



BRIEF HISTORY - SCHOOL SPORT AUSTRALIA NATIONAL SCHOOLBOYS FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS



The National Schoolboy Championships were inaugurated in Melbourne in 1923. Victoria were the first Carnival winners with New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia the other foundation participants.

Western Australia and Tasmania entered for the first time in 1925 whilst the Australian Capital Territory have played several short periods since the early 1950's and have participated currently since 1977 when Hobart was the venue. The Northern Territory entered in 1974 when the Carnival was played in Brisbane and the 1998 Championship was their 25th carnival. From 1974 to 2007 all States and Territories have participated in the Championships except South Australia who missed from 1998 to 2007 and 2009 to 2011, Tasmania 1991 to 1993 and 1998 to 2013 and Western Australia 1998 to 2000.

There have been two breaks in the competition continuity with an outbreak of infantile paralysis in 1937 and the Second World War the reasons. The Carnival has continued unbroken since 1947. First awarded in 1931, the J.L. Williams Medal for the Championship Best and Fairest perpetuates the memory of the late Jack Williams, a Victorian teacher who battled for the creation and recognition of the National Schoolboys' Championships.

Of the 44 12&U Championships conducted 40 have ended with outright winners, with one tie; the 1986 and 1994 Championships finished in three way ties.

Outright winners have been South Australia and Victoria 20 times and Northern Territory once. Victoria (3), South Australia (2), Queensland (2) and Northern Territory (1) have been involved with ties. The host State has won or tied in only 10 of the 44 Championships conducted.

Of the 85 15&U Championships conducted (1956 and 1957 Championships having Senior and Junior Divisions and 1996 and 1997 having Division One and Division Two) 80 have ended with outright winners, 5 with ties and the 1956, 1973 and 1987 Championships finishing in three way ties.

Outright winners have been Victoria 48 times (including Victoria Country 5 and Victorian Metropolitan 5), Western Australia 15 times, South Australia 6 times, New South Wales 4 times, Tasmania 4 times and Queensland 3 times.

Victoria (5), Western Australia (4), Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania (each 1) have been involved with ties.

The host State has won or tied in only 24 of the 85 15&U Championships conducted. The Australian Secondary Schools' National Football Council (A.S.S.N.F.C.) has been a leader in Inter-State competitions, and many innovative ideas have been adopted by the Australian Schools Sports Council (A.S.S.C.) then School Sport Australia (SSA) during the past 85 years.

Perhaps the years of the greatest expansion began in 1978. This was the year that the Commonwealth Bank became the major sponsor. We have seen many new ideas introduced to our Championships. These have been possible because of the funds supplied by the Commonwealth Bank. It had also been much easier on our Host Associations, as our sponsorship funds helped to ease the costs of conducting our Championships.

In 1996 and 1997 the Championship was played as an Under 16 competition organised and funded by Football Development Foundation in each State under the umbrella of the AFL as the parent body.

In 1998 School Sport Australia reverted back to the original concept of a 15 and Under Championship for compulsory age students without any financial support. The Championship was funded by the participants.

Since 1999 Victoria has fielded two teams: a metropolitan and country team. In 1999 the first combined Primary and Secondary Football carnival was held in Canberra, ACT, where student umpires from participating States & Territories officiated at the Championships for the first time.

From 2002, the A.S. McLean Medal was awarded to the best umpire (field, boundary or goal) who officiates in the Championship. The medal is named in honour of Alan McLean, a Life Member and former National Secretary of the ASSNFC for 18 years and who had been involved in umpiring for over 34 years.

The carnival which combined the 12 & Under Exchange and 15 & Under Championship was formally named 'The School Sport Australia Australian Rules Football Carnival' in 2005. In 2008 it was renamed the "School Sport Australia Australian Football Championships".

Hosted in Melbourne, the 2008 Carnival marked the 150 Years Celebration of the commencement of Australian Football. South Australia who had not participated since 1997 rejoined the 15 and Under Championship. For the first time in the Championships history, four female student umpires officiated and every game was fully officiated (field, boundary and goal) by student umpires.

In 2009 the inaugural 16 years and under Girls Invitational competition was played between Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia in Maroochydore, Queensland.

The Richard G. Newman Shield was inaugurated in 2010 and recognised one 12 & Under Team, which extols the virtues of sportsmanship, outstanding ambassadorial aptitudes and commitment which Richard upheld throughout his long association with the School Sport Australia Australian Football 12 & Under Championship. The Shield is named in honour of Richard Newman, a SSA Service & Honour Award recipient, and former Manager & Coach of SAPSASA for 17 years.

2011 saw the inaugural School Sport Australia Girls 16 years and under Championship held in Canberra, ACT with five member bodies represented and an invitational team from AFL NSW/ACT. The Girls Championship was won by Victoria.

The 2012 Championships were hosted by South Australia. This coincided with the SAPSASA Centenary Celebrations which recognised their commencement with Australian Football in 1912. This was South Australia's first hosting since 2004 and they had representation in all competitions.

In 2013 the Schoolgirl's Player of the Championship Medal was awarded to the player adjudged to be the fairest and best in the Championship in Darwin, Northern Territory. The first A.S.S.N.F.C. All Australian Girls Football team was selected from participants at the Championships.

The 2014 Championships were hosted by New South Wales. This coincided with the NSWCHSA & NSWPSA 125 Year Anniversary celebrations which recognised their service to the State of NSW.