



Competition Rules – AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL

1. TEAM ENTRY

1.1 There are two grades, with two divisions in each:

- SENIOR A and B – It is recommended that teams are selected from girls in Years 10-12. When selecting girls younger than Years 10-12 in the senior divisions; size, skill level and physical strength must be taken into consideration.
- MIDDLE A and B - Middle teams will consist of only Years 6 - 9 students.

The shield grades are Senior A and Middle A. The pennant grade is Senior B.

1.2 Schools can enter where they best fit.

1.3 Senior A, Senior B and Middle A Grades:

1.3.1 Teams will consist of 16 players on the field. Matches can be played with less players (or more) if mutually agreed upon by both teams prior to the game, however;

1.3.2 In non-shield grades, every effort should be made to ensure an equal number of players on the field between the two teams for the duration of the game. Equalisation options may include:

- Offering spare players to the opposition team OR
- Reducing on-field number of players to 15 or 14

Equal player numbers is within the spirit of school sport.

A team must commence the match with a minimum of 14 players for a result to count. Anything less will result in a forfeit; however, a scratch match may proceed under equalisation conditions outlined above.

1.4 Middle B Grade - Teams are to consist of 12 players on the field. Matches can be played by less per side if mutually agreed upon by both teams prior to the game, however every effort should be made to ensure an equal number of players on the field between the two teams for the duration of the game.

1.5. In all grades, the maximum number of players on the bench is 8. The number of interchanges allowed during the game is unlimited.

1.6 Schools need to provide 1 field for every 2 teams entered in the competition.

2. ELIGIBILITY

2.1 Eligibility for a finals match: If half the player(s) matches have been played in any given grade, they can play in a Final in that grade (as confirmation, if a player plays 50% of their matches in Senior A grade and 50% in Middle A grade, they would be eligible for finals in either grade).

3. UMPIRING/OFFICIALS

3.1 IGSSA will ensure the provision of 2 Field umpires for each **Senior A** IGSSA Australian Football match.

3.2 'Home' or first listed school will provide two field umpires for all other grades. Note that Middle B can have 1 umpire. IGSSA can organise field umpires for schools upon request.

3.3 1 x Goal Umpire to be provided by each team.

It is preferable that match officials for Senior A Grade are not enrolled students at participating schools. If it is necessary for a student to be allocated to an official role, then they must be accredited or in a training/pathway program for accreditation, and not wearing school uniform. They should be operating alone in these roles (i.e., goal umpires should not be standing in groups behind football goals).

3.4 Boundary Umpires are not required.

3.5 1 x Runner per team can deliver a coach's message during play. They are required to deliver the message as quickly as possible and come straight off the ground.

3.6 Water carriers can go onto the ground at any time. They cannot interfere with play, loiter on the ground or occupy space on the ground. They cannot barrack, give directions, or communicate with players other than in providing water. Water carriers cannot be inside 50m when the ball is in that area, or within the centre square at a centre bounce.

4. MATCH RULES

4.1 Matches are to be played on Australian Football grounds where possible.

4.2 Middle B grade games are *ideally* set up on a smaller playing area to suit 12 players.

4.3 Matches are played Friday afternoons.

4.4 Games should start as close to 4.10pm as possible.

4.5 Teams play 4 x 12-minute quarters (with breaks of 3/5/3 minutes) with a running clock. Games must be completed by 5.15pm. If teams are late to arrive due to transport distance, then all quarters will be reduced equally in time unless the finishing time can be extended by mutual agreement. Coaches should negotiate time before the start of matches. For finals games only, the clock will be stopped for injury.

*Note: agreed by all Sport Coordinators to increase the quarter lengths to 14 minutes on a **trial basis only** for the 2025 winter season in **Senior A division only**, where games are able to commence before 4.15pm. If game commences at or after 4.15pm, quarters will be reduced to a maximum of 12 minutes. The success of this trial is to be evaluated post-2025 season, with a decision to be subsequently made on permanency of the rule.*

4.6 Choice of ends shall be determined by the toss of a coin.

5. GAME SPECIFIC RULES

5.1 The competition is to be played according to Part D of the current '[Laws of Australian Football](#)' unless stipulated below.

5.2 Tackling is permitted. (No sling tackles are permitted).

5.3 A mark to be awarded when a player marks the ball directly from another player's kick that has travelled at least 10m

5.4 Last touch rule applies between the 50m arcs. This means a free kick will be paid against the last player who touches the ball before it goes out of bounds.

5.5 Soccering off the ground is permitted (but not encouraged).

5.6 A 25m penalty can be awarded at the umpire's discretion.

5.7 As confirmation, there are no 'starting zones' required, but 5-6-5 (if playing 16-a-side) is encouraged.

6. RESULTS

6.1 In the event of tied scores at game end, the match will be deemed a draw. There is no provision for extra time (this excludes finals).

6.2 Incomplete matches.

6.2.1 If a match is unable to commence for reasons beyond the control of either team, then every reasonable effort should be made to reschedule. Shield and pennant grades should be prioritised where practical when venues are weather (or otherwise) affected. If a mutually agreeable reschedule date between the participating schools cannot be reached, then the match result will be a draw, with a 0-point differential.

6.2.2 If a match has commenced but is not able to proceed at any time prior to **half time**, the result will be a draw with scores at the time of match interruption used to calculate score differential.

6.2.3 If the **half time interval** has been reached and the match is unable to proceed at any time after, the scores of the teams at the time the match was interrupted shall be deemed the final scores of the match.

6.2.4 If **half or more** games from an IGSSA Division are unable to be completed in a single Shield round, then **all games** from that round in that Division will be considered a draw, with a 0-point differential. For the avoidance of doubt, for example, if there are six scheduled Shield games in a round, and three are unable to be completed, then all games in that round are considered a draw.

6.3 Scorers/Timers or an official rep from each school to be responsible for keeping score and time for the match. Both to sit together for the entire match and confer scores with field and goal umpires at each break.

6.4 All results from the preceding week's matches must be submitted to Clipboard by 48 hours post-fixture in order for accurate Premiership Tables to be published in a timely manner.

6.5 Three points will be awarded for a win, one point for a draw and zero points for a loss. The maximum win tally that will be registered is 48 points. If teams win (or lose) by more than 48 points, it will be just the 48-point margin registered. In the event of a bye, the team drawn to have a bye will be awarded zero points. In the event of a forfeit, the non-offending team will be awarded three points and the maximum winning margin. The offending team will be awarded zero points and the maximum losing margin.

6.6 A 1 v 2 final will be scheduled with the top 2 teams (finalists) playing for the shield in the nominated shield grades. The winner of the 1 v 2 Final will be awarded the shield.

6.6.1 Finalists will be determined by total points initially (i.e., win/loss tally) and then SD (Score differential) if points are equal but a split needs to be made.

6.6.2 If a **finals** match is tied, teams are allowed a 2-minute break. They then switch ends as if it is a new quarter and it will be the next score who wins the game (golden point).

6.6.3 If no finals match can be played and team(s) are on tied points in shield grades at the end of the season, the shield winner will be identified using the following criteria:

- i. Head-to-Head – Calculate the premiership points for games played between *each team involved in the tie* only. The school with the most Head-to-Head premiership points wins the shield (providing equal number of Head-to-Head games between tied teams exist). If there is still no clear winner from Head-to-Head calculation, then:
- ii. Score Differential – Calculate the score differential for all games played. The team with the greatest score differential will be awarded the shield. If there is still no clear winner from the score differential, then:
- iii. The shield will be shared between all teams on tied points.

7. EQUIPMENT

7.1 Each school is to provide a Yellow Sherrin MATCH size 4 ball for their home games.

7.2 Mouthguards are compulsory.