



**NATIONAL
PREMIER LEAGUES**



**NATIONAL
PREMIER LEAGUES
NORTHERN NSW**

2021

National Premier Leagues Northern NSW

Competition Rules



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OFFICIAL



1. SCOPE & DEFINITONS

1.1. The National Premier Leagues Northern NSW 2021 Competition Rules are to be read in conjunction with Northern NSW Football 2021 Premier Competition Regulations.

1.2. All definitions as outlined in the Northern NSW Football 2021 Premier Competition Regulations will apply in this document.

2. FEES

2.1. Participation Fee

(a) The total Participation Fee is approximately \$42,180.49, subject to Rule 2.1(c).

(b) This Fee includes the following:

| | | |
|--------|---|-------------|
| (i) | Competition Fees | \$10,243.75 |
| (ii) | Contribution to Match Official Appointments Officer | \$770.00 |
| (iii) | FFA Cup Entry Fee | \$907.50 |
| (iv) | BarTV Coverage | N/A |
| (v) | Disciplinary Levy | \$825.00 |
| (vi) | Match Official Fees | \$11,895.00 |
| (vii) | Senior Player Registration Fees | \$9,546.92 |
| (viii) | Junior Player Registration Fees | \$7,992.32 |

(c) The final confirmed amount will be based on the exact number of Player registrations undertaken by a Club throughout the season. This final adjustment, positive or negative, will be reflected in the 4th instalment noted in 2.1(d)(iv).

(d) The Participation Fee will be paid over four instalments:

| | | | |
|-------|--------------|-------------|---------------------------------|
| (i) | Instalment 1 | \$10,545.12 | Monday 15 th March |
| (ii) | Instalment 2 | \$10,545.12 | Thursday 15 th April |
| (iii) | Instalment 3 | \$10,545.12 | Saturday 15 th May |
| (iv) | Instalment 4 | \$10,545.12 | Tuesday 31 st August |

3. COMPETITION STRUCTURE

3.1. Each Club will be required to field and maintain the following Teams in NPL NNSW Competition:

(a) Senior Competition:

- (i) First Grade;
- (ii) Reserve Grade;
- (iii) 18 Years.

(b) Youth Competition:

- (i) 16 Years;
- (ii) 15 Years;
- (iii) 14 Years;
- (iv) 13 Years.



3.2. The Senior Competition is comprised of 10 Clubs and played on a home and away basis over 18 rounds.

3.3. The Youth Competition is comprised of 12 Clubs will be played on a home and away basis over 22 rounds.

3.4. Points will be awarded in accordance with the 2021 Premier Competition Regulations.

4. FINAL SERIES

4.1. The senior Finals Series will be conducted under the following format:

(a) Finals Series Fixtures:

| Week 1 | | | | |
|--------|-------------------|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| QF | Qualifying Final | 2 nd Placed Team | v | 3 rd Placed Team |
| EF | Elimination Final | 4 th Placed Team | v | 5 th Placed Team |
| | | Loser Eliminated | | |
| B1 | Bye | 1 st Placed Team | v | Bye |
| Week 2 | | | | |
| MSF1 | Major Semi-Final | 1 st Placed Team | v | Winner QF |
| MSF2 | Minor Semi-Final | Loser QF | v | Winner EF |
| | | Loser Eliminated | | |
| Week 3 | | | | |
| PF | Preliminary Final | Loser MSF1 | v | Winner MSF2 |
| | | Loser Eliminated | | |
| B2 | Bye | Winner MSF1 | v | Bye |
| Week 4 | | | | |
| GF | Grand Final | Winner MSF1 | v | Winner PF |

(b) Weeks 1-3 finals host Venue is determined solely on the basis of first named 1st Grade Teams as outlined in Rule 4.1 (a).

(c) Reserve Grade and 18 Years Finals Series Matches will take place at the same Venue as their equivalent 1st Grade Competition Fixtures.

(d) The highest placed Team on the Official Points Table (1st Grade) reserves the right to nominate their preferred playing day.

(e) NNSWF reserves the right to schedule NPL Finals Series at their sole discretion, taking into account, all other Matches in Premier Competitions.

(f) If winners for the 1st Grade Finals Series Matches outlined in Rule 4.1 (a), Weeks 1-3 cannot be determined at the conclusion of normal time, then the following will occur immediately after the conclusion of the match:

- (i) Extra time of 2 equal periods of 15 minutes will be played in accordance with FIFA Law 8 for;
- (ii) If at the conclusion of both periods of extra time, a winner has not been determined, penalty kicks will be taken in accordance with FIFA Laws of the Game to determine a winner.



(g) If winners for the Reserve Grade and 18 Years Finals Series Matches outlined in Rule 4.1(a), Weeks 1-3 cannot be determined at the conclusion of normal time, then the following will occur immediately after the conclusion of the match:

- (i)** Penalty kicks will be taken in accordance with FIFA Laws of the Game to determine a winner;
- (ii)** For the avoidance of doubt no extra time will be played in Reserve Grade and 18 Years Competition Fixtures for these Matches.

(h) For all Senior Grand Final matches outlined in 4.1 (a) Week 4, if a winner cannot be determined at the conclusion of normal time, then the following will occur immediately after the conclusion of the match:

- (i)** For 1st Grade and Reserve Grade, extra time periods will be 2 equal periods of 15 minutes;
- (ii)** For 18 Years, extra time periods will be 2 equal periods of 10 minutes;
- (iii)** If at the conclusion of both periods of extra time, a winner has not been determined, penalty kicks will be taken in accordance with FIFA Laws of the Game to determine a winner.

(i) NNSWF will determine the Venue, kick-off time and playing date of all NPL Grand Finals at its sole discretion.

4.2. Senior Finals Eligibility

(a) The grade a Player has played the highest percentage of their Matches in is the lowest grade in which they are eligible to participate in the Final's Series.

- (i)** A Player is eligible to participate in the lowest grade they qualify for in accordance with 4.2 (a) and grades above.
- (ii)** For the avoidance of doubt, percentage is calculated based on the number of individual games the Player has played, and not the number of games the Team has participated in.
- (iii)** Should a player have played an equal percentage of their Matches in all grades they participated in, they will be considered eligible to participate in those grades.

(b) The highest grade in which a Player is named as a starting Player, will be considered to be the grade in which that Player has participated in for that round.

(c) Subject to any suspension and/or age eligibility a Player is eligible to participate in the grade they have qualified for and grades above.

(d) Club may seek special dispensation for the specialist position of Goalkeeper. All requests will be considered on an individual basis by NNSWF.



4.3. Youth Finals Series:

(a) Youth semi-finals will be fixtures as follows:

| Week 1 Semi-Final | | | | |
|---------------------|-----|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| (i) | SF1 | 1 st Placed Team | V | 4 th Placed Team |
| Loser Eliminated | | | | |
| (ii) | SF2 | 2 nd Placed Team | V | 3 rd Placed Team |
| Loser Eliminated | | | | |

(b) The winner of both semi-final matches will advance to the Grand Final.

(c) If either match in Rule 4.3 (a) is drawn at full-time then the following will occur immediately after the conclusion of the semi-final:

- (i) Penalty kicks will be taken in accordance with FIFA Laws of the Game to determine grand final placing's;
- (ii) For the avoidance of no extra time will be played in NPL Youth Semi-Finals.

(d) If at the conclusion of a Youth Grand Final Match the scores are level:

- (i) Extra time shall be played, 2 equal periods of 10 minutes will be permitted to find a winner. The conditions of FIFA Law 8 will apply;
- (ii) If scores are level at the conclusion of both periods of extra time, penalty kicks will be taken in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the Game, to determine the winner of the match.

(e) NNSWF will determine the Venues for all NPL Youth Finals Series Matches.

4.4. Youth Finals Eligibility

(a) The grade a Player has played the highest percentage of their Matches in is the lowest grade in which they are eligible to participate in the Final's Series.

- (i) A Player is eligible to participate in the lowest grade they qualify for in accordance with 4.2 (a) and grades above.
- (ii) For the avoidance of doubt, percentage is calculated based on the number of individual games the Player has played, and not the number of games the Team has participated in.
- (iii) Should a player have played an equal percentage of their Matches in all grades they participated in, they will be considered eligible to participate in those grades.

(b) Should a player have played an equal percentage of their Matches in all grades they participated in, they will be considered eligible to participate in those grades.

(c) Club may seek special dispensation for the specialist position of goalkeeper. All requests will be considered on an individual basis by NNSWF.

5. ADMISSION CHARGES

5.1. Scheduled Fixture



(a) The following fees are the maximum admission fees which can be charged for senior Matches:

| | | |
|--------------|------------|---------|
| (i) | Adults | \$10.00 |
| (ii) | Concession | \$5.00 |
| (iii) | Vehicles | \$2.00 |

(b) Admission fees may only be charged for senior football:

- (i)** In the event of youth Matches occurring on the same day at the same Venue as senior Matches, admission fees may only apply from half time in the youth Match immediately preceding the first senior match.

5.2. Rescheduled Fixture

(a) Where a 1st Grade Team participates in a rescheduled fixture:

| | | |
|--------------|------------|---------|
| (i) | Adults | \$10.00 |
| (ii) | Concession | \$5.00 |
| (iii) | Vehicles | \$2.00 |

(b) Where only lower grades (more than 1 grade) participate in a rescheduled fixture:

| | | |
|--------------|------------|--------|
| (i) | Adults | \$5.00 |
| (ii) | Concession | \$2.00 |
| (iii) | Vehicles | \$1.00 |

(c) No charge will apply where only 1 lower grade participates.

6. CLUB PASSES

6.1. Each Club will be provided the following passes:

| | | |
|------------|-----------|----|
| (a) | VIP | 10 |
| (b) | Committee | 18 |
| (c) | Players | 60 |

6.2. Clubs are responsible for ensuring that all Club Associates adhere to the required terms and conditions noted on their specific pass.

7. AGE RESTRICTIONS

7.1. A Player's age is determined by the age they turn during that calendar year.

7.2. 2021 Senior Grades

(a) Minimum age to play in Senior Grades is 15 years.

(b) All Clubs, are required to register and maintain a minimum of 7 Players born 2001 or later in their Reserve Grade Roster:

- (i)** Players required in Rule 7.1 (b) cannot be listed on the Club's 18 Years Roster with the exception of Rule 7.1 (b) (ii);
- (ii)** A maximum of 2 Players from the Clubs Player Points System Roster may be included in the required Players of 7.1 (b).



7.3. 2021 Youth Grades:

- (a) Players born 2007 and 2008 are permitted to play a maximum of 2 years above their actual age grade (subject to final series qualification)
- (b) Players born 2006 and before, are permitted to play into any high age group, including senior grades an unlimited number of times (subject to final series qualification)

7.4. A Player registered in the Player Points System Roster (1st Grade) is not permitted to participate in a Youth Grade competition.

8. PLAYER REGISTRATIONS

8.1. The maximum number of Players permitted to be registered per Club is:

| | | |
|----------------|---|----|
| Seniors | 1 st Grade, Reserve Grade and 18 Years | 60 |
| Youth | 13 Years, 14 Years, 15 Years and 16 Years | 64 |

8.2. Youth Players

- (a) JDL Players who are born in 2009 and 2010 will be consider eligible to participate in the 13 Years Competition Fixtures.
- (b) Youth Players are not permitted to play down into an age group lower than their age with the exception of 8.2 (b) (i):
 - (i) In the event of an injury to a youth Goalkeeper, and the subsequent goalkeeper from the age group below Clubs must seek permission in writing to play the Goalkeeper from the next highest age group up. In the event of an injury or unavailability this request is to be supported by evidence from the Club.

8.3. Biological Maturity Process

- (a) Clubs may seek dispensation (under Biological Maturation guidelines) for a maximum of 1 Player in each of the 13 Years, 14 Years and 15 Years. Clubs seeking dispensation must apply to NNSWF on the prescribed request form:
 - (i) <https://northernnswfootball.com.au/biological-maturation/>
- (b) All Players applying for Biological Maturation exemption must attend a physical session with NNSWF Player Development staff before being approved.
- (c) Biological Maturation approvals are at the sole discretion of the NNSWF and are not appealable.

8.4. Mid Coast FC and North Coast Football may apply to NNSWF to register female Players in the 13's, 14's 15's and 16's NPL Youth.

- (a) Approval to register is strictly at the absolute discretion of the NNSWF's Technical Department.



(b) A female Player may be registered and is eligible to participate in an age group up to 2 years below the Player's age.

(c) The above rule is subject to female Players who are up to and including 18 years of age.

9. PLAYER POINTS SYSTEM

9.1. Each Club is subject to the requirements of the Player Points System as set out by FFA.

(a) For season 2021 each Club is allocated 180 PPS points for their 1st Grade squad.

(b) Each Club must maintain a minimum PPS Roster of 20 Players and a maximum PPS Roster of 23 Players at all times throughout the NPL season.

(c) Should any Club's PPS Roster fall below the minimum 20 Players, for any reason, the Club will be required to nominate the appropriate number of Players from their Reserve Grade or 18 Years squads to fulfil the requirements outlined in Rule 9.1 (b) Overage Players will not be considered in this instance.

9.2. Clubs will be required to submit PPS documents to NNSWF as below:

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Draft Roster | Friday 26 th February |
| Final Roster | Friday 19 th March (5:00pm) |

9.3. Clubs will be permitted to make a maximum of 2 changes to their original PPS squad during the following windows:

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1 st Window | Tuesday 4 th May → Thursday 6 th May (5:00pm) |
| 2 nd Window | Tuesday 22 nd June → Thursday 24 th June (5:00pm) |

9.4. Reserve Grade

(a) Players born 2000 or earlier on the Reserve Grade Roster, will not be permitted to play 1st Grade Matches unless they have been added to the PPS in line with Rule 9.3.

(b) Clubs are permitted to transfer overage Players into the PPS Roster in the windows outlined in Rule 9.3.

(c) Any Overage Players at the start of the season, not included in the PPS at the time, are ineligible to represent the Club in the FFA Cup (from the round of 32) and the FFA NPL Final Series.

9.5. Should a Player listed within a PPS squad be deregistered outside of the allocated PPS windows, the Club will not be able to draft a replacement Player into its PPS squad until the PPS window opens, with the exception of Rule 9.1 (c).

9.6. Changes to a PPS squad will not be permitted in the event of a Player(s) suspension.

9.7. Any Club found to deliberately mislead or breach the PPS by knowingly providing incorrect information on a Player/s history will be subject to disciplinary action as determined by NNSWF.



10. MATCH DURATION

10.1. Each Competition Fixture shall consist of the following:

| Competition | Match Duration | Half-Time Interval |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 st Grade | 2 x 45-minute halves | 15 minutes (max.) |
| Reserve Grade | 2 x 45-minute halves | 5 minutes (min.) 10 minutes (max.) |
| 18 Years | 2 x 40-minute halves | 5 minutes (min.) 10 minutes (max.) |
| 16 Years | 2 x 40-minute halves | 5 minutes (min.) 10 minutes (max.) |
| 15 Years | 2 x 40-minute halves | 5 minutes (min.) 10 minutes (max.) |
| 14 Years | 2 x 40-minute halves | 5 minutes (min.) 10 minutes (max.) |
| 13 Years | 2 x 40-minute halves | 5 minutes (min.) 10 minutes (max.) |

10.2. Additional time for injuries and stoppages in NPL 1st Grade may be added at the discretion of the referee.

11. MATCH BALLS

11.1. Approved match balls must be used in all NPL Competition Fixtures.

11.2. Mitre is the approved match ball for season 2021.

11.3. The following match ball sizes must be used:

(a) NPL 13 Years → Size 4.

(b) NPL 14 Years to 1st Grade → Size 5.

12. TEAM OFFICIALS & TECHNICAL AREA

12.1. Clubs will be permitted to allow a maximum 6 registered Team Officials and 5 registered substitute Players in the Technical Area during the fixture:

(a) All Team Officials and substitute Players must be named on the Official Team sheet.

12.2. All registered Team Officials must display their NNSWF Accreditation Pass at all times.

12.3. A Player or Team Official who has been expelled or is serving a suspension is not permitted to be in the Technical Area during a fixture in accordance with Regulation 37 of 2021 Premier Competition Regulations.

13. SUBSTITUTION / INTERCHANGE OF PLAYERS

13.1. Substitution NPL 1st Grade, Reserve Grade and 18 Years

(a) Each competing Team may name a maximum of 5 substitute Players on the Official Team Sheet and at its discretion use 5 substitutes during a Match, 1 of whom may be the Goalkeeper;

(b) To reduce disruption to the Match, each Team will have a maximum of 3 opportunities to make substitutions during the game; substitutions may also be made at half-time. If both teams make a substitution at the same time, this will count as 1 of the 3 opportunities for each team.

(i) For Matches where Extra Time is required (Rule 4.1) each Team will have 1 additional opportunity to make a substitution.



13.2. Interchange

- (a) A Team is permitted to name a maximum of 5 interchange Players on the Team Sheet.
- (b) A Team will be permitted to make unlimited interchanges during each half and the half-time interval:

13.3. The interchange rule will apply for the following competitions:

- (a) 16 Years;
- (b) 15 Years;
- (c) 14 Years;
- (d) 13 Years.

14. RESCHEDULED FIXTURES

14.1. Senior Competitions

- (a) Senior Competition Fixtures postponed due to inclement weather or any other causes will in the first instance be rescheduled to the next available catch-up round, with preference given to matchdays where multiple grades have been postponed.
- (b) Should there be no available catch-up rounds, the matches will be replayed the second week after the postponement as follows:
 - (i) 1st Grade to be played Wednesday at 7:00pm;
 - (ii) Reserve Grade to be played Tuesday 8:00pm;
 - (iii) 18 Years to be played Tuesday 6:15pm.

14.2. Youth Fixtures

- (a) Postponed youth league fixtures must be rescheduled and replayed within 3 weeks of the original postponement:
 - (i) It is the responsibility of the home Club to liaise with the away Club to determine reschedule dates for all postponed fixtures;
 - (ii) Where the home Club's ground is not available within the 3-week period the away Club will be afforded the opportunity to host postponed fixture.
- (b) NNSWF reserves the right at its absolute discretion to consider all available options to ensure that as many fixtures as possible are played during a period of inclement weather or postponements, and where any fixture may have a bearing on a final's series position all endeavours will be made to reschedule fixture.
- (c) Postponed NPL Youth fixtures involving Mid Coast Football and North Coast Football will not be rescheduled due to travel distances and logistical constraints:
 - (i) These fixtures will be deemed a nil all (0-0) draw.

14.3. Should inclement weather persist and cause the postponement of rescheduled fixtures, NNSWF will liaise with the Home Club to determine new Competition Fixture dates.



14.4. The availability of Players or Team Officials will not be taken into consideration when determining rescheduled fixtures.

15. PRIZE MONEY

15.1. Prize money shall be awarded in accordance with the following table:

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1 st Grade Premiers | \$10 000.00 |
| 1 st Grade Second Place | \$2 000.00 |
| 1 st Grade Grand Final Winners | \$4 000.00 |
| 1 st Grade Grand Finalists | \$2 000.00 |
| Club Championship | \$2 000.00 |
| Club of the Year | \$1 000.00 First Touch Voucher |

16. MEDIA & MARKETING

16.1. Clubs will be required to actively operate Social Media accounts that are up to date, relevant and provide information to their members in accordance with NNSWF's Social Media Policy.

16.2. Clubs may be required to erect 3 NPL sponsorship banners on the inside of the playing field perimeter fencing with 1 banner erected behind each set of goalposts and the remaining banner on or as near as possible to the halfway line on the opposite side of the ground to the grandstand.

(a) Clubs who fail to adhere to this will be subject to a fine in accordance with Appendix A of the 2021 Premier Competitions Regulations.



APPENDIX A – AWARDS

The following awards shall be presented to eligible recipients.

| Award | Criteria / System | Method |
|--|---|---|
| Graham Jennings Medal (Player of the Year) * | Ongoing 3-2-1 Vote System | Voted by Match Officials of each Premiership fixture. |
| Players Player Award * | 1 off singular Vote System | Following the completion of the Premiership each Player on the respective 1 st Grade Roster will vote for the player they believe is the best in the league. |
| Media Award * | 1 off 3-2-1 Vote System | Following the completion of the Premiership selected media who have actively covered the league will vote for the best player in the league. |
| Bill Mahoney Goalkeeper of the Year * | 1 off 3-2-1 Vote System | 1 st Grade Head Coaches vote at the conclusion of the Premiership season. |
| Young Player of the Year * | Highest eligible vote getter | Highest vote getter in the Player of the Year tally who is 21 or younger. In the event this player has won the Player of the Year the next highest vote getter within the criteria would receive the award. |
| Coach of the Year * | 1 off 3-2-1 Vote System | 1 st Grade Head Coaches vote at the conclusion of the Premiership season. |
| Fair Play Award | Scaled Disciplinary Infringement System | Awarded to the Club with the best disciplinary record throughout the Premiership season considering yellow / red card infringements & Code of Conduct offences across all Competition Grades. |
| Golden Boot * | - | Highest goal scorer during the Premiership season. |
| Dave Williams Medal Player of the Grand Final * | - | Technical panel assembled to determine the best player of the Grand Final. |
| Club of the Year | NNSWF Reporting System | Based on Club reporting system data. |

*1st Grade only.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

A Player or Team Official is ineligible to win any of the aforementioned awards if the Player / Team Official is:

- (A) suspended as a result of receiving a Direct Red Card in Match;
- (B) suspended as a result of a determination of a body under the Disciplinary Regulations;
- (C) convicted of an anti-doping offence;
- (D) found guilty of serious misconduct as determined by FA; and/or
- (E) found guilty of breaching an FA Statute and NNSWF determines that as a result of such breach the Player is ineligible to win any of the aforementioned awards.

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