



## Blue Mountains Football Club Inc.

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PO Box 235, GLENBROOK NSW 2773

28 May 2020

Dear BMFC Member

Thank you all so much for your patience lately – there is a lot of information to get to you, so apologies for the length of this note but please read it. The final part of the note has some exciting news on the development of Knapsack Park.

As you may be aware Football NSW (FNSW) has lifted the moratorium on training and, subject to strict conditions being met, teams can commence training. Whilst this is very positive and reflective of the wider relaxation of restrictions, it by no means is a return to our usual practices. We still have no clear guidance if we will be able to play games in the 2020 season, and returning to games is by no means a certainty.

Before any training can commence it must be **sanctioned** and that will be conditional on the Club meeting all requirements of FNSW. Any training which takes place before it is sanctioned means there is no protection for players, including insurance. If a team is subject to fines for breaching the current social restrictions which are in place, the Club may also be fined – we will pass this fine onto the team, training privileges will be revoked and we will not provide assistance in any way. I urge every player in the strongest possible terms to not gather or train unless it is sanctioned.

The FNSW requirements for training restrict the number of people which can be engaged in specified areas and also restrict the drills which can be undertaken.

The training requirements for all teams, regardless of age, include:

- full records completed at each training session of who has participated – this must be provided to the Club at the conclusion of each session
- no more than 10 people (players/coach(es)/others) in a 50 x 30 metres space, which is approx. ¼ of a full field – coaches can only train one team at a time
- spacing so that there is no more than 1 person/4m<sup>2</sup>
- no person-to-person contact
- no contact-to-contact drills (e.g. tackling drills, one-on-one, two-on-one, mini-games, etc)
- handling of equipment to be kept to a minimum
- availability of hand sanitiser, including regular use
- spectators not permitted, unless they are included in the count of max. 10 people
- if training bibs are used, each player must use only one and take that with them to wash
- no use of change rooms
- no socialising post-training – everyone must leave the venue immediately after training has finished.



There is absolutely no obligation for anyone to return to training – there will may be teams who wish to wait until we have further guidance on the likelihood of competition games (which would most likely be contingent on further relaxation of the current requirements).

I would like all of you to discuss this, on a team basis, and communicate with your coach. Before a team returns to training all requirements must be adhered to (see links below), so that all players/parents and coaches are aware of what is expected and the restrictions which are in place. As always, if in your team discussions questions arise, or if you have something you need additional information on, please contact the Club ([contact@bmfc.com.au](mailto:contact@bmfc.com.au)).

Football NSW's Return to Training Resources:

- Home Page – <https://footballnsw.com.au/return-to-training/>
- Checklist – <https://footballnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Return-to-Training-Requirements-checklist-FNSW.pdf>
- Info for Players/teams – [https://footballnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/FNSW\\_COVID-Poster\\_A3\\_Players.pdf](https://footballnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/FNSW_COVID-Poster_A3_Players.pdf)
- Info for Coaches – [https://footballnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/FNSW\\_COVID-Poster\\_A3\\_Coaches.pdf](https://footballnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/FNSW_COVID-Poster_A3_Coaches.pdf)
- Attendance Sheet – <https://footballnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Return-to-train-attendance.pdf>

I'd like to make some specific comments for different age groups/teams/roles.

### **U5–U7 MiniRoos**

Our usual practice is that U5–U7 MiniRoos train before their games on Saturday mornings. As detailed above, there are some very strict conditions which must be met to allow for training, including no one-on-one tackling drills or contact between players. There will also be no game at the end of training, which is generally how 'normal' Saturday morning sessions end. Perhaps the biggest restriction is that parents are included in the maximum numbers on the field (i.e. 10 people), so watching a training session must be done from a distance and not on the field. Therefore, training for these age groups will be difficult for a coach to prevent kids from wanting to tackle each other and get close. Given these (and some other) restrictions, it may not be feasible for some teams to get together, plus it places a fair amount of onus on coaches to adhere to the requirements. Exercise has significant benefits for children – and I know my kids are desperate to get back into football; however, we don't want the training sessions to be overly onerous or frustrating for participants. What I would ask of you is to talk with your team and decide if you wish to start training now, or take a wait-n-see approach for your child/team.

If U5–U7 MiniRoos teams want to train, the time for this will be on Saturday mornings only. Not more than 9 teams can train at any one time, so training start times will be 9 am, 10 am or 11 am – teams will be allocated 30 minutes for training.

Can the coach or manager of each U5–U7 team please let the Club know by Sunday evening (31<sup>st</sup> May) whether their team will be training or not, and if yes, preferred start time (e.g. 9am – 1<sup>st</sup> preference, 11am – 2<sup>nd</sup> preference, 10 am – 3<sup>rd</sup> preference). The first preferred start times will be accommodated as best as possible.

## U8–U11 MiniRoos

Again, as with the U5–U7 MiniRoos, with these age groups it will be somewhat difficult to maintain distance between players with no one-on-one contact including tackling drills. As some teams have more than 9 players, a ½ field will be required if all players train.

## U12s and up

Again, no “game” or one-on-one drills can be conducted and if all players of the team want to train, a ½ field will be required. Fitness and kicking skills will be ok – but no spectators and no socialising after the training session.

## All teams U8s and up

As you know, weeknight training is a busy time at Knapsack Park and we must be conscious of the spacing and distraining rules in place. With the exception of Saturday mornings, if a team wishes to train on a weekend instead of a weeknight, this is possible – at least whilst there are no games. This may be a suitable alternative to weeknights and also allow for additional training time and space.

## For Coaches

I understand that many of you possibly are concerned that you are the one that will be managing training sessions under the above requirements – something which you did not sign up for. As much as we can, the Club will assist you in planning sessions and maintaining the requirements. This will no doubt be easier for teams who are older – whilst for younger teams it will be a challenge. Please discuss with your team what approach is most appropriate for everyone and if you have any queries please come back to me. As alluded to earlier, it may be that a wait-n-see approach is taken for a couple of weeks and that is perfectly fine. The underlying problem that we have is that we still do not know if a game will be played this season – something that some may prefer to see determined first. If the go-ahead for games is given, I would imagine that may change some of the restriction and thus make it easier for sessions.

## From Here ...

Once teams have determined what they wish to do, if the coach or manager could communicate to the Club the following, by Sunday evening (31<sup>st</sup> May):

<b>Team Name:</b>		
We want to train as soon as possible	Yes	No
We want to wait-n-see and we'll advise the Club when we wish to commence training	Yes	
If training:		
– we would prefer to train at our original scheduled time (*)	Yes	No
– we would like to train on a weekend instead (note: let the Club know preferred day and start/finish training times)	Yes	

(\*) This is referring to the training schedule the Club had in place prior to all football activities being suspended

## **Knapsack Park**

As you are all probably aware, we are in the process of a new precinct at Knapsack Park – this includes a new clubhouse and car park.

Whilst it has served us well over the years, it is time to prepare for the clubhouse to be demolished. For this to occur we need to get our stuff out.

On Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> June (long weekend) if you could spare some time to assist us in moving our gear into on-site storage, it will be so appreciated! The more we have the better, as this means it will take less time and be easier for all. This will start at 10 am. **Please let me know by next Thursday (4<sup>th</sup> June) if you can help.**

Whilst there are some items that are heavy, it mostly is boxes and plastic storage containers. Anyone can help and no matter how little time you can give, it will be really welcomed.

I will be surprised if the clubhouse sees out July, so it is happening that quickly!!! This is a very exciting project for many of us and has taken quite some time to get to this stage.

Thank you all again for your patience – please stay safe and I hope to see you all soon.



David Smith  
**BMFC PRESIDENT**