



## MEMO 63 -2024

**DATE:** Monday 27<sup>th</sup> October  
**TO:** Premier Clubs  
**FROM:** General Manager Football Operations  
**SUBJECT:** 2025 Season Calendar & Youth Competition Structure

For Information or Action	Action required	When	NNSWF Contact	Total Pages
Information	N/A	N/A	<a href="#">Thom Kane</a>	4

Please find attached to this memo the 2025 Competitions Calendar for our premier competitions following our most recent Standing Committee and PYL Advisory Committee meetings:

- NPL – Mens & Womens
- Northern League One
- PYL Girls & Boys
- Junior Development League
- Australia Cup
- State Cup – Mens & Womens

### Senior Football

There have been no material changes to any senior league competitions for season 2026, with the exception of moving the season back one week for both start and finish dates.

As the Women's & Girls League Cup was introduced as a youth focused competition, with the focus on providing youth female players with a cup competition, the decoupling of these competitions means we do not have empty weekends in the NPLW calendar. The Women's State Cup competition will remain.

### Premier Youth League Boys

Further to our discussions with the relevant Standing Committees and the PYL Advisory Group, whilst the principles of two phases and promotion and relegation will be maintained for season 2026, the timing of competitions will be altered to help us better prepare for another wet weather affected year.

### PYLB: League Sizes



# NORTHERN NSW FOOTBALL

With the welcome addition of Dudley Redhead United to the PYL Boys competition, we now have 25 teams. This will necessitate a change to the numbers in each division and the competition will be split as follows:

- Phase 1:
  - Division 1 – 12 Teams playing all teams once – 11 matches
  - Division 2 – 13 Teams playing all teams once – 12 matches
- Phase 2:
  - Division A: 9 Teams – 1<sup>st</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> Place in Division 1, playing each team twice – 16 matches + finals
  - Division B: 8 Teams – 10<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup> Division 1 and 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> in Division 2, playing each team twice – 14 matches + finals. Top 3 teams promoted to Division 1 in 2027.
  - Division C: 8 Teams – 6<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> in Division 2, playing each team twice – 14 matches + finals

## **PYLB: Cup Competition**

In order to provide a buffer between Phase 1 and Phase 2, the previously scheduled pre-season “UEFA Champions League” style competition will now take place between the two phases. It will allow us to sacrifice this smaller competition, or small parts of it, to ensure we maintain as much integrity as possible in the promotion & relegation process for youth football. As a reminder, the format of the cup competition is as follows:

- ‘UEFA Champions League’ Style Single League Format for each age group.
- All clubs split into 3 pots based on 2025 standings.
- Each team to play 1 team from each pot – 3 matches.
- The teams finishing 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in each age group will play the Cup Final.
- These fixtures will be released alongside PYL Phase 1 fixtures in December.

## **PYLB: Season Start & End Timing**

As the Phase 1 season will start earlier (during the period the pre-season competition was previously scheduled), fixtures will be altered to accommodate for the potential heat. For matches not involving regional clubs under 18s and under 16s will be scheduled to play on Friday evening (or other evening nominated by clubs) with 13s-15s playing Saturday or Sunday morning – kicking off at 8am. This will be in place until the weekend of 1<sup>st</sup> March as a minimum. *For matches involving regional teams, appropriate measures will be taken to avoid scheduling in the heat whilst being practical for regional teams and teams travelling to regional clubs.*

We also understand that the A division does cross into October, and are open to the possibility of bringing the PYL Boys season forward by a week to start in the first week of February if clubs prefer.

## **PYLB: Midweek & Double Headers**

With the number of matches being played by our players in PYL, we understand this can make for a long season for volunteers. Based on the consultation and feedback at the PYL Advisory Group meeting, we opted to include a scheduled midweek round in phase 1, and another midweek round and double header for Div A in phase 2 (noting that although there are 18 rounds this will include 2 byes for each team). *For any matches involving a regional team –*



*midweek matches will automatically revert to a double header, which may potentially be played later in phase 1 to avoid the hotter part of the year.*

## **PYL Boys Kick off Times**

Based on discussion at the PYL Advisory Group in phase 1 we will be trialling a different line-up of kick off times once the hot weather precautions have subsided, which will see the following kick off times:

- Under 18 – 9:00am
- Under 16 – 10:40am
- Under 13 – 12:20pm
- Under 14 – 2:00pm
- Under 15 – 3:40pm

There are a number of key reasons for this:

- This will ensure players who are bridging the gap between Under 18s and Reserve Grade no longer need to choose which team to play for, and are able to sit on the bench of senior football without sacrificing their under 18s commitments.
- The panel of match officials best suited to, and available for Under 18s are also the same referees that cover Reserve Grade football, meaning we will not need to choose which matches get appointment – and can cover more Under 18s matches with those referees then able to also do senior football. This increases significantly when the under 16s are added to also include assistant referees.
- The vast majority of PYL referees are also PYL players and will rarely referee before they play, however, if our 15-18 year old group have finished playing by lunchtime – we will be able to cover more matches in the afternoon.
- We understand this may also benefit the volunteer and canteen operations with the under 15s age group generally a more populated and engaged group being the final match of the day as opposed to under 18s.

*Please note this will not change Northern NSW's aim to align Under 18s fixtures to senior fixtures where clubs wish this to occur.*

## **Premier Youth League Girls**

### **PYLG: League Format**

Premier Youth League Girls has now formally decoupled from the NPL Womens Competition for season 2026. We welcome Kahibah to the competition, this now brings the total number of teams in PYL Girls to 9. All teams will play each other three times in a 30 round competition (with each team receiving 3 byes during the season).

### **PYLG: Cup Competition**

2026 will see the alignment of girls and boys competitions, with both competitions being played at the same time in the middle of the season. The format will be similar, with slight differences as the number of clubs differ:

- 'UEFA Champions League' Style Single League Format for each age group.



# NORTHERN NSW FOOTBALL

- All clubs split into 3 pots based on 2025 standings.
- Each club to play 1 team from each pot – 3 matches.
- The teams finishing 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in each age group will play the Cup Final.
- These fixtures will be released alongside PYL Phase 1 fixtures in December.

## **PYLG Season Start & End Timing**

As the Phase1 season will start earlier (during the period the pre-season competition was previously scheduled), fixtures will be altered to accommodate for the potential heat. This will include either kicking off matches at 8am, or potentially moving under 18s to Friday evening. This will be in place until the weekend of 1<sup>st</sup> March as a minimum. *For matches involving regional teams, appropriate measures will be taken to avoid scheduling in the heat whilst being practical for regional teams and teams travelling to regional clubs.*

We also understand that the PYL girls competitions also does cross into October, and are open to the possibility of bringing the season forward by a week to start in the first week of February if clubs prefer.

## **PYLG: Midweek & Double Headers**

With the increase in matches for the PYL girls we understand this can make for a long season for volunteers. Based on the consultation and feedback at the PYL Advisory Group meeting, we opted to include 2 scheduled midweek rounds (noting that although there are 30 rounds this will include 3 byes for each team). *For any matches involving a regional team – midweek matches will automatically revert to a double header, which may potentially be played later in the season to avoid the hotter part of the year.*

## **Clashes with Youth Trial Matches**

To be clear, competition matches take precedence over any pre-season trial match or tournament your club may have committed to. However, there is flexibility to move matches if clubs can agree to a change. With this in mind – please ensure in your fixture requests to outline any weeks you would like to have that flexibility to allow us to pair you with other clubs in the same position, only where possible. This goes for boys and girls pre-season, and the potential proctor cup clashes.

## **Junior Development League**

There will be no significant changes to the calendar for Junior Development League, Boys or Girls, for season 2026.

Please read this in conjunction with Memo 62, and provide any feedback on fixtures or season dates in line with the dates outlined in that memo.

**Liam Bentley**  
**General Manager Football Operations**  
**Northern NSW Football**