to make up as even-skilled teams for club-ball.
- Players receive even play time, including rotation through all positions, including pitcher and catcher in moving-ball games, in order to expose them to all facets of the game.
- Development goals set for teams and players of all skill levels.
- Fill-in players shall not participate in primary fielding positions to the exclusion of a suitably qualified existing team member

Representative team approach

- In line with Club Bylaws: Team is selected to perform and playing time is earned. This can sometimes lead to uneven playing time (fielding), particularly when players have a particular role to play on a Representative team. Head Coaches and Executive Officers/Team Managers are required to communicate this.
- Exposing advanced skillsets to higher-level competition and letting them thrive.
- Encourage all players to improve and set goals.

Pitching

Pitching depth underpins team success as players progress through the age divisions into adult competitions. While softball governing organisations do not impose pitching restrictions on junior players, Kalamunda Rangers have imposed the additional pitching guidelines to apply across all competitions and in addition to the restrictions imposed by baseball governing associations with the aim to:

- allow more players the opportunity to pitch
- allow arm strength to develop over the course of a season.
- pitchers are fresher and more effective over shorter outings.
- player safety and not overextend players during peak periods of physical and physiological changes

KR Pitching Limits					
League Age	Minor	1-day rest	Weekend Max	BWA Threshold	Competition
8	NA	NA	40	56	MnLL/SJS
9	NA	NA	40	75	MnLL /SJS
10	NA	NA	60	75	MnLL/LL/SJS
11	NA	NA	60	85	MLL/SJS
12	20	35	60	85	MLL/IL/SJS
13	20	35	70	95	IL/JL/JS
14	20	35	70	95	JL/SL/JS
15	30	35	70	95	SL/CBL/JS
16	30	45	70	95	SL/Adult/JS
17 or new 18+	30	45	70	105	U21/Adults
18	30	45	85	105	U21/Adults
19-22	30	45	85	120	U21/Adults

Coaching

Our coaches are encouraged to lead by example and encourage competitiveness and fair play by:

- Exposing players to different people with the same common goal for KR and passion for the game.
- Development through collaboration – established coaches teach incoming coaches.
- Using and expanding resources in the larger community to keep improving.

It is recommended all Head Coaches have the following accreditation levels for clubball levels of competition:

	Required	Recommended
Level C Baseball/Diamond Academy		IL and JL and above
Level B Baseball	Little League and above	Machine Pitch
Level A Baseball	Machine Pitch	Teeball
Level A Teeball		Teeball
Level 1 Softball	Senior competitions	Junior Competitions

The following accreditation levels are required for higher levels of play

	Required	Recommended
Level C Baseball/Diamond Academy	Head Coach LL and above	All Assistant Coaches
Level B Baseball	LL, IL and JL State Champs (all staff)	
Level A Baseball	MP State Champs (all staff)	
Level A Teeball	Head Coach Teeball State Champs	Assistant Coach
Performance Coach	Head Coach State Teams	Assistant Coach State Teams

Player Objectives

Every club wants their members to progress through all stages to get to the highest level they can and remain active participants in the community. In conjunction with *Skills and Drills Playbook*, Kalamunda has the following broad development outcomes with respect to the relevant age groups. This is to show the outcomes and experience we hope our members have at each age level and aligns with the club's mantra.

- SubJnr & Jnr Teeball – basic skills and enjoyment
- Int Teeball MP baseball and SubJnr Softball – growth and challenge (overcoming obstacles)
- Snr Teeball, PGF and LL – Recognising differences in teams and players and adapting.
- IL Baseball – Refining skills and introducing new rules.
- Jnr Softball, PGL, JL and SL Baseball – Goal setting and club building.
- BL and Adult leagues – One-for-all and all-for-one approach – continued personal and club development opportunities for members.

JUNIOR FLOWCHART

Teeball

Plus Interdistricts teams 9 to 12 years

Sub Juniors

3 to 4 years old

Juniors

Pre Primary to Year 1

Intermediate

Year 2 to 3

Seniors

Years 4,5 and 6

Machine Pitch

League Ages 7 to 10 years

Intermediate League

League Age 13 years

Senior League

League Ages 15 to 16 years

Baseball

Plus State Champs
teams 9 to 18 years

Little League

League Ages 10 to 12 years

Junior League

League Age 14 years

Big League

Under 21s

PONY Girls

Girls Only Baseball plus pathways
to State and travel teams.
Can also dual with Teeball
and Baseball club ball levels

PG Futures

Girls Only
League ages 10 to 13

PG League

Girls Only
League ages 13 to 16

