

# Grange Thistle Football Club



## Grange Thistle Girls Academy Program. Parent/Player Handbook



[www.grangethistle.com](http://www.grangethistle.com)

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## 2 Welcome to the Grange Thistle Girls Academy Program!

I am excited to have you be a part of an academy that has been designed using the latest methodology of the world's greatest player development programs.

This handbook will address the standards and requirements that are expected by all athletes. Outlined below are the expectations for player commitment and parent involvement.

We have worked hard to build this program to be a fun and rewarding experience for your child.

GTFC brings together families with greatly differing levels of soccer sophistication.

The sport of soccer is growing dramatically in Australia, and every season brings new ideas at all levels. Therefore, our philosophies are also continuing to evolve, and our policies continue to be moulded and reshaped in ways that will better serve the needs of each player and the Club. To some extent, and in order to fit unique circumstances, the policies of a particular team may vary somewhat from those set out in this Handbook. Look first and foremost to your head coach for direction.

We sincerely welcome your suggestions, as well as your participation in the workings of GTFC. It takes a tremendous effort to accomplish all that must be done in order to sustain a successful football program including the care of the fields, session scheduling, and much more. Too often these responsibilities fall on the shoulders of a very few. We are always looking for volunteers and earnestly solicit your participation. If you are willing, we have a volunteer opportunity for you!

Please read carefully the information set out in this Handbook. Your familiarity with what is contained here will help ensure you and your child have a fun and rewarding GTFC experience.

Coach John Cook, Girls Technical Director

[gftcwomen@gmail.com](mailto:gftcwomen@gmail.com)

“There’s no better feeling than stepping out on the field and stunning them all by doing what none of them thought you could do.”

@AshlynHarris @GrangeThistleFC #GrangeGirls #OrangePride

### 3 GTFC History

According to the scribes who keep the records, there was a club in Brisbane called Thistle as far back as 1888. A fore-runner to the current club, 'Merthyr Thistle', was founded in 1911 and disbanded in 1918 after a group of supporters and all but one player broke away and formed the Grange Thistle club of today. The recognised founder of the club is Robert Waddell, father of a past president of the Club and the Queensland Soccer federation, Bill Waddell.

The Grange Thistle's time continuum can be divided into a series of eras when really outstanding players represented the Club that impacted on a much broader geographical scale than just an inner-Northern suburb of Brisbane.

In the 1920s and 30s, ten members of the first division team also represented Queensland and Australia. They were Billy McBryde, Jack & Dave Cumberford, Jim Peebles, Andy Thompson, William Nichols, Ross Craig, Sam Ross, Allan McMillan and Jim Perrotte. Jack Cumberford scored Australia's first goal on a tour of New Zealand in 1922.

The Club went into a minor hibernation in the late 1930s and the competition was stopped during the war years, but charity matches were played at Lanham Park against visiting Navy, Army and Airforce personnel and the money raised was used to send food parcels back to England.

Grange Thistle was reformed after the Second World War and an influx of Scottish and English immigrants boosted the playing strength of the Club. It was in the late 1940s and 50s that the next band of notable players emerged. During this period Thistle set a record by appearing in four consecutive Tristram Shield finals from 1949 to 1952, winning the last three, thereby allowing the Club to proudly display the Shield as their own. Eight players of that era also represented their state and country, including Herb Bool, Wally (Shirley) Cansick, Derrick (Nobby) Clark, George Haggert, Clem Higgins, Robert (Bob) Jardine, Sammy Morgan and Charlie Stewart.

The late 1970s and early 1980s were undoubtedly the most successful period in the Club's history. Players of this era equalled and surpassed the success of their predecessors of the 1920s and 50s with Mark Aponas, Tony Bailey, Steve Dolan, Iain Fagan, John Ferguson, Peter Gee, Glen Huntley, Alan Marley, Wilson Maelaua, John Patterson and Ken Swan all gaining Queensland honours. From 1977 to 1983 Thistle won three premierships, four championships, the Ampol President's Cup and the Golden Circle Cup.

Grange Thistle holds the record for the most appearances in Brisbane's top flight competition and return to the Brisbane Premier League in 2017 after securing second place in the 2016 Capital League 1 competition (with the most wins in the competition) as well as attaining the Reserve Grade Premiership, Capital 1 Grand Final and the Capital League 1 Club Championship.

The BPL Premiership just eluded the Club in 2018, but the Club took out the Grand Final. We also won the Canale Cup, a feat that was repeated in 2019, making Grange Thistle the only Club to have won it back to back. Our Women also narrowly missed the Premiership in the Capital 1 league by Goal difference, but secured the promotion to the Brisbane Women's Premier League in 2020 making Grange Thistle the only Club in the Football Brisbane Competition to have teams in both the Men and the Women Premier Leagues.

During the tumultuous 2020 Season that saw the effect of the COVID 19 Pandemic shut down all football from Mid March until early July, the Club again finished in the top four, but this year there were to be no Finals. Our Women also performed well in their first year in the top flight.

At the end of 2020, the Club Board decided to apply for admission into both the Women's National Premier League and the Men's Football Queensland Premier League 2. The Club was successful with the admission to FQPL2, and will continue its attempts to gain access to the NPLW. Our motivation is also to see our Junior Competition squads join the NPL as soon as possible in the future.

## 4 About Us

### 4.1 Our Mission

To promote and foster a love of the international game of football for all our players who live in the Grange community and surrounding areas.

### 4.2 Our Vision

- Give every player, coach and referee the opportunity to develop their skills to the best of their ability.
- Provide a healthy, safe and enjoyable soccer environment for all participants.
- Provide a level of competition equal to each participant's ability, interest and desire.
- Foster and promote sportsmanship, honesty, integrity and good will within the soccer community.
- Provide soccer-related educational opportunities to all players, coaches, parents, referees and the community at large.
- Be a positive role model and provide leadership to the sports community.

### 4.3 Club Values

Our culture refers to the character of our Club or our operating 'climate' and collective 'personality'. This is shaped by our core values, beliefs, principles, traditions, ingrained behaviours, communication, practices and style of operation.

Our core values help define our standards and behaviours and what is acceptable and what is not. Our values define 'how we do things' at Grange Thistle Football Club.

- **Spirit**

A lively, vigorous, energetic and determined approach both on and off the field.

- **Support**

A collaborative and cooperative environment, in which people are empowered, trusted and supported.

- **Inclusivity**

A welcoming environment where diversity is embraced and participation is encouraged.

- **Respect**

We recognise our club history and appreciate and acknowledge our colleagues' roles and efforts.

- **Integrity**

We consistently act in accordance with our values.

#### 4.4 Academy Values

The Grange Thistle Girls Academy Program also has a set of attributed values. These values act in conjunction with the Club values and are the foundation of the coaching philosophy of the lead coach and the Girls Technical Director, John Cook.

- **Pride**

Pride is the cornerstone of who we are as athletes. Without pride in our ability, there can be no performance. Without pride in our team-mates, there can be no collaboration and without pride in your club, there can be no inspiration.

- **Passion**

Passion is the optimal aroused state for football performance. Passion for the game of football is critical for success. Passion for technical execution leads to perfection. Passion in performances leads to competition.

- **Patience**

Patience is the key for technical improvement. Academy members must also be patient with themselves and their team-mates Academy footballers need to be patient with the football, maintaining possession. Patient possession football is the fundamental foundation of the G.A.P playing style.

- **Positivity**

Positivity is absolutely crucial for the success of the individual, the team and the Academy. A positive mindset is your best tool for improvement and success and it is the best way of gaining and maintaining the relationships of your team-mates. Positivity is also a fundamental foundation of the G.A.P. playing style. Whilst we always strive to maintain possession, we always aim to move the ball positively, always looking to work our way towards the opposition goal and towards goal creation opportunities.

## **5 Team Management**

### **5.1 The Technical Director**

The primary purpose of the Girls Technical Director is to grow and nurture the football development program throughout the Women's Program. This is achieved by providing grading, coach education/support, and both monitoring and mentoring coaches to conduct appropriate quality football sessions within the Club, aligned to our playing philosophy. The fundamental goal of the Technical Director is to empower our coaches to improve the technical ability and tactical understanding of all players so they can fulfil their potential.

### **5.2 The Academy Lead Coach**

A minimum C Youth License, Lead Coach (or a Coach willing to obtain the license) will be designated for each G.A.P Academy team. The Lead Coach may run the Academy training session with the assistance of the Academy Assistant Coach. They will be responsible for team training and team cohesion. Grange Thistle is proud of its coaches, and we have made every effort to provide your child with the best-available teachers of the game. Please give the coach your support and assistance. Each coach at Grange Thistle is held to a very high set of coaching rules of conduct and professional standards.

### **5.3 The Academy Assistant Coach**

The Grange Girls Technical Director may designate an Academy Assistant Coach to Academy Teams. The Assistant Coach is responsible for the appropriate preparation for the Academy training session as well as providing coaching support to the Academy Lead Coach. These Academy Assistant Coaches can be a junior coach, with the intent of being developed into a lead coaching role. Please give the coach your support and assistance.



## **6 Players Expectations**

### **6.1 Practice Schedule:**

Without regular and proper practice, football skills and tactics cannot be mastered. We demand from our G.A.P Academy coaches a tremendous time commitment, and we expect the players to be willing to make the same commitment. We know that many of our players have other interests and demands on their time, however we believe it is very important that you make every effort to attend each practice session.

It is important to come to practice regularly. Missing practice makes it difficult to improve and to develop cohesion and team work as a squad.

Proper practice means you:

1. Pay attention to the coaches;
2. Make an effort to improve your skills;
3. Practice at game speed (learning to do a skill in slow motion will not help in a game)
4. Do not distract others (e.g., acting silly while attempting a drill is distracting to others).

## **7 Parents Expectations**

### **7.1 Procedures for Handling Problems**

The Girls Technical Director is charged with the responsibility for investigating internal complaints and disciplinary problems. If you feel there has been a breach of the code of conduct, please do not hesitate to contact John Cook.

### **7.2 Parental Support:**

Parental support and involvement in the Club are essential. If your daughter commits to G.A.P, your commitment is also necessary. Making sure your child arrives at the Academy 10 minutes early is a good practice. Positivity surrounding athlete performance is essential. Encouragement is welcome but criticism will not be tolerated.

### 7.3 Sideline Coaching:

#### **There will be no sideline coaching by parents!**

No matter how good your intentions are, we insist there be no shouting instructions to your daughter or yelling (complaining) to coaches. Your vocal support and positive encouragement are welcome after a good play. “Go” or “Shoot” are interpreted as instructions, and, as such, are not desirable. It is required that players not be distracted at Academy and that players are given instructions before, during, and after practices and games, by the G.A.P. coaches only.

GTFC’s first concern is for the safety and long term growth and development of your child as a person along with their football abilities. There will be times that coaches make decisions and players are instructed to do things parents will not understand. Parents must understand this and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with a healthy team environment.

Parents should feel free to communicate and ask questions about their child at the appropriate times (not at training or games). Please also take the initiative to teach your child to speak up and communicate for themselves whenever possible.

## 8 Weather Procedures

The G.A.P Academy session will go ahead as long as the fields are open. This decision is made by 3 pm on each day and is updated on the website. If the fields are closed, a rescheduled session will be organised by John Cook.

If your child is unable to make a session, please contact John Cook at [gftcwomen@gmail.com](mailto:gftcwomen@gmail.com) at least 3 hours in advance.

## 9 GTFC Facility Rules

We are proud of our facilities. They are maintained through hard work and significant financial investment. We hope that you too, will take pride in these fields. To help us keep the fields in better condition, we ask that you always observe, and remind others to observe, a few special rules.

1. Whatever you bring to the field, take it home with you at the end of the day. Do not leave trash on the facility ground.
2. Please be especially careful and drive slowly when entering and leaving the facility.
3. Take special precautions when the ground is wet.
4. Soccer nets and goals are expensive – treat them with respect. Do NOT hang from the Crossbars or nets.
5. Our fields are to be used only for Club sponsored activities and only by Club members.
6. Any equipment you use is to be returned to where it came from once finished with. Additionally, make sure any doors opened are locked when finished.
7. All Change Rooms, Dugouts and spectator areas (Home or Away) must be left clean before leaving. If there is a problem achieving this, contact a Club Administrator to let them know the issue that cannot be resolved.
8. If you see a problem, and can fix it, please do. If you are not able to fix it or are not sure how or whether you should, please let a Club Administrator so it can be addressed.

## 10 Development vs Winning

### Is it more important to develop talent or win games?

A common situation that I have experienced in my years of being involved in youth football happens at the youngest ages of the game. I will call this “**The Winning Scenario.**” Let’s take the U9 age group as an example. As a coach, if I want to win most games, I put the player that can kick the ball the farthest at central defender and my fastest player at striker. Obviously, the defender will kick the ball the length of the field and the speedy forward will sprint past everyone and score on a breakaway. This may happen three or four times per game, and the team will win most of the time.

Now let’s look at “**The Development Scenario.**” I have the same players lined up in the same positions, but instead of coaching the defenders to kick the ball up the field as far as they can, I tell them to control the ball with one touch and find a short simple pass with their second touch. With this scenario my team may lose some of their games. But which scenario is best for kids?

## **X The Winning Scenario**

This strategy may work for players at U8, U9, U10, and U11. However, when they reach U12, they will struggle because these players will not have learned how to play the game of football. They will have simply learned to kick the ball hard and run fast, getting by on their athleticism alone. After U11, when they come up against teams that have learned to pass and create space, they will end up chasing the game the entire time and most often lose.

## **✓ The Development Scenario**

It's important to remember that the competition provided by games is simply another part of the overall football development of our players. While we as coaches should always encourage our players to compete and to strive towards winning, it's important that we don't allow the **RESULTS** alone to become the "be all and end all" of our efforts or the definition of our success. Instead when thinking about games, our primary focus should be on **DEVELOPMENT**, taking into account the contributions of each player individually as well as the team as a whole. Some of the questions we can ask when looking at development are as follows:

1. Were we technically good?
2. How well did we keep shape and stay organized?
3. Did we attack well? Did we defend well?
4. Did we have energy?
5. How was our communication?
6. Did we make good decisions on and off the ball?

By being able to answer these questions for individual players and the team, we will have a much better idea of what areas we need to work on during practices – we have a path towards improvement!

Grange Thistle FC will always opt for the Development Scenario with the following playing style:

***“A proactive brand of football, based on effective possession with the cutting edge provided by creative individuals.***

***Defensively the key components are quick transition and intelligent collective pressing. The Playing Style is underpinned by a strong ‘team mentality’, capitalising on Australia’s traditional strengths.”*** @FFA Vision & Philosophy