



# NORTH COAST FOOTBALL

## By-law 7

# Competition Rules 2024

## Status

This By-law is made by the Zone Committee under the powers conferred on it by the Constitution of North Coast Football Zone Inc. It is to be known as By-law 7.

## Interpretation

Words and phrases defined in the Constitution have the same meanings in this By-law, which is to be read in conjunction with (and subject to) the Constitution.

## Purpose

This By-law provides rules for the conduct of Football competitions within the Zone.

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**INTRODUCTION - Objects & Functions**  
**North Coast Football Zone Inc.**  
**(Extract from NCF Constitution November 2010)**

The objects for which the Zone is established are:

To be the member of NNSWSF in respect of the Jurisdiction and to comply with the constitution and by-laws of FA & NNSWSF;

To control Football throughout the Jurisdiction, prevent infringement of the constitution and by-laws of NNSWSF and protect Football from abuse;

To foster friendly relations among the officials and players of Football and encouraging Football games in the Jurisdiction;

To prevent racial, religious, gender or political discrimination or distinction among Football players in the Jurisdiction;

To promote, provide for, regulate and manage Football tournaments and games in the Jurisdiction;

To promote, provide for, regulate and manage Football players representing the Jurisdiction;

To co-operate with NNSWSF, other members of NNSWSF and other bodies in the promotion and development of, or otherwise in relation to, Football, the Statutes and Regulations and the Laws of the Game;

To facilitate the provision and maintenance of grounds, playing fields, materials, equipment and other facilities for Football in the Jurisdiction; and other object which, in the opinion of the Zone Committee, is in the best interests of Football.

Subject to article 7.1 of the Zone Constitution, the Zone Committee in general meeting may amend, repeal and replace this By-law.

The Zone Committee shall be the only body empowered to interpret this By-law and its decisions shall be final.

## **A1 GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A1.1 CLUB MEMBER BEHAVIOUR**

Each member Club is responsible for the behaviour of its players, team officials and supporters. Any person or club found guilty of misconduct or of bringing Football into disrepute shall be liable to suspension and/or such other penalties as may be determined by the Disciplinary Committee and/or the Zone Committee.

### **A1.2 CLUB FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

Each member Club is responsible for its financial obligation to NCF.

The club is ineligible to vote at the NCF AGM if they have any outstanding monies owed from the previous financial year (deemed unfinancial) or **MUST** have an agreed payment plan in place approved by the Board to enable the Club eligibility at same.

## **A2 DEFINITION OF HOME TEAM/CLUB**

The first team/Club named in each fixture is the home team/Club, and shall normally host the fixture on its home ground.

The home team/Club for any finals fixture in a series of special competition shall be the team that finished in the higher position on that competition points table.

### **A2.1 HOME TEAM/CLUB'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

Home teams/Clubs are solely responsible for fulfilling each of the following requirements.

**A2.1.1** Ensure that the designated home ground is available on the date and at the time specified for the fixture.

**A2.1.2** In the event of the ground being unfit or unavailable consult with the Competition Administrator to arrange an alternative venue, date and time. The Competition Administrator has the final authority on such matters.

**A2.1.3** Notify the visiting team, and the Competition Administrator of any change of venue as soon as reasonably practicable but within 24 hours of a decision being made.

**A2.1.4** Carry out whatever ground maintenance may be necessary to ensure conditions are safe and playable.

**A2.1.5** Mark the field of play clearly and in accordance with Law 1 - FIFA Laws of the Game. (See also A15).

**A2.1.6** Equip all goal posts with nets, which are to be safely secured to the goal posts and to the ground.

**A2.1.7** Secure Goal Posts to comply with Australian Standards.

**A2.1.8** Ensure the presence of a Duty Officer for the duration of each fixture. The Duty Officer is responsible for the maintaining of good order and conduct at fixtures and shall wear some form of distinctive identification, be active and visible by the appointed Match Official at all times during a game (NB the appointed Match Official has the right to delay the start / continuation of a match if the Duty Officer can't be clearly identified).

**A2.1.9** It is advisable that a 'Level 3' First Aid Officer and an adequate first aid kit is accessible at all times for emergency situations.

**A2.1.10** Ensure adequate security provision for the safety, welfare and protection of Team Officials, Match Officials, players and the public.

In the case of Match Officials this obligation applies from the time they arrive at the ground until the time they depart.

**A2.1.11** Home Club is responsible for maintaining no Alcohol is sold at Junior fixtures.

**A2.1.12** The consumption of alcohol at all junior matches is prohibited. The home club is responsible for upholding this law.

### **A3 GROUND UNFIT OR UNSAFE FOR PLAY**

**A 3.1** The Match Official is the deciding official on all matters relating to the field of play and is required to submit a written report to the Competition Administrator on any problems.

**A3.2** Should a Match Official refuse to commence a fixture due to unsatisfactory markings, goal-posts, nets, corner flags, lighting or an unsafe playing surface, the home Club shall be liable for the Match Officials' fees in full and a win by forfeit shall be awarded to the visiting team. An exception is in the case of a neutral ground having been arranged for the fixture, in which case the home team's liability is limited to the Match Officials' fees and the fixture will be rescheduled.

**A3.3** Any protest by a team against the condition of a ground must be lodged with the Duty Officer (**Section A2.1.8**) before the scheduled starting time of the fixture. The Duty Officer is required to make the Match Official aware of any such protest.



Any formal protest subsequently lodged must be in writing on a Club letterhead and be provided / forwarded to the Zone office **by noon on the second normal working day following the fixture.**

Notwithstanding any protest lodged with a Duty Officer, the fixture in question shall be played as scheduled, and the fact that a protest has been lodged may not invalidate the result of the fixture.

In the event of two or more protests being received by the Competition Administrator about any particular ground within a four-week period then a representative of the Zone Committee or Competition Administration may inspect that ground, accompanied by a Management representative of the Club concerned, to decide on the fitness of the ground and/or any remedial work required.

## **A4 WASHED OUT OR DOUBTFUL FIXTURES**

**(See also A.33.1)**

**A4.1** Clubs shall provide the Competition Administrator with a written list of the names, addresses and telephone numbers of officials authorised to declare a ground unfit for play.

**A4.2** If inclement weather or other conditions preceding a fixture create reasonable doubt about play being possible, the home Club must arrange an inspection of the ground before 7am on the day of the fixture and decide whether play can take place. Home Club Administrator to update Squadi if their Home Club Grounds are closed.

**A4.3** In the event of a ground being declared unfit for play on the day scheduled, it remains closed until inspection by a Senior Match Official or Competition Administrator.

**A4.4** A Club using more than one home ground of which only one is declared unfit for play may have others deemed playable. In such cases each separate ground must be clearly identified by number or name, as in the official fixture list, to eliminate any possible confusion.

**A4.5** More than 50% of the fixtures in any Competitive Division must be played for the round to be counted. The Competition Administrator may re-schedule fixtures or declare that the round is “washed out” at the Competition Administrators absolute discretion.

## **A4.6 Junior Competitive Divisions – Final Series**

**A4.6.1** Should a Junior **Semi Final** be washed out the following will apply:

- (a) The team finishing higher on the competition points table in the Major Semi Final shall progress to the Grand Final. The other team shall progress to the Preliminary Final
- (b) The team finishing higher on the competition points table in the Minor Semi Final shall progress to the Preliminary Final, the other team is eliminated.

**A4.6.2** Should a Junior Preliminary Final be washed out the following will apply:

- (a) The team finishing higher on the competition points table shall progress to the Grand Final.
- (b) The other team is eliminated.

**A4.6.3** Should a Junior Grand Final be washed out the following will apply:

- (a) The team finishing higher on the competition points table shall be declared the winner.
- (b) The team finishing lower on the competition points table shall be declared the runner-up.

**A4.7 Junior Wet Weather Weekends** may be nominated by the Competition Administrator for playing catch up matches required due to inclement weather.

## **A5 POWER TO DIRECT A CHANGE OF HOME GROUND**

The Competition Administrator may direct a team to play any fixture(s) at a ground other than its home ground for disciplinary reasons; or for any other reason the Competition Administrator may think fit provided that reasonable notice is given to the team(s) affected.

## **A6 COMPETITION RULES AND THE LAWS OF THE GAME**

All fixtures shall be played in accordance with the Official Laws of the Game – as set down and published from time to time by FIFA and FA except:

That the Competition Administrator may decide from time to time to set and/or vary these competition rules, including the duration of fixtures, provided that reasonable advance notice of such variations has been given to each competing Club/team, the Match Officials, and other affected parties.

## **A6.1 Interchange / Substitutions**

All Competition Divisions will be allowed 16 players per team sheet and unlimited interchange within 3 stoppages of play (not including half time) per team, per half except for the following;

Premier League Men and Women – in 2024 will have the same “Interchange” rule as all other Competitive Divisions.

**A6.1.1** It is regarded as contrary to the spirit of the game and therefore an abuse of interchange for Coaches/Managers to attempt to use it as a time-wasting tactic. Referees, at their discretion, are entitled to report cases to the Competition Administrator.

## **A6.2 Modified Games (Miniroos, Masters, and Gala Days)**

### **A6.2.1 Miniros**

Please refer to the FA Website for the Rules and Regulations on Miniros.  
[www.footballaustralia.com.au](http://www.footballaustralia.com.au)

### **A6.2.2 Masters Competitions**

Refer to Masters Competition Rules and Regulations on the NCF Website.  
[www.northcoastfootball.com.au](http://www.northcoastfootball.com.au)

### **A6.2.3 Gala Days**

Refer to NCF website for “Gala day” application form. [www.northcoastfootball.com.au](http://www.northcoastfootball.com.au)

## **A7 FOOTBALLS**

### **A7.1 Provision of Match Balls**

The home team in all Senior games is responsible for providing the match referee with 3 correctly inflated footballs of an approved brand and size, no later than 15 minutes before the scheduled kick-off.

(Refer to Law2 – The Ball. the following marks: FIFA Quality PRO, FIFA Quality, IMS - INTERNATIONAL MATCH STANDARD)

Home teams that fail to provide the required footballs may be fined \$50.

In a Finals Series fixture, each Senior team is responsible for providing the referee with 2 correctly inflated footballs of an approved brand and size no later than 15 minutes before the scheduled kick-off. The referee will select the ball to be used, the other(s) being reserved as spare(s).

In all Junior games, each team is responsible for providing the match Referee with one correctly inflated football, no later than 15 minutes before the scheduled kick-off.

## **A7.2 Football sizes**

Senior men and women	Size 5
U14s to U17s	Size 5
U10s to U13s	Size 4
U6s to U9s	Size 3

## **A8 OFFICIAL FIXTURE LIST**

### **A8.1 Fixture List:**

All dates and times of fixtures in each competition shall be published as the Official Fixture List by Competition Administrator as soon as practical after the announced closing date for team nominations.

### **A8.2 Number of Rounds:**

Where practicable, a competition shall consist of 2 rounds with each team playing every other team twice. Should the Competition Administrator recommend that such a competition is insufficient, whole rounds may be played between such teams as the Competition Administrator deems fit.

### **A8.3 Playing Start Time:**

The Competition Administrator may schedule daytime fixtures to commence from 8.30 am on any day.

### **A8.4 Disputes between teams:**

Any dispute between teams about fixture arrangements shall be referred to and be decided by the Competition Administrator. Any perceived problems, such as the timing or location of a fixture (or any other reason) shall be immediately reported to the Competition Administrator by the team(s) concerned.

**A8.5 Rearrangement of Fixture:**

Any proposed rearrangement of a fixture shall be submitted in writing to the Competition Administrator for approval no later than 14 days before the scheduled date. If there is no written approval no change may be made.

**A8.6 Fixture not played as scheduled:**

The Competition Administrator may re-schedule a fixture or determine the result of a fixture at its sole discretion.

**A8.7 Competition Administrator Authority:**

Any alteration or amendment to any fixture date, venue or kick-off time is at the absolute and final discretion of the Competition Administrator, which has delegated authority from the Zone Committee, providing that reasonable notice (normally, but not essentially, a minimum of 7 days) is given to both teams.

The Competition Administrator has delegated authority from the Zone Committee to administer the Competition Rules and abandon any fixture and/or organise any other fixture(s) should such action be deemed necessary in the interests of the competition.

**A9 FORFEITED FIXTURES (also note rule: A24.4)**

**A9.1** Any team failing, without reasonable cause, to fulfil an engagement to play a fixture on the appointed date, time or venue shall forfeit that fixture, and in addition competitive division teams may also be liable for a fine plus any reasonable expenses incurred by its opponents in relation to that fixture.

**(Ref: A24.4 and also see Appendix A- Fines)**

**A9.2** Fixtures should kick off at the stipulated times. However, a fixture may have a late start no more than 10 minutes after the stipulated time. Any team unable or unwilling to begin a fixture after this period shall be deemed to have forfeited the fixture. (See also A11.3 and NNSWF Lightning Policy).

**A9.3** A team forfeiting on 2 occasions in the one competition without an explanation considered satisfactory by the Competition Administrator may be removed from that competition. (See also A25).

**A9.4** A 'win by forfeit' shall be awarded to the opposing team, which shall be credited with a score of 3-0 together with three competition points.

**A9.5** A forfeiting team shall pay all appropriate Match Officials' fees and compensation and may be liable for a fine as determined by the Competition Administrator if forfeiting within a 24hr period prior to scheduled start time of the match. The forfeiting team must notify the Competition Administrator in writing.

**A9.6** A forfeit is classified as a fixture, and as such, a suspension may be served by a player (but only in the team receiving the forfeit) provided that a Match Sheet showing same is provided to the Zone office as per A26.9.

## **A10 PLAYING TIMES**

The normal duration of fixtures shall be two equal halves of:

Senior men and women	45 minutes
U17s	40 minutes
U15s & U16s	35 minutes
U13s & U14s	30 minutes
U12s	25 minutes
Miniroos	*

\* For modified games refer to A6.2

**A10.1** The playing time for each fixture commences at the time designated as the kick-off time in the fixture list.

**A10.2** A half-time interval must be taken and shall be a minimum of 5 minutes.

**A10.3** In the Premier League only, and at the discretion of the Match Official, playing time may be added to either half in accordance with FIFA Law 7

**A10.4** If, for any reason, a fixture falls short of the stipulated playing time it shall be deemed to have been completed unless the referee decides to abandon play prematurely.

## **A11 KICK-OFF TIMES**

**A11.1** The kick-off time for each fixture shall be set by the Competition Administrator and published in the official fixture list.

**A11.2** Kick-off times may not be changed without the prior consent of the Competition Administrator.

**A11.3** Any delay to the start of a fixture will result in 'short time' being played in two equal halves to allow succeeding fixtures to start at their designated times. Match Officials are solely responsible for applying this rule at their discretion.

## **A12 DEFERMENT OF FIXTURES**

**A12.1** A Club may seek permission of the Competition Administrator to have a fixture deferred. This should be requested no later than 14 days before the fixtures scheduled date. Each request will be considered on its merits and it will be at the sole discretion of the Competition Administrator as to whether the application has sufficient merit to grant a deferment.

**A12.2** Should an opposing team be unable to recoup expenses resulting from an agreed deferment, the Competition Administrator shall decide the amount of compensation to be paid by the team granted that deferment.

**A12.3** The Competition Administrator in conjunction with the clubs involved, shall arrange a rescheduled date for the playing of a deferred fixture or, alternatively, may at its discretion declare the fixture void.

**A12.4** The Competition Administrator shall notify each competing Club of the time, date and venue of a deferred fixture and shall also notify the Match Official Officer. (Ref: A.8.7)

**A12.5** A deferred fixture not played may render the Club(s) and/or team(s) concerned liable to disciplinary action by the Competition Administrator.

## **A13 FINDING WINNERS**

The Competition Administrator will determine methods of finding winners for the various Competitions as follows: (The Competition Administrator, at its discretion, reserves the right to change this format).

### **A13.1 Competitive Division Premiers**

**A13.1.1** On completion of the Season's league fixture list the team with the highest points total on the official points table shall be Premiers.

**A13.1.2** Should 2 or more teams in the same Competition be equal on points, the team with the most wins shall be Premiers.

**A13.1.3** In the event of most wins being equal goal difference shall determine the Premiers.

**A13.1.4** In the event of goal difference being equal, the team, which has scored most goals, shall be Premiers. Should this not decide the issue, the team scoring most away goals in the competition shall be Premiers.

**A13.1.5** As a last resort, if 2 or more teams remain equal, they shall be Joint Premiers.

## **A13.2 Competitive Divisions Finals Series**

**A13.2.1** On completion of the season's league fixture list the top four (4) teams on the official points table shall compete in a finals series competition.

- (a) The two highest placed teams compete in the Major Semi-Final at the home ground of the first placed team. The winning team qualifies for the Grand Final. The losing team qualifies for the Preliminary Final.
- (b) The 3rd and 4th placed teams on the official points table compete in the Minor Semi-Final at the home ground of the third placed team. The winning team qualifies for the Preliminary Final. The losing team is eliminated from the Competition.
- (c) At the discretion of the competition administrator, the highest placed regular season team involved, will host the semi or preliminary finals match in every division

**A13.2.2** If, at the conclusion of any competitive Junior Division Final Series fixture the scores are level, then 2 periods of 10 minutes extra time shall be played. In the case of a Senior Division Final Series fixture, then 2 periods of 15 minutes extra time will be played as per FIFA Law 8(Teams shall swap ends at the completion of each time period.)

**A13.2.3** If a competitive Division Final Series fixture remains a draw after extra time, the result of the fixture shall be determined by 'kicks from the penalty mark', as defined in FIFA laws 'Procedures to Determine the Winner of a Match'.

## **A14 COMPETITION POINTS**

Win	3 points
Draw	1 point
Win by forfeit	3 points + 3 goals for
Loss by forfeit	3 goals against

(See also A24.4 and 'Attachment A - Fines / Fees' for Competitive teams forfeiting)

## **A15 PLAYING AREA REQUIREMENTS**

During any fixture, no spectator is allowed within 2 metres of the field of play and technical area.

Where no permanent boundary fence defines a field perimeter, a rope or a painted line should be used to indicate the 2 metres and no encroachment within is allowed.



In the event that a Club is unable to fulfil these requirements, special dispensation must be obtained from the Competition Administrator.

### **A15.1 Technical Area**

During play, the Technical Area is under the jurisdiction of the Match Officials.

- (a) In the absence of special 'dug-outs', then 2 benches or the equivalent in chairs must be placed on one side of the playing field. Each bench or set of chairs and any other structures or equipment shall be located equidistant each side of the half way line and at least 2 metres back from the touchline.
- (b) Each designated seating area is for the team officials, Medical Assistant and Substitutions/Interchange players of one team.
- (c) Team officials must be registered in Play Football and names must be listed on Squadi Match Sheets.
- (d) Substitute/Interchange players must wear bibs.
- (e) No other persons are permitted in the Technical Area.
- (f) All occupants of each team's seating area should remain seated (or stand immediately behind the bench/chairs) and behave in a responsible manner. All are subject to the jurisdiction of the Match Officials.
- (g) Coaching from any place other than the Technical Area is prohibited.
- (h) Any team official who leaves or refuses to remain within the Technical Area or who gives instructions from any other place outside that area shall forfeit any rights to organise the activities of the team for the duration of the fixture.
- (i) Any team official dismissed from the Technical Area by the match Official may not return to it for any reason for the duration of that fixture and must move to a position where they can have no influence of any kind on the remainder of the match. Failure to abide by this requirement will result in additional disciplinary action.
- (j) The Match Official has the right to suspend play until he/she is satisfied that the rules have been complied with and shall send a written Conduct report on the circumstances to the Competition Administrator within 48 hours of the end of the match.
- (k) Suspended players/Officials and players/Officials sent from the field during a match are not permitted in the Technical Area until after the full suspension is served.
- (l) Should any person persist in infringing these rules to the detriment of the fixture, it is the responsibility of the home Club Duty Officer to see that he/she is escorted from the ground. The Match Official may stop the match until such time as the issue is resolved if need be.

### **A15.2 Injury to a player**

Safety of players is paramount. In the event of injury to a player the Match Official may call a First Aid Attendant and/or one team Official only onto the field to assess the injury.

In a case involving serious injury or suspected serious injury, treatment or movement of the injured player is solely at the discretion of the First Aid Attendant and the Match Official.

## **A16 ADMISSION CHARGES**

Any admission charges for any competition, including parking fees (if vehicles are permitted into the ground), will be assessed by the Competition Administrator from time to time. Any such charge will apply at all grounds for the same competition.

Application to introduce charges for any fixture must be made, formally and in writing by a Club, to the Competition Administrator no later than one calendar month prior to the date of the fixture.

Clubs must honour all honorary admission passes issued by Football Australia, Northern NSW Football and North Coast Football.

## **A17 WINNERS' MEDALLIONS AND AWARDS**

Each Junior Premiership winning team, and each Grand Final Champion and Grand Finalist in a competition will receive a set of 16 trophies or medallions.

Senior Premiership winning teams will be presented with 1 team trophy. 1 perpetual trophy will be presented to the top Men's and Women's division only. Premier League only will receive medallions. Clubs will return the perpetual trophy each year when requested by the Competition Administration.

Further trophies or medallions may be purchased from the Competition Administrator by a qualifying team at a cost set by the Competition Administrator.

## **A18 PLAYERS' UNIFORMS / EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS**

### **A18.1 Strip Approval:**

The Competition Administrator must approve all playing strips/colours.

Refer to the NCF Kit Sponsorship Logo Policy on the NCF Website via the Club Headquarters Tab.

### **A18.2 Advertising Allowed**

The following advertising is allowed on playing strips, and off field strips and/or equipment:

- (a) The NCF emblem /badge;

- (b) Any distinguishing mark, badge or emblem of the equipment manufacturer;
- (c) The name/emblem of any Competition sponsor.

### **A18.3 Team Sponsorship Logos**

- (a) Refer to the NCF Kit Sponsorship Logo Policy ([LINK](#))
- (b) In any Competition, any team fielding a player not wearing an approved uniform may be liable to a fine and forfeit competition points.

### **A18.4 Colour clash**

- (a) Each team must wear colours that readily distinguish players from the opposition. The perception of a colour clash and any changes required as a consequence of this rule shall be at the sole discretion of the Match Official.
- (b) In the event of teams in any fixture wearing strips with similar colours, the visiting team shall change to an alternate strip (including socks) that must be readily distinguishable from the home team's (in the opinion of the match Official).
- (c) In any Finals Series or special competition fixture the team named second in the draw shall be deemed to be the visiting team.
- (d) If there are ball-persons at any fixture they shall wear colours that clearly distinguish them from players and Match Officials.

## **A19 EXPENSES**

Any and all expenses incurred in participating in a competition shall be the responsibility of the participating club.

## **A20 DISPUTE OVER FIXTURE SCORES/RESULT**

In the event of a dispute about the scores/result in a fixture, the scores/result recorded by the Match Official shall be the official result.

All disputes must be submitted in writing by the Club Secretary or President to the Zone office no later than 14 days after the completion of the fixture.

## **A21 NOTIFICATION OF UNTOWARD INCIDENTS**

**A21.1** In the event of any untoward incident occurring at a ground or in a fixture, the home Club shall advise the Competition Administrator of the circumstances and facts as soon as reasonably practicable.

**A21.2** In the event of any team/Club responsible for the incident(s) being a visitor from outside the Zone, the Competition Administrator shall report to the appropriate Authority requesting that appropriate action be taken.

**A21.3** Persistent or repeated problems with untoward incidents may result in a Club being called to appear at a Disciplinary Tribunal.

## **A22 INTER ZONE OR INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL CLEARANCES**

**A22.1** No player(s) or team may play outside the Zone's geographical area without prior written approval, in the first instance, from the Zone Competition Administrator after which approval will be sort from NSW Football and/or the appropriate administrative entity.

**A22.2** No club team may play in any competition (other than those specifically approved by the Zone), without prior written approval from the Competition Administrator.

## **A23 GALA DAYS / TRIAL MATCHES**

A club must seek and obtain written permission from the Competition Administrator for any Gala Day(s) or trial matches it proposes to conduct.  
Refer to the NCF Website for appropriate documentation.

## **A24 ABANDONMENT OF FIXTURE/ INCOMPLETE FIXTURE**

### **A24.1 Competition Administrator Investigation:**

If a fixture is abandoned by the Match Official before its scheduled completion time, for whatever reason, the Match Official must submit a written report detailing the reasons for this action to the Competition Administrator.

The Competition Administrator will investigate who will then decide as follows:

- (a) The result of the abandoned fixture.
- (b) Whether the fixture should be re-played and under what conditions.
- (c) Whether any disciplinary action needs to be taken.

### **A24.2 Refusal to start a fixture and/or continue play**

A team refusing to commence a fixture or causing a fixture to be terminated before its natural conclusion through a refusal to allow play to continue may be deemed to have committed serious misconduct. Any such fixture shall be awarded as a win by forfeit to the opposing team with a 3-0 score credited to the opposing team. The offending team shall be liable to such further penalty as shall be determined by the Disciplinary Committee.

**A24.3 Breaches of Section A24:**

Any decision of the Zone Committee shall be final and not subject to appeal to any other authority. The action of the Zone Committee in respect of penalties imposed shall be distinct from any decisions of the Disciplinary Committee in respect of persons charged with offences by a match official.

**A24.4 Club Forfeiting a Competitive Fixture:**

Any Team / Club forfeiting a competitive fixture will incur a \$250 fine on each occasion for a Senior fixture and \$50 fine on each occasion for a Junior Competitive fixture. The result of the forfeit will be recorded as a 3-0 win to the opposing team.

**A25 TEAMS REMOVED / WITHDRAWING FROM COMPETITION**

Should a team withdraw or be removed from a Competition, the following procedure will take effect to allow the amended Competition to proceed:

- (a) In the case of removal or withdrawal of a team before the Competition has started – ‘bye’ results may apply to every fixture so affected in the competition.
- (b) In the case of a team removing or withdrawing after the start of a Competition round but before the end of the first full round – every result involving that team shall be deleted from the Competition records for that Round and each opposing team shall be credited instead with a ‘bye’ result and every team yet to play the withdrawn or removed team shall be credited with a ‘bye’ result.
- (c) A Club withdrawing a team after the competition has commenced shall be fined (see ‘Appendix A’ – Fines / Fees).

**A26 THE OFFICIAL MATCH SHEET / CARD**

All Squadi procedures will be listed on the NCF website.

## **A27 Player and Team Official Information**

### **A27.1 Player Numbers:**

The number on a player's shirt must correspond with the official match sheet at all times. The only exception to this is in the case of a goalkeeper substitution.

### **A27.2 Recording Suspensions:**

Suspended Players / Coaches / Managers names **MUST** be written in the appropriate section of the Match Sheet to indicate that they are standing down from that particular fixture.

If a team Official has omitted to record a suspended person on the match sheet, the Club Secretary may email to the Zone Office **BEFORE** the next scheduled fixture for that team to have the suspension recorded.

### **A27.3 Fielding an ineligible or unregistered player**

A team / Club found to have fielded an ineligible or unregistered player shall be deemed to have been guilty of misconduct and will forfeit the fixtures to their opponents with a 3-0 win awarded to the opposing team. In the event the score at the end of the match was of a greater margin, that score will stand in favour of the opposing team. The opposing team shall also receive 3 competition points for a win.

The team / Club shall be liable to such further penalty as shall be determined by the Disciplinary Committee. (See appendix A-Fines / Fees)

### **A27.4 Player Identity in question:**

On match day, any team may ask to check the identity of any opposing player(s). NCF recommends that all players should have a passport-style photograph loaded into Play Football updated every year as part of the Registration process. The photograph will be in accordance with policy defined in Play Football registration requirements.

Team Officials may check the player identity of any player(s) on the opposing team. This action must be completed prior to the player(s) participating in the game by the production of a Play Football ID or some other form of photographic ID such as a driver's licence or

valid student card. If identification cannot be provided and a Club wishes to challenge the identity of a player(s), an image of the player(s) must be obtained at this time.

In the event of a team Official having a reasonable doubt about the identity or eligibility of an opposing player named on a match card, they should record this in the dispute box and advise the Zone office by noon on the first normal working day following the fixture; following this up with a full report of the alleged circumstances and evidence on Club letterhead, delivered to the Zone office by noon on the third normal working day following the fixture.

Notwithstanding any such dispute, the player(s) concerned will be allowed to play in the fixture. The Competition Administrator shall adjudicate on eligibility as soon as practicable.

## **A28 MATCH OFFICIALS**

**A28.1** It is the Zone Committee's policy that all reasonable efforts should be made to ensure that each match is played under the control of appropriately trained and accredited match officials.

**A28.2** In the event of no suitably qualified match official being in attendance and able to officiate, the home team shall appoint a 'Club Referee' for that fixture.

Failure to do so shall be treated as a forfeit to the visiting team.

Refusal of the visiting team to accept an appointed 'Club Referee' shall be treated as a forfeit to the home team.

Failure of either team to take the field within 10 minutes of the scheduled starting time (with the exception of the NNSWF Lightning Policy – can be found under the NCF Website Club Headquarters tab) will result in a forfeit to the opposing team.

The appointed 'Club Referee' shall assume the full responsibility of a Match Official and shall be treated accordingly.

NB only registered Match Officials are permitted to wear the Approved Match Officials kit i.e. a "Club Referee" is not permitted to wear Match Officials kit (current or outdated) and their clothing must be distinguishable from the two teams participating in the match under their control.

**A28.3** In the event of an appointed Match Official failing to appear, the fact is to be clearly recorded by the home team on the match card and reported to the Referees Administrator.

The Match Official Officer will investigate such occurrence(s).

The Match Official may incur a fine if they fail to appear to an appointed match.

**A28.4** A person appointed as a 'Club Referee' who is not an adult, must be at least 14 years old and at least 2 years older than the age grade they are being asked to referee.

No person under the age of 18 is to be appointed 'Club Referee' in senior competitions.

**A28.5** Any club failing to pay match officials' fees as directed by the Zone Competition Administrator may be subjected to Disciplinary action. They may also be deemed ineligible for participation in the final series.

**A28.6** A Club and / or team Official may report to the Competition Administrator on the performance of a match official during a fixture. The Competition Administrator should be emailed a report by the noon on the Tuesday following the match.

## **A29 RESPONSIBILITIES OF MATCH OFFICIALS**

In general, it is desirable that a Match Official should be present at least 30 minutes before scheduled kick-off time and in attire as stipulated by NCF / NNSWF.

### **A29.1 Suspending Play:**

In suspending play for any reason, the Match Official shall wait a reasonable length of time before deciding to abandon the fixture and may consult with whomever they consider appropriate before arriving at a decision.

**(Refer to all available procedures including player safety policies which can be found on the NCF Website under the Club Headquarters tab)**

### **A29.2 Player / Team Official Send-off Notice:**

Having sent-off a player / team official, the Match Official must on request, inform a Club Official of the team in question of the charge / offence for which a player / team official was sent off at the conclusion of the match.

The Match Official shall confirm that a player / team official was sent off in the appropriate place(s) on the official match sheet, identifying the player / team official by name and shirt number (in the case of a player).

### **A29.3 Recording Send Off / Caution:**

The Match Official shall record details of each caution and send-off on the match sheet, and must submit a written report to the Zone office on each sending-off to arrive by close of business on the second normal working day following the match.



Failure to submit a written report by the required time to the Zone Office shall render the Match Official to a fine. (See appendix A-Fines / Fees)

#### **A29.4 Match Officials Fees:**

Match Officials' fees shall be determined by the Competition Administrator after consultation with NNSWF and shall be fixed prior to the commencement of the competitions.

### **A30 REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS**

Each Club is required to adhere, in the first instance, to the National Registration Regulations (2013) as issued by Football Australia.

**A30.1** Each club must ensure they have **ACTIVATED** all players within the online registration system (Play Football) prior to participation in the current season competition matches.

**A30.2** A player must be turning 5 years of age or more during the season calendar year to be accepted and activated by a Club.

**A30.2.1.** No male can play in a female team.  
Junior females can play in Junior mixed teams.  
Females can only play into senior male teams at the discretion of the Competition Administrator.

**A30.3** Clubs entering teams in the Junior Competitions must have their Registrar sight, verify and record the birth certificate details of each new player. Failure to comply with the above conditions will result in a player being classified as unregistered.

**A30.4** A person registering to play after the competition has commenced must have an active Play Football status with their Club, 24 hours before participating in any fixture. Failure to abide by this requirement will result in the player being deemed an ineligible player.

**A30.5** A junior players' grade eligibility will be determined by the age attained during the calendar year in which the competition takes place.

**A30.6** No Club may register more than the following number of players in any one team, without written application to and approval from the Competition Administrator:

Years 6, & 7, Players are registered with Miniroos as individuals with clubs, not as teams.  
Years 8, and 9, playing Miniroos - Ten (10) players  
Years 10, & 11, playing Miniroos - Twelve (12) players  
Years 12 to 18 playing Junior Football - Sixteen (16) players

Senior Men, Women, Over 35's Men and Over 30s Women - Minimum eleven (11) players. No maximum.

**A30.7** Should a player leave a team's registered list they may be replaced.

**A30.8** Players registered or playing with any other Club, Zone or Federation shall not be eligible to register or play with any Club affiliated with the Zone. Procedures relating to Movement of an Amateur/Professional as per the National Registration Regulations (2013) need to be observed.

Exemptions to this rule may only be provided by Northern NSW Football and the NCF Committee of Management in writing.

**A30.9** Any Club nominating more than one team in a Junior competitive age group must register the players separately for each team, with a minimum of 12 in each. These players must be documented and provided to the Competition Administrator by the 1<sup>st</sup> of May each year.

**A30.10** Any Club nominating a Junior competitive team that has 6 (six) or 7 (seven) NCF Skills Acquisition Program players registered in that team must play up one age division or play for no competition points.

Any Club nominating a junior competitive team that has 8 (eight) or more NCF Skills Acquisition Program players, must play up one age division and will not compete for points. The 3 competition points and a 3 – 0 score will be awarded to the opposition team.

No SAP player can play 2<sup>nd</sup> Division without approval from the Competition Administrator.

***Clubs may lodge a written submission to the Zone Committee requesting an exemption to this rule if they believe that special circumstances need to be taken into consideration. Any application received will be considered on an individual basis.***

**A30.11** Any player playing / registering at a level below their recognised playing age without prior written approval from the Competition Administrator may have their registration rescinded at any time.

**A30.12** Between the end of one season and the start of the next, no Junior player may drop more than two grades without prior written approval from the Competition Administrator.

**A30.13** Dual registration; a player can only be registered with one Club at a time. Dual registration will not be allowed.

A player may be registered for a maximum of three (3) Clubs during the period 1 January until 31 December. During this period, the player is only eligible to play in Matches for two (2) Clubs.

Refer to FFA National Registration Regulations (2013)

**A30.14** No new registrations or transfers will be accepted after 30<sup>th</sup> June in any Season.

## **A31 CLUB ELIGIBILITY FOR SENIOR FOOTBALL**

### **A31.1 Team Nominations**

Clubs nominating teams to participate in Senior Division football must also provide teams in the Zone Junior Divisions. Departure from this criterion will only be permitted under exceptional circumstances (e.g. a university-based Club as opposed to a community-based Club).

Any Club nominating any team to participate in any Senior Competition shall be required to deposit a club bond with the Zone at the time of team nominations. This pre-season bond shall be \$1,000 (see appendix A – Fines / Fees) per Club (NOT per senior team). From this bond will be deducted all fines imposed by the Competition Administrator and Zone Committee. The residue of any bond so deposited shall be refundable at Season's end on request.

#### **A31.1.1 Premier Leagues:**

- (a) Clubs participating in Men's Premier League must also participate in Men's First Division (clubs buddying up is permitted).
- (b) Clubs participating in Women's Premier League **do not** need to also participate in Women's First Division. Until team nominations indicate the viability of Women's First Division, at the Competition Administrator discretion.

#### **A31.1.2 Senior eligibility for First and Second divisions:**

A club can only nominate one team in each senior division. NCF, however, will consider exemptions to this rule.

#### **A31.1.3 Senior Player eligibility – Multiple Club teams in the same Division**

In the event of a Club nominating two or more teams in a division, players can only play in one of the teams. Any player being named on the match sheet cannot be played in another team in the same division for that season.

### **A31.2 Senior Division Player Eligibility**

Any registered player must turn 15 or older in the calendar year to be eligible to play in a senior competition.

A senior player can only be named in two (2) teams per competition round.

In Senior football, a player having been named five times in the starting line up in any season on a Premier League match sheet can only play down into First Division, no lower.

A player having been named five times in the starting line up in any season on a First Division match sheet can only play down one division to Second Division. Players cannot play any lower than 1 Division without the expressed written consent of the Competition Administrator.

### **A31.3 Senior Eligibility – Finals Series**

#### **A31.3.1 The highest division team entered by a Club in both Men and Women's competitions:**

No restrictions

#### **A31.3.2 All Other Senior Divisions:**

The player must have played (starting line-up) at least One third of that team's premiership-playing season in the respective grade. (Unless A30.4.1 applies)

### **A31.4 Age Qualification for over 35 Competitions**

A player must turn 35 in the calendar year to be eligible to register for that year's over 35 Competition.

Any player fulfilling the over 35 age criterion and registered with a Club is entitled to play in that Club's over 35 team regardless of their membership of other teams in their Club.

### **A31.5 Age Qualification for over 30 Women's Competition**

A player must turn 30 in the calendar year to be eligible to register for that year's over 30 Competition.

Any player fulfilling the over 30 age criterion and registered with a Club is entitled to play in that Club's over 30 team regardless of their membership of other teams in their Club.

## **A32 Player and Team Official Infringements**

### **A32.1 Cautions**

- (a) A player accumulating 3 cautions during a pre-season competition shall serve a one-match suspension with no rights to appeal against that one-match suspension. The suspension shall be served in the next pre-season match or (if that competition has ended) in the first Premiership competition match that follows the match in which the third caution was received.
- (b) A player accumulating 5 cautions during a Premier competition shall serve a one-match suspension with no right of appeal against that one-match suspension. The suspension shall be served in the next Premiership competition match or (if that competition has ended) in the first series match that follows the match in which the fifth caution was received.
- (c) A player accumulating 8 cautions during the Premiership competition shall serve a two-match suspension with no right of appeal against that two-match suspension. The suspension shall be served in the next two Premier competition matches and/or (if that competition has ended) in the first finals series match(s) that follow the match in which the eighth cautions was received.
- (d) A player accumulating 2 cautions during a Finals Series competition shall serve one-match suspension with no right of appeal against that one-match suspension. The suspension shall be served in the next Finals Series match if there is one, but failing this the suspension shall carry over to in the first Premiership competition match in the following season.
- (e) A player accumulating sufficient cautions during a Championship or Special Competition to warrant a mandatory suspension shall serve that suspension in that competition's next match or (if that the team's participation in that Championship or Special Competition has ended) shall serve the suspension in the next Premiership Competition match or finals series match (as appropriate) that follows.
- (f) Notwithstanding any of the foregoing, a player accumulating 9 cautions shall serve a three-match suspension with no right of appeal against that three-match suspension. Additionally, the players may be required to appear before the Disciplinary Committee, which may, at its discretion, impose a further suspension as it deems appropriate for every subsequent caution received by the player, without the right to appeal.

### **A32.2 Misconduct of a Team**

- (a) A minimum sanction of a \$200 fine will be imposed on any club for the misconduct of a Team which includes, but not limited to:
  - (i) 5 players are cautioned or sent off during 1 match
  - (ii) 3 players are sent off during 1 match; or
  - (iii) Several players together make threats or show force against a Match Official

## **A33 TRANSFERS AND CLEARANCES**

Each Club is required to adhere, in the first instance, to the National Registration Regulations (2013) as issued by Football Federation Australia.

## **A34 PLAYER & TEAM QUALIFICATION JUNIOR FOOTBALL**

### **A34.1 Junior Football**

- (a) The name and grade of any registered player temporarily playing in a higher grade as a “borrowed player” must be recorded on the match card with ‘B/P’ after their name.
- (b) A maximum of 3 players from other teams shall be permitted in any fixture in this fashion.
- (c) A “borrowed player” may not take part in a match by taking precedence over a player registered in that team.
- (d) Borrowed players can only be used to make the team up to thirteen players.
- (e) A player may only be named on the match card in one Junior Semi-Final, one Junior Preliminary Final and one Junior Grand Final in any one year.
- (f) Players are restricted to ‘playing up’ two competition age groups (e.g. a 12 year-old may play 13’s or 14’s).
- (g) Players may ‘play up’ grades and Divisions – but not down or across Divisions.
- (h) In special circumstances (e.g. physical or intellectual disability) a Club may request to play a player down. The Club must put their request in writing on club letterhead stating the reason for this special request. The Competition Administrator will assess this request and advise the Zone Committee the Club of the outcome.
- (i) A junior player can only be named in three teams per week with the written consent of North Coast Football.

### **A34.2 Miniros:**

Players may play for their Club in any team in their correct age division or in an appropriate higher age grade. However, players are restricted from ‘playing up’ two age groups without having played one season in an FFA Curriculum development block (i.e. U6 & U7; or U8 & U9; or U10 & U11 development blocks)

Clubs may request an exemption to this rule in writing to the Competition Administrator.

### **A34.3 Re –grading:**

The Competition Administrator reserves the right to re-grade any team deemed to be incorrectly nominated.

## **A35 PROCEDURES**

### **A35.1 WEATHER (See A.4)**

Where a Competition has designated Catch-Up weekends within the Zone Calendar, any match not played as scheduled due to weather will be rescheduled to the next available Catch-up weekend by the Competition Administrator.

Refer also to NNSWF Policies.

- Lightning;
- Sun Protection and;
- Hot Weather.

In the event of Weather impacting scheduled fixtures, the following procedure is to be followed by all Clubs hosting Competition games.

**a) Cancellation Monday to Friday:**

If cancellation is being advised Monday to Friday before 4.30pm, contact North Coast Football Office and advise that your Club's Home Ground is closed.

North Coast Football will advise:

- I. visiting Club(s);
- II. Match Officials;
- III. post notice to NCF website; and
- IV. advise relevant media.

**b) After Hours – Midweek Fixtures**

If the home / host Club's ground is unsuitable for play after 4.30pm, it will be the responsibility of the home / host Clubs to:

- I. advise all visiting Club(s);
- II. advise Match Officials;
- III. advise NCF Wet Weather Coordinator

**c) Weekend Fixtures**

After 4.30pm on Friday, the Home Club will be responsible for:

- I. Advising all visiting Clubs of the Ground Closure.  
Refer to the Clubs tab of the NCF Website Contact details.
- II. Contact the Zone Match Official Officer
- III. Contact NCF Wet Weather Coordinator advising of the cancelled fixtures

**d) The Playing of Catch-up Games**

The home Club is initially responsible for negotiating and arranging the Catch-up game.

This fixture should be played either

- a) on the next designated Catch-up weekend or
- b) arranged within 14 days of the original scheduled fixture.
  - I. However, the home team must take into account reasonable objections from the visiting team in selecting a rescheduled date.
  - II. In the event of an impasse, written approval will need to be obtained from the Competition Administrator for the match to be scheduled.

Written permission to postpone the fixture/s outside of these timeframes must be approved by the Competition Administrator.

If Clubs cannot agree on a suitable date, the Competition Administrator will arrange the fixture on a non-negotiable revised date, time and location.

If either team refuses to play this fixture on the revised date, the result will be awarded to the other team as a 3-0 forfeit.

If both teams refuse to play this fixture the result will be recorded as a No result.

### **A35.2 MASTERS COMPETITION RULES**

- a) Refer to the NCF Masters Rules of Competition document for the full list of Rules for these competitions. Note that where the Masters Rules of Competition do not cover an issue, the relevant section within this document will take precedence.
- b) Competitions will be run from time to time as decided by the Competition Administration.
- c) Nominations for these competitions will be called by the Competition Administration

### **A 35.3 SIX-A-SIDE / SUMMER COMPETITIONS / TOURNAMENTS**

Clubs intending to apply to host six-a-side / summer competitions or tournaments need to note the following:

- a) The Club hosting the tournament / competition must seek, in the first instance, approval from NNSWF. This request must be in writing and needs to be lodged at least two (2) months prior to the commencement of the tournament / competition.

NNSWF will confirm with the NCF Competition Administrator that the Zone ratifies this proposal.

- b) If approved and ratified by the NCF Competition Administrator, final approval from Northern NSW Football is to be sought on the Clubs behalf by NCF.
- c) Upon receipt of approval from NNSWF, a tournament / competition package is to be forwarded to the Club detailing all administrative requirements.
- d) All pre-season six-a-side and summer competitions are to be scheduled to be finished on or before the end of February in any year.
- e) All Players competing in special competitions need to be registered and activated for that competition via Play Football.
- f) Any registered player must turn 15 in the calendar year to be eligible to play in a Senior Competitions.



## APPENDIX A – FEES / FINES (GST inclusive)

### FEES

1.	Appeals to Disciplinary Committee Fee	\$400 per appeal
2.	Appeals to Appeal Board Fee	\$450 per appeal
3.	Appeals to North Coast Football Zone Committee Fee	\$880 per appeal
4.	Pre-season bond (senior clubs only)	\$1,000 per club

### FINES

a)	Failure to appear as directed by Disciplinary Committee Maximum fine	\$400 per offence
b)	Failure of club official to attend Disciplinary Committee Fine	\$55 per offence
c)	Guilty of unseemly conduct at a Disciplinary Committee.	\$330 per offence
d)	Vexatious appeal / attempt to circumvent NCFZ regulations	\$330 per offence
e)	Failure to appear as directed by Appeal Board	\$220 per offence
f)	Failure of club official to attend Appeal Board	\$110 per offence
g)	Guilty of unseemly conduct at an Appeal Board	\$330 per offence
h)	Failure to comply with the requirements of a Commission	\$275 per offence
i)	Incorrect or incomplete information on match card	\$50 per offence

j)	Failure to submit Match Official Send Off or Match Official Conduct Report by 6.00pm on the second normal day after the Match.	\$50 per offence
k)	Fielding an ineligible or unregistered player	\$100 per offence
l)	Club Forfeiting a Senior Fixture	\$250 per team
m)	Club Forfeiting a Junior Competitive Fixture	\$50 per team
n)	Club failing to attend AGM, EGM or All Clubs meeting	\$200 per offence
o)	Club withdrawing a senior team post the competition commencing	\$500 per offence

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## **FFA Disciplinary and Grievance Regulations.**

### **PLEASE NOTE**

The January 2015 FFA Disciplinary and Grievance Regulations supersede NCFZ By-law 9 (Commissions/Inquiries Disciplinary/ Appeal Boards ~ February 2006)

These FFA Regulations are available on the FFA website. All clubs are recommended to download the FFA regulations and become familiar with them.

**End of By- Law 7**

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