

JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP HANDBOOK 2023



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About

Eltham Wildcats Basketball Association is one of the largest basketball clubs in Australia. With a history spanning back to the early 1960s, we are stronger than ever in 2022. We continue to serve the broader Eltham community and those who wish to participate in basketball by providing opportunities across all levels of age, gender, ability and mobility.

At Eltham Wildcats, we are exceptional proud of our broad and inclusive range of basketball program offerings. Our basketball programs cover kids as young as 2 years old in our Kinder Club program, or 5 year old kids in our award winning Cub Squad program, right through to the more young at heart “mature aged” players still able to play the game they love in our Walking Basketball program. But perhaps the most special program of all is our Unified Basketball program that promotes and creates social inclusion between individuals with and without disabilities through basketball.

In terms of junior domestic level basketball, Eltham Wildcats is always heavily represented in the Eastern District Junior Basketball Association (Winter and Summer) competitions across all age, gender and skill levels. From friendship group teams and beginner player teams just playing the game because they love hanging with their mates, right through to high performance players and teams wanting to achieve more and continue to develop their basketball knowledge and skill... you won't find a larger basketball club with more teams playing under the same name than Eltham Wildcats in the EDJBA competition.

For the elite juniors coming through our ranks, we offer players the opportunity to participate in “Championship Basketball” with Eltham Wildcats teams participating in the VJBL every year.

In terms of pathways for dedicated juniors, our senior program currently offers players the opportunity to strive for and compete at Big V level and NBL1 level. Big V is the senior league in Victoria comprising 145 semi-professional sides from 47 Associations in 12 competitions for both men and women. While NBL1 is a semi-professional basketball league in Australia, consisting of South, North, Central, West and East Conferences with both men's and women's competitions. NBL1 is the second highest level of basketball in Australia. Second only to the NBL.



Overview

What is Championship Basketball at Eltham Wildcats?

The Eltham Wildcats Championship program is a junior representative program that provides a pathway for elite players to compete in the Victorian Junior Basketball League (VJBL). The VJBL is run by our state governing body, Basketball Victoria.

Championship basketball is played once a week (Friday night) against other competing associations from all over Melbourne metropolitan and often includes regional areas such as Bendigo, Ballarat, Gippsland, Geelong and Surf Coast.

The Eltham Wildcats Championship program aims to encourage all players to focus on developing their basketball knowledge and skill base during their time in our program through U12s, U14s, U16s and U18s age groups to finally finish their junior careers in our U20 program.

Memories and friendships created during a players time in the program last a lifetime and create an undeniable bond for years to come.



VJBL Competition

The Victorian Junior Basketball League (VJBL) incorporates competitions conducted state-wide and provides the highest level of junior competition in Victoria. The VJBL boasts 1248 representative teams from 54 associations across Victoria, with over 13,000 participants competing inside 80 plus venues on a Friday night.

The competition includes U12 to U20 age groups, in a graded structure from Victorian Junior Championship League to the Regional Competition.

Eltham Wildcats play home games at Montmorency Secondary College, Eltham High, Montmorency South Primary School and Eltham Leisure Centre.

Game times start from 6.30pm for the younger age groups through to a 9.40pm start for the older age groups.



Season Dates

2023 Season - Key Dates

Grading Phase 1

Fri 18th Nov 2022 – Game 1

Fri 25th Nov 2022 – Game 2

Fri 2nd Dec 2022 – Game 3

Fri 9th Dec 2022 – Grading cross-over Round

27 – 29 Jan 2023 – Eltham Dandenong Tournament

Grading Phase 2

Fri 3rd Feb 2023 – Game 1

Fri 10th Feb 2023 – Game 2

Fri 17th Feb 2023 – Game 3

Fri 24th Feb 2023 – Grading cross-over game 1

Fri 3rd Mar 2023 – Grading cross-over game 2

VJBL Season

Fri 10th Mar 2023 – Round 1

Fri 8th & 15th Sept 2023 – Grand Finals



Coaches and Support Staff

Coaches

- Director of Coaching – Craig Stratford
- Assistant Director of Coaching – Leighton Lewis
- Age Level Lead Coach (U12 & U14) – Jason Harris
- Age Level Lead Coach (U16 & U18) – Chris Cameron
- Head Coaches
 - U12 Girls – Paula Hogan
 - U12 Boys – Daniel Dowisha
 - U14 Girls – Chris Cameron
 - U14 Boys – Rachel Wallace
 - U16 Girls – Carly Stone
 - U16 Boys – Craig Stratford
 - U18 Girls – Daniel Robertson
 - U18 Boys – Leo Malvaso
- Age group administration team
 - U12 – Leanne Giardina
 - U14 – Michelle Lewis
 - U16 – Jason Arena
 - U18 – Matt Evans



Eltham Wildcats Contacts

- CEO Connor Matthews ceo@elthamwildcats.net.au
- Basketball Operations Manager Jacob Burnham jacob@elthamwildcats.net.au
- Finance Manager Steven Chadd accounts@elthamwildcats.net.au
- Office Manager Sophie Foote admin@elthamwildcats.net.au

- Championship Committee Chair Brad Johnson bradjwildcats@gmail.com
- Wellbeing Committee Rep Leanne Giardina welfare@elthamwildcats.net.au

- Age level Lead Coach (U12 – U14) Jason Harris workshop57@hotmail.com
- Age Level Lead Coach (U16 – U18) Chris Cameron cjcameron11@gmail.com

Please note: During the season, any basketball and team related queries MUST first go through your team manager, who will then forward to the appropriate person/s. For any matters concerning child welfare or for matters confidential in nature, please feel free to email the relevant contacts above directly.

Under no circumstances are any players, parents, coaches or team managers to contact VJBL directly.

Trials Process

Trials for the 2023 season commenced from Sunday 2nd October 2022

The aim of the Eltham Wildcats Championship program trial process is to select representative teams to compete (at all levels) of the Victorian Junior Basketball League (VJBL). With only 2 months from the commencement of trials to the first VJBL Grading game, the trials process must be fast and efficient.

It is worth noting, while the “official trial process” takes place at the end of the current season, players are being watched and evaluated all year round. Work rate, commitment, attitude and skill development are being noticed (by current coaches, DOCs, Age level leads and the broader selection team) over the course of the current year and may be considered before and during the trial process.

The process is as follows:

Each week of the trials, players participate in two separate sessions as follows:

Sunday Sessions – Sundays are a “training session”. Players are organised into smaller, more manageable groups (named colours... Blue group, green group, orange group etc etc) and put through skills and small game sessions by trial coaches.



Trials Process

- Trial coaches, DOCs, Head coaches, Age level leads and selection team meet post session to discuss players and to allocate them into “trial game” squads for the next trial session
- NB: Parents/Guardians are required to attend a “parent/guardians meeting” while players are in session
- Parents/Guardians are not permitted in the stadium to watch the trials on Sundays

Weekday Sessions – Weekdays are for “trial games”. Players are assigned “trial game” squads and play trial games generally Thursday night or Friday night, however the allocated night for these games may change each week for each age group.... And could be any week night. Players will be notified prior to the day.

- Trial coaches, DOCs, Head coaches, Age level leads and selection team meet post trial games to discuss players
- Parents/Guardians are permitted in the stadium to watch the trial games on weekdays



Athlete Principles

Eltham Wildcats Championship Basketball Program is for young athletes who are ready to push their skill development and are committed to playing in the toughest junior basketball league in the country (VJBL). Our aim is to help young players develop their basketball knowledge and skill base during their time in our program through U12s, U14s, U16s and U18s age groups to finally finish their junior careers in our U20 program with similar skills as outlined below:

Competitiveness

Eltham Wildcats athletes are relentless for both development and victory. They represent the program and respect it, to always give their best and behave with integrity. Eltham Wildcats should always;

- Play/Coach to YOUR best effort
- Mental: (able to stay in the moment)
- Create a practice environment that ignites competitiveness;
- Compete against each other and/or self
- Create and maintain an unrelenting mentality to never be beaten

Physical Literacy

The modern game calls for a desirable physical make-up. Eltham Wildcats Athletes have the ability to perform the 7 fundamental movement patterns (push, pull, squat, hinge, row, lunge, rotate) with proficiency and under load. This enables the individual to express movement efficiently & effectively, allowing for the Athlete to develop the physical preparedness necessary to perform technical skills of Basketball at the highest intensity and longest duration.

**Athlete Principles have been adopted via Basketball Victoria*

Athlete Principles

Shooting Ability

Eltham Wildcats athletes are able to make shots consistently. Be able to make game speed shots in elite games requires hours of practice and thousands of repetitions.

Inability to shoot the ball makes it difficult to excel on the world stage, and we want to produce world class basketball players. Elite shooters will commit to a variety of daily form shooting, footwork and finishing in their attempt to master the skill which will always be a point of difference for basketball players.

1V1 Offensive

Eltham Wildcats athletes have the ability to use ball handling, footwork and finishing ability at a level where you can make an impact on the game with the ball in your hands?

Eltham Wildcats athletes understand that the game is not always about them, but they are able to both create a shot for themselves or a teammate when the moment calls for it.

1v1 Defensive

Eltham Wildcats athletes are committed to defending the basketball. They understand that the closeout, hand pressure and footwork are imperative to keeping the ball in front of them.

In addition, they are also invested in defending on-ball screens. They do not simply melt and give in to being screened, nor do they stand upright and allow the ball to go wherever it wants.

**Athlete Principles have been adopted via Basketball Victoria*

Athlete Principles

Decision Making

Eltham Wildcats athletes make great decisions that offensively lead to uncontested shots for our team, and defensively forces contested two-point shots.

Our athletes understand that when they see a second defender, it is time to move the ball. And when it is their time to jump up and shoot a rhythm jump shot, they do so.

Decision making ability also refers to decisions away from the court (do your habits align with your goals; professionalism).

**Athlete Principles* have been adopted via Basketball Victoria

Training

Compulsory team training sessions are allocated to each team throughout the season. These sessions may be a combination of midweek, Saturday or Sunday training times. Midweek training sessions are held between 5.00pm and 9.30pm.

Exact session times and days will be arranged through the coach/team manager as soon as team selections are finalized and the coach submits his/her request.

All players are expected to attend every Eltham Wildcats training session and scheduled games (including injured players). If you are unable to attend a session/game, you must phone your coach or team manager prior to the session.

Training sessions run from October through to September. Sunday trainings (practice matches or organized team activity) occur weekly apart from public holidays, the first and middle weekend of school holidays and from mid-December to mid-January.

There is significant work done to schedule all Eltham Wildcats training sessions and sometimes training will clash with other sports. There will be no changes to our schedule once completed, so please take this into consideration prior to attending tryouts and accepting a place in an Eltham Wildcats team.

Uniforms

Eltham Wildcats club policy for all participants in the Eltham Wildcats Championship Program is as follow:

All Games (Home and Away)

Players

- All players must arrive at games in Eltham apparel eg. hoodie, warm up top etc.
- During warm-ups & on bench players are required to wear their supplied Eltham warm-up tops.
- All players dressed the same for on-court warm up.

Coaches (and support staff)

- At the beginning of the season, coaches and support staff are to agree on a “common” top to wear during the game. Must be Eltham Wildcats apparel (top, polo, hoodie etc)
- Black pants or black tracksuit bottoms to be worn.
- No thongs or slides

Training

Players (and Coaches)

- Basketball apparel only – preferred red/black reversible Eltham training singlet (available from the Wildcats Store)
- Strictly No Footy shorts or tops

Shop at Wildcats Online Store or email business@elthamwildcats.net.au

Tournaments

Eltham Dandenong Australia Day Tournament – Compulsory for all Eltham Wildcats Championship Teams

The success of our Australia Day Tournament is dependent not only on the support of other Clubs, but also on the support from within our club. All Eltham Wildcat Championship teams are obliged to participate in the Aust. Day tournament.

Revenue raised directly through the participation and support from other clubs and associations at the Aust. Day Tournament supplements a range of Eltham Wildcat programs, including the Domestic and Championship competition registration fees for our participants. With this in mind, each Championship team is asked to support at least one of the Tournaments hosted by one of the Clubs who support our Tournament in a major way.

There are a range of tournaments to choose from, including:

- WHITTLESEA (21st – 23rd April 2023)
- NUNAWADING – Queen's Birthday weekend
- ALTONA/ MELTON – during term 3 School holidays
- COLAC (u16/18 – 25th & 26th February 2023; u12/14 – 4th & 5th March 2023)
- TRARALGON (Labour Day Weekend)

The Team Registrations for the above listed Tournaments are eligible to receive a small subsidy from the Club. Contact Steven Chadd – Finance Manager for more info.



Court Time

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY:

ONE OF THE MAIN PROBLEMS OR ISSUES THAT CAN OCCUR DURING THE SEASON IS THE DISTRIBUTION OF COURT TIME.

As per the Eltham Wildcats Coaches Code of Conduct policy, all coaches are requested to give players a “reasonable amount of court time” throughout the season. However, during games, often the combination of coaching philosophy (supported by the club) and the teams overall desire for scoreboard success, can lead to limited court time for some players in any given game situation. Different games require different strategies, with different match ups and different court balance.

At times your child may miss out on court time... It is not personal, rather a reflection of team skillset against each opposition team.

We trust the selection process and the decisions made by coaches and the selection panel when your child is selected into a team. We ask that you support these decisions also as the season progresses.

Within teams we promote the importance of individual skill development and ask that the players take some responsibility for this by practicing in their own time as well as at training.

Commitment

The Eltham Wildcats Championship Program and the VJBL season at large is long and demanding... on players, coaches, families, assistant coaches and certainly on managers.

From the beginning of October as trials commence, through to potential finals in September, Championship Basketball is an 11 month commitment for all stakeholders.

Player Commitment

The Victorian Junior Basketball League (VJBL) is the strongest and most competitive junior basketball competition in the nation. And, while every player selected to represent the Eltham Wildcats in this competition is selected on their individual merits, it is their commitment to the team for the duration of the season that we look for the most every year.

Commitment from players at the beginning of the season is always very clear to see and obviously welcomed. However, we do find players (boys and girls) overall commitment can be quite challenged during the season... particularly when other "winter" sporting seasons commence. Players will be reminded of their commitment if this happens and the club will ask that parents play a pivotal role helping their child maintain focus on the team also.

If just one player lacks in commitment, it affects the performance of the whole team.

Family Commitment

Just as the commitment from players for a full season can be challenged, so to, the commitment by their families needs to be considered.

Every Friday night, for the best part of 11 months, your child (or children) will be playing basketball somewhere in the greater metropolitan Melbourne area or even regional Victoria.

Depending on the team that your child is selected in (and the coaches preference), your child will have 1 or 2 training sessions to attend each week... often the second session is on a Sunday.

As also touched on above, as winter sports take affect each year, the commitment to your team (from players and families) will be challenged. Please consider this at the time of accepting a position in our program and understand that your child has made a commitment to the Eltham Wildcats Championship program that needs to be maintained.

Behaviour

Players

See link

[Eltham Wildcats - Players Code of Conduct Policy](#)

Eltham Wildcats Basketball Club takes its responsibility of creating and maintaining a culture of positive sporting behavior, very seriously. This ensures the season is an enjoyable experience for everyone involved. The link above details the Eltham Wildcats position with regards to player conduct and behavior and covers the following:

- Understand and play by the rules.
- Respect referees and other officials.
- Control your temper
- Work equally hard for yourself and for your team
- Be a good sport.
- Treat all players as you would like to be treated
- Play for the “enjoyment of it” and not just to please parents and coaches.
- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person.
- Be prepared to lose sometimes.
- Listen to the advice of your coach and try to apply it at practice and in games.
- Always respect the use of facilities and equipment provided.

Players and parents must be aware that any cases of verbal abuse, offensive language, threats or violence, with or without provocation, to our coaches, opposition coaches, other players/parents or officials will not be tolerated and will be investigated. Consequences appropriate to the outcome of the incident will apply. For example, in extreme cases, you and your child may be asked to leave the program.

Likewise any overt undermining of coaches to other participants in the program will not be tolerated.

Our Commitment To Child Safety and Wellbeing

All children who are a part of the Eltham Basketball Club have a right to feel safe and to be safe. The wellbeing of the children in Eltham Basketball Club will always be our first priority and our Club has a zero tolerance to child abuse.

Eltham Basketball Club aims to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun and our Club's activities are always carried out in the best interests of the children.

At Eltham Basketball Club, everyone must operate within our accepted ethical framework, including Basketball Victoria's Codes of Conduct, Basketball Victoria's Member Protection Declaration, Victorian Working with Children Checks, Victorian Government Child Safety Standards and Eltham Basketball Club Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of conduct.

Eltham Wildcats Basketball Club is proud of our community of children, young people, families and volunteers who work together to create a wonderful child and family friendly club which is safe and inclusive. Furthermore, we have an ongoing commitment to provide children and young people with safety and protection whilst in the care of our Club. Thereby, promoting high standards of care and safe practices, and to assist staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child safety issues.

The Victorian Government have introduced legislation that requires all sporting organisations that provide sporting services to children to implement Child Safe Standards. As a result the Club has put together a Child Safety and Wellbeing committee, who are responsible for ensuring that policies are reviewed and updated and that training exists for committee members, volunteers, coaches, team managers, assistants and employees on child safety matters.

The Child Safety and Wellbeing committee is also responsible for identifying and managing risk relating to child safety. This committee has developed a Child Safety Policy, Child Safety Guidelines, a Child Safe Code of Conduct and an Incident Reporting form to support this.

Eltham Wildcats Child Safety & Wellbeing Code of Conduct
Eltham Wildcats Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy

Fees

2022/2023 Championship Fees

\$240 First Installment Due by November 11 via PlayHQ Registration (U20's TBC at a later date). Includes cost of warm up top.

\$250 Second Installment To be sent out by March 1st and Due on March 31st via Teammo.

U20 First Installment \$150 as \$50 paid to register for trials.

Teams that are training twice a week will have an additional \$100 added to their second installment.

U20's Second Instalment will be reduced by \$100 due to the later start to the season.

A Cognito form will be supplied when the second installment is sent out - in which you can apply for an 10% reimbursement of the second installment for those that have multiple children within the Championship Program.

Player & Parent Contract

Cognito form for players and parent/guardians to sign (digitally) and return to Wildcats

Acknowledge they have read this doc and agree to all...

Must be signed and returned as acceptance of position in a team.

Sponsors

A Championship Basketball program the size of Eltham Wildcat's simply wouldn't exist without the amazing support we receive from our sponsors. Every year, over 700 kids from the Eltham community are engaged in elite level basketball right across Victoria. Every Friday night, our kids are representing themselves, their families and Eltham, competing and striving for greatness in basketball, but becoming amazing young community minded humans in the process. The unwavering generosity of our club sponsors is in no small way helping our amazing young athletes of today become amazing adults tomorrow... we thank them.

