



**DEVELOPMENT  
SQUAD  
HANDBOOK  
2024 & 2025**



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## To our SheKicks family,

As we reflect on the incredible year of 2023, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all parents who have been a part of our SheKicks community. To those who have placed their trust in us over the years and to the new members who joined us, we thank you.

Your trust has allowed us to provide your children with an enriching football development experience, while instilling in them the values of effort and perseverance to improve week after week.

At SheKicks, we take pride in supporting the growth of female soccer in Australia, we aim to prove this by expanding our age groups over the upcoming terms. Female football has evidently become more popular in Australia. Partly down to the world cup success of the Women's national team (The Matildas). They may not have won the tournament however they inspired a whole nation with some memorable performances. It's great to see our kids growing up with these role models as it encourages our young stars to follow their dreams and continue playing soccer.

The dedication of our coaches and staff over the past two years, especially in the post-COVID era, has brought us to where we are today. And, excitingly, we aspire to achieve even more!



Looking forward to 2024, we are particularly enthusiastic about the progress of our Development Squads. This handbook contains information, guidelines and policies relevant to the players and parents/carers.

Here's a summary of what you can expect from your child's development with us from 2024.

## **Our Primary Goal**

The primary goal of the Development Squad is to provide a platform for the ongoing development of players. We aim to do so while maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all members of the community.

## **Key aspects of the program include:**

- Constant skill development.
- Fostering a desire and effort to improve.
- Instilling a commitment to the association, the team and the individual.
- Recognising and acknowledging different rates of development.
- Developing a positive attitude towards teammates, coaches, officials and opposition.
- Enjoying the game of soccer.

The emphasis of this program is on long-term skill development, participation, confidence building, teamwork and enjoyment.



## **The Different Phases of Player Development - ADVANCED PROGRAM**

### **U6 & U7 Development Squads - Discovery & Skill Phase**

The U6/U7 phase fosters technical skill development while introducing tactical teamwork concepts. Coaches keenly observe players' preferences and abilities, gradually assigning more specific positions. Games become more structured, with larger spaces and more detailed rules.

### **U8 & U9 Development Squad - Skill & Game Training Phase**

As we progress, players delve deeper into both technical and tactical development. They begin working on more complex team strategies, emphasising the importance of position play and teamwork. While specialisation in positions may commence, we continue to encourage versatility.

### **U10/12 Development Squad - Game/ Team Training Phase**

The U10 phase further develops technical and team processes used within the game. We now implement strategies for the individual to function within the team. This includes the different transitions of the game from defending to attacking, attacking to defending. Aiming to develop the understanding between players and their positions, with and without the ball.



## DEVELOPMENT SQUADS 2024

Our Development Squad represents a selective program from our SheKicks Soccer Academy prioritising player development. The selection process hinges on a player's ability to listen, absorb instructions, exhibit a baseline skill level, and possess a genuine desire to engage in competitive soccer. The key difference lies in the two levels of competency, skill, and technique within the squads.

### Development Squads U6-U12

Players in the Development Squads will engage in a program that emphasises improvement throughout the year. Coaches will closely monitor this development process, providing insights in our half-yearly reports to help set goals with the players.





We are currently in the planning phase of arranging tournaments for SheKicks to complete in.

- April: To be confirmed.
- July 7th to 12th: Canberra Kanga Cup (U9 to U12 players) TBC
- October 4th to 7th: Sydney International Cup (U8 to U12 players)

We are excited about the potential these competitions hold for our players' development and the unique experiences that await them on and off the field. As we embark on this exciting journey, your support is invaluable, and we can't wait to share more details in the coming months!





## Number of Teams/Players

SheKicks will enter teams ranging from U6-U12 depending on player & coach availability in each age group.

Each team consists of a maximum of 10 players

## Selection Eligibility/Criteria

To be eligible for selection a player must:

- Acknowledge that they and their parents/carers accept the guidelines and policies in this handbook.
- Be under the age limit as of 31st December in the year of the season.
- During the trial process, the following criteria may be considered for player selection: Demonstrated skill level in all areas of soccer: shooting, dribbling and passing.
- Attitude, dedication, work ethic, commitment and coachability. Positional needs of each team.
- The player's availability to commit to all the requirements of the season including preseason and finals.
- The player and their parent/carer's history of behaviour and compliance with relevant codes of conduct.







## **The following factors are not to be considered by coaches in any circumstances:**

- The race or religion of the player or their parents/carers.
- The position/status of the parent.
- The player's affiliation with any local competition club, school or external training program.

## **Team selection process for our Development Squads**

- Unless a player is severely underperforming or there are consistent behavioural problems.
- ALL players in the Development Squads will automatically be enrolled for the following year.
- Team selection is done by the Head Coach of each age group and considerations such as friendships will be taken into account.

## **The coaches are provided with:**

- A list of all players signed up for the trials.
- A list of all players who are absent from the trial for approved reasons.
- At the trials, the lead head coach of each age group is to determine the drills or activities conducted in each session. Following the trial, the coaches meet to discuss the final team selections.



## Weekly Schedule 2024

### Development Squads Term 1 and term 4:

- Mondays and Fridays from 4 to 5:30pm training sessions in Centennial Park.
- Saturday ESAL & SSL between 1pm to 5pm in Easts Rugby + Queens park/Centennial Park.

### Development Squads Term 2 and Term 3:

- Monday's and Friday's from 3:45 to 5:15pm in Queens Park.
- Saturday ESAL & SSL competitions between 1 to 5pm in Queens Park.

*\*Please note that this may change for decisions out of our control such as councils venue permits, tournaments organisations decisions, weather conditions, etc..*





## Training Expectations

- SheKicks teams generally have two training sessions per week of an hour and a half each.
- Training venues may include: Centennial Park, Queens Park & Steyne Park - Double Bay.
- Players are expected to be at training, fully dressed and ready to train at the scheduled start time. One minute late is considered to be late and any penalties for unnotified lateness are at the discretion of the coach.
- If you cannot attend training or will be late, this should be communicated to the coach as early as possible.
- Training sessions during the school holidays are not mandatory.
- Players should wear their SheKicks uniform and bring water.

## Player Match Time

The Development Squad program is considered to be an elite development program, however, all players must play in both halves. Playing time is ultimately at the discretion of the coaches. Relevant factors to be considered include:

- Attendance and punctuality.
- Behaviour and appearance.
- Attitude towards coaches, teammates and referees. Playing ability.



## SheKicks Attire

All players are required to purchase a SheKicks uniform. Which includes; Playing Top, Shorts & Socks. Players will have the opportunity to have their names and numbers on the back of their playing top.

**Players who do not have the full correct uniform at the game will not be permitted to play.**

## Player Expectations

- All players must attend all practices and games unless they are sick or receiving professional treatment for an injury.
- Injured players should still attend training even if they cannot participate fully.
- All players must support their team at all times, whether they are on the court or on the bench, both verbally and with correct body language.
- All players are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner at all times. Any instances of inappropriate behaviour, bullying, or attitude detrimental to the team may result in disciplinary action or expulsion from the program.
- Representative teams are limited to 10 playing spots.





## Parent-Player-Coach Communication

- Communication between the coaches, players and parents needs to be timely, accurate and complete.
- Parents are not to approach coaching staff during games. Coaches are instructed not to deal with negative feedback directly following a game.
- If you have issues that need to be resolved, wait at least for the next day to speak with the coach. The majority of issues should be able to be resolved with the coach directly however if needed, issues can be escalated to the head coach.
- During games and practices, please support the whole team, not just your own daughter.
- Parents coaching from the sidelines is never appropriate regardless of their level of knowledge. By all means be passionate and vocal, give encouragement to the SheKicks teams and praise good play by our opponents but refrain from negative feedback towards anyone.

At SheKicks, we are committed to providing a pathway for players to grow, compete, and potentially showcase their talents on an international stage.



## Exciting Plans for 2024 & 2025!

### Pathway for Development Squad Players: Ensuring Continuity

As we look ahead to 2024, we are thrilled to unveil an exciting pathway for our Development Squads players, ensuring a high level of continuity in their SheKicks development journey. This program opens doors for our oldest players to seamlessly transition into Representative Programs in the National Premier League (NPL) and Skill Acquisition Program (SAP).

We are committed to offering comprehensive pathways that foster growth, competition, and the realisation of each player's full potential.





## Our Team of Coaches

At SheKicks we have a wealth of talent, experience and expertise in challenging and educating all of the players in our Development Squads. All of our coaches have qualifications and experience as both players and coaches.

Brandon Prouse - Head Coach Development Squad

“My goal is to inspire each player to become the best version of themselves, both on and off the soccer field. At SheKicks we aim to install lifelong values through the development of discipline, respect and hard work. I commit to being the best mentor I can be, sharing my knowledge, skills and expertise, to create a positive learning environment. We will embrace the challenge on the field, support each other, and play with passion. Let your love for the game shine, and success will follow!”

Stay tuned for regular updates on our plans for the future as we progress with the planning and organisation.

Thanks,  
The SheKicks Team.

