



**BASKETBALL  
ACT**

# Athlete Framework



# Acknowledgement of Country

Basketball ACT acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land, the Ngunnawal people, and pay our respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect the continuing culture Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make to the life of basketball within the city and region.

## Our staff are here to help if you have any questions



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# About this Resource

Basketball is a sport for all, whether it's participating recreationally with family and friends; or competitively in representative competition events. With approximately 10,000 Canberrans participating in various forms of organised basketball, it is one of the Capital's largest and most popular participation sports. Basketball ACT is committed to developing the game and increasing the participation rates at all ages and ability levels along the athlete pathway.

To ensure basketball remains one of the Capitals largest participation sports it is imperative that an integrated and aligned system has been designed to ensure the pathway from grassroots to high performance basketball is sustainable, and delivering the mission of providing a high-performance culture for athletes, coaches, and officials in the ACT to maximise and develop their full potential.

Based on evidence, the Athlete Framework advocates a best practice approach to long term athlete development to ensure every athlete receives the right support at the right time wherever they are on their developmental journey. Also allowing for alignment of the basketball pathway from local Canberra athletes to Basketball Australia National Squads.



# Basketball ACT Athlete Pathway

## FOUNDATION

### **F1: FUNdamentals**

Develop fundamental movement skills that contribute to basketball including running, jumping, stopping & pivoting. Basketball specific technical skills of dribbling, passing/catching, shooting and defensive footwork & techniques are emphasised.

### **F2: Learn to Play**

First exposure to age-appropriate, modified basketball  
Technical skills should be both individual & multi-player. Emphasis on team play, proper spacing, ball and player movement.

### **F3: Basketball for Life**

Develop your skills, make friends, enhance fitness and learn to love the game through:

- Club Basketball
- U12 and U14 Development Programs
- Extension Programs

## TALENTED

### **T1: Refinement of core fundamentals of the game**

Players are consistently developing foundation skills through individual and team practice. In particular, players are committed to refining shooting technique and developing shooting consistency through repetition.

### **T2: Introduction of new skills & team concepts**

Players are exposed to advanced individual skills and are encouraged to be creative in the development of their 1 v 1 capabilities, in particular.

### **T3: Players are exposed to basic tactical & strategic approach to game play**

Players are exposed to more advanced tactics such as transition, zone offense & defense, and half court set plays. Technical skills are combined to form a system of play however players are encouraged to read & react, be creative and make decisions.

### **T4: Whole athlete development**

Athletes are exposed & supported through appropriate athletic development, performance psychology, nutrition and career planning.

## ELITE

### **E1: Emphasis on refinement of technical skills**

Players have refined and can execute fundamental and advanced technical skills in competitive situations. Players must continue to train & compete with intensity and focus.

### **E2: Athletes may specialize into defined roles**

Players have a very good understanding of their position specific skills that are needed to be successful in addition to sport-specific fitness that is required to play at this level. Players understand the specific roles within a team system.

### **E3: Athletes would have been introduced to all strategies**

Players are confident independent decision-makers and leadership skills are becoming more developed. Players have a good understanding of and can cope with multiple strategies and tactics.

### **E4: Establishment of technical, strategic, mental and ancillary skills & capacities needed to compete at senior level**

Athletes are now proficient at performing both basic and sport-specific skills and techniques, have learnt to perform these under a variety of competitive conditions.





# Development Programs

## Overview

The U12 and U14 Development Programs are often the entry point for young athletes into the athlete development pathway. Young players are being exposed to different sporting activities and are encouraged to participate in a range of sports with an emphasis on FUN, learning how to train and developing appropriate training habits.

## Philosophy

A strong focus in the Development Programs is exposing young players to the foundation technical skills and basic game play concepts of basketball, building players physical literacy through fundamental movement skills, promoting fun and developing friendships through basketball.

## Daily Training Environment

Players are introduced to ancillary capacities such as dynamic warm-ups, stretching, nutrition, hydration and the importance of sleep and mental preparation for training and games. Athletes are encouraged to undertake their own individual skills training and may be provided a home-training program.

A significant focus in training is on the development of foundation technical skills and avoiding over-specialization at this stage. Players are encouraged to develop and try different skills and game play is largely “position-less”.

The development of athlete’s physical capabilities is largely incorporated into training activities however body weight exercises, for example, push ups, squats, lunges and so on, may be incorporated into a training program.

Trials are conducted in November each year with the program beginning early February with twice per week squad trainings.



## Values and Behaviours

Coaches establish a positive learning environment considering individuals' variations in physical, psychological, cognitive and emotional development.

Players are guided and encouraged to develop positive behaviours including:

- What it means to be a good team-mate
- Giving their best effort
- Being receptive to coach instruction and feedback
- Fair play and sportsmanship

## Athlete Characteristics

Long term athlete identification is relatively challenging in these age groups for various reasons, so the greater focus is on identifying players that:

- naturally move well,
- are enthusiastic to learn and practice
- have a good “feel” for the game

At this age level there may be a wide range of proficiency with some players having considerable experience in the sport and solid foundation skills whilst other players may be new to the sport with limited skills and game play understanding.

## Competition Opportunities

Both U12 and U14 programs will have competition opportunities through:

- BNSW Southern Junior League (March – May)
- BNSW Junior Premier League (February – August)
- U14 Southern Cross Challenge (January)

In addition, BACT will nominate teams for the annual:

- BNSW John Martin Country Tournament (June )
- National Junior Classic (June)
- U14 Australian Junior Club Championships (September)





# All-Abilities Programs

## Overview

Basketball ACT aims to provide everyone in our community access to the sport of basketball through programs such as 'Players with an Intellectual Disability', Wheelchair Basketball programs, etc. As an example, the ACT Ivor Burge Program, for players with an intellectual disability, has a strong history in the ACT with men's and women's representative teams participating in the Australian Basketball Championships each year.

## Philosophy

Basketball ACT encourages everyone to engage in physical activity through the sport of basketball and support those players who aspire to the highest levels of sport performance to achieve their goals. Sport for individuals with a disability has grown tremendously over the past few decades and Basketball ACT is committed to inclusiveness and providing opportunities to athletes with a disability.

## Daily Training Environment

Players are introduced to ancillary capacities such as dynamic warm-ups, stretching, nutrition, hydration and the importance of sleep and mental preparation for training and games. Athletes are encouraged to undertake their own individual skills training and may be provided a home-training program.

A significant focus in training is on the development of foundation technical skills and avoiding over-specialization at this stage. Players are encouraged to develop and try different skills and game play is largely "position-less".

## Values and Behaviours

A strong focus in these programs is exposing players to:

- the foundation technical skills
- basic game play concepts of basketball
- building players physical literacy through fundamental movement skills
- promoting fun
- developing friendships through basketball



## **Athlete Characteristics**

Within the All-Abilities Programs participants must meet the outlined competition athlete requirements as set by the event organisers. Basketball ACT will outline all athlete requirements within the selection information for programs each year. As a guideline the following requirements apply:

Ivor Burge National Championships:

- A participant's eligibility is based on an Intelligence Quotient [IQ] of 75 or below). Participants will need to have completed appropriate IQ testing and have an Ausrapid Number

Spalding Waratah Wheelchair League:

- Wheelchair Sports NSW/ACT establish an athlete classification system based on an individual's characteristics. Teams competing in the competition must not exceed the total number of classification points designated for a Team.

## **Competition Opportunities**

Basketball ACT and affiliates enter two key competition events in an annual cycle:

- Ivor Burge National Championships
- Spalding Waratah Wheelchair League

Basketball ACT is seeking to expand the domestic competition opportunities for All-Ability Athletes in future performance cycles.





# Junior Performance Programs

## Overview

The U16, U18 and U20 Junior Performance Programs are a critical stage in the development of high-performance athletes. Typically, at this stage, athletes commit to being a “one-sport athlete”, undertake individual tailored athletic development programs and complete additional training outside prescribed Club and State team practices.

## Philosophy

This is the stage for tremendous skill refinement and for athletes to be exposed to techniques and strategies which are combined to form a system of play. There are largely conceptual in nature and still allow players freedom to make decisions. Teams will have strategies for transition, offense, defense etc. This stage is about learning to compete.

## Daily Training Environment

In this stage athletes are likely to undertake 6-9 basketball specific trainings per week which, ideally, would include:

- 2-3 athletic development sessions,
- 1-2 individual/small group skill acquisition / shooting sessions,
- 2-3 team practices and 1-2 competition games

Coaches are cognisant of, and consider, the athletes overall weekly commitments including their work/academics, load management / recovery and family/friend's obligations.

Players are introduced to many higher-level technical skills that allow them to start to specialize. Players refine their technical skills and team concepts through game intensity small-sided games which enhances their decision-making capabilities.

Trials are generally conducted in November with Teams training twice per week from February through to the completion of JPL in August for some players.



## Values and Behaviours

During this stage, coaches ensure the training and competition environment promotes and supports:

- fun and friendship through hard work and teamwork
- attention to detail and striving towards a common goal
- an athlete's compatibility within the team, coachability and being a supportive and positive team-mate

There is a greater focus on mental preparation, for both training and competition, including:

- goal setting,
- developing resilience
- mindfulness
- Coaches cultivate appropriate life skills through the program

## Athlete Characteristics

Athletes training and competing in the Junior Performance Programs have established appropriate training habits including:

- a love of competing
- can execute the basic fundamental skills in game play.
- Their non-preferred hand skills i.e., dribbling, passing and layups are well developed.
- Players shooting technique is well established
- players may be developing specific positional skills suited to their strengths and capabilities.
- Players will have a strong understanding and ability to execute team concepts, for example, motion offense principles of play, playing out of ball screens and defensive rotations.
- Players will be developing basketball specific strength, speed/agility and their aerobic capacity.



## **Competition Opportunities**

It is critical at this stage that athletes have access to meaningful competition to support what has been practiced.

Benchmark competitions include:

- East Coast Challenge (January)
- U15 Southern Cross Challenge (January)
- National Junior Classic (June)
- Australian Junior Championships (U18 – April, U16 – July and U20 – TBC)

Other competitions Basketball ACT attend to assist in athlete preparation and development for Benchmark events are:

- BNSW Junior Premier League (February – August)
- BNSW Southern Junior League (March – May)
- BNSW John Martin Country Tournament (June )
- National Junior Classic (June)





# Senior Performance Programs

## Overview

The senior representative program incorporates the Canberra Gunners, the Canberra Nationals and their respective Academy teams. A major objective is providing an appropriate competition program for the best senior players in the region. The senior program also aims to provide a pathway for talented local junior players and coaches to the higher levels of the sport including the US College system, COE/NBA Global Academy, the NBL and WNBL.

## Philosophy

The senior men's Canberra Gunners/Academy & women's Nationals/Academy teams operate as single program's with two teams and two competition programs. That is, one program, two teams.

The primary KPI for the senior Gunners and Nationals is being highly competitive and consistently making finals each year.

Although the Academy Programs are considered senior representative programs the primary KPI for the Academy Programs is to develop players for the senior Gunners/Nationals Teams. Bridging the gap through continuous pathways from junior to senior representative basketball programs. Both the men's and women's Academy programs are primarily targeting players in the 17-22 years of age.

## Daily Training Environment

All facets of the game have already been introduced, practiced and refined. An emphasis on refinement must still exist as improvements can be made on all technical and tactical areas throughout an athlete's career.

At this point individual athletes would be proficient at the following capabilities needed to be successful at a senior level:

- basketball skills,
- position specific skills
- sport specific fitness

Team trainings are basketball-specific, of high intensity and shorter duration. A significant focus in team practices is on refining team systems including specific tactical elements for upcoming games.



## **Values and Behaviours**

Athletes at this level demonstrate behaviours consistent with continual improvement and performance excellence.

Athletes take personal responsibility for their ongoing development and are well equipped to coach themselves. For example, athletes can complete their own individual shooting program and year-round strength & conditioning program.

A successful player at this level can adapt effectively to new strategies, offensive & defensive philosophies and systems of play. Players at the senior representative level are excellent role models, both on and off the court, and consistently demonstrate strong leadership skills.

## **Athlete Characteristics**

Athletes at this stage have well-established high performance habits, well-developed energy systems, basketball-specific functional strength and speed and have technically sound fundamental skills.

Players are well versed in team concepts and various techniques, for example, ball screen offense and defense. Players are self-directed and assume responsibility for their performances. Players demonstrate the ability to effectively apply mental training skills to enhance performance by goal setting, focus and distraction control, emotional stability, positive self-talk etc.


Athletes consistently train at high level of intensity under game pressure situations.

## **Competition Opportunities**

The senior Canberra Gunners and Canberra Nationals compete in the NBL1-East League whilst the Gunners Academy and the Nationals Academy compete at the appropriate level in the Basketball NSW Waratah leagues. These leagues are conducted between April and September.

Trials for the senior Canberra Representative Teams are generally by invitation only whilst the Academy Programs conduct open trials in January/February.



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