

WABL



ATHLETE & PARENT EXPECTATIONS GUIDE



WABL MISSION STATEMENT

Culture and Development Before Wins and Losses.

COUGAR VALUES

Belonging. Joy. Respect. Excellence.

WHAT DOES OUR CULTURE LOOK LIKE?

At Cockburn Basketball Association, our culture is the cornerstone of our organisation. It shapes our leadership, our gameplay, and our collective growth. We are more than a basketball club; we are a community where everyone belongs. From athletes to coaches, parents to volunteers, we are united by a shared commitment to values of belonging, respect, joy and excellence, that develop not only great basketball players but great people.

We prioritise culture and development over scoreboard results because we believe that investing in our people will lead to success. We appreciate the manager who dedicates hours to washing uniforms and preparing water bottles on game day. We celebrate the parent who offers words of encouragement to the team rather than focusing on the referee's decisions. We encourage coaches and NBL1 players to mentor our younger athletes, recognising the significant impact of shared experiences and visible leadership.

We uphold accountability and expect high standards from everyone within our community - no matter the role you play within the club- because we don't just want to be a club that's great at basketball, we want to be a club that's great at basketball, with even greater people.

OVERVIEW

The Cockburn Cougars WABL program is a year-long commitment to basketball. Administered and delivered by Cockburn Basketball Association (CBA) the Cockburn Cougars compete within both the Western Australian Basketball League (WABL) and Basketball Western Australian State Championships Tournament (State Champs).

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN BASKETBALL LEAGUE (WABL)

WABL is Western Australia's elite junior basketball competition, administered by Basketball WA (BWA). It caters for players from as young as 7, through to 20-year-old men and women. The age-groups are broken down into U12, U14, U16, U18 and U20/21s.

State Championships is the first step in a year long process within the Cockburn Cougars WABL program.

Selection in the State Championship program will guarantee athletes a position on a WABL team as either a full-time or train on athlete for the following year. Teams are to be announced following the completion of the State Titles weekend, with pre-season training to commence February. Selection in a specific grade for State Championship does not guarantee athletes will remain in that team come final selection for WABL the following year.

The official WABL season commences in February/March with the grading tournament, to sort each association's individual teams into the correct WABL division, to maximize the quality of games each season. The WABL season begins, mid-April, running until finals in September. Home games are played at Wally Hagan and away fixtures at venues from as far north as Joondalup, east to Kalamunda and Mundaring, and south to Bunbury.

STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Late November/early December each year, the State Championships tournament are run by BWA. This tournament has all WABL Associations represented as well as other smaller metro Associations country Associations.

Our coaches are selected each year prior to the State Championships and continue through to the next WABL season. All teams are open to new and existing athletes in October for the State Championships.

Trials commence early October and are the entry point for most athletes in representative basketball for the Cockburn Cougars. Once selected, teams train until their allocated tournament weekend.

Tournament weekends consist of teams from associations all over Western Australia, with majority taking place at Bendat Basketball Centre (Bendat) with State Titles commencing the State Championships, and Divisions 2-5 compete over the following four (4) weekends. Teams are selected at the conclusion of the State Titles weekend. The selection process is highlighted in the CBA Player Selection Policy.

PLAYER EXPECTATIONS

We are excited to be a part of the basketball journey each athlete is about to undertake. Basketball is an amazing sport, but it is important to make sure the life of an athlete is balanced, academically, personally and on the court.

Cockburn Cougars are leaders in on and off court behaviour, so it is important that all athletes play hard, smart, decisive and fair. Cougars show respect and play with humility.

Cougars play for their club before all else. Playing for the team comes next. Then finally, each individual. Some of the best players in the world make personal sacrifices; we are no different.

As a Cougar athlete, communication is key. Any issues that arise, it is important to make an attempt to resolve them. The process of conflict resolution is indicated further on in this document.

It is expected Cougar athletes:

- Conduct themselves in a manner reflective of the club's mission at all times. This includes embracing the Cougar Values and abiding by the Cougar Way and CBA Code of Conduct.
- Are financial and actively participating with both their domestic and WABL team, in order to be available for selection. The CBA Basketball Operations Manager will consider financial issues on a case-by-case basis.
- Arrive at the designated venue in a timely manner as directed by each coach.
- Inform the coach directly, at the earliest possibility, if they cannot attend training or will be late. It is unacceptable to inform the coach on the day of unavailability unless it is a case of sudden illness.
- Inform the coach of any pre-existing injuries. In the case of an injury, attendance at training and games is still expected, provided the injury does not stop this.
- Do not attend training and games if illness can be passed onto others.
- Do not miss training to study unless there is an examination the next day. If this is the case, it is important the coach is aware well in advance. If you need help with time management, consult the CBA Basketball Operations Manager.
- Respect all training and game venues, leaving them damage free, clean and tidy.
- Wear the Cockburn Cougars training singlet, CBA black shorts, bring a basketball and drink bottle to all training sessions.
- Respect all equipment.
- Always follow the instruction of coaches.
- Are leaders with their on court and bench behaviour at all times, supporting team mates on and off the court.

UNIFORMS

- All players are expected to wear a Cougar reversible training singlet and black shorts to all training sessions once selected in the team.
- Players will purchase WABL playing shorts and a WABL warm-up top to be worn at all games during the regular season.
- Players are only allowed to warm up in WABL playing uniform, WABL warm-up tops and CBA hoodies. No other attire (including other Cougar merchandise) is to be worn during warm-up and games.
- Club merchandise can be purchased from the Cougar store.
- All players must wear mouth guards during **training and games**.

Item	Requirement
Black Training Shorts	Essential
Reversible Training Singlet	Essential
Blue WABL Playing Shorts	Essential
Polo Shirt	Optional
T-shirts	Optional
Drink Bottle	Optional
Duffle Bag	Optional
Backpack	Optional

PLAYING TIME

- Full-time athletes are entitled to a MINIMUM number of ‘playing opportunities’ per game, per age group. A playing opportunity is defined as the athlete starting a quarter or being substituted into the game.
- U12 athletes will be guaranteed a MINIMUM of 3 playing opportunities, U14 athletes will be two, U16 athletes will be two and U18 athletes will be one.
- The length of opportunity is at the discretion of the head coach, and subject to their individual assessment. Coaches are instructed to be explicit with their instructions to athletes, so it is clear what is expected of them. This process is not designed to punish simple skill errors, but to hold athlete’s accountable to instructions from their coach. It also ensures athletes are not sat off the court for an entire game.
- NOTE: Athletes who play more than 15% of total game time are deemed to have used their total minimum playing opportunities, and their remaining playing time is at the sole discretion of the head coach.
- The above is also dependent on meeting the club and team expectations throughout the season, this includes:
 - Attendance and punctuality
 - Behaviour and appearance
 - Attitude towards their team, teammates, coaches, officials, and opposition
- Minimum number of ‘playing opportunities may vary within finals and grading.
- Train-on athletes are as much a part of the team as full-time athletes and are required at both training and games.
- Train-on athletes may be selected to fill-in during the WABL season at the coach’s discretion.
- The decision to play/not play train-on athletes must be communicated by coaches prior to gameday (with exception of injuries, illness, etc.)
- Train-on athletes are **not** entitled to the minimum number of ‘playing opportunities’ if selected to play.

WABL PLAYERS DOMESTIC BASKETBALL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Domestic Competition is an important element of the Cockburn Basketball Association. **It is the lifeblood of our club.**

The objective of the competition is to involve athletes in a competition that players want to be a part of, and can develop in, without the cost and travel associated with WABL.

Games are currently spread throughout the week depending on age group and it is an expectation that all WABL athletes are involved in the Cockburn Domestic Competition in all terms of the school year.

To be eligible for WABL team selection WABL players must:

- Be registered and active participants in a CBA domestic team (summer & winter)
- Be fully financial with their domestic club by the due date specified by the domestic club. Athletes with financial issues must make their situation known to the junior domestic club who may contact the CBA Basketball Operations Manager.
- Athletes who are not involved in a Cockburn domestic program or WABL team may be allowed to train with a team if granted by the CBA Basketball Operations Manager.

WABL players who regularly do not turn up to domestic games without notification to their domestic team coach/manager will not, unless a reasonable excuse can be given, be able to play in the next WABL game if deemed appropriate by the CBA Basketball Operations Manager.

The above also applies to State Championships. Only active and financial players will be eligible to trial in accordance with the CBA WABL Player Selection Policy.

Players with a long-term injury must notify their domestic club and the CBA Basketball Operations Manager to give updates on their situation.

Players wishing to be excluded from playing in the junior CBA competition must apply for an exception via the CBA Basketball Operations Manager, who will approve or deny the request. Reasonable exemptions include:

- Be apart of the CBA NBL1 program
- State Level Commitments in basketball that would be directly impacted by the domestic competition. This may include a direct clash or workload that is deemed excessive.
- An inability to safely travel to and from games as a minor
- Other exemptions MAY be considered on a case-by-case basis.

All players wishing to transfer from another WABL Association must register and actively participate in our domestic competition prior to trials to be eligible for selection. Exceptions may be provided for high potential athletes as approved by Basketball Operations Manager.

FEES

State Championships

- Trials: \$40.00 (PlayHQ)
- Tournament Fee: \$140.00

WABL

- Pre-season Fee: \$135.00
- Full-Time Season Fee: \$495.00
- Train-On Season Fee: \$245.00
- WABL Weekly Game Fee: \$15 players, \$3 (Teampay)

Payment plans are available upon request; however, these will not be granted if a request is not made in a reasonable timeframe. The CBA will continue to provide support to families with two or more athletes participating in the WABL competition. A discount of 10% on fees will be applied to all subsequent family members after the first athlete.

We want to maximise the opportunity of all athletes, so please contact the CBA Basketball Operations Manager if you have any concerns around making your financial obligations. The association is committed to finding a solution for all families.

Athletes who suffer a season ending long-term injury after playing less than five games of the WABL season will be refunded their fees, minus administrative charges. If an athlete suffers a season ending long-term injury having played 5-9 games (inclusive), they will be charged half the total fee cost. Any more than 10 games played (inclusive) will be charged the full season fee.

THE COUGAR WAY

The purpose of the Cougar Way is to clearly define expectations and outline the process the Cockburn Basketball Association follows to manage behaviour within its WABL program. The code is reviewed annually to ensure current, with the sole goals to:

- Promote positive and respectful conduct on and off the court
- Encourage accountability from all community members
- Apply consistent, fair, and transparent consequences
- Maintain discretion to account for context and severity
- Involve team coaches as key contributors in managing behavioural outcomes

The framework applied to:

- WABL players (junior and senior) at WABL games, WABL trainings & WABL representative events
- WABL coaches and team staff at WABL games, WABL trainings & WABL representative events
- Parents, guardians and spectators attending WABL games and trainings

PARENTS AND SUPPORTERS

We are grateful to be able to work with all athletes through our WABL program, and appreciate the sacrifices made to enable each child to be involved in this worthwhile opportunity.

We love the involvement and investment all parents have and appreciate their desire to help with their teams. Unlike some clubs, we encourage parents to attend all team meetings, attend trainings, tryouts, and speak directly with coaches where suitable. CBA do not wish to ever deter these happenings from occurring as this is a core part of how we operate.

The following expectations/standards for parents/teams to ensure our coaching engagement remains at a level that fosters an environment that is appropriate for all members of our WABL program.

Communication with Coaches

Our Cougar coaches have been appointed with the trust to deliver our program. Parents must understand the correct/not correct avenues and methods to understand a coach's decision. Please be supportive of them. They make decisions everyday affecting the welfare of the club, team, and players. This is not easy, and we appreciate not everyone will always agree. Effective communication is required between parents and coaches.

Positive feedback is always encouraged; please provide this at any time.

If there are any issues that need to be resolved, please follow this process:

1. Hold off at least 30/45 minutes post-game before speaking with the coach. We understand emotions can be heightened within this timeframe. A reasonable/cordial exchange is acceptable. Coaches have been instructed to refer issues to CBA Basketball Operations Manager if negative feedback/communication becomes adverse.
2. If after talking to the coach, the issue has not been resolved, please discuss directly with the CBA Basketball Operations Manager.

It is an expectation the above process is followed. Coaches, officials, and team managers are instructed not to engage in conversations that do not follow the above procedure.

Parents Engaging in Coaching

We are fortunate to have dedicated and experienced coaches throughout our parent cohort, and/or parents committed to the development/success of their child's team. CBA has spent many seasons developing and implementing a playing style consistent across the club. Input into style of play, while valuable, must stay consistent, with messaging coming from the teams' coaches, and Director of Coaching. While we appreciate a parent's desire to coach their child's team out of support, it is important to understand when it is not appropriate to engage in coaching of their child and/or child's team. Below is a list of actions we ask parents to ensure they avoid:

- **Courtside Coaching:** coaching your child from the sidelines throughout a game. It is common for athletes to want to seek this from their parents. We need parents to disengage from sideline coaching the moment warm-up begins. Cheering and general comments regarding the game are welcomed, but strictly no coaching.
- **Interjecting into Breaks:** parents having their child come to them during time outs and/or interjecting in a team's huddle, is something we strongly condemn. There is no situation that gives permission for a parent to involve themselves in coaching during these times. Allowing this to occur with one child/parent opens the door for all to partake in this practice. Consistent messaging is required for teams, which is to come from their coaches and development co-ordinators.

Player Criticism/Comments

Basketball WA Code of Conduct outline parent expectations on criticism and providing feedback. While constructive criticism delivered appropriately should be welcomed, parents should refrain from commenting on athletes which are not their child. This extends to taking notes and collecting stats of players (not their child). Stats are only to be shared at the request of the coach, with the understanding that these may sometimes not be perfect.

We encourage parents to be passionate and vocal by giving encouragement to all Cockburn players and praise good play by our opponents. Negative feedback to referees is not allowed and should be called out, they too are developing and without them, we have no game.

CBA management will always support a parent/athlete calling out behaviour that does not align with our values.

We require assistance from parents in the form of team manager duties, scoring and fundraising. Please be supportive of every athlete, the wider team and the club in helping out when you can.

Finally, the club, its management and coaches make decisions for the benefit of the Cockburn Basketball Association and Cockburn Cougars. Whilst not everyone always agrees, please accept and educate each athlete on how to handle success as well as difficulties or hurdles they may come across. Please take both on board with equal acceptance and educate athletes on how success is important, but negative hurdles are an important learning opportunity.

Dealing with success AND failure is an important skill we can instil in our Cougar athletes, and it starts with parents. It makes athletes more resilient and capable to overcome future challenges.

VIDEO/STATISTICS

Videoring and stat taking of games remains at the coach's request. Parents are permitted to video and stat keep for their own child at all times for individual development. Video or statistics are only to be used by coaches as tool for athlete development, this is never used as a tool for parents to provide feedback to coaches.

Coaches may permit a suitable person to film video. This film is not to be shared unless permitted by coaches. If filming please ensure you notify opposition teams prior to filming as a courtesy.

If coaches request statistics to be taken, this again is not to be shared unless sanctioned. There is also the understanding that stats are unable to be 100% correct, due to many factors.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Please remember that anything published on social media can have an impact on others. Any posts related to the club, team, players, parents, officials, supporters or opposition should only be positive in nature.

What others post online can impact club culture, team harmony and individual's feelings. Any issues brought to the attention of the CBA on social media regarding the club, coach, players, parents, officials, supports or opposition will be swiftly dealt with by the CBA Basketball Operations Manager.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- CBA Code of Conduct
- BWA Code of Conduct
- CBA WABL Player Selection Policy
- CBA WABL – The Cougar Way