

# OVER 35's FOOTBALL



## Rules of Competition 2019

## **RULES OF COMPETITION**

These Rules of Competition are to be read in conjunction with FIFA Laws of the Game and any relevant Football Federation Australia Codes of Conduct or associated policies.

They are reviewed annually by Over 35's Football's Rules Interpretation Committee to aid Over 35's Football to deliver fair and safe Masters Football competitions to its member Clubs.

The role of the Rules Interpretation Committee is to manage and interpret Over 35s Football Competition Rules and Policy on behalf of the Over 35's Football.

### **1. COMPETITION STRUCTURE**

Over 35's Football will arrange age restricted competitions for players in Over 35s and Over 45s Men's Competitions. The composition of each division will be determined annually by Over 35's Football's Competition Manager in consultation with all teams using a combination of each Club nominating a preference for a Division, and compulsory promotion and relegation from the final placings of the previous year's competition.

Over 35's Football's Competition Manager's decision regarding make up of Divisions is final.

Over 35's Football Competition Manager reserves the right to amend the size and structure of any Division.

### **2. RULES OF THE GAME**

As per FIFA Laws of the Game, with the following amendments:

#### **Length of games**

2 x 40 minute halves, with a 5 minute half-time break.

#### **Dangerous Play Explanation**

To promote the highest standards of player safety, all players must stay on their feet whilst challenging for the ball (in both attack and defence).

It will be considered "Careless Play" where a player has failed to do so, and the opposition team will be awarded an indirect free kick.

It will be considered "Reckless Play" where a player has failed to do so, and the player makes contact with an opposition player. The opposition team will be awarded a direct free kick, and the offending player issued a blue card.

#### **Blue Card**

A Blue Card is issued for all "reckless play" and at the discretion of the Referee where in the opinion of the Referee, they believe the player needs time off the field in order to "cool down", 10 minutes in the "sin bin" (sideline), with a replacement player not permitted to take the field.

Reckless play is defined that a player has acted with complete disregard of the danger to or consequences for, his opponent.

#### **Multiple Blue / Yellow Cards in the same game**

A red card is issued if the same player in the same game, receives two (2) blue cards, two (2) yellow cards, or one (1) yellow and one (1) blue card, in any order. The player must leave the field of play and take no further part in the game. NO REPLACEMENT PLAYER IS ALLOWED. A mandatory one (1) week suspension applies.

### 3. FIXTURES

#### Scheduling

Over 35's Football's Competition Manager will arrange the dates, times and venues of all fixtures, in consultation with the Clubs/teams concerned. Over 35's Football's Competition Manager reserves the right to schedule or re-schedule a fixture or fixtures on any day, time and place as they deem appropriate.

#### Points

In all fixtures, match points will be awarded as 3 points for a win, one point for a draw and no points for a loss, or bye.

### 4. APPLICATION FOR ALTERATION TO FIXTURES

Any application for an alteration to scheduled fixtures shall be submitted to Over 35's Football's Competition Manager at least five (5) working days prior to the scheduled fixture. Games cannot be rescheduled due to players or teams being unavailable for reasons such as injuries, work or social functions.

It is the responsibility of the team requesting the alteration to approach and negotiate with the opposition team in relation to the alteration of a fixture. If both teams agree to re-schedule the fixture, the fixture must be replayed within fourteen (14) days with a new time, location and date that is acceptable and agreed to by both teams. The team requesting the fixture alteration is responsible for advising Over 35's Football's Competition Manager and providing proof that the opposition team agrees to the change.

Over 35's Football's Competition Manager decision in regard to the rescheduling of fixtures will be final.

### 5. NON-PARTICIPATION IN A FIXTURE

In the event the home or visiting team is not ready to commence a fixture or finals match **within 15 minutes of the scheduled kick-off** time, the match will be recorded as a 3-0 win in favour of the opposing team, and the points will be awarded to the opposing team.

If, for any reason, a team intends to forfeit a scheduled fixture match, the team is to provide two (2) clear days written notice of the forfeit to Over 35's Football's Competition Manager. Over 35's Football's Competition Manager shall be responsible for notification to the Match Officials and the forfeiting team shall advise the opposition team by phone or in person (text or email is not acceptable). The match will be recorded as a 3-0 win in favour of the opposing' team, and the points will be awarded to the opposing team.

### 6. WITHDRAWAL/REMOVAL FROM FIXTURES

If any team in the competition withdraws or is removed, then the following will apply:

- if the team is withdrawn or removed before the competition has started and they cannot be replaced - a bye in the competition will be substituted;
- if the team is withdrawn or removed during the first round - the recorded results for that team will be deleted and a bye in the competition will be substituted; and  
if the team is withdrawn or removed during the second or subsequent rounds - all points and goals acquired for completed rounds will be retained by opposing teams; the recorded results for that team in the uncompleted round will be deleted and a bye in the competition will be substituted.

## 7. POSTPONED MATCHES

Matches may only be postponed for reasons of ground unavailability (due to weather conditions, or unforeseen scheduling clashes).

Postponed matches will be rescheduled on the catch-up week. If that week has been used, then the home team is responsible for approaching and negotiating with the away team in relation to the alteration of a fixture. The fixture must be replayed within fourteen (14) days with a new time, location and date that is acceptable and agreed to by both teams. The home team is responsible for advising Over 35's Football's Competition Manager and providing proof that the opposition team agrees to the change.

Over 35's Football's Competition Manager reserves the right to record any outstanding fixtures that have not been completed by **NO LATER THAN** one (1) week after the conclusion of the fixture season as a nil result.

## 8. ABANDONED MATCHES

Should the Referee abandon an Over 35's Football match at half time or later, then the match result will stand, unless the matter is referred to Over 35's Football's Competition Manager for determination.

Over 35's Football's Competition Manager reserves the right to determine the match result if they are satisfied that one (or both) of the competing teams, its players, officials, members or supporters were directly responsible for the abandonment of the fixture.

If the allegation is proven, Over 35's Football's Competition Manager may decide to direct any of the following outcomes:

- the match be recorded as "NO RESULT"
- the match be recorded as a 3-0 win in favour of the opposing team, unless the score at the time of abandonment was of a greater margin in favour of the opposing team, and the points will be awarded to the opposing team
- impose a fine, suspend, expel or take whatever disciplinary action they deem necessary against the offending team(s), player(s) and official(s) in accordance with Over 35's Football's Disciplinary Policy.

## 9. LEAGUE CHAMPIONS – FINAL FOUR

In all Competition Divisions, the team finishing with the most points in each division at the conclusion of the "Home and Away" season will be declared League Champions. At the conclusion of the fixture season, the top four (4) placed teams in each division will participate in a Finals Series to determine the Grand Final Winners and Runners Up.

If, at the end of the fixture competition, any two or more teams are equal on points, goal difference shall be taken into account in determining:

- the League Champions;
- the teams eligible to play in the Finals Series in the respective Divisions;
- all other positions on the points table.

Goal difference shall be calculated by subtracting the number of goals **AGAINST** from the number of goals **FOR** in all fixture matches:

- the team with the higher or highest resultant plus figure from such subtraction shall be deemed to have the superior goal difference and shall be the higher or highest placed team;
- in the case of goal difference being equal, the team having scored the most goals **FOR** shall be the higher or highest placed team.

In the case of teams having an equal goal difference and having scored an equal number of goals **FOR**:

- the team with the higher or highest number of points from matches played between the teams in question shall be the higher or highest placed team;
- if the number of points is equal, then the team with the superior goal difference from matches played between the teams in question, shall be the higher or highest placed team;
- in the case of goal difference being equal, the team having scored the most goals FOR from matches played between the teams in question, shall be the higher or highest placed. team;
- if the goal difference and goals FOR are equal, then the team that scored the most away goals from matches played between the teams in question, shall be the higher or highest placed team.

If teams are still equal after taking into account all of the above considerations, both teams will be deemed in the same position on the table.

## 10. FINALS SERIES

### Format - All Competitions

The first stage of the Finals Series will be the Semi-Finals contested between the 1st and 2nd placed teams, and the 3rd and 4th placed teams. The winner of 1 v 2 will go direct to the Grand Final. The second stage will be the Preliminary Final, contested between the winner of 3 v 4 and the loser of 1 v 2.

Week 1	Semi-Final	1v2
	Semi-Final	3v4

Week 2 Preliminary Final	Loser of 1 v 2 v Winner of 3 v 4
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Week 3 Grand Final	Winner of 1 v 2 Semi-Final v Winner of Preliminary Final
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To be eligible to play for a team in the finals series, a player must have started/ been listed at that team's divisional level or lower in a minimum of four (4) matches.

For all finals matches, should the scores be equal after normal time, then the winner will be determined by a penalty shoot-out, in accordance with FIFA Laws of the Game Procedures for Determining the Winner of a Match.

## 11. INTERCHANGE OF PLAYERS

In all Divisions, unlimited interchange will be permitted. Only player's names that appear on the team sheet are permitted to take part in the match. A player who has been interchanged may return to the field for another player. All interchanges can only occur at a break in play with the approval of the Referee and must take place at the halfway line.

## 12. PLAYER REGISTRATION

Players are permitted to be registered at any time prior to the commencement of the Final Series. Players must be registered both with Over 35's Football and their Club. Players cannot be registered at two different clubs concurrently. Unless cancelled earlier, registration is effective from date of registration until 31 December of that year.

### Other Competitions

Players registered in other football competitions (eg Football Brisbane, Church Leagues, Commercial leagues or similar), cannot play in any Over 35's Football Competition Division without prior approval from the Over 35's Football's Competition Manager.

### Protest - Playing Ineligible Player

Any team is permitted to lodge a letter of protest regarding the alleged fielding of an ineligible player. The protest must be in writing and be forwarded to Over 35's Football's Competition Manager. Such protests will be accepted from the Club Secretary ONLY - any protests from persons other than the Club Secretary will be disregarded. An investigation of the circumstances surrounding the incident will be undertaken immediately. Over 35's Football's Competition Manager decision in regards to the protest will be final.

In the event that the protest is upheld, Over 35's Football's Competition Manager will determine an appropriate penalty. A penalty may include a warning, a suspension or forfeiture of points. The decision of the Over 35's Football's Competition Manager will be final.

## **13. TEAM PLAYER AGE REQUIRMENTS**

### **Over 35's**

Only players born in 1984 or earlier are eligible to play in Over 35's Divisions. For the 2019 season only, a team can register a Goalkeeper who turns 34 this calendar year. This player can only play in goals.

### **Over 45's**

Players born in 1974 or earlier eligible to play in Over 45's Divisions.

To assist teams transitioning to the Over 45's Division, teams are allowed up to three players in their squad who turn between 40 & 44 years old this calendar year. These players must be nominated in advance of the season starting and no additional players can be added to that teams list for the remainder of the season who meet this age category.

In the event of a player or team breaching these rules the player in question will be considered ineligible to play under rule 12 Player Registration.

## **14. BORROWING PLAYERS (Fill Ins)**

### **Players moving between Divisions and Ages Groups**

- Players are only able to play for other teams at their Club, in other Divisions where the standard is comparable or higher (see table below for reference). Where a borrowed player has significantly impacted the outcome of the game (in the opinion of the opposition team) the Over 35s Competition Manager should be advised by the Secretary of the Opposition Club. The Over 35s Competition Manager will consult with the Referee and any other relevant parties, and if all parties are of the view that the borrowed player did significantly impact the outcome of the game, the result will be recorded as 3 – 0 to the appellant.
- Players cannot play down more than one Division without the advanced approval (48 hours minimum) of the opposing team's Manager;
- A maximum of two players are able to play down a Division and this assistance can only take the maximum number of players on that team to 12; must be communicated a minimum of 48 hours in advance to the opposition team's Manager, must be clearly indicated on the team-sheet and to the Referee prior to the game commencing;
- Where there are two teams from the same Club in the same Division, players cannot move between those teams;
- Players who are younger than 45 years of age in 2019 and registered with an Over 35s team cannot fill-in the Over 45s Division.

Over 45s Division 1 =	Over 35s Division 2 & 3
Over 45s Division 2 =	Over 35s Division 4 & 5

In the event of a player or team breaching any of these rules the player in question will be considered ineligible to play under rule 12 Player Registration.

## 15. TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

### Facilities/Ground Arrangements

Home teams should ensure:

- the ground is correctly marked, including the technical area;
- it provides suitable goal nets, safely fastened or pegged to the ground and corner flags;
- it provides toilet facilities and dressing room facilities (where possible) that are hygienic and clean;
- it provides a safe environment for players, officials and spectators;
- it provides a Referee's Room where referees and assistant referees can rest and leave their belongings while officiating.

Any team whose facilities do not meet the requirements specified may have its home fixtures played away.

### Player Identification

Each team should ensure that players listed on the Over 35's Football Official Team Sheet have in their possession some legitimate form of photographic and signed identification which should be produced at the request of the Referee or opposing Team Manager. Legitimate forms of identification may include a Driver's Licence, employment 10 card, or Passport.

### Team Sheets

On match day, both teams are required to complete the Over 35's Football Official Team Sheet for the current season prior to the commencement of any match. The team sheet must list all players taking part in the fixture. The team sheet **MUST** be supplied to the Referee **at least 15 minutes** prior to the scheduled kick-off. Each team is responsible for providing the team sheet.

If required, all players must ensure that they have signed the team sheet before it is given to the Referee. In the event a player is unable to sign the team sheet prior to the start of the fixture, it is the responsibility of the team official to ensure that player is listed on the team sheet. That player then has until the conclusion of the half time interval to sign the team sheet and must do so in front of the Referee.

If required, should any listed player fail to sign the team sheet by the conclusion of the half time interval and participates in the fixture, then that player will be deemed to be in breach of the Rules of Competition and the team will be disciplined as determined by Over 35's Football's Competition Manager.

It is the team's responsibility to ensure:

- it has minimum number of seven (7) players to commence the match;
- all players taking the field are eligible to play;
- all players taking the field of play are correctly listed on the team sheet in legible writing;
- all players taking the field of play have signed the team sheet.;
- all players are ready to commence the fixture at the scheduled kick-off time.

***Failure to adhere to these rules will lead to the team being deducted One (1) competition point by the Over 35's Football's Competition Manager.***

### Alcohol Consumption – Participants

Players are not permitted to consume alcohol prior to or during any pre-season, post-season or competition game UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES. Referees have a "duty of care" to all players and will refuse to

allow a player to continue to participate in a game if alcohol consumption is evident. This clause will also apply to match officials, and coaches/managers.

Away teams playing at a home team's Club must not bring their own alcohol with them and should support the home team's facilities.

### **Match Balls**

The home club shall provide the appointed Referee **at least two (2) Match Balls** (Size 5), **at least 15 minutes** prior to the commencement of the scheduled fixture.

### **Playing Strips**

All clubs must nominate a "Home" and have available an "Alternate" strip. The alternative strip (shirts, shorts & socks) should not clash with the nominated "Home" strip. All playing strips must have numbers on the back of the jerseys.

All first named clubs will be deemed the "Home" team and will play in their nominated colours. In the event there is a clash of colours, it will be the responsibility of the **home team** to change into an alternative strip.

Team managers should check the strip worn by their opponents on a weekly basis to avoid the likelihood of a clash. Goalkeepers can wear any colour provided it does not clash with either team or referees.

## **16. MATCH OFFICIALS' INFORMATION**

### **Team Sheets and Send Off Incident Report Forms**

At the conclusion of each match, the Referee shall complete the Team Sheet and Send Off/Incident Report Forms and once completed forward to reach the Over 35's Football office no later than **two (2) days after the weekend**, i.e. by close of business, Tuesday.

In the event a team official approaches the Referee seeking to protest the fielding of an ineligible player, the Referee should instruct the team official to lodge an official protest with the Club Secretary. The Referee should note this on the Team Sheet.

Please note that the Team Sheets & Send-Off/Incident Report Forms from the appointed match official will be accepted transcript. Over 35's Football Competition Manager may investigate and make alterations to this transcript if it is reasonably satisfied that an error has been made.

### **Non-Attendance or Unavailability of Match Official**

In the event no registered match official is present to take charge of the fixture, then the designated "Home": team shall consult the visiting team and appoint a match official to take charge of the fixture. This match official has the same powers as a registered match official.

All teams are obligated to fulfil all fixtures regardless of whether an appointed match official is present to take charge. Should any team fail or refuse to participate in any fixture on the above grounds, then the following will apply:

- the match will be recorded as a 3-0 win in favour of the opposing team, and the points will be awarded to the opposing team;
- the team may be subject to further disciplinary action

In the event both teams refuse to play, Over 35's Football's Competition Manager reserves the right to award a **NO RESULT**, fine both teams and recommend further disciplinary action.

### **Players' Equipment**



It is the Referee's responsibility to ensure all players take the field of play are wearing equipment that is safe to themselves and any other person. All players must wear shin-guards whilst on the field of play.

## **17. APPEAL AGAINST A BREACH OF COMPETITION RULE DECISION**

An appeal against a decision in relation to a breach of these Competition Rules will not be allowed unless the club seeking to appeal satisfies the Over 35's Football Rules Interpretation Committee that one or more of the following grounds of appeal are involved:

- (i) That significant new or additional evidence has become available;
- (ii) That the penalty imposed by Over 35's Football's Competition Manager was not in accordance with the provisions of these Rules, Over 35's Football Policy, or Football Federation Australia Codes of Conduct or associated policies that the penalty was imposed under;
- (iii) That Over 35's Football's Competition Manager failed to follow procedures or requirements of these Rules to the significant detriment of the club seeking to Appeal;
- (iv) That a party was not afforded a reasonable opportunity by Over 35's Football's Competition Manager to present their case;
- (v) That the decision of Over 35's Football's Competition Manager was affected by actual bias.

All appeals must be submitted to the Over 35's Football Competition Manager and MUST:

- Be a written statement from the Club Secretary; and
- Include all documentation relevant to the appeal; and
- Set out the grounds for the appeal against the disciplinary decision.

The written statement must be submitted to the Over 35's Football Competition Manager within 7 days of the date on which the decision being appealed was issued by the Over 35's Football Competition Manager, to be considered.

All appeals will be heard by the Over35's Football Appeals Committee in accordance with its Terms of Reference.