

SCHOOL SPORT AUSTRALIA

Boys 12 Years & Under and Girls 12 Years & Under Australian Football Championships

RULES AND GUIDELINES

Section A – Championship Overview

- A - 1.** These Rules and Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the School Sport Australia (SSA) General Policy and General Rules – 12 Years and Under Championships.
- A - 2.** The Championships shall be conducted according to the Laws of Australian Football, as published by the Australian Football League from time to time, unless specifically stated in these Rules and Guidelines.
- A - 3.** The Championships shall be conducted in accordance with a current Memorandum of Understanding between School Sport Australia and the AFL.

A - 4. Team Size

A - 4.1 Boys

A team may consist of up to twenty-three (23) players. All players shall be eligible to compete in each match.

A - 4.2 Girls

A team may consist of up to eighteen (18) players. All players shall be eligible to compete in each match.

Added October 2019

A - 5. Age Dispensation

Age Dispensation is not granted to any SSA member body for these Championships.

Section B – Competition Structure

- B - 1.** The scheduling of the 12 Years and Under Boys and Girls Australian Football Championships would commence on the second weekend of August or as soon as practicable after that date. The Championships will run from Sunday to Saturday (seven (7) days) with teams arriving on the Saturday. The Championships are not to run concurrently with the 14 Years and Under Boys and Girls Australian Football Championships.

B - 2. Draw

- B - 2.1** The draw for an eight team Championship is listed below. The start times are suggested only and will be the prerogative of the Host Member Body to determine.

Day 1 (Sun)	Opening Ceremony			
	Stage 1 - Round Robin Games' Format [all games 2 x 20 minute halves]			
	Round 1			
	9.30am	Round 1 – Game 1	11.40am	Round 1 – Game 3
	10.35am	Round 1 – Game 2	12.45pm	Round 1 – Game 4
Day 2 (Mon)	Round 2		Round 3	
	9.00am	Round 2 – Game 1	1.20pm	Round 3 – Game 1
	10.05am	Round 2 – Game 2	2.25pm	Round 3 – Game 2
	11.10am	Round 2 – Game 3	3.30pm	Round 3 – Game 3
	12.15pm	Round 2 – Game 4	4.35pm	Round 3 – Game 4
Day 3 (Tue)	Round 4			
	9.30am	Round 4 – Game 1	11.40am	Round 4 – Game 3
	10.35am	Round 4 – Game 2	12.45pm	Round 4 – Game 4
	Excursion Session 1 - Teams playing in afternoon games have education excursion in the morning		Excursion Session 2 - Teams playing in afternoon games have education excursion in the afternoon	
Day 4 (Wed)	Rest Day			
Day 5 (Thu)	Round 5		Round 6	
	9.00am	Round 5 – Game 1	1.20pm	Round 6 – Game 1
	10.05am	Round 5 – Game 2	2.25pm	Round 6 – Game 2
	11.10am	Round 5 – Game 3	3.30pm	Round 6 – Game 3
	12.15pm	Round 5 – Game 4	4.35pm	Round 6 – Game 4

Day 6 (Fri)	Round 7			
	9.30am	Round 7 – Game 1	11.40am	Round 7 – Game 3
	10.35am	Round 7 – Game 2	12.45pm	Round 7 – Game 4
<p>Stage 2 – Final Day playoffs.</p> <p>Final position will be determined by final placings after the Round Robin Games.</p> <p>Where two teams are tied on the same number of points, then the result of the match in which they played each other shall determine their position. Where three or more teams are tied on points, then the percentage in the games where they played each other shall determine their position.</p>				
Day 7 (Sat)	Playoffs [All games 4 x 15 minute quarters]			
	8.15am	7 th v 8 th		
	9.45am	5 th v 6 th		
	11.15am	3 rd v 4 th		
	12.45pm	1 st v 2 nd		
	Closing Ceremony			

Amended October 2019

B - 2.2 If less than eight teams are participating:

B - 2.2.1 The Host Member Body in consultation with the National Australian Football Advisor will prepare a round robin fixture.

B - 2.2.2 'Play Off' or 'Cross Over' games will only be included if there are five or less participating teams.

B - 2.3 Draft Draw

At least twelve (12) weeks prior to the commencement of the Championships the Championship Convener shall submit to all States/Territories a tentative program of matches. Any State/Territory wishing to submit an alteration to the tentative program of matches must do so within two (2) weeks of receiving it. Any amendment to the program shall be circularised as early as possible to all States/Territories.

B - 3. Duration of Matches

B - 3.1 **Eight Team Draw match formats**

B - 3.1.1 Stage 1 Round Robin Games shall consist of two twenty (20) minute halves with a ten (10) minute half time break.

Amended October 2019

B - 3.1.2 Stage 2 Final Day Playoffs shall consist of four fifteen (15) minute quarters, a five (5) minute break at quarter and three quarter time plus a ten (10) minute half time break.

Amended October 2019

B - 3.1.3 In all matches there will be no 'time on' added (except for the Blood Rule, serious injury, stretchers and send off).

Amended October 2018

Former rule 2.4.3 removed October 2018

B - 3.2 Seven Team or Less match formats

If there are less than eight teams participating then the game times will be four (4) twelve minute quarters with a five (5) minute break at quarter and three quarter time plus a ten (10) minute break at half time.

Added October 2019

B - 4. Game Protocols / Specific Rules

B - 4.1 Even Up Rule

In the spirit of the game and player welfare, if a team is unable to field a full team due to injury and/or illness, then both teams will start with an even number of players.

Added October 2019

B - 4.2 Order-Off Rule

B - 4.2.1 The umpire(s) in charge of a match may order a player from the field for a period of fifteen (15) minutes of actual playing time by use of a yellow card for:

B - 4.2.1.1 verbal harassment,

B - 4.2.1.2 abusive language,

B - 4.2.1.3 other unseemly conduct detrimental to the game

B - 4.2.1.4 any reportable offence according to the 'Laws of Australian Football'.

B - 4.2.2 Such player must report to the interchange steward on leaving the field and before returning. The player will be in the control of the team manager while off the field of play.

B - 4.2.3 The player sent off may be replaced by an interchange player. When this occurs, the umpire must show the card to the Interchange Steward and call time off. Time shall be signalled when the replacement player is in position.

B - 4.2.4 It shall be left to the discretion of the umpire whether the player sent off is reported.

B - 4.2.5 For a second offence during the game the player must be sent off for the remainder of the match, shown a red card and be reported. The player may be replaced by an interchange player.

B - 4.2.6 The field umpire(s) may send off a player for the remainder of the match if, in his/her opinion that player constitutes a menace to the physical well being of other players. Such a player must be shown a red card, reported and may be replaced by an interchange player.

B - 4.2.7 The field umpire(s) shall report a player by notifying the National Australian Football Advisor or the Championship Convenor within an hour of the completion of the game.

B - 4.3 Interchange Rule

B - 4.3.1 Boys Championship

Any State / Territory may name up to twenty three (23) players for any game, of which only 18 may be on the field at any one time.

B - 4.3.2 Girls Championship

Any State / Territory may name up to eighteen (18) players for any game, of which only twelve (12) may be on the field at any one time.

B - 4.3.3 Interchange Area

The ongoing interchange player must enter the playing arena through the defined area. The player leaving the field must leave through the defined area. Failure to do this will mean that the player cannot return to the game. There is no limit on interchanges.

B - 4.4 Stretcher / Carry Off Rule

Any player who is injured during a match and who, in the opinion of a Doctor, Trainer or Official, requires the assistance of a stretcher, shall be attended by the Team's training staff and either carried off or on a stretcher as soon as possible to ensure the health and safety of the player. The normal process of notifying the umpire will occur and the player shall remain off the field for a period of 20 minutes

B - 4.5 Penalties

B - 4.5.1 Boys – Championship: 25 Metre Penalty

A 25 metre penalty will be awarded rather than the 50 metre penalty for the 12 Years & Under Boys Championship.

B - 4.5.2 Girls Championship – 15 Metre Penalty

A 15 metre penalty will be awarded rather than the 50 metre penalty for the 12 Years & Under Girls Championship.

B - 4.6 Wet Weather

B - 4.6.1 Decision on wet weather day to be determined by the National Australian Football Advisor or the Championship Convenor in consultation with participating team managers and officiating umpires.

B - 4.6.2 Should wet weather interfere in the Championships, then the State / Territory leading the competition shall be declared the winner. If two or more States/Territories are leading the competition they shall be declared joint winners.

B - 4.7 Girls Championship – Specific Rules

B - 4.7.1 Marking

10 metre direct catch.

B - 4.7.2 Bouncing the ball

Two (2) maximum.

B - 4.7.3 Modified Tackling

B - 4.7.3.1 Players must perform a modified tackle.

B - 4.7.3.1.1 A player in possession of the ball may be tackled by an opponent wrapping both arms around the area below the top of the shoulders and on/above the knees. The tackle may be from either side or from behind providing the tackle from behind does not thrust forward the player with the ball (that is push the player in the back).

B - 4.7.3.1.2 If the player in possession of the ball is taken to the ground in the act of tackling, they will receive a free kick. If the umpire feels the player drops to the ground deliberately in order to receive a free kick, they will be penalised for holding the ball.

B - 4.7.3.1.3 A player in possession of the ball, when held by an opponent applying the wrap-around tackle, should be given a reasonable chance to dispose of the ball by kick or by handball, or by attempting to kick or handball, otherwise a free kick shall be awarded to the tackler for holding the ball.

B - 4.7.3.1.4 The field umpire shall conduct a ball-up when the player with the ball has the ball held to the body by an opponent, unless the player has had a reasonable time to dispose of the ball before being tackled, in which case a free kick shall be awarded to the tackler for holding the ball.

B - 4.7.3.1.5 The field umpire shall allow play to continue if the ball is knocked accidentally out of a player's hands by an opponent.

B - 4.7.3.1.6 A player not in possession of the ball, when held by an opponent, shall be awarded a free kick.

B - 4.7.3.1.7 There is strictly no bumping, slinging or deliberately bringing the opposition player in possession of the ball to the ground.

B - 4.7.3.2 Players cannot:

B - 4.7.3.2.1 knock the ball out of an opponent's hands on purpose;

B - 4.7.3.2.2 push the player in the side;

B - 4.7.3.2.3 steal the ball from another player;

B - 4.7.3.2.4 smother an opponent's kick;

B - 4.7.3.2.5 shepherd an opponent.

Added November 2019

B - 5. Points Allocation

For all competition three (3) points shall be awarded for a win, and two (2) for a tie and one (1) for a loss.

B - 6. Method of Determining a Winner

At the completion of the competition, where two or more teams finish on equal points, joint winners will be declared and percentages will not be used to determine outright winners.

Section C – Facilities / Equipment

C - 1 .Field Size

C - 1.1 Boys Championship

All games to be played on a standard sized oval without modification.

Amended November 2018

C - 1.2 Girls Championship

All games to be played on an oval sized approximately 100m x 80m.

Added November 2019

C - 2 .Match Equipment

C - 2.1 All match balls to be supplied by the host School Sport Australia member body.

Amended September 2016

C - 2.2 Ball Type

C - 2.2.1 All 12 Years & Under Boys games to use a size 3 leather ball unless the National Australian Football Advisor decides a synthetic ball would be better.

Amended November 2019

C - 2.2.2 All 12 Years & Under Girls games to use a size 3 synthetic ball.

Added October 2019

C - 3 .General

C - 3.1 Team lists

The Team Manager is to submit three team lists, including the interchange bench players and officials, in writing to the Umpires/Ground Manager prior to the commencement of the game. Team lists will be provided by the Host State/Territory.

C - 3.2 Water Bottles

Team Management must ensure that each player has an individual water bottle for use by the player before, during and after the game.

C - 3.3 Spare Footballs

Spare footballs are kept at each end behind the goals during games.

Section D – Uniform

D - 1 .Jumper Numbers

D - 1.1 Boys Championship

Teams may allocate jumper numbers from one (1) to twenty eight (28) with numbers of contrasting colours.

Amended April 2018

D - 1.2 Girls Championship

Teams may allocate jumper numbers from one (1) to eighteen (18) with numbers of contrasting colours.

Added October 2019

D - 2 .State and Territory Uniform colours:

Australian Capital Territory	- Royal Blue and Gold
New South Wales	- Navy Blue and Sky Blue
Northern Territory	- Ochre, Black and White
Queensland	- Maroon and White
South Australia	- Red, Gold and Navy
Tasmania	- Red, Bottle Green and Yellow
Victoria	- Navy and White Vee
Western Australia	- Gold and Black

D - 3 .States/Territories must notify the National Australian Football Advisor of any changes to uniform at least twelve (12) weeks prior to the commencement of the Championships for endorsement and circulation to competing States / Territories.

Section E – Injury Management

E - 1. Refer to School Sport Australia General Policy for the management of injuries.

Section F – Officials

F - 1. Match Officials

F - 1.1 Ground Officials

F - 1.1.1 Two official timekeepers shall be appointed by the Host State/Territory to act in concert for all matches.

F - 1.1.2 A Ground Convenor and an Interchange Steward should be appointed for each game.

F - 1.1.3 A Sports Medicine person be supplied at each field by the Host State, provided within the budget.

F - 1.2 Umpire / Student Officials

F - 1.2.1 Each participating Team should bring a field and a goal and a boundary umpire who are current Secondary students. Preference should be given to Secondary school students holding or gaining Level 1 accreditation. Where this is not possible the State/Territory must notify the host State/Territory and the National Australian Football Advisor one (1) month prior to the Championships. Student Officials will be supplied with one full Umpiring uniform for the Championships and provided with lunch when officiating.

F - 1.2.2 The Host State/Territory is responsible for appointing a suitably qualified Umpires Coordinator and evaluator. The Umpires Coordinator must attend the Pre-Championships meeting which will discuss rules and players/coaches codes of conduct. Should the Umpire's Coordinator not be available to attend the Pre-Championships meeting, then a written statement

containing rules and expectations shall be produced by the Coaches/Managers/Championship Organisers at the Pre-Championships meeting and this is to be given to all officiating umpires prior to the commencement of the competition.

F - 1.2.3 The Host State/Territory will appoint a teacher as the Umpire Supervisor to the Championships in addition to the Umpire Coordinator. Funding for this position will come from the Championship budget.

F - 1.2.4 Where possible neutral field umpires be appointed to pool and round robin games.

F - 1.2.5 Before all games field umpires should introduce themselves to both coaches, shake hands and briefly address the teams. Umpires will check for safety of all boots at the beginning of each game. Gloves and jewellery are not permitted.

F - 1.2.6 Competent boundary and goal umpires shall be appointed. If such umpires are not accredited, they should receive training for their duties.

F - 1.2.7 In addition to goal umpires, a neutral scorer shall be appointed.

F - 1.2.8 Interpretation or clarification of rules should be requested by the team manager through the Umpires Coordinator following the completion of matches.

F - 2. Team Officials

F - 2.1 Coaches

In the spirit of the game and in order to promote the development of the game, tactics such as 'tagging', 'flooding' and dropping players behind the ball are discouraged.

F - 2.2 A Runner

Coaches of playing teams will be restricted to occupying the Coach's bench during playing times, except in the case of a serious injury. A designated team official, other than the coach, will be allowed on the field to attend injury and to act as a runner. The designated team runner should be an adult and must wear an official uniform supplied and maintained by the participating State or Territory. The uniform is to adhere to the colour and design as stipulated by the National Australian Football Advisor.

Amended October 2017

F - 3. General Officials

F - 3.1 Sports Trainer

Each participating team is encouraged to provide a qualified Sports Trainer as part of their Team Management.

F - 3.2 Water Carriers

Each team shall be entitled to use three (3) water carriers. Each water carrier must be clearly identified, must not engage in coaching of individuals in teams whilst on the field of play, must avoid areas of actual play and must not remain on the field for extended periods of time. The water carriers are to wear an official uniform supplied and maintained by the participating State or Territory. The uniform is to adhere to the colour and design as stipulated by the National Australian Football Advisor.

Amended October 2017

F - 4. Team Officials Area

All Coaches & Team Officials shall stand a minimum distance of at least 1.5 metres from the boundary.

Section G – Protests

- G - 1.** In the event of a protest concerning any match played during the Championships, such protest in writing must be lodged with the National Australian Football Advisor or the Championships Convenor, within two (2) hours following the completion of the match concerned.
- G - 2.** A copy of the protest must also be lodged with one of the managers of the team protested against within the same period.
- G - 3.** The protest shall be adjudicated by a Protests and Disputes Committee consisting of one (1) delegate from each State/Territory competing in the Championships, but excluding the delegates of the States/Territories concerned in the dispute.
- G - 4.** The President of the host State/Territory member body or his/her nominee, shall be chairperson, and shall have a casting vote only. The National Australian Football Advisor shall summon a meeting of the Protests and Disputes Committee as soon as possible after the receipt of the protest.
- G - 5.** No appeal shall be made to any outside organisation, and the decision of the Protests and Disputes Committee shall be final.

Section H – Tribunal / Judiciary

- H - 1.** The National Australian Football Advisor, in consultation with the Executive of the State/Territory conducting the Championships, shall submit to the Pre-Championships meeting, for approval, its proposal for the constitution of the Tribunal to arbitrate in cases of players being reported by Umpires for field offences.
- H - 2.** Reports shall be dealt with by the Tribunal as soon as possible, in the presence of the umpire(s) who made the report.
- H - 3.** The Tribunal shall have the power to impose a suspension of one or more games on any player reported by an umpire and found guilty.

Section I – Trophies / Awards / Medals

I - 1. The Alex Howe Trophy

The Alex Howe Trophy, which shall be held by the winning State / Territory for twelve (12) months. The name of the winning team is to be engraved on the Trophy at the expense of the winning State / Territory. It shall be the responsibility of this State / Territory to see that the Trophy is with the National Australian Football Advisor in time for presentation to the winner of the succeeding Championship

I - 2. The R.G. Newman Shield

The Richard G. Newman Shield recognises one Team, which extols the virtues which Richard upheld throughout his long association with the School Sport Australia Australian Football 12 Years & Under Championship. The team will include the twenty three (23) players and the designated Team Officials. The Shield will be presented at the Closing Ceremony and appropriate pins/medallions will be given to each member of the winning team. The cost will need to be included in the budget.

The successful team will be judged on the following criteria:

- The team which demonstrates outstanding ambassadorial aptitudes for their State/Territory and the game during the Championships on and off the field.

- Demonstrated exemplary Sportsmanship by team members.
- A recognised team commitment by all to all-working as a team.
- An inclusive attitude to all educational and sporting components of the Championship.
- An ability to have fun.

The following areas are provided as a guide to the selection panel in determining the successful Team: Functions; Team presentation; Game conduct and general behaviour.

The award will be judged by a selection panel consisting of the Championship Convenor, the Championship Umpires Coordinator and chaired by the National Australian Football Advisor.