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A GUIDE TO THE POLICY

This Policy provides a framework and guidelines for the efficient and equitable delivery of all forms of junior participation in adult roller derby activities.

The Policy contains the following sections:

Section 1: Introduction details the mission, objectives, rationale and responsibilities of the Policy.

Section 2: The Participants describes approved junior skaters' rights and responsibilities.

Section 3: Competition deals with the issue of competition for approved junior skaters, including appropriateness and mixed-sex participation.

Section 4: Sport Educators deals with those at the forefront of the delivery of approved junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities: coaches and administrators. Stress has been placed on the importance of quality instruction for participants, and hence the need for the appropriate training of sport educators.

Section 5: Clubs provides guidelines for extending links between clubs and their responsibilities, particularly to ensure a consistent and coordinated approach and the best utilisation of resources (people, equipment and facilities).

Section 6: Other Personnel outlines the roles and responsibilities of other important contributors to enjoyable and equitable participation of approved junior skaters in adult roller derby activities.

Section 7: Safety Guidelines provides basic information and advice for the safe conduct of approved junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities.

REFERENCES

NATIONAL JUNIOR SPORT POLICY by the Australian Sports Commission

Skate Victoria Roller Derby Membership Bylaws, www.skatevictoria.com.au/documents-and-policies

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Approved Junior Skaters Participating in Adult Roller Derby Activity Policy is to ensure the provision of opportunity to all approved junior skaters to develop and enrich their lives through adult roller derby activities in a safe and fair environment.

To this end, the Policy contains a framework and guidelines for those responsible for the development, organisation and conduct of approved junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

To achieve the stated purpose, the following objectives for junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities have been identified:

To provide the best possible sporting experiences for all approved junior skaters so as to encourage lifelong participation in sport.

To provide supportive environments for enjoyable participation in a wide variety of roller derby activities, through the development of skills and good sporting behaviour.

To provide the safest possible environment for the conduct of approved junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities.

To provide equal opportunities for approved young female and male skaters to participate in adult roller derby activities.

To encourage and actively cater for talented young skaters.

1.3 RATIONALE

This Policy is premised on the principle of social justice and the belief that roller derby, when presented and organised properly, is an important educational and developmental area that offers benefits to both the individual and the sport.

1.4 RESPONSIBILITY FOR JUNIOR SKATERS PARTICIPATING IN ADULT ROLLER DERBY ACTIVITIES

Approved junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities is the shared responsibility of clubs, affiliated associations, parents/guardians, sports administrators and officials, sports health professionals and the participants themselves.

Clubs have a particular responsibility because they are the only organisations that can ensure the provision of adult roller derby activities to approved junior skaters.

The organisation responsible for the development of this Policy, Skate Victoria, has a leading role in overseeing its implementation. Their endorsement and commitment to the Policy is detailed in the Policy Implementation section on page 10.

THE PARTICIPANTS

2.1 THE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF APPROVED JUNIOR SPORT PARTICIPANTS

All approved junior skaters have the right to:

Enjoy adult roller derby activities and to be treated with dignity.

Proper preparation for participation in adult roller derby activities.

Play according to rules and values of their club in a safe and healthy sporting environment.

Skilled and qualified leadership, with the opportunity to share in leadership and decision-making roles.

Equal opportunity for successful participation.

All approved junior skaters also have a responsibility to practice good sporting behaviour. This means to:

Play fairly, safely and by the rules.

Co-operate with the coaches, team-mates and their opponents.

Abide by decisions, without argument or bad temper.

Applaud all good play, by their own team and opponents.

Not engage in practices that affect sporting performance (e.g. alcohol /tobacco/drug use).

Understand and accept that adult clubs/teams do not have to allow approved junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities. This is a privilege, not a right.

2.2 APPROVAL FOR JUNIOR SKATERS PARTICIPATING IN ADULT ROLLER DERBY ACTIVITIES

Please see the current Skate Victoria Roller Derby Membership Bylaws, junior section, for the current requirements for junior skaters to get approval to participate in adult roller derby activities.

Copy of the bylaw is available at <http://www.skatevictoria.com.au/documents-and-policies>

COMPETITION

3.1 GENERAL

Competition is an intrinsic part of sport that involves measuring performance against an opponent, oneself, or the environment. Competition provides stimulation and challenge as well as the opportunity to apply, test and further develop skills in a game situation. Properly managed, competition should be seen as a healthy and desirable part of sport.

Competition is also a test of ability and potential, with the pursuit of excellence as desirable in approved junior skaters as in other participants. All approved junior skaters should be encouraged to achieve, do their best, and develop their full supporting potential. Challenging competition is one element of this developmental process. All participants should be given opportunities to succeed and do their best through competition.

3.2 APPROPRIATENESS

All participants involved need to be made aware that there is an approved junior participating in adult derby activities, it is the right of any participant to decline participating with an approved junior skater.

Approved junior skaters need to be aware that this can potentially happen and they will not be able to participate in some activities.

3.3 MIXED-GENDER PARTICIPATION

Approved junior skaters need to be aware that junior roller derby is inherently mixed gender though adult roller derby activities are separated into female, male and mixed gender divisions. This may limit the approved junior skater's accessibility to participate in some adult roller derby activities.

SPORT EDUCATORS

4.1 THE ROLE OF COACHES AND ADMINISTRATORS

Coaches and administrators educate participants in the fundamentals and various techniques of a sport. Appropriately trained coaches and administrators are vital to quality roller derby development.

They have a special responsibility to foster positive attitudes towards physical activity and sport, and to help approved junior skaters develop roller derby skills.

They are a powerful influence on the continued involvement of approved junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities.

Roller derby coaches/administrators should:

Encourage enjoyment of sport and cater for varying levels of ability.

Provide equal encouragement to all participants to participate, acquire skills and develop confidence.

Recognise exceptionally talented skaters and give them the opportunity to develop their full sporting potential.

Prepare and conduct sessions based on sound coaching principles.

Set realistic standards and objectives for their approved junior skaters.

Provide safe playing conditions and educate approved junior skaters and parents on health and safety in sport (see Section 7).

Ensure that the consequences of inappropriate behaviour are clearly understood.

Keep up to date on roller derby sport coaching developments.

Set an example of good sporting behaviour.

4.2 COACH/ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING

Quality sport education is dependent on quality coaches and administrators. All roller derby coaches and administrators should have the qualifications/training necessary to provide excellent learning experiences for all participants.

Both clubs and affiliated organisations have roles in such training.

CLUBS

5.1 GENERAL

Close links must be established between clubs and affiliated organisations to ensure a systematic and coordinated delivery of roller derby. These links will reduce inefficiencies caused by duplication and under-utilisation of resources, while providing a consistent and complementary approach to the provision of roller derby as a sport. Close links will also provide for a smooth transition between junior roller derby and adult roller derby activities.

Duplication

It is recognised that duplication can mean more opportunities for more participants. However, the generally negative effects of duplication in clubs is widely recognised, particularly in the competition area. Duplication can lead to over-training, 'burn out' and unnecessary competing demands on participants. It also leads to excessive burdens on parents, coaches, officials, and affiliated organisations.

The duplication of roller derby clubs in close proximity to each other has been reduced by Skate Victoria's Roller Derby Membership Bylaws that will ensure ongoing communication and consultation between clubs and affiliated organisations.

Shared Resources

Where possible, clubs should implement measures to share the resources used in the delivery of roller derby. Shared resources could include: facilities, equipment and human resources (coaches, administrators and officials). This would help avoid unnecessary extra costs and inconvenience for the participants, and lead to a more efficient and effective roller derby delivery system.

5.2 THE ROLE OF CLUBS

Clubs should encourage participation by:

Encouraging the use of their facilities by all participants.

Liaising with members regarding the participation of an approved junior skater in adult roller derby activities.

Maintaining compliance for the participation of an approved junior skater within their adult roller derby activities

Integrating their competition programs with other clubs in their area, being transparent regarding all participants involved.

OTHER PERSONNEL

6.1 GENERAL

Responsibility for the delivery of roller derby activities is shared by many groups:

Coaches and Administrators (see Section 4)

Clubs (see Section 5)

Parents /guardians

Officials

The media

Affiliated Organisations

The roles of some of these groups have been outlined earlier (as indicated). The other groups are set out below.

6.2 PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The delivery of approved junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities would not be possible without the on-going commitment of parents and guardians, who provide voluntary support in many ways.

Their expectations and attitudes significantly affect the enjoyment that their junior skaters receive from adult roller derby participation.

To ensure that approved junior skaters receive the greatest benefit from their participation in adult roller derby activities, parents and guardians should:

Encourage approved junior skaters to participate, without forcing them to do so.

Focus on effort and performance rather than on the outcome. Never ridicule or yell at an approved junior skater for making a mistake or losing at an event.

Encourage approved junior skaters to always play according to the rules.

Be models of good sports behaviour for approved junior skaters to copy.

Be courteous in their communication with skaters, coaches, officials and administrators.

Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical violence from roller derby activities.

6.3 OFFICIALS

Officials (Referees, Non Skating Officials) also have an important influence on approved junior skater's enjoyment of adult roller derby activities and their continued participation.

When officiating at adult roller derby activities that has approved junior participants, Officials should:

Be consistent, courteous and helpful to all participants.

Be models of good sports behaviour for approved junior skaters to copy.

Keep informed of sound officiating principles that take account of approved junior skater's growth and development.

Discourage unsporting behaviour and promote respect for opponents.

6.5 THE MEDIA

The media plays a significant part in the shaping of attitudes.

To be a positive influence, the media should:

Develop a climate of acknowledgement and support by reporting on all roller derby activities.

Identify and report on the benefits of participating in roller derby.

Increase coverage of both competitive and non-competitive activities.

Focus on the participants' fair play and honest effort.

Take into account the differences between junior and adult roller derby.

Place in proper perspective any incidents of unsporting behaviour, rather than make such incidents the highlight of the event.

Report equitably on both female and male roller derby activities.

Recognise that there may potentially be an approved junior skater participating in adult roller derby activities and act accordingly.

6.6 AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS

Skate Victoria has a responsibility to ensure that any junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities have been approved and that all compliances have been met by the club/s involved.

Skate Victoria:

Is committed to the promotion of roller derby for the benefits that it offers individuals (see section 1.3).

Provides support and encouragement to clubs to improve their delivery of roller derby.

Supports only those programs that encourage participation in roller derby by all and provides equality of sporting opportunity.

Supports and encourages approved junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities.

Provides for a range of appropriate programs for all their affiliated clubs.

SAFETY GUIDELINES

7.1 GENERAL

An important objective of this Policy is the provision of safe environments for junior skaters who have met the Skate Victoria requirements to participate in adult roller derby activities.

Accordingly, those involved in the conduct of junior skaters participating in adult roller derby activities need to:

Take into account the ways in which the physical and emotional maturity of a junior skater differs from that of an adult.

Take into account any long term or short term medical conditions participants may have.

Ensure that sport facilities and equipment are appropriate and safe.

Ensure that participants wear protective equipment and that coaches have adequate first aid knowledge.

Ensure that participants are properly prepared for their sporting involvement, especially through quality coaching.

7.2 PHYSIOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

General

Warm-up and cool-down exercises should accompany all roller derby activities. Repetitive training techniques should be avoided, and endurance activities restricted, so that developing bones, joints and muscles are not injured. Junior skaters should play in a variety of positions and not over-train in particular skills.

Body temperature regulation

Compared with adults, junior skaters have a larger skin surface area to body mass ratio, and their sweat glands are immature, making them more susceptible to heat loss or heat gain. Sport sessions should not, therefore, be of long duration (over 30 minutes) in conditions of extreme temperature (over 30 degrees) and humidity (over 50 percent).

Fluid

Junior skaters do not instinctively drink enough fluids to replace the amount they lose during activity. Adequate fluid intake before and during all sessions must be ensured.

Nutrition

The nutritional needs of junior sport participants are affected by their level of activity. A balanced diet that provides them with all the essential elements should be encouraged. Regular fluid intake before and during training and competition should also be encouraged.

Weight loss

Methods of weight reduction by dehydration are extremely dangerous and should not be used under any circumstances.

Weight Training

Before adolescence, weight training does little to increase muscle size or strength; time and effort are better spent on skill development. At any level, weight training should only be under the supervision of a qualified instructor or it may result in injury if inappropriate.

Stress

Whether junior skaters find playing roller derby stressful depends on the attitudes of parents, coaches and officials. Adults should not set unrealistic goals, but should instead offer support and encouragement.

Drugs and Sport

The drugs most commonly used by (mostly older) children are alcohol and tobacco. Their use affects general health and well-being and, therefore, sports performance. Less common but still of concern is the use of performance-enhancing drugs, which some young people may use in response to pressures to 'win at all costs'.

Everyone involved in roller derby can help junior skaters to develop appropriate attitudes by discussing the issues with them, by emphasising participation rather than outcome, and by setting a good example. It should be stressed that good training practices and a healthy lifestyle are the factors that most contribute to enhanced sports performance.

7.3 MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Some junior skaters have medical conditions that may affect their participation in physical activity. Particular care should be taken in the case of long term conditions (eg asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and heart or lung disease). Coaches should be aware of each junior skater's specific needs and also know how to deal with any emergency.

Medical opinion should be sought when the fitness or performance of any junior participant is questionable, and when recovery from illness or injury is in doubt.

7.4 FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Measures should be adopted to reduce the risk of facility or equipment-related injury during sport activities:

Maintain facilities and equipment in a safe condition.

Properly supervise all participants during sessions.

Ensure that adequate protective equipment is used for training and competition.

Ensure that protective equipment is correctly fitted.

Cancel bouts, scrimms, or training where inspection of playing surfaces shows they are unsuitable or unsafe for play.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

MAKING IT HAPPEN

The major implication of the Skate Victoria Approved Junior Skater Participating in Adult Roller Derby Activities Policy is that every Skate Victoria affiliated club has an ownership and responsibility for it. The Policy will not be the single responsibility of any one club and its ultimate success will rely on the commitment and actions of all clubs. Devolving this responsibility ensures that its ownership is shared and reliant on working together to achieve its aims.

The implementation of the Policy does not start at the very beginning. It is important to recognise that over the past several months many initiatives have been developed which contribute to and are consistent with the aims of the Policy. The Policy seeks to formalise and reinforce these strategies and where possible contribute to the enhancement and extension of good practices.

Achievement of the implementation of the Policy will require ongoing consultation and self monitoring. To this end, Skate Victoria will continue to operate to provide support and guidance for the initial implementation stages.

DOCUMENT REVISION HISTORY

April 2016	Policy	Created
January 2017	Wording corrected - non-gender biased	Updated

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