

FROM THE PRESIDENT

FFA's NATIONAL (DEVELOPMENT) CURRICULUM and SMALL SIDED GAMES

Under the new National Director of Coaching, FFA's thinking about Small Sided Games (SSGs) has changed. As part of their new approach to child player development, under-6s and under-7s are coupled for development purposes, as are 8s and 9s, 10s and 11s, then 12s and over. Under this new approach, under-12s will no longer be played as SSGs. There are a number of other significant changes proposed.

As part of the National Curriculum, to operate from season 2010, FFA has stated its intention to apply the following rules for the age groups:

Age Group	Team Structure	Comment
Under 6's & 7's	4 x 4 (No Goalkeeper)	This is a change down for the U/7's
Under 8's & 9's	7 x 7 (including a Goalkeeper)	This is a significant change for the 8's
Under 10's & 11's	9 x 9 (including a Goalkeeper)	A change for the 10's
Under 12's & above	11 x 11 (normal rules)	A major change for the 12's

Regarding competition, FFA's thinking is that under-6s to 9s would have no competition tables, semi-finals or grand finals. Finally, under-10s and 11s will have full competition tables as for existing older 11 x 11 competitions.

Field sizes are also changed to be consistent with the coupling of age groups for development purposes:

Under 6's & 7's	30m x 20m
Under 8's & 9's	40m x 30m
Under 10's & 11's	60m x 40m

This represents important changes from the existing field sizes. Under-8s and 9s are brought together on larger fields for the 8s; under-10s and 11s are brought together on larger fields for the under-10s. This will go some way towards meeting Association and senior coach objections that the smaller field sizes for some age groups as significantly cramping players' styles. Other changes to increase field sizes may also be sought by some Associations, but it is important to keep these to dimensions which can fit into something approaching multiples of a standard full sized field.

Finally, FFA thinking is that the new format for SSGs should apply in all Associations from under-6s to under-9s from 2010. This would be a change in the agreement reached by FNSW and FFA early in 2009 and announced to Associations that FFA would only mandate under-6 to under-8s to participate in the SSG format in 2010, to allow a more orderly transition to SSGs across all Associations. At present, four Associations participate in SSGs for under-6s only, and have been asked, with promised help from FFA to advance to up to under-8s in 2010.



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