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UK Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Association

A Framework for the Development of Junior & Juvenile Brazilian Jiu Jitsu in the United Kingdom

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Version History

Author	Position	Version	Date
Neil Williams	UKBJJA Director (Wales)	Draft (not for distribution)	22/04/2016
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Introduction

1. **Purpose:** It is the aim of the UKBJJA Board of Directors and UKBJJA Council that this document acts as a framework and set of guidelines for the development of Junior and Juvenile Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (BJJ) in the UK in a safe and enjoyable environment.
2. **Objective:** To achieve the purpose the following objectives have been identified:
 - i. To provide the best possible experience for all youths and juveniles in the United Kingdom to ensure lifelong participation in the art and sport of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (BJJ)
 - ii. To provide supportive environments for enjoyable participation in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (BJJ), through the development of skills and good sporting behaviour.
 - iii. To better provide for the allocation of appropriate resources and facilities.
 - iv. To provide equal opportunities for young females and males to participate in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu.
 - v. To provide equal opportunities for young people with special needs to participate in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu.
 - vi. To encourage and actively cater for talented young people in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu.
3. **All young participants of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu have the right to:**
 - i. Enjoy the art and sport of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu
 - ii. Be treated with dignity
 - iii. Participate at a level equal to their ability, maturity and physical stature
 - iv. Skilled and appropriately qualified leadership
 - v. Safe and healthy environments
 - vi. Equal opportunity for participation
4. **All young participants of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu have the responsibility to:**
 - i. Practice good behaviours
 - ii. Participate fairly and safely
 - iii. Adhere to the rules
 - iv. Cooperate with coaches, team mates and opponents
 - v. Abide by rules and guidelines in a respectful manor
 - vi. Not engage in practices that affect sporting performance (e.g. Alcohol, drug use)



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5. Junior Brazilian Jiu Jitsu development model

All youths and juveniles should be able to participate in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu at a level equal to their ability, maturity and physical stature. Competing and practicing as much as possible within their age groups, grade and maturity. The Junior Brazilian Jiu Jitsu model should focus on the following principles

- i. The focus of all junior Brazilian Jiu Jitsu activities should be enjoyable and successful participation.
- ii. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu helps to develop self-confidence, discipline and respect.
- iii. The primary focus in all BJJ activities for juniors to promote long term participation and sustainable athlete development should be training in a fun, competitive and supportive environment. Such goals are best achieved through the support of individual clubs and coaches, and any selective national training programme which focuses on high performance junior development should be co-ordinated with the agreement of clubs and coaches and the input of junior coaching experts.
- iv. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu involves competition. However, junior sport competition should differ from that experienced by adults and be free from undue adult pressures and demands.
- v. Training should balance the need for athletic and sporting development with the problems associated with over-training and over-specialization, and the potential harm done to the muscular skeletal development of young athletes. Juniors should not be engaging in intense training and physical conditioning until they reach an age of biological maturity. Coaches and instructors should recognize their responsibility for advising juniors of the dangers of excessive training and over specializing in one sport, and making sure juniors rest and recover adequately. They should take into consideration the needs of individual juniors in conjunction with advice from junior coaching and strength and conditioning experts

6. Appropriate participation and inclusion

It is important that boys and girls have the same opportunity to participate in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu activities in line with their physical and physiological needs. There should be careful consideration of the transition from children and youths through to adults.

7. Competition

Competition is an intrinsic part of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu it involves measuring performance against an opponent, oneself, or the environment. Competition provides stimulation and challenge as well as the opportunity to apply, test and further develop skills in a competitive situation. Properly managed, competition should be seen as a healthy and desirable part of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. They should cater for all levels of ability, ensuring a satisfying experience for all participants. Competitions (especially the junior leagues) at a junior level must have an educational focus for junior competitors, parents, guardians and spectators and stress the importance of competing safely and tapping when required.

a. Referees



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- i. Referees with specific experience in officiating children's, junior and juvenile competitions should always be used. (The UKBJJA offer specific referee training modules for this in addition to the standard referring training and accreditation)
- ii. Referees have the ultimate responsibility for officiating children's, junior and juvenile competition and ensuring competitors have an enjoyable competitive experience in a safe environment.

b. Belt, Age & Weight Categories

Where there are sufficient numbers, the categories should be divided by the weight, age and the individual belts categories as detailed below.

Where there are insufficient numbers to run a category, a move to a higher weight, age or belt category may be offered as detailed below.

Any moves must be a joint decision made by the event organiser, the athlete, their coach and the parents.

Weight Categories:

Competitors should be divided by the weight categories shown below.

-21 kg -24 kg -27 kg -30 kg -34 kg -38 kg -42 kg -46 kg -50 kg -55 kg -60 kg -65 kg
-70kg -75 kg -80 kg +80kg

Where there are insufficient numbers to run a category, at the discretion of the organiser, competitors may be offered the opportunity to fight up one weight category.

Age Categories:

The following age brackets will be used.

Pee Wee 1 (4 & 5) 2 minute fights

Pee Wee 2 (6 & 7) 2 minute fights

Junior 1 (8 & 9) 3 minute fights

Junior 2 (10 & 11) 4 minute fights

Teen 1 (12 & 13) 4 minute fights



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Teen 2 (14 & 15) 4 minute fights

Juvenile (16 & 17) 5 minute fights

Where there are insufficient numbers to run a category using the age brackets shown, at the discretion of the organiser, competitors may be offered the opportunity to fight up (not down) an age group.

Belt Categories:

The following separate belt categories should be used.

White Belts

Grey Belts (Grey/White, Grey and Grey/Black)

Yellow Belts (Yellow/White, Yellow and Yellow/Black)

Orange Belts (Orange/White, Orange and Orange/Black)

Green Belts (Green/White, Green and Green/Black)

Blue Belts

Where there are insufficient numbers to run a category using the belt categories shown, at the discretion of the organiser, competitors may be offered the opportunity to fight up (not down) a belt group.

8. The role of coaches, teachers and professors

Junior sport coaches/teachers should:

- i. Encourage enjoyment of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu
- ii. Cater for varying levels of ability so that all juniors have an enjoyable experience
- iii. Provide equal encouragement to girls and boys to participate, acquire skills and develop confidence.
- iv. Recognise and cater for groups with special needs.
- v. Recognise exceptionally talented juniors and give them the opportunity to develop their full potential.
- vi. Prepare and conduct sessions based on sound coaching principles.
- vii. Set realistic standards and objectives for their juniors.
- viii. Put more stress on effort than outcome.
- ix. Educate juniors and parents on health and safety in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu
- x. Ensure that the consequences of inappropriate behaviour are clearly understood.
- xi. Set an example of good behaviour



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- xii. Obtain the relevant qualifications and training should be in place for junior coaches, namely DBS/PVG/Access checks, First Aid and Child Protection training
- xiii. Offer appropriate advice on Strength and Conditioning and coaching relevant for children and juniors (this will be facilitated through the UKBJJA)

The UKBJJA will help facilitate and offer coaching courses aimed at improving coaches' understanding of how to teach juniors and to meet those actions expected of them.

9. The role of parents and guardians

The delivery of junior Brazilian Jiu Jitsu would not be possible without the on-going commitment of parents and guardians, who provide voluntary support in many ways. Their expectations and attitudes significantly affect the enjoyment that their children receive from Brazilian Jiu Jitsu participation. To ensure that children receive the greatest benefit from their Brazilian Jiu Jitsu activity, parents and guardians should:

- i. Encourage children to participate, without forcing them to do so.
- ii. Focus on effort and performance rather than on the outcome.
- iii. Never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake or losing in an event.
- iv. Encourage children to always participate according to the rules.
- v. Be models of good behaviour for children to copy.
- vi. Be courteous in their communication with players, coaches, officials and administrators.
- vii. Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical violence from sporting activities
- viii. Never shout to a child not to tap whilst competing or training; this is very dangerous, they are the ones competing and they and the referees alone understand at what point tapping is required and when a match is stopped.
- ix. Do not coach children and juniors from the side-line whilst training and competing regardless of your experience or lack of. This is the role of their coach and professor. Many people shouting at children is distracting and dangerous especially when those instructions come from a party not experienced in the art and sport of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu

10. Implementation of the policy

The guidelines and framework detailed are to assist all involved in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu in the United Kingdom and ensure the youth and juvenile population are cared for in a safe and adequate manner. It is the responsibility of all individuals involved not just that of the national governing body (UKBJJA) to ensure these guidelines and framework are considered in each and every aspect of the art and sport.