

Instructions regarding juniors (under 18's) fishing in AMFC matches

The Association will support juniors who would like to fish in AMFC Matches. Encouraging juniors to fish with us carries serious legal consequences and responsibilities. In both principal and practice you are required to act as though you were a **reasonable** parent. ***In loco parentis*** means you are 'in place' of the parents. Everyone who organises juniors has a role. The Association is now meeting its responsibility by issuing the following instructions. If everyone encourages juniors in a responsible manner we should have no mishaps, or events, which could be construed as negligent (or worse)

Your Club (4 major areas of responsibilities)

1. Permission Make absolutely sure that the Parent or Guardian has given permission for the activity. Make sure they are aware of any travel arrangements and very important when their child can be expected home. Most of our juniors travel with their parent or guardian, if so this is not a problem – if not treat this seriously and check that everything is O.K. and that the junior has returned home safely.

2. Competence You have selected the junior to represent you. Your club and especially the Committee may be held responsible if you ask a junior to represent you who has neither the experience nor skill to fish safely. (It would help if you could show that the junior had been coached by a GAIA licensed Instructor).

3. Under 14's Under 14's should if possible fish with a parent or guardian. If these are not available you must offer an adult from your team to partner the junior.

4. Pass all this information on If your club is organising the event make sure that this information has been given to whoever is organising on your behalf. Also all team captains from the other participating clubs.

Organiser of the Day (four major areas of responsibility)

1. Boat Partner Make sure the junior's boat partner is willing **and is aware of their responsibilities and competent to carry out these responsibilities** (if you have anyone with a GAIA License use them). If there is any hesitancy change the boat partner to make sure that everyone is willing to accept the responsibility. If the junior is under the age of 14 years it will be necessary to re-organise the boat draw.

2. Equipment I know it may sound silly but **you are in charge of the match.** Therefore **YOU** must check that the junior has appropriate equipment. This may depend on the day but things you should check on are proper clothing for the conditions and likely changes, glasses (sun or otherwise), suitable fishing equipment and a boat seat that is safe and comfortable. Make sure the junior has proper food and drinks (hot if it a cold day and lots of cold drinks if it is very hot and sunny. Make sure that both the junior and adult wear a life jacket. (The last thing you want is a junior in a boat with his partner in the water who is drowning).

3. Conditions on the Day If the conditions are in any way problematical **YOU** will have been expected to consider these conditions and made some appropriate fishing restrictions. If the conditions are worrying ask advice from the Fishery Manager – they will have had more experience and their instructions must not be ignored – in any case always inform the fishery that there is a junior fishing in the competition. It would be impossible to list all the conditions that may cause concern, but things like strong winds thunder and lightening, continuous rain, cold and excess heat and sun should all be considered. (It is not just hypothermia but also heat exhaustion that may occur) It would also be impossible to list all the conditions you could impose. Typically it may include in very windy weather a geographical limit where the junior may fish, or the number of flies the junior may have on his cast. In extreme conditions the length of

time that the junior may remain on the water. If you do make some restriction make sure that the boat partner and the juniors team captain are clearly instructed of the conditions you have imposed.

4 Check on what is happening I know that most of you will be fishing in the match. **But** once again **YOU** are the organiser and **it is your duty to keep an eye on what is happening.** On an ordinary day when you have not imposed restriction you should check up morning and afternoon. On a day when you have imposed restrictions you should observe more regularly and, if necessary, take further action.

Responsible Boat Partner

Unless the parent or guardian is in the boat with you, **YOU** have **FINAL and ABSOLUTE** responsibility. Remember the reason why juniors have adults in charge of them is because it is assumed they may not make rational, considered and therefore the right decision. If you think things are becoming a problem you should talk with your charge as well as observe. But 'he/she said they were alright' is no defence when the junior is in hospital with hypothermia. You are the boss and if there is an incident you will have to justify your action, or inaction. Again it would be impossible to list all the situations that may occur. Instead a list of aims:

1. Aim to keep the junior safe
2. Aim to keep the junior physically comfortable
 - a. Not too hot
 - b. Not too cold
 - c. Not too wet
 - d. Not tired to the point of exhaustion
3. Not too frightened of the elements
4. Comfortable with you as his partner
5. Aim to give the junior as successful a day as possible.

If you decide there is a problem do not hesitate to get the junior off the water

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