



# COBRAS

## FOREWORD

The Cessnock Cobras Representative Program at Cessnock Basketball plays a vital role in fostering the development and growth of basketball in our community. As a community-based organization, our objectives go beyond merely tracking win/loss records; we gauge success through the enhancement of fundamental skills, players' understanding of the game, and fostering teamwork and sportsmanship. It is expected that all coaches, players, parents, committee members, and officials participating in the Cessnock Cobras Representative Program fully comprehend and comply with the policies and guidelines presented in this document, as well as with the policies and by-laws of Cessnock Basketball and Basketball NSW.

Should a particular situation arise that is not covered by these guidelines, the Representative Manager will evaluate the matter, consulting with the Cessnock Basketball Board as needed, and will make decisions on a case-by-case basis. Cessnock Basketball reserves the right to maintain, amend, or implement any decisions concerning the management of the representative program if it is considered in the best interest of Cessnock Basketball. This document must be reviewed and acknowledged by all players, parents, coaches, team managers, and any other individuals involved in the program prior to accepting any role.

## INTRODUCTION

Cessnock Basketball operates the Cessnock Cobras Representative Basketball Program for juniors in the Cessnock region, aiming to enhance their skills and compete at a higher level. Our Cessnock Cobras representative teams participate in Basketball NSW competitions and a variety of preseason and in-season events.

## SEASON OVERVIEW

- October – Trial and team selections
- October-February – Pre-season
- December - Season Launch
- March-June – NEJL Regular season
- June - John Martin Country Tournament
- July – NEJL Finals
- August - State Cup

## PRESEASON

Details are being finalized, but our intention is to send each team to a preseason tournament. At this stage:

- Teams competing in NEJL Division 2 can expect to attend the preseason tournament hosted by the Maitland Basketball Association, alongside other Division 2 teams.
- Teams competing in NEJL Division 1 can expect to attend the Coastal Classic preseason tournament.
- The U18 Boys Division 1 team can expect to attend the NEJL Division 1 preseason tournament hosted by the Tamworth Basketball Association.

Coaches may also arrange preseason games against nearby associations such as Maitland, Newcastle, and the Central Coast.

## NEJL REGULAR SEASON

Teams will compete in the 2025 Spalding Waratah North-Eastern Junior League (NEJL). The rounds and dates will be announced by Basketball NSW.

Based on previous years, we anticipate four regular-season rounds, approximately one per month from March through June, at various locations throughout the NEJL region.

In 2024, teams traveled to Port Macquarie, Tamworth, Maitland, Newcastle, and the Central Coast, as well as playing games at Cessnock.

## FINALS

The venue and dates for the NEJL finals have not yet been announced by Basketball NSW. However, based on previous years, the finals are expected to be held late July at Port Macquarie.

## STATE CUP

The winners of the U14, U16, and U18 NEJL divisions will compete in the State Cup, alongside the top four teams from Metro Division 1 and the champions of the Southern Junior League (SJL) and Western Junior League (WJL). The venues and dates for the tournament have not yet been announced, but it is anticipated to take place in August.

## JOHN MARTIN COUNTRY TOURNAMENT

Teams will compete in the John Martin Country Tournament (JMCT) during the June Long Weekend, June 7th – 9th, 2024. The venues for the tournament will be announced by Basketball NSW. In 2024, the tournament featured venues in Bathurst, Maitland, Central Coast, Shoalhaven, Newcastle, and Illawarra.

## ADDITIONAL TOURNAMENTS

Teams may have opportunities to participate in additional games and tournaments during the season. The decision to take part will be made after careful consideration by the coaches, parents, and the Rep Manager. Please note that additional fees may apply for participation in these extra tournaments or games.

## TRIALS

Trials will be held for U12, U14, U16, and U18 Boys, as well as U12, U14, and U16 Girls.

- U14, U16, and U18 Boys trials are scheduled for Sunday, October 13th and Sunday, October 20th.
- U12 Boys, along with U12, U14, and U16 Girls, will have their trials on Saturday, October 19th and Saturday, October 26th.

All U14, U16, and U18 Boys intending to participate must register by October 11th.

All U12 Boys, as well as U12, U14, and U16 Girls, must register by October 18th to participate in the trials.

Registration can be completed at:

<https://www.cessnockbasketball.com.au/rep-trials/>

Late applications will not be accepted.

Trials for U14, U16, and U18 teams will be closed sessions. Parents will not be permitted to attend the trials.

## PLAYER SELECTION POLICY

### ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for selection, players must:

- Acknowledge their readiness to adhere to the policies and guidelines outlined in the 2025 Cessnock Cobras Representative Handbook.
- Have an up-to-date Basketball NSW registration.
- Attend the full trial process, as determined by Cessnock Basketball, with any absences explained, communicated, and approved by Cessnock Basketball.
- Pay the appropriate trial fee. Please note, trial fees are non-refundable.
- Currently participate in local competition organized by Cessnock Basketball or acknowledge their intention to participate.

# 2025 CESSNOCK COBRAS REPRESENTATIVE HANDBOOK

- Complete a Basketball NSW Permission To Trial Form if they have previously played representative basketball for another Basketball NSW affiliated association.
- Have a parent or guardian attend the parent information session prior to the trials.
- Have no outstanding levies from previous representative seasons or unpaid game fees for the Cessnock Basketball local competition.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

During the selection process, the following factors will be evaluated:

- Potential for competitive success.
- Athletic aptitude.
- A genuine desire and commitment to developing basketball skills through hard work.
- Receptiveness to coaching.
- Ability to collaborate effectively within a team setting.
- Adherence to high standards of personal conduct and self-discipline.
- Commitment to the Cessnock Cobras representative program and the local basketball competition.
- For returning Cessnock Cobras representatives, a history of consistent attendance at training sessions will be a key consideration.

Except in exceptional circumstances, athletes trialing for another association will not be considered for selection by Cessnock Basketball. Commitment to the Cessnock Cobras representative program and Cessnock Basketball remains a key priority.

Objectivity is an inherent aspect of the selection process. Team selection will be guided by these criteria, with consideration given to the overall balance and composition of the team.

## TEAM ANNOUNCEMENT

Following the trials, teams or squads (if necessary) will be selected to represent the Cessnock Cobras for the 2025 season. If a squad is chosen, teams will be finalized by coaches and the Rep Manager after a designated number of training sessions.

Teams will consist of up to ten (10) players and up to four (4) development players.

Team selections for U14, U16, and U18 Boys will be announced via email on October 22nd.

Selections for U12 Boys, as well as U12, U14, and U16 Girls, will be announced on October 28th.

Please be sure to check your spam folder to avoid missing the announcement. Team lists will also be posted on the Cessnock Basketball website and social media accounts.

To confirm a player's position on a team, the "commitment levy" must be paid within seven (7) days of the team announcement, along with returning the signed *Representative Participation Agreement and Behaviour Form*.

In exceptional circumstances where Cessnock Basketball deems that changes benefit the representative basketball program, Cessnock Basketball may decide to add additional players after the selection process.

## TRIAL EXEMPTION

It is an expectation that all athletes will attend all trials in order to be considered for selection. However, any player who believes they have a legitimate reason for being unable to participate may appeal (send appeals to [rep@cessnockbasketball.com.au](mailto:rep@cessnockbasketball.com.au)) to be considered in the selection process. Cessnock Basketball reserves the right to consider each case on its merits, and the decision of Cessnock Basketball will be final.

## INTENTION TO TRIAL FORM

Any player seeking a trial for Cessnock who has previously played representative basketball for a Basketball NSW-affiliated association other than Cessnock must complete the Basketball NSW Intent To Trial Form.

Please note that this form does not provide a Basketball NSW clearance, and players are not permitted to participate in any Basketball NSW-organized competitions without a processed clearance.

Upon submitting this form, all involved associations and Basketball NSW will receive an email notification of your application.

<https://www.cessnockbasketball.com.au/intent-to-trial>

## PARENT INFORMATION SESSION

A parent information session will be held prior to the trials. During this session, we will provide an overview of the trial process, the upcoming season, and the level of commitment expected from athletes and their families. Additionally, parents will have the opportunity to pose questions.

The parent information session will be held on Saturday, September 28th, at 5:00 p.m. It is essential a parent or guardian attend this session.



## TRAINING

Attendance and participation in training sessions are paramount to the success of the Cessnock Cobras. **Training sessions are compulsory for all players**, and those who are unable to commit to training should not commit to being a Cessnock Cobra.

Each team will hold one to two weekly training sessions, with the exact dates and times communicated to players. Additional training sessions may be scheduled, particularly leading up to the finals.

If a player is unable to attend a training session due to an unforeseen circumstance, the parent should promptly notify the team manager. Injured players are expected to attend training sessions to learn from observing and listening to their teammates.

Players who miss training sessions without a valid reason will face disciplinary action, which may include being benched, demoted to a lower division team, or being removed from the Cessnock Cobras representative program.

To ensure a smooth training session, players should arrive at least 10 minutes before the scheduled start time. They should be dressed in the appropriate training uniform and be adequately warmed up before the session commences.

Throughout the season, specialized intensive skills and strength and conditioning sessions will be organized. While these sessions are not mandatory, players are strongly encouraged to participate to enhance their performance.

*Training sessions are compulsory*

## LEVIES

Player levies contribute to the costs, training fees, and equipment associated with the Cessnock Cobras junior representative basketball program. Cessnock Basketball subsidizes the program to help make representative basketball more accessible for our juniors. Player levies are utilized to cover the following expenses:

- Preseason games and tournament fees.
- BNSW North-Eastern Junior League nomination, game, and association fees.
- BNSW John Martin Country Tournament fees.
- Referee fees and travel expenses.
- Court hire fees for training sessions.
- Team equipment.
- Presentation night expenses.

## PLAYER LEVY

The 2025 player levy is \$850, payable in three installments. The levy for development players is \$300.

To confirm a player's position on a team, the "commitment levy" or first installment of \$300 must be paid within seven (7) days of the team announcement.

The second installment of \$300 is due by January 10th.

The final installment of the remaining amount is due by March 15th.

Please note that after March 15th, non-financial players will not be able to participate in games or training until any outstanding monies have been paid.

Levies do not include uniform costs. Additional costs will be incurred for travel and accommodation for away rounds.

## PLAYER REGISTRATION/AFFILIATION

All players are required to maintain their registration with both BNSW and Cessnock Basketball at all times. Players registered with other associations are expected to affiliate with Cessnock Basketball and transfer their primary registration to Cessnock Basketball upon the expiration of their current registration.

It is the responsibility of the player and/or their parents to ensure that their registration is current.

Registration and affiliation are not included in representative fees and are additional costs for participants. All registration and affiliation fees can be viewed at:

<https://www.cessnockbasketball.com.au/registration/>

## HARDSHIP

Cases of financial hardship can be brought to the attention of Cessnock Basketball for consideration of payment options and agreement. Requests will be handled in confidence and on a case-by-case basis. Please contact the Treasurer ([treasurer@cessnockbasketball.com.au](mailto:treasurer@cessnockbasketball.com.au)) to initiate the process.

Players with outstanding levies from previous representative seasons or unpaid game fees for the Cessnock Basketball local competition will be classified as non-financial. As a result, they will not be eligible to represent the Cessnock Cobras or participate in the local competition. Furthermore, non-financial players will be denied clearance to play for any other Basketball NSW-affiliated association until the outstanding amount is paid.

## REFUNDS

Once a player's position is accepted, parents are obligated to remit the full player levy.

Should a player withdraw from a team due to a long-term injury or illness, applications for partial refunds may be submitted in writing, accompanied by medical documentation, to [rep@cessnockbasketball.com.au](mailto:rep@cessnockbasketball.com.au).

It is important to note that the commitment levy is non-refundable.

## UNIFORMS

iAthletic is the official apparel partner for Cessnock Basketball. Further details regarding uniforms will be released shortly. Items will be available for purchase in packs or individually.

Kindly ensure that all uniforms are ordered before November 3, 2024, to facilitate timely delivery of player uniforms for the commencement of the season.

All Cessnock Cobras players are required to wear Cessnock Cobras-branded tops (hoodie and warm-up top) as their primary outer layer of clothing when attending and departing games.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents play a pivotal role in shaping their children's development, and we highly value their support in fostering a positive environment for our community. To ensure the optimal outcomes for players, coaches, and managers, we have established several fundamental principles.

During games and training sessions, it is imperative to encourage the entire team, not solely your child. The coach should be the sole source of technical feedback to the players. Coaching from the sidelines is never appropriate, regardless of your expertise in the game.

Parents should exercise caution when discussing team matters in front of their children. Negative remarks about a coach, player, or referee can have a detrimental impact on your child's attitude.

Our goal is to cultivate positive players and supportive parents. We encourage you to express your unwavering support for our teams, but please refrain from making disparaging comments about the opposition, referees, or other team members. Without these essential components, we cannot sustain a game. At the heart of Cessnock Basketball lie positive players and positive parents.

## COMMUNICATION WITH COACHES, TEAM MANAGERS, AND OTHER PARENTS

Before the season begins, the Coach and Team Manager will decide on the most effective way to communicate with Parents, the Coach, and the Team Manager. This involves choosing the appropriate channel, setting the right timing, and determining the best method of communication. It's important for parents to follow this process to ensure smooth communication and avoid any misunderstandings or duplication of information.

## GAME DAY REQUIREMENTS

### BENCH AREA

Parents are not permitted to approach the bench area for any reason unless specifically requested by the coach or directed by a Basketball NSW official.

## SCOREBENCH DUTY

Parents will be required to help with score table duty on a rotational basis on competition weekends.

For further information on how to help with score table duty, please visit our website

<https://www.cessnockbasketball.com.au/scoretable>.

## COMMUNICATING CONCERNS

Please be advised that our coaches are volunteers who dedicate considerable time and effort to nurturing your child's development as both an athlete and an individual. Coaches are entrusted with the responsibility of making impartial decisions that prioritize the well-being of your child, the team, and the organization.

We recognize that there may be instances where you express disagreement with a coach's decision. Effective communication between you and the coach is paramount in addressing any concerns you may have. Positive feedback can be discussed at any time.

However, if you encounter issues that necessitate resolution, please adhere to the following process:

1. Refrain from approaching the coach in the presence of other players or supporters. Unless prior arrangement and agreement have been made, it is inappropriate to confront the coach during or immediately following a training session or game weekend.
2. Implement the 48-hour rule. Before discussing any concerns with the coach, wait 48 hours. This allows you time to reflect on the situation and consider potential solutions.
3. If, after the 48-hour period, you still wish to address any issues, contact your team manager to arrange a meeting with the coach.
4. If a resolution cannot be reached after meeting with the coach and team manager, the matter should be referred to the Cessnock Basketball Rep Manager ([rep@cessnockbasketball.com.au](mailto:rep@cessnockbasketball.com.au)). If a satisfactory outcome is not achieved, the issues will be addressed by the Cessnock Basketball Board.

## REPRESENTATIVE PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT AND BEHAVIOUR FORM

All parents, guardians, grandparents, or adult family members involved in your child's participation in the Cessnock Cobras Junior Representative Program are subject to the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook. It is

# 2025 CESSNOCK COBRAS REPRESENTATIVE HANDBOOK

imperative that all individuals involved read this handbook, sign and return the *Representative Participation Agreement and Behaviour* form.



## COURT TIME

Representative basketball is an elite program. **Playing time is never guaranteed.** With the exception of Under 12 players, who are required to participate in both halves, there is no expectation of playing time for players in other age groups.

Playing time is determined by the level of competition, the player's role in each game, and the significance of the match.

Players can enhance their chances of gaining additional court time by adhering to the expectations set by Cessnock Basketball regarding attendance, punctuality, behavior, and attitude towards coaches, teammates, referees, and extended members of the basketball community. Furthermore, improvements in playing ability and consistent effort and energy during training sessions can also lead to increased court time.

For disciplinary reasons, a coach may reduce a player's court time if they fail to meet the following criteria:

- Fail to attend all training sessions;
- Be tardy for all training sessions and games;
- Lack full effort during training sessions and matches;
- Disrupt training sessions or games;
- Display poor sportsmanship towards the coach, other players, officials, or spectators;
- Engage in behavior that will negatively impact the reputation of Cessnock Basketball.

In cases of severe misconduct, coaches and Cessnock Basketball may also demote a player to a lower division team or remove them from the Cessnock Cobras representative program due to disciplinary reasons, including non-attendance at training.

*Playing time is never guaranteed*



## TEAM MANAGER

Each representative team necessitates a Team Manager, typically a parent of the team, who assumes responsibility for the team's internal administration.

The Team Manager serves as the primary contact for both the team and parents, coordinating game and training schedules. They also organize score bench rosters for each game and ensure that players are appropriately registered on GameDay iPads (or scoresheets, if utilized). Furthermore, the Team Manager is accountable for managing the team's equipment, transporting it to and from all games, including team ball, water bottles, a first-aid kit, and a blood kit.

Team Managers play a pivotal role in the team's success, and their contributions are greatly appreciated. However, it is crucial to emphasize that Team Managers' responsibilities **do not encompass any coaching duties**. They should refrain from assuming this role.

## LOCAL JUNIOR COMPETITION

A competitive representative program is established upon a robust local competition. Cessnock Cobras representative players are obligated to continue participating in the Cessnock Basketball local junior competition to remain eligible for representative basketball. Exemptions will be granted in exceptional circumstances. For players originating from another association, a grace period will be provided before joining a local team.

## REPRESENTATIVE PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT AND BEHAVIOUR FORM

Selection to the Cessnock Cobras Representative Program is a privilege not to be taken lightly. It reflects high individual skills or the potential to develop them. It also implies a sound understanding of the positive philosophies of development, teamwork and sportsmanship required for a successful program.

This agreement defines the minimum standard of performance and behaviour expected of all participants.

All players, families, officials and spectators must abide by the Codes of Conduct adopted by Cessnock Basketball and BNSW and the Zero Tolerance Policies for all competitions.

1. I understand and accept that participation in Cessnock Basketball and BNSW-conducted events is a privilege and honour. I always agree to maintain the highest standard of effort, performance and behaviour.
2. I accept, without reservation, the appointment to any role of the coaching staff, administrative staff and authorised personnel by Cessnock Basketball and BNSW and agree to abide by any decisions made by those appointed.
3. I understand that my behaviour and performance reflect on Cessnock Basketball and accept the right of Cessnock Basketball to consider further action should I fail to fulfill my obligations under this agreement.
4. I agree without reservation to participate fairly and in a sportsmanlike manner at all times in any fixture and at any venue within the Representative Program, whatever role my participation may take at the time.
5. Considering my team or Cessnock Basketball and BNSW objectives, I understand and accept without reservation that the final decision regarding my participation, in any event, is entirely that of the appointed coach or an authorised representative of Cessnock Basketball.
6. I agree to abide by any rules, policies, by-laws and guidelines governing the operation or administration of the Cessnock Basketball Representative Program, including any rules, policies, by-laws and procedures set forth by BNSW, the governing body of the sport in NSW.
7. I accept that there are risks of injury associated with playing basketball, as with most sports. Dangers will arise in running, jumping, catching, throwing and guarding opposition players. While we aim to minimise risks, it is not possible to eliminate them all.

# 2025 CESSNOCK COBRAS REPRESENTATIVE HANDBOOK

8. I understand that I must hold a current registration and compete regularly in the Cessnock Basketball domestic competition, and I am responsible for ensuring my registration is current.
9. I agree to support Cessnock Basketball and BNSW's policy and guidelines of the statutory requirements of the NSW legislation about child protection and Cessnock Basketball and BNSW's sports rage guidelines. For further Child Protection information, please visit [www.dsr.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au), [www.playbytherules.net.au](http://www.playbytherules.net.au) or contact your local Member Protection Officer.
10. I agree to make every effort to meet any conditions or requirements about the administration of my team, including attending all team meetings and training sessions on time.
11. As a parent/guardian of a Representative Program participant, I accept full responsibility for the supervision and welfare of my child before and after training or team meetings and scheduled fixtures.
12. As a parent/guardian of a Representative Program participant, I agree to set an appropriate example of sportsmanship and leadership by being fair and sportsmanlike in my attitude, actions and behaviour. I agree to make every effort to ensure that my attitude, actions, and behaviour are of the highest standards at all times.
13. As a parent/guardian of a Representative Program participant, I agree to share the associated responsibilities and obligations of the team, including transport, fundraising and score bench duties to ensure maximum enjoyment for all and fair contribution by all.
14. I agree to meet all financial obligations as and when they fall due or to communicate any difficulty in meeting them in writing by the specified date.

I have read and understand the guidelines contained within this Representative Agreement. I accept the right of Cessnock Basketball to consider further action should I fail to practice fair sportsmanship or meet my obligations to my team and Cessnock Basketball as outlined in this agreement.

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Player Name

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Parent/Guardian Name

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Player Signature

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date