



**NORTHERN  
NSW**  
FOOTBALL

**2026**  
**Talent Support Program**  
**(TSP)**

Information Guide

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## Overview

Northern NSW Football (NNSWF) is committed to implementing a state-wide series of Talent Support Program (TSP) Hubs. Importantly, TSP's will be delivered locally across our region, minimising the need for extensive travel, through the establishment of five TSP hubs encompassing metropolitan and regional Northern NSW including:

- Hunter Region (Metro)
- Mid North Coast
- Northern Inland
- North Coast
- Far North Coast

The TSP's main objective is to provide identified players with a platform to showcase their talents in a high performance, player centred environment where they can strive to progress on to A-League Academies and National Teams setup.

## Purpose

The purpose of NNSWF's TSP is to provide identified players with an opportunity that is consistent with Football Australia's (FA) policies, to perform in high intensity, player centred, environments without fear of failure and use the TSP program as a platform to achieve their ambitions of becoming a professional footballer.

## Program Overview

Northern NSW Football want to empower our clubs to be at the heart of player development. The TSP will support the clubs in their player development by identifying and showcasing this talent. Therefore, the TSP program will provide players, in addition to their existing club or zone participation, a high-quality, games-based learning environment that will supplement their normal training loads. We believe that providing our most talented players the opportunity to play in higher intensity and engaging formats in addition to their club program provides the best chances of becoming a professional footballer or representing their country.

## TSP Structure

NNSWF's TSP training methodology in 2026 will deliver age and stage appropriate session plans linked to the NNSWF Football's DNA and a games-based model aimed at providing identified players the opportunity to play against and with other talented players. This will provide a higher level of intensity and engagement within the game format and an excellent foundation to showcase the players.

Within the training session, the players will be challenged to play and enjoy the game aligned to the NNSWF DNA without the fear of failure. We believe that when we can reduce the fear of failure within a higher intensity, higher engaged environment, there will be a greater chance of showcasing the player's best talent. We will create the no fear of failure environment through our coaching approach, training intervention strategies and inclusive environment which will be taught at our in-house coach development sessions.

Along with the game-based approach, players will be empowered to be at the centre of their own development. Individual and group feedback will be given in the moment by the TSP coaches, however, official 'termly' feedback will not be given. This decision is made, due to the limited time spent with the TSP group and the feeling that effective feedback will be difficult to give to individual players. We see this type of feedback aligning more with the club's role of being the main vehicle for player development.

NNSWF's TSP's will be conducted in four (4) ten (10) week cycles.

For each cycle, players will train bi-weekly with and against different players within the TSP program. In some regions, the training sessions could include games which may be played against external teams/clubs/academies/programs.

Within each TSP cycle, there will also be opportunities to play with and against the Newcastle Jets Academy.

Players within the TSP will be reviewed and may be released or invited to return for the next cycle. This means that any talented players who are identified external to TSP, may be invited into the program for the following cycle.

### Key Points

- NNSWF's TSP is aligned to FA's Integrated Talented Player Pathway.
- TSP provides a Nationally consistent development programs leading to Junior/Youth National Team identification.
- TSP helps to prepares players for the performance phase with clubs (PYL & AL); and
- Provides a benchmarking opportunity for the most talented youth players in the region.

## Hunter Region Talent Support Programs

The Hunter Region TSP will be implemented as follows:

### Boys Programs

- 13's
- 14's
- 15's
- 16's

### Girls Programs

- 13's & 14's combined
- 15's & 16's combined

The program will consist of one training session every two weeks with sessions taking place at Lake Macquarie Regional Football Facility. Training will be led by dedicated TSP Coaching staff and overseen by NNSWF's Talent Development Officer and Technical Director.

## Regional TSP Programs

Mid Coast and North Coast Football hubs will be conducted as multi-age programs. For example:

### Boys Programs

- 13's/14's
- 15's/16's

### Girls Programs

- 13's/14's
- 15's/16's

In the regions of North Coast Football, the location will be Coffs Coast Leisure Park and Mid Coast Football, the location will be Macquarie Park, Port Macquarie and Rainbow Beach, Lake Cathie.

Far North Coast TSP hub will be conducted as below:

### Boys Programs

- 13's
- 14's
- 15's & 16's combined

### Girls Programs

- 13's & 14's combined
- 15's, 16's combined

In the region of Football Far North Coast, the location will be Cavanbah Centre, Byron Bay.

In the Northern Inland region, the hub will be conducted as mixed gender, multi-age programs, pending interest levels from talented players within each region. The location for the Northern Inland program will be Viaduct Playing Fields, Tamworth and Gipps Street Sporting Complex, Tamworth.

In all Regional areas the TSP's will consist of five training sessions per 10-week, termly cycle.

## 2026 Program Dates

The TSP's will be conducted in four cycles. The cycles will align with the Emerging Championships being the culmination of 4 cycles. Therefore in 2026, 'cycle 1' will be school term 2, as this will be the first cycle post 2026 Emerging Championships. The training sessions held during the following weeks:

W	CYCLE 3 - 2025	CYCLE 1 - 2026	CYCLE 2 - 2026	Cycle 3 - 2026
1	3 <sup>rd</sup> February	28 <sup>th</sup> April	21 <sup>st</sup> July	13 <sup>th</sup> October
2	10 <sup>th</sup> February	5 <sup>th</sup> May	28 <sup>th</sup> July	20 <sup>th</sup> October
3	17 <sup>th</sup> February	12 <sup>th</sup> May	4 <sup>th</sup> August	27 <sup>th</sup> October
4	24 <sup>th</sup> February	19 <sup>th</sup> May	11 <sup>th</sup> August	3 <sup>rd</sup> November
5	3 <sup>rd</sup> March	26 <sup>th</sup> May	18 <sup>th</sup> August	10 <sup>th</sup> November
6	10 <sup>th</sup> March	2 <sup>nd</sup> June	25 <sup>th</sup> August	17 <sup>th</sup> November
7	17 <sup>th</sup> March	9 <sup>th</sup> June	1 <sup>st</sup> September	24 <sup>th</sup> November
8	24 <sup>th</sup> March	16 <sup>th</sup> June	8 <sup>th</sup> September	1 <sup>st</sup> December
9	31 <sup>st</sup> March	23 <sup>rd</sup> June	15 <sup>th</sup> September	8 <sup>th</sup> December

10	7 <sup>th</sup> April	30 <sup>th</sup> June	22 <sup>nd</sup> September	15 <sup>th</sup> December
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## Player Numbers

Hunter Region TSP training groups will consist of the following:

- 13's Boys - up to 32 players selected per cycle
- 14's Boys - up to 32 players selected per cycle
- 15's Boys - up to 28 players selected per cycle
- 16's Boys - up to 24 players selected per cycle
- 13's & 14's Girls - up to 32 players selected per cycle
- 15's, 16's Girls - up to 24 players selected per cycle

Regional TSP's will consist of up to 24 players per program.

## Invitation Benchmark

It is important to note that the number of players invited into a TSP will be dependent on the number of players meeting the required development benchmark. The benchmark for being considered for an invitation into a TSP is having the ability or potential to:

- Transition into the Newcastle Jets Academy.
- Be considered to represent NNSWF at Emerging Championships; and/or
- Be considered to represent Australia at Junior National Team level.

## Selection to TSP

TSPs allow identified talented players to play with and against other identified talented players. The purpose is to supplement and not replace or interfere with club training commitments to achieve 3-4 high quality sessions per week.

TSP is an integral part of NNSWF's Talented Player Pathway and is an important component of the player Identification process.

Players may be invited to participate in TSP through being identified by:

- Involvement in previous NNSWF programs and/or representative teams.
- NNSWF Talent Development staff.
- Newcastle Jets Academy staff.
- Football Australia National Team staff.
- Being referred to NNSWF technical staff by Premier Club and Zone TD's and coaches

### Key Points

- TSP is an invitation only program for identified talented players.

## **Costs associated with NNSWF TSP's**

NNSWF subsidises Talent Development programs and are committed to making Player Development programs such as TSP as affordable as possible for families.

Players who are offered positions within NNSWF TSP's will be charged on a per term basis for the periods that they are selected. Participation fees for the training component of all NNSWF TSP's is \$100 per cycle.

The training component is inclusive of:

- Coaching fees
- Facility hires
- Training equipment
- Referee fees
- Insurances

## **Training Kit**

Each player that accepts an invitation into a NNSWF TSP program will be required to purchase and wear the NNSWF TSP training kit which will consist of a training shirt, shorts and black socks. Other optional TSP items can be purchased, such as TSP jacket, TSP spray jacket.

The TSP kit will be a one-off purchase, and NNSWF are committed to providing this at the most cost-effective price possible.

Players will be responsible for all expenses associated with attending any additional programs and events including TSP Tournaments and gala days, Talent Development Games and 'Elite matches' organised by NNSWF.

## **TSP Coaches**

NNSWF will identify, select, and employ all coaches engaged in NNSWF TSP's. To ensure the most qualified, experiences and suitable coaches are appointed to TSP's, NNSWF may:

- Call for expressions of interest.
- Call for coach nominations from Premier Clubs or Member Zones.
- Identify and appoint targeted coaches; and/or
- Advertise for positions.

## **Coach Mentoring Opportunities**

NNSWF extends an open and ongoing invitation to club and Member Zone coaches who would like to attend and assist with the TSP as a development opportunity (non-paid).

## **Talent Development Games and Gala Days**

These TSP events are a critical component of our statewide talent identification. The talent development games (TDG) provide opportunities for registered TSP players to represent their zone and play against TSP players from the other zones in tournament style games. Allowing players to represent their zone at these TSP events, we hope produces a more intense and higher engaged game where players can showcase their talents.

The TSP gala days differ to the TDG's by allowing the players to represent themselves rather than any zone. This player centred approach gives players the opportunity to be mixed in with other identified players from across the whole state in small, sided games and then more traditional full-sized games.

Both events allow NNSWF to effectively compare and benchmark the players from across the whole of Northern NSW.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

From time-to-time TSP players will be asked to assist NNSWF in their delivery of other programs. These programs may include coach education, tournament preparation and coaching masterclasses. These opportunities will be sporadic and may come with limited notice. We encourage our TSP players to make themselves available for as many of these opportunities as possible, and these activities are looked upon as another excellent way to showcase our TSP player's talent.

## **Interstate Tours**

NNSWF will work with other member federations to provide a series of TSP tournaments for players engaged in TSP's (Regional and Hunter Region), typically during the school holidays. Please note that the age groups that will be invited to take part in these tournaments will vary from cycle to cycle, as this will be dependent on the opportunities presented at the time.

## **Overseas Tours**

Overseas tours also form part of the NNSWF talented player pathway. The TSP will be the program that NNSWF use, along with the Newcastle Jets to gain interest and offer invitations to represent NNSWF on these tours. Whilst these tours are additional to the program, and are not mandatory for players to attend, they are an excellent way for players to excel their development and experience playing against different cultures. Please note that the age groups that will be invited to take part in these tournaments will vary from cycle to cycle, as this will be dependent on the opportunities presented at the time.

## **TDS Games**

Identified players from NNSWF's TSP's (Regional and Hunter Region) may also have the opportunity to be invited to attend National Elite Games which form part of FA's National Identification process for the various National Junior and Youth team programs.

Elite games will enable FA, the Newcastle Jets and NNSWF to benchmark the very best players and to further identify players who have the potential to transition into the Newcastle Jets Academy or A-League squads.

## **Emerging Championships**

The Emerging Championships are the culmination of the TSP training calendar and are specifically aimed at the U15 and U16 age groups in both the boys and the girls. The Emerging Championships provide an opportunity for identified players to showcase their talents with other identified talented players from within NNSWF, against other member federations from across the nation, in front of National Team staff. Our Emerging Championship squads are selected from our respective TSP age groups, along with the Newcastle Jets Academy players.

## **Northern NSW Football Representation Selection Policy**

Please refer to the [NNSWF selection policy](#) for further information.