



2015 RDFNL JUNIOR FOOTBALL IMPORTANT INFORMATION



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AFL GOLDFIELDS JUNIOR CODES OF CONDUCT

JUNIOR PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Abide by the rules of the game and rules set down by your coach, club and league.
2. Never argue with an official or umpire. If you disagree, have your captain, coach or manager approach the official during a break or after the match.
3. Control your temper. Verbal or physical abuse of officials, umpires, spectators or other players, deliberately distracting or provoking an opponent is not acceptable or permitted.
4. Work equally hard for yourself and your team. Your team's performance will benefit, so will you.
5. Be a good sport. Applaud all good plays whether they be by your team, opponent or the other team. Be proud to walk off the ground after each game knowing that you have given your best effort and never involve yourself in an argument with opposing players, umpires or officials.
6. Treat all players as you would like to be treated. Do not interfere with, bully or take unfair advantage of another player. Your involvement to play is for fun and enjoyment and that winning is only part of it.
7. Co-operate with your coach and team mates, and respect the ability of your opponent. Without them there would be no game.
8. Always show respect for Umpires and respect decisions made even if you do not agree with the outcome.
9. Play for the 'fun of it and not just to please parents and coaches.
10. Avoid use of derogatory language based on gender or race. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of the gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
11. Agree to abide by your League's policies as listed on the website and in the information booklet and operations manual.
12. Do not take part in any form of bullying including via the use of social media. For more information they should see their state, league or national Member Protection Policy.
13. Be prepared to be responsible for your actions.

PARENTS / GUARDIANS & SUPPORTER CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Encourage children to participate if they are interested. However, if a child is not willing do not force them.
2. Focus upon the child's efforts and performance rather than the overall outcome of the event. This assists the child in setting realistic goals related to their ability by reducing the emphasis on winning.
3. Teach your child that honest effort is as important as victory so that the result of each game is accepted without undue disappointment.
4. Encourage your child always to play by the rules.
5. Never ridicule or yell at your child for making a mistake or losing a competition.
6. Remember your child should be involved in Football/Netball for their enjoyment, not yours.
7. Remember your child learns best by example. Applaud good play by both your team and by members of the opposing team.
8. If you disagree with an official or umpire raise the issue through the appropriate channels rather than questioning the official's judgment and honesty in public. Remember, most officials give their time and effort for your child's involvement.
9. Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from junior sporting activities.
10. Recognise the value and importance of volunteer coaches. They give their time and resources to provide recreational activities for your child and deserve your support.
11. Support your club officials in maintaining the highest standard of behaviour both on and off the field for the betterment of the league and your family. Offer your assistance to the team that your child is playing in so that every opportunity is being provided for the very best supervision and support. Your involvement will give both yourself and your child far more satisfaction.
12. Avoid use of derogatory language based on gender or race. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of the gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
13. Agree to abide by your League's policies as listed on the website and in the information booklet and operations manual.
14. Do not take part in any form of bullying including via the use of social media. For more information they should see their state, league or national Member Protection Policy.
15. Be prepared to be responsible for your actions.

JUNIOR COACH CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Be familiar with the laws of Australian Football/Netball and abide by the rules and conditions of your league and club.
2. Teach your players that rules of the game are mutual agreements which no player should evade or break.
3. Do not discriminate against any of your players and always work at providing an inclusive environment where all players can participate.
4. Avoid over-playing the talented players. The 'just average' players need and deserve equal time, if not more.
5. Remember that the players involved play for fun and enjoyment and that winning is only part of it. Emphasise the importance of the learning and development of skills and positive attitudes. Never ridicule or yell at your players for making mistakes or losing.
6. Control your temper. Verbal abuse of officials and sledging other players, deliberately distracting or provoking an opponent are not acceptable or permitted behaviours in any sport and may be a breach of your state, league or national Member Protection Policy.
7. Never engage in any type of violence either on or off the field.
8. Develop team respect for the ability of opponents, as well as for the judgment of umpires and opposing coaches.
9. Follow the advice of a qualified person when determining when an injured player is ready to play or train again.
10. Make a personal commitment to keep yourself informed of sound junior coaching principles and developments. Attain coaching accreditation and to become an active member of your local Coaches Association.
11. Avoid use of derogatory language based on gender or race. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of the gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
12. Have a Working With Children Check carried out and record your card number and expiry date with the club.
13. Agree to abide by your League's policies as listed on the website and in the information booklet and operations manual.
14. Do not take part in any form of bullying including via the use of social media. For more information they should see their state, league or national Member Protection Policy.
15. Be prepared to be responsible for your actions.

JUNIOR COACH CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Be familiar with the laws of Australian Football/Netball and abide by the rules and conditions of your league and club.
2. Encourage team members to participate if they are interested. However, if a child is not willing do not force them.
3. Focus upon team member's efforts and performance rather than the overall outcome of the event. This assists the players in setting realistic goals related to their ability by reducing the emphasis on winning.
4. Teach your team members that honest effort is as important as victory so that the result of each game is accepted without undue disappointment.
5. Encourage your team members always to play by the rules.
6. Never ridicule or yell at your team members for making a mistake or losing a competition. Control your temper. Verbal abuse of officials and sledging other players, deliberately distracting or provoking an opponent are not acceptable or permitted behaviours in any sport and may be a breach of your state, league or national Member Protection Policy.
7. Remember your team members should be involved in Football/Netball for their enjoyment, not yours.
8. Remember your team members learn best by example. Applaud good play by both your team and by members of the opposing team.
9. If you disagree with an official or umpire raise the issue through the appropriate channels rather than questioning the official's judgment and honesty in public. Remember, most officials give their time and effort for your team member's involvement.
10. Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from junior sporting activities.
11. Support all club officials in maintaining the highest standard of behaviour both on and off the field for the betterment of the league and your club. Offer your assistance to the team whenever possible so that every opportunity is being provided for the very best supervision and support. Your involvement will give both yourself and team members far more satisfaction.
12. Avoid use of derogatory language based on gender or race. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of the gender, ability, cultural background or religion.
13. Have a Working With Children Check carried out and record your card number and expiry date with the club.
14. Agree to abide by the League's policies as listed on the website and in the information booklet and operations manual.

INTERLEAGUE POLICY & SELECTION POLICY

The RDFNL annually compete in up to 16 Interleague matches across 7 campaigns at Junior level. The introduction of the RDFNL Junior Football Academy has allowed for the Interleague / Academy coaches and the RDFNL Junior Development Officer (JDO) to readily select the initial squads for each Interleague age group.

All squad selections are made by the JDO in conjunction with the coach of each age group. The age groups are as follows:

- Under 16
- Under 15A
- Under 15B
- Under 14A
- Under 14B
- Under 13
- Under 12

Under 16 Selection Policy

The RDFNL JDO will select in their opinion the best 40-50 players in the Under 16's who are not at the present time on a Calder Cannons or Western Jets Under 16 Squad list. The aim of selecting non CC or WJ listed players is to allow RDFNL players not already selected for such squads to play at the highest level available to them and to allow recruiters to scout the players. There is no minimum or maximum number of players who can be selected for the initial squad or final team from the one club.

Under 15 & Under 14 Selection Policy

The Under 15 and Under 14 squads are considered the most important squads in the RDFNL Junior Interleague. The initial squads are selected from the best performing players from the previous Academy. The coaches and the JDO will add players to the squad from their early season round scouting. Where required, clubs will be asked to provide names of potential additions to both squads.

Two teams in each age group will be selected with the best players in their positions selected in the A team. The emergencies in the A team will be automatic selections for the B team and are required to play up if called upon. Each team will require a combination of tall and small, quick and strong players and generally the best 24 players in the league are not necessarily selected in the A team's 24 for the AFL Vic Metro Championships.

There is no minimum or maximum number of players who can be selected for the initial squad or final team from the one club.

Under 13 & Under 12 Selection Policy

The Under 13 and Under 12 initial squads are selected from the best performing players from the previous Academy. Clubs who are not featured in the initial squads are asked to send their best 3-4 players from their club in each age group. The RDFNL ensures that at least one player from each club is selected in each of the Under 13 and Under 12 final teams for the respective interleague campaigns.

All Interleague squad and final team selections are at the discretion of the JDO and respective team coach. The JDO, Coaches and RDFNL staff will not entertain requests from clubs, parents or players to be selected after the teams have been announced.

AFL JuMP GUIDELINES

In 2013 a working party consisting of AFL Victoria Operational Staff, AFL Victoria affiliate league General Managers and AFL identities David Parkin and Peter Schwab met on a number of occasions to assist the AFL in identifying, formulating and introducing a key set of guidelines and policies for Junior Football nationwide in 2014.

Each league was continually asked to give feedback on a range of junior issues including match rules, competition set up, team numbers, oval size, tackling and coaching to name a few.

The following philosophy has been determined to provide a basis of understanding for all leagues, clubs, coaches, players and supporters when creating policy and guidelines for junior football.

AFL JuMP - THIS IS OUR GAME PHILOSOPHY

PLAYING GROUND, ZONES, TIME AND EQUIPMENT

Kids can't kick as far, run as fast or process the same level of match information as adults – so why make them play on the same size field?

The 'This is Our Game' philosophy is committed to a reduced playing area, playing time and suitably modified equipment to take the emphasis away from endurance and allow for greater skill development.

With smaller grounds the players are encouraged to concentrate because the ball is never far away.

USE OF ZONES

The AFL Junior Policy embraces "zones" for the younger children as an excellent teaching practice. Firstly, the use of zones prevents ball-chasing and subsequent congestion where all players congregate around the ball. Secondly, it enables groupings of players of similar size and ability to play within a zone.

TEAM COMPOSITION

Reduced numbers allow individual players to have more frequent and longer contact with the ball whilst play is more open, even when played on a reduced size oval.

ROTATION OF PLAYERS

Children should experience playing in a variety of positions. The practice of rotating players through different positions and the interchange enables the development of a solid foundation and adds variety and interest to the matches.

CONTACT

Deferring the introduction of full tackling is based upon the need to provide players with the best possible conditions to learn develop and improve their disposal skills by reducing congestion and pressure on the player in possession. All skills are eventually taught and learned, but there is an appropriate sequence for doing so.

The physiological and emotional readiness of children's bodies to resist the pressures of tackling also needs to be recognised in assessing when to introduce tackling. The "age of readiness" will vary from child to child, but generally is recognised as being around the 11-12 years age group.

MARKING

Awarding marks over any distance in the development phase recognises that many youngsters cannot consistently kick the ball beyond 10 metres.

BOUNCING

Restricting the number of bounces prevents players running excessive distances with the ball, encourages disposal skills and enhances team play.

KICKING OFF THE GROUND

In a players development years, the ability to enhance the skill of picking the ball up takes precedence over the need to kick it off the ground.

THE COACH ON THE GROUND

The absence of stringent competition conditions should enable the coach to provide praise, teaching and feedback when warranted or as errors immediately they occur.

PREMIERSHIP POINTS COMPETITIONS

The match environment in junior football must be one of encouragement, learning and development over a focus of “winning”.

Where winning overrides such aims, and encouragement is replaced by a fear of failure, the program for children is inappropriate.

AWARDS

Any awards should not replace or detract from the fun and enjoyment gained by participation in the program and the learning that is an integral part of it.

Under 10's

PURPOSE

To provide children with a fun, safe and positive experience through a well structured match program that considers the level of maturation in motor, cognitive, psychosocial and emotional skill ²of children in this age group.

The emphasis at this age level is the further development basic game specific skills (kicking, handballing, marking, gathering, evasion and checking) and learning technical and tactical concept. The match program for this age group provides further opportunities to develop game specific skills and the tactical principles of gaining possession, pressure, utilising space and positional play.

SPIRIT OF THE GAME

Prior to the commencement of play:

- all players, coaches and umpires should gather together on the ground and shake hands
- the umpire and coaches should ensure that players are aware of the rules and procedures to be followed in the conduct of the game

The spirit of the game is **to give all available players a game** of football. Therefore:

- where difficulty occurs fielding full numbers, both coaches must agree to even up player numbers.
- excess players should be given to the opposition team if they are unable to field the required numbers.
- coaches should consider modifying the numbers per side to ensure all players participate (for instance, if planning 12-a-side but only 18 players in total are available: play 9-a-side)

The umpire should at all times:

- endeavour to apply the rules of the games whilst preferring to award kicks to players in preference to calling for “ball-ups”
- understand that the spirit of AFL junior match rules for this age group is to enable all players to gather possession and that **“The player in possession of the ball should be given every opportunity to kick or handball”**.
- attempt to involve all players as the opportunities arise, particularly when indicating which players are to receive a “free kick” upon the ball being kicked out of bounds and ensuring the effective rotation of players

In relation to all **ball-ups**,

- A player contesting a ball-up may not grab the ball and play on

THE BALL

A synthetic size 2 or leather football should be used.

PLAYING TIME

The playing time should be reduced to what is appropriate for the age of the players.

AFL Junior Fixture – Maximum of 4 x 12 minute quarters with no time on.

THE TEAM

Twelve-a-side means: 4 forwards, 4 centres, 4 backs + reserves

Fifteen-a-side means: 5 forwards, 5 midfielders, 5 backs + reserves

Eighteen-a-side means: 6 forwards, 6 midfielders, 6 backs + reserves

Interchange may take place at any time, but all players must play at least half of the match.

Rotate players every quarter to provide opportunities in several positions, i.e. players to change from one zone to another and interchange onto the field.

Equalise the teams and opponents as much as possible (match sizes, abilities)

PLAYING GROUND and OFFICIALS

The size of the playing field should be no bigger than 100m x 80m and divided into three equal zones (thirds) identified by markers or lines on the ground.

*For leagues that feel that zoning at this level is not in the best interests of the local conditions, an exemption can be sought via the State Body.

This field is a maximum size with flexibility needed depending on the players per team, age and ability level. Playing on a larger field will compromise the intent of the laws and in turn have an adverse effect on the development of players.

A field umpire is needed, if there are no boundary umpires, the central umpire is to throw the ball up 10 meters from the boundary line. Two goal umpires are required to adjudicate a score decision but are not to record scores.

START OF PLAY and RESTARTING AFTER A GOAL

When all players are in position, a ball-up is conducted between two centre players of similar height as nominated by the umpire, alternate players for subsequent bounces.

CONTACT / TACKLING

Players can perform a modified tackle.

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 back the player in the back).

- 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 penalized for holding the ball

- 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.
- 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 **prior to** being tackled, in which case a free kick shall be awarded to the tackler for holding the ball.
- The Field Umpire shall allow play to continue if the ball is knocked out of a player's hands by an opponent.
- A player not in possession of the ball, when held by an opponent, shall be awarded a Free Kick.
- There is strictly no bumping, slinging or deliberately bringing the opposition player in possession of the ball to the ground.

COACHES

The coach must not pressure, instruct or make comment to the opposition team.

At the end of the game all players and coaches should gather on the ground and shake hands. The umpire should also take this opportunity to address the players.

ORDER OFF RULE

To be applied at the umpire's discretion (or the Controlling Body where applicable). Bad language, poor sportsmanship and disputing umpiring decisions should be actively discouraged.

THE GAME - PREMIERSHIP POINTS COMPETITIONS

The football match program to be offered to players 9-10 years of age must comply with the modified match program presented in this document with no premiership points, no finals, no ladders, no match results (no score) and no names of players published. Skill clinics and participation carnival days maybe held.

REPRESENTATIVE FOOTBALL

No representative teams should be selected.

Under 12's

PURPOSE

To provide children with a fun, safe and positive experience through a well structured match program that considers the level of maturation in motor, cognitive, psychosocial and emotional skill of children in this age group.

The consolidation of basic game specific skills is still the focus at this age level rather than competition and winning, while further developing technical and tactical concepts. These concepts include position specific, and basic performance capacities – e.g. warm up, cool down, nutrition, hydration, recovery and goal-setting.

SPIRIT OF THE GAME

Prior to the commencement of play:

- all players, coaches and umpires should gather on the ground and shake hands
- the umpire and coaches should ensure that players are aware of the rules and procedures to be followed in the conduct of the game

The spirit of the game is **to give all available players a game** of football. Therefore:

- where difficulty occurs fielding full numbers, both coaches must agree to even up player numbers.
- excess players should be given to the opposition team if they are unable to field the required numbers.
- coaches should consider modifying the numbers per side to ensure all players participate (for instance, if planning 18-a-side but only 30 players in total are available: play 15-a-side)

The umpire should at all times:

- endeavour to apply the rules of the games whilst preferring to award kicks to players in preference to calling for “ball-ups”
- understand that the spirit of the AFL junior match rules for this age group is to enable all players to gather possession and that **“The player in possession of the ball should be given every opportunity to kick or handball”**.
- attempt to involve all players as the opportunities arise, particularly when indicating which players are to receive a “free kick” upon the ball being kicked out of bounds and ensuring the effective rotation of players through the three zones of play

THE BALL

A synthetic or leather size 3 football made specifically for this age group should be used

PLAYING GROUND and OFFICIALS

A full size field is allowed unless the dimensions are clearly unsuitable for the number and skill level of the players involved.

In this instance, refer to the match program for 9 & 10 year olds for guidance.

This field size is the optimum size and flexibility is often needed, in particular, smaller field sizes may be required depending on the number of players per team, age and ability level. A field umpire is needed.

THE TEAM

Fifteen-a-side means: 5 forwards, 5 centres, 5 backs + reserves

Eighteen-a-side means: 6 forwards, 6 midfielders, 6 backs + reserves

Interchange may take place at any time, but all players must play at least half of the match.

Equalise the teams and opponents as much as possible (match sizes, abilities)

Rotate players every quarter to provide opportunities in several positions.

PLAYING TIME

AFL Junior Fixture – Maximum of 4 x 15 minute quarters with no time on.

SCRIMMAGE and FIELD BALL-UPS

Conducted between two players of equal size selected by the umpire. Before the throw up, the umpire should clear the area by sending players back to their positions. No more than three players from each team shall be closer to the ball-up than approximately 20 metres. (**Full Possession Rule Applies**)

CONTACT / TACKLING

Full tackling rules as per the laws of Australian Football can be applied.

BARGING

Fending off, with an open hand to the body (not above the shoulders or in the back), is allowed.

DISTANCE PENALTY

A player **can** be awarded a 25m advancement towards their goals if, after a mark or free kick the umpire is of the opinion that an opposing player hinders that player. This includes: overstepping the mark; wasting time; using abusive language/behaviour; etc

ORDER OFF RULE

To be applied at the umpire's discretion (or the Controlling Body where applicable). Bad language, poor sportsmanship and disputing umpiring decisions should be actively discouraged.

COACHES

The coach is not allowed on the ground. Messages may be delivered by a Runner. However, the Runner must abide by the procedure of going directly to the player involved, delivering the message and returning directly to the coaching bench.

At the end of the game all players and coaches should gather on the ground and shake hands. The umpire should also take this opportunity to address the players.

THE GAME - PREMIERSHIP POINTS COMPETITIONS

The football program to be offered to players needs to be delivered in a well conducted league with appropriate development structures feeding into it, the program to be adopted might be the alternative "premiership" program. Such a decision should be made by the relevant controlling bodies and endorsed by the State football bodies.

FINALS ELIGIBILITY

JUNIORS – TAKEN FROM RDFNL BY-LAW 126

j) A player must play in at least five matches for his Club in the minor rounds (home and away games) to qualify to play in the final series. A player selected as an interchange player and whose name is on the list of players exchanged before the commencement of the match and who is on the ground in uniform and ready to play and remains so ready until the conclusion of the match, shall for all purposes be deemed to have played in such match.

k) A player must play in at least five matches in a grade to be eligible to play in the final series in that grade, except in the following cases:

- i)** Where a registered Junior player is selected to play in the Under 18 ½ or any open age side
- ii)** Where a registered junior player is selected to play in a higher age group on the RDFNL Competition Hierarchy (e.g. under 14 player playing under 16). This is not to be at the expense of a registered and available player in that age group.

l) A player shall not be permitted to take part in the finals series of matches unless he has previously played not less than five minor round matches (home and away) with his Club during the current season. Any player who changes Club mid-season shall be deemed a new player for the Club, with which he has been granted a permit to play and shall be required to therefore complete no less than three minor round matches (home and away) with his new Club before being eligible to play in the final series of matches.

m) A registered player, playing five games during the minor rounds (home and away) in any one season in a competition, shall be eligible to play finals in that competition and any competition that sits above it on the competition hierarchy.

n) A registered player in any RDFNL Junior Competitions having played MORE THAN 50% of games with a higher grade, as listed on the RDFNL Competition Hierarchy, shall be ineligible to play with the lower grade in the final series of matches, except in the following cases

- i)** A player has competed in a home and away round under compliance with rule **126 o)**
- ii)** The team in which the player has played MORE THAN 50% of games with is playing on the same weekend as outlined in rule **126 q).**

o) A player who has played more than one home and away round match in a day (e.g. U/14 Reserves and U/14 Seniors) shall only have their first game recorded as a game played when determining finals eligibility. The second game will not count when determining finals eligibility. Equally, a player filling in for a higher age team will not have the higher age match counted for finals eligibility (e.g. Under 12 and Under 14).

p) A player may only participate in one finals match in the age group the player has qualified for in any round of a finals series. No player is allowed to play in more than one finals match during the same round of finals.

q) Any player having played more than 50% of home and away games in a higher grade is ineligible to play in the lower grade unless the higher grade is playing finals on the same weekend. This applies to clubs whose higher grade side is directly through to the Grand Final whilst the lower grade side is playing in the Preliminary Final.

r) The Calder Cannons or Western Jets are not recognised as a player's home club.

s) Finals eligibility is calculated using home and away matches only. Finals matches played are not included when determining finals eligibility.

PLAYER PERMITS

An Area Agreement between the AFL Goldfields Region and AFL Central Victoria Region – incorporating all Leagues affiliated with these two Regional Commissions.

This Agreement is signed pursuant to the AFLVC rules and regulations pertaining to clearances and permits and in particular the clause 2.10 – Area Permits, whereby an interchange of players between the abovementioned Leagues / Regions may take place without clearance or permits and is subject to any provisions contained within this agreement.

The form for this agreement can be found in the appendix section of the Operations Manual and on the RDFNL website.

FORFEITS & PLAYER SHORTAGES

Rule 35 - Forfeiture

Clubs with more than one team in any age group must play their highest ranked team each week. Therefore clubs cannot forfeit their highest ranked team in any grade if they have players available playing in their other team/s in that age group.

Rule 132 - Junior Football - Minimum Numbers to Constitute a Game

For junior football only (U/16 down), the following shall apply:

- a) From season 2015 onwards, clubs who field a side with 12 or more players will be eligible to play for points. This means, the score, percentage, best players and all goal kickers will stand.
- b) Please note, if one club lends another club players and the game progresses with 12 or more players per side, point a) shall apply.
- c) Clubs who field a side with 11 or less players will forfeit the points to the other side. Both teams are encouraged to still conduct a game with whatever players are available. The size of the ground can be reduced if need be.
- d) Where possible, clubs must assist their opposition to field a side of 18 or more players.
 - i) Where a team cannot field 18 players it can approach the opposing team and request that players be loaned. This request must be made at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the match and must be made by the Team Manager or highest ranking available team staff member.
 - ii) Loaned players must be listed on the opposition team sheet, with a note that they are from the opposing club, and will be eligible for any fairest and best votes cast by the umpires as well as any goals kicked. These votes and/or goals will be credited as if the players were playing for their own club.
 - iii) Where the team that has less than 18 players does not request loan players from the opposing club then the opposing team may take the field with an additional two players. (i.e. if team A has 14 players and does not request loan players from team B then team B may enter the field with 16 players).
 - iv) Where a team has requested the loan of players and is denied by the opposing team and then takes the field with less than 18, the opposing team must also take the field with the same amount of players; all other players may be included as interchange players up to the maximum 24 players and can be interchanged as required.
- e) In the event where both sides cannot field a side of 12 or more players, the points will be split. Clubs again are encouraged to still conduct a game however the score, percentage and goal kickers will not stand.
- f) In any round, a team that has been allocated the bye should assist other clubs by supplying them with as many players as they can and comply with the permit procedure set out in the Interchange Agreement adopted by the RDFNL.

PLAYER EXEMPTIONS

Playing Under Age

Players seeking to play up an age group for the full season can only do so if the League has received on club letterhead a signed letter from the players' parent / guardian.

Players must be 15 years of age as of the 1st January in the current year to play Senior, Reserve or Under 18.5 Football.

Playing Over Age

A Junior club may apply for approval for a player in the age group below their age. To obtain approval clubs must submit to the Operations / Junior Development Officer a request for each proposed player, supported with medical advice where applicable. A player will not be considered for screening or exemption unless they meet the following parameters for each age group.

- **Exemption to play Under 16:** Height - < 175 cm, Weight - < 65 kg.
- **Exemption to play Under 14:** Height - < 170 cm, Weight - < 55 kg.
- **Exemption to play Under 12:** Height - < 155 cm, Weight - < 45 kg.
- **Exemption to play Under 10:** Height - < 145 cm, Weight - < 35 kg.

The Board in conjunction with the Operations Manager and Junior Development Officer will consider the application and provide a response in writing to the member club within twenty-one (21) days. A player screening session may be required to assist with any player exemption request.

The Board, Operations Manager or Junior Development Officer has the power to review and rescind any approval to play a player in an age group below their age at any time. Additionally the Board can exempt or screen a player based on special circumstances deemed appropriate by the Board.

MATCH OFFICIALS DUTIES

1. Officials in Bench Area

Only persons authorised may enter the playing arena during the playing of a match and Match Day Officials must remain within the marked area around the interchange box. Clubs competing in the RDFNL senior competition are permitted to have up to 4 officials (including Coach, Asst Coach, Chairman of Selectors, etc) within the marked confines of the Interchange box. Junior clubs shall be permitted to have a maximum of one (1) coach and one (1) assistant coach.

Furthermore, Clubs (Junior & Senior) are permitted to have up to two (2) runners, six (6) trainers and/or water carriers, and four (4) interchange players. Junior clubs can refer to By-Law 116 for requirements on interchange players. Clubs will be allowed to use an additional two (2) water carriers in extreme weather conditions, however, this must be approved by the Umpire. All, apart from Trainers and Water Carriers, are to remain seated in the coaches box at all times during play, or within the confines of the perimeter lines surrounding the Coach's Box. If no lines are marked, all must remain within the confines of the Coach's Box.

If there is insufficient space within the coach's box, or no box is provided, then remaining officials are to be situated outside the boundary line. Trainers and Water carriers may be spread around the ground but must be positioned against the fence and not on the boundary line when at rest. All other personnel not mentioned above are considered unauthorized, and umpires have been instructed to remove them from the ground.

Any Club desiring authorisation of any other officials must apply to the League for such authorisation, prior to the commencement of the match.

Coaches and their coaching staff who don't remain within the perimeter lines surrounding the coaches box will be penalised 10 penalty units per offense.

2. Club Runner

Refer to AFL Victoria Country Handbook, "Runners". Clubs may use up to two (2) club runners for Seniors through to Under 14 for each match and only one (1) for Under 12 through to Under 10. Only one (1) runner is permitted to be on the field of play at any time. There is no requirement for runners to use the interchange gate.

3. Ground Manager / Umpire Escort

- a) For Senior match days, the Secretary, or an approved representative of the first named Club in any match arranged by the League, or alternatively a person so appointed by the Board, shall be regarded as Ground Manager. For Junior match days, the Junior Coordinators of both clubs, or an approved representative of both Clubs in any match arranged by the League, or alternatively a person so appointed by the Board, shall be regarded as Ground Manager. The Ground Manager's duties shall include the supervision of arrangements for the proper conduct of such matches and attend to the duties set forth in the Appendix section, and to any other special instructions that may be issued from time to time by the League. Ground Managers will be supplied with a vest from the Riddell District Football & Netball League and this vest must be worn on match days to ensure the Ground Manager stands out in the crowd on match days.
- b) The Umpires Escort's duties shall include the duties set forth in the Appendix section, and to any other special instructions that may be issued from time to time by the League.

4. Water Carriers

A maximum of up to four (4) Water Carriers can be used by Senior through to Under 14 teams and up to two (2) for Under 12 through to Under 10 teams. Water carriers must be of sufficient age that they do not impose risk to themselves and others. In extreme weather conditions, clubs will be permitted to appoint a further two (2) water carriers however this must first be approved by the Central Umpire(s).

Water carriers must be competent and able to fulfil the required duties of a water carrier and must be a minimum of 12 years of age. Water carriers are to run water to players and umpires and remove themselves from the playing arena immediately. At no stage should a water carrier remain out on the ground if they are not handing water to players. A fine of 5 penalty units will apply to clubs found guilty of using water carriers to fill spaces on the ground.

5. Timekeepers

A Club shall for all grades provide a Timekeeper. The home club will be responsible for the provision and location of an audible signalling device and a back up device for the use of Timekeepers. Timekeepers at all matches shall be required to keep the scores. The Goal Umpires scorecards are to be used on the day, but in case of a dispute, the timekeeper's scores will be forwarded as evidence to the League. A fine of 10 Penalty Units will apply should a Club fail to provide a Timekeeper for any RDFNL fixtured match. A fine of 20 Penalty Units shall apply if a Club fails to provide an audible signalling device and "back up" siren or bell.

6. Interchange stewards

The Riddell District Football & Netball League will appoint representatives from the Riddell Umpires Association to act as Interchange Stewards during finals matches. RDFNL clubs are encouraged to provide an Interchange Steward for each match of each round of the home and away season.

7. Trainers & AFL Goldfields Trainers Association (AFLGTA)

At Senior level, it will be required for all Senior Clubs to Register all Trainers with the AFL Goldfields Trainers Association (AFLGTA). Furthermore, at Senior Level all Trainers that take the field must be Qualified and Registered. At Junior level, it will be required for all Junior Clubs to Register two Trainers with the AFL Goldfields Trainers Association (AFLGTA). Furthermore, at Junior Level each club must have a minimum of two (2) Trainers who are qualified and registered with AFLGTA.

The requirement for Qualified and Registered Trainers;

- a) Basic Qualification Required - Level 2 First Aid, CPR
- b) Sports Trainers Certificate

All Riddell District FNL Clubs will be required to have one representative from each Club at AFLGTA meetings. All Riddell District FNL Clubs will submit a list of their Trainers, including accreditation, to the AFLGTA and the Riddell District FNL prior to the commencement of the season. Club Trainers shall be attired in all white and bear a number which can be obtained by the league which will correspond to the Team Sheet to be completed prior to the commencement of each match. Failure of clubs to Register a Trainer with the AFLGTA, attend an AFLGAT meeting or include a Trainer on a Team Sheet will result in a 5 penalty unit fine.

In addition to the two (2) AFL Goldfields registered Trainers at Junior Level, other non AFL Goldfields registered trainers can enter the junior playing field should they hold any of the following qualifications:

- (i) Medical Practitioner
- (ii) Physiotherapist
- (iii) Sports Medicine Australia - Level 1 minimum
- (iv) Sports First Aid
- (v) Advanced First Aid
- (vi) First Aid Trainer/Instructor
- (vii) Workplace First Aid – Level 2 minimum
- (viii) Advanced Workplace
- (ix) First Aid – Level 2 minimum
- (x) St John Ambulance
- (xi) Ambulance Paramedic – Level 2
- (xii) St John, Red Cross and Ambulance – Level 2 minimum
- (xiii) Registered Nurse

Persons acting as a club trainer without any of the above qualifications may not enter the junior playing field at any time to attend to an injured player or official.

COMPLAINTS / INVESTIGATION PROCESS

Any on field or off field incidents that in the opinion of the President or Committee of an RDFNL club requires disciplinary action or investigation must follow the complaints investigation process set out by the RDFNL.

1. Player, Parent, Supporter or Coach makes complaint or Investigation request to the club President or Committee. **The RDFNL will not speak directly with any player, parent, supporter or coach – all complaints or investigation requests are to be communicated to the RDFNL through the Club President.**
2. Club President officially lodges complaint / investigation request to RDFNL Operations Manager. **Any Investigation request must be made by 4:00pm.** The RDFNL Operations Manager will advise if the club requesting the investigation is required to pay a deposit.
3. Should the RDFNL Operations Manager deem that the complaint made requires action from the club whom the complaint was made against, that club will be contacted immediately and required to reply with a statement. In the event of an Investigation request, the RDFNL Operations Manager will appoint an RDFNL Investigator immediately and issue advice of the investigation and club requirements to both clubs concerned.
4. The Operations Manager will present the complaint and response from the offending club to the RDFNL Board for review and resolution. In the event of an Investigation, the Investigation Officer appointed will contact both clubs to arrange interviews with required persons.
5. The Operations Manager will advise both clubs of the outcome of the complaint as soon as the Board has come to a resolution or sanction. In the event of an investigation, the Investigation Officer will have 14 days to complete all interviews and a report to the Operations Manager.
6. In the event of an Investigation, the Operations Manager will depending on the report from the Investigation Officer schedule a Tribunal or advise both clubs that no further action will be taken.
7. All outcomes/sanctions from complaints and investigations can be appealed within 7 days by either club in writing to the RDFNL Board. In the case of Tribunal appeals, the matter may be determined by an independent tribunal determined by AFL Victoria.

For more detailed explanations of RDFNL Investigations, Complaints, Tribunals and Appeals refer to **RDFNL By-Laws 53-54.**

MATCH TIMES

Turner Division - One Oval (Kilmore, Melton South Home Games)

Grade	Start Time	Ground	Quarters	Breaks
Under 16 Senior	3:00pm	Full	4 x 20min No time on	4-8-4 mins
Under 14 Senior	1:40pm	Full	4 x 15min No time on	4-8-4 mins
Under 14 Reserves	12:20pm	Full	4 x 15min No time on	4-8-4 mins
Under 12 Senior	11:10am	Full	4 x 12min No time on	4-8-4 mins
Under 12 Reserves	10:00am	Full	4 x 12min No time on	4-8-4 mins
Under 10 Senior	9:00am	Half/Full	4 x 10min No time on	4-8-4 mins
Under 10 Reserves	8:00am / 9:00am	Half/Full	4 x 10min No time on	4-8-4 mins

Turner Division - Two Ovals (Gisborne, Rupertswood, Sunbury Lions & Melton Home Games)

Grade	Start Time	Ground	Quarters	Breaks	Venue
Under 16 Senior	3:00pm	Full	4 x 20min No time on	4-8-4 mins	Main
Under 14 Senior	1:40pm	Full	4 x 15min No time on	4-8-4 mins	Main
Under 14 Reserves	12:20pm	Full	4 x 15min No time on	4-8-4 mins	Main
Under 12 Senior	11:10am	Full	4 x 12min No time on	4-8-4 mins	Main
Under 12 Reserves	10:00am	Full	4 x 12min No time on	4-8-4 mins	Main
Under 10 Senior	9:00am	Half/Full	4 x 10min No time on	4-8-4 mins	Main
Under 10 Reserves	9:00am	Half/Full	4 x 10min No time on	4-8-4 mins	Minor

Beatson Division - One Oval

Grade	Start Time	Ground	Quarters	Breaks
Under 16	2:00pm	Full	4 x 20min No time on	4-8-4 mins
Under 14	12:30pm	Full	4 x 15min No time on	4-8-4 mins
Under 12	11:15am	Full	4 x 12min No time on	4-8-4 mins
Under 10	10:00am	Half / Full	4 x 10min No time on	4-8-4 mins

Note: Venues that have a combination of Turner / Watson, Turner / Beatson or Beatson / Watson fixtures will have their match times and specific grounds determined on a weekly basis no later than Monday before the round commences.

Matches proceeding a forfeited match will be brought forward.