



PO Box 211 , Warragul VIC 3820
E: daniel.heathcote@afigippsland.com.au

GIPPSLAND LEAGUE – RETURN TO PLAY AUGUST 21st

Gippsland League will return to play for all ten competitions this weekend under a revised draw. The revised draw will see the remaining games left for each side to have played once in the regular season be completed.

The member clubs met with the League last night to decide between, forging on with the season under the state government restrictions or abandoning the senior competitions for 2021. With the weekend's running out to get play back in time for a finals series to be completed, the options were put forward for the clubs to decide if they are willing to move forward under restrictions or abandon the senior competitions with the knowledge these restrictions could be in place for a number of weeks moving forward. The overwhelming response from the clubs was to return to play this weekend for all competitions with 90% of the member clubs voting in favour of returning. Both the League and vast majority of clubs identified the key focus is to ensure that there is an end to the season that all the stakeholders have worked hard to achieve.

The matches return under the state government restriction levels for this weekend including no spectators and the Greater Melbourne restrictions for player and volunteers. At the request of the clubs, the League will be putting in place recommendations in relation to player and official availability under the Greater Melbourne restrictions with a number of clubs concerned about senior players that reside or work in Melbourne being eligible to play under the restrictions. The Gippsland League put the onus back on the member clubs to manage these players under the DHHS guidelines and that ultimately the responsibility lies with the clubs and individuals to ensure they are adhering to state laws. The below matches are scheduled to be played for all ten grades with the team listed first the home side.

ROUND 18

Saturday, August 21

Traralgon v Moe
Leongatha v Warragul
Morwell v Bairnsdale
Maffra v Drouin
Wonthaggi v Sale

The member clubs were also presented with two options to consider for the 2021 finals series. The option was offered to keep the same format and dates which would see a four-week series played up until the 18th September. These finals would be impacted by the COVID 19 restrictions, and the potential shift of dates being thrown around for the AFL Grand Final. Another curve ball in the decision making to keep a four-week finals series was the withdrawal of the hosting offers from two clubs, scheduled to host three of the six originally scheduled finals, due to the management of COVID 19 restrictions for crowds.

The alternate option, recommended by the League, was to adjust the finals structure for 2021 to a three-week top six finals series which would consist of Semi Finals, Preliminary Finals and a Grand Final. This structure gives greater flexibility in the event of a snap lockdown during the next four weeks to allow the best chance of a Grand Final being played. The member clubs voted in overwhelming favour of the three-week top six series for 2021 with 80% of the clubs seeing this structure as the way forward to finish off the 2021 Gippsland League season.

---- continues ----



PO Box 211 , Warragul VIC 3820
E: daniel.heathcote@afigippsland.com.au

RETURN TO PLAY

Gippsland League will return to play August 21st for all senior and junior competitions under the following conditions.

Play resumes August 21st

- Updated draw Round 16 moved to this date (senior and junior competitions)
- Gippsland League to play a finals series played as top 6 with a three-week series as per appendix 2.
- Finals qualifications adjusted as per appendix 1.
- Player and official's restrictions as per State Government.
- Reserves matches to be adjusted to 16 per side for round 18 with up to 6 on the bench.
- Permits can only be conducted under the area agreement conditions.

Appendix 1

FINALS QUALIFICATION ADJUSTMENTS

- Football qualification will be adjusted to
Football finals qualification – 1 match in that grade for season 2021
Senior aged players must have been registered to the club as a player before June 30th 2021
- Senior netball qualification will be adjusted to
Senior netball finals qualification – 2 matches in that grade for season 2021
- Junior netball qualification will be adjusted to
Junior netball finals qualification – 1 match in that grade for season 2021
Player must have been registered to the club as a player before June 30th 2021

Players will need to have played finals series qualification matches whilst registered to the club. Players on permit need to meet conditions of that permit. NAB League players are required to have played 1 match in the Thirds to qualify for Thirds finals.

Appendix 2

FINAL 6 SERIES STRUCTURE

FINAL	PROPOSED DATES	PROPOSED VENUE	Ladder positions
Semi Finals 1	SAT AUG 28 th	TBC	3 v 6
Semi Finals 2	SUN AUG 29 th	Morwell Recreation Reserve	4 v 5
Preliminary 1	SAT SEPT 4 th	First place senior team venue	1 v WSF2
Preliminary 2	SUN SEPT 5 th	Second place senior team venue	2 v WSF1
GRAND FINAL	SAT SEPT 11 th	Ted Summerton Reserve	WPF1 v WPF2