



Northern Inland Football Inc

# Competition Rules & Regulations

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## SECTION A - – CHANGES TO REGULATIONS

### RULE 1 - REGULATIONS

1. The Regulations governing competitions are set by Northern Inland Football Inc. from time to time. The Regulations can be altered (without the need for notices of motion) by the Competition Administrator.
2. Some competitions MAY have specific rules and regulations (such as NIF Premier League/ Tamworth & Armidale Competitions or Mann Cup/Acropolis Cup) that are not covered in these Rules and Regulations – please refer to the appropriate specific rules for the competition.

## SECTIONS B – NOMINATIONS

### RULE 2 – NOMINATIONS

1. Nominations shall be from registered clubs recognised by Northern Inland Football.
2. A Club shall be eligible to enter the NIF Competitions by making application to the NIF Competition Administrator.
3. Nominations are preferred in writing on the appropriate nomination form
4. The ultimate decisions on the allocation of teams to a division shall be made by the NIF Competition Administrator.
5. If a club (having nominated more than 1 team) withdraws a team from the competition after the competition has commenced the team withdrawn shall be from the lowest division in the competition whether or not the teams are in adjoining divisions. Junior teams must apply to the Competition Administrator if the team remaining wishes to play in a lower division.
6. Nomination fees will apply to all NIF Competitions – Nomination fees will be set annually.

## SECTION C – PLAYER REGISTRATION

### RULE 3 – PLAYER REGISTRATION

1. Clubs are responsible for ensuring that their players are properly registered.
2. All players except as provided in Rule 4 shall be registered.
3. All players must be amateur (not receiving payment for playing)
4. A player who plays in any fixture during the season MUST be registered and will be subject to the full fees as determined by NIF annually apart from players subject to rule 4.
5. No refunds will be issued to any Club for any player unless the player did not participate in any competition fixture for the season (and providing the player has not trained with the club and sustained injury which may or may not result in a claim on the club or player insurance policy).
6. Registration is not complete until full fees have been paid to NIF or the club has reached an appropriate arrangement with NIF.
7. Any team found guilty of using a player who is not registered for their club at the time of the fixture, is registered with another club or plays in an age group younger than he/she is entitled to shall be determined to have lost the match by forfeit or

shall lose such points as determined by the Competition Administrator. In addition, a fine may be imposed on the club.

8. No registration of players can be affected after 30<sup>th</sup> June in the competition year unless exceptions circumstances apply or subject to Rule 4.

#### **RULE 4 – GUEST PLAYER**

1. The NIF Competition Administrator may allow guest players to play in its competitions. Conditions Apply.
2. The Competition Administrator must approve such guest player having consideration to the level of the competition being played and any other matters that are relevant. (As per FFA National Registrations Regulations 5.3)
3. Application for a Guest Player is to be made on the appropriate form.
4. Guest players will only be permitted after the 30<sup>th</sup> June each year.
5. A fee payable to NIF and the Club for which the guest player is to be associated will apply.
6. Guest players will NOT be permitted in the NIF Premier League Competition.

### **SECTION D – PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

#### **RULE 5 – PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

1. A players age shall be taken as of the 31<sup>st</sup> December in the year of the competition.
2. Each Club shall forward a “Team Sheet” for each team to the Competition Administrator PRIOR to the first fixture of the season.
3. Players whose name appear on the “Team Sheet” are deemed to be registered to that team.
4. Players may be added to the “Team Sheet” at any time prior to a fixture (in writing) but no later than 1 hour before the fixture.

#### **RULE 6 – SENIOR PLAYER GRADING**

1. No senior team shall use more than 5 players whether as substitutes or interchange that have already been listed or will be listed on the match card in a senior team in a lower division on the day (whether the higher division match is played before or after the lower division match).
2. No senior team shall use more than 3 players in a lower division who played in a higher division match in the previous round
3. If a club has more than one team in the same division a player may only play exclusively for one team for the whole competition.
4. Senior players who have played for a higher division may only be relegated to the next lowest division. IF, however a club fields teams in senior divisions that are no adjacent they may relegate a player to the next lowest division team for their club.

## RULE 7 – JUNIOR PLAYER GRADING

1. A player must be turning five (5) years of age in the year they register to play.
2. Any female player is permitted to play in an age group one year below her age. E.g. an 11-year-old girl is permitted to play in the 10's competition but a 12-year-old girl is not.
3. No player who has played in a higher division may be permitted to play in a lower competition of the same age group except by permission of the Competition Administrator.
4. No transfers from a higher to a lower division may be made during the final four weeks of the Premiership Competition (Junior competitive competitions) without the permission of the Competition Administrator.
5. Where there are two or more teams entered by the one Club in the same division of the one age group a player must play exclusively for the team in which he is registered.
6. Play Back - Should the need arise for a player to play in a younger age group for which they do not qualify, application can be made to the Competition Administrator. Each application will be decided on an individual basis.

## RULE 8 – JUNIORS IN SENIOR COMPETITION

1. To be Eligible to play in a senior competition a player MUST be turning 15 years of age in the year of the competition and a "Parental Consent Form" has been submitted to the Competition Administrator.
2. Junior players aged up to 16 years are able to play across any grading in the senior competition subject to rule 8.1.

## SECTION E – COMPETITION FIXTURES

### RULE 9 – GROUNDS

1. All Clubs are required to stipulate if they have a home ground under their control, "Home" fixtures will be played at that ground where possible.
2. Clubs not having a home ground may be required to play their "Home" fixture at any field controlled by NIF.
3. The competition will be played on a home and away basis where possible.

### RULE 10 – FIXTURES

1. Fixtures will be governed by FIFA/FFA rules except as varied in these regulations.
2. Games are to be played in accordance with the official draw of NIF or any draw that is subsequently varied or approved by the Competition Administrator.
3. The maximum number of players that can be listed on a match card is 16 with the exception of the Women's competition which allow 18 players to be listed.
4. Each team may have no more than 5 interchange or substitute players over the allowed number of numbers of players at each fixture.

5. A team must consist of a minimum of 7 starting players. Subject to Rule 10.7 if a team is unable to commence the fixture at the stipulated time with 7 players the game shall be declared a forfeit to the opposition team.
6. A fixture that commences late MUST finish on time – two equal halves are to be played with a 5-minute half time.
7. Duration of Fixtures shall be as follows
  - Under 6, 7, 8 and 9's – 2 equal 20-minute halves
  - Under 10, 11 and 12's – 2 equal 25-minute halves
  - Under 13 and 14's – 2 equal 30-minute halves
  - Under 15 and 16's – 2 equal 35-minute halves
  - Senior Women – 2 equal 40-minute halves
  - 19's - 2 equal 45 minute halves
  - Senior Men's and Opens - 2 equal 45-minute halves.
8. Ball Sizes
  - 6 – 9 years - size 3
  - 10 – 12 years - size 4
  - 13 – 16 years - size 5
  - 19's - size 5
  - All senior games - size 5
9. Each team shall provide a ball for every fixture in which it plays, ball sizes are to be used for each age group as per Rule 10.9.

## RULE 11 – COMPETITION POINTS

1. All competitive divisions will be awarded points as follows
  - Win - 3 points
  - Forfeit win - 3 points & 3 goals for
  - Draw - 1 point
  - Loss - 0 points
  - Forfeit loss - 0 points & 3 goals against
  - Bye - 3 points

## RULE 12 - MATCH CARDS, RESULTS, POINTS TABLE.

1. Match cards in a form decided up by NIF are the official record of the fixture and are to be filled in by teams from Under 12's up to and including Senior teams prior to the starting time of every fixture and handed to the referee. After the match the Referee will lodge the card in a place appointed for the purpose of having the recorded goals scored, the match result, any infringement details and the Referee and Assistant Referee details.
2. Any player who is listed on a match card for a fixture is deemed to have played that fixture unless otherwise specified for specific divisions.
3. The maximum number of players that can be listed on a match card is 16 with the exception of the Women's competition which allow 18 players to be listed.

4. All match cards are to be written clearly in blue or black pen with all details of game venue, date etc. to be filled in. All match cards MUST be signed by the Coach and/or manager for the team.
5. All clubs are asked to maintain their own records of each fixture.
6. If a result or score is in dispute for a fixture then the club should notify the Competition Administrator, clubs are asked to check the official points table regularly and advise the Competition Administrator of any issues.
7. When fixtures are played at venues other than those in Tamworth or Armidale it is requested that the home team notify the Competition Administrator of the results of the fixture if no Official Referee has officiated the game.

### **RULE 13 – MATCH OFFICIALS**

1. Each fixture where possible will be played under the control of an official referee and assistant referee (known as match official) who has been appointed by the Referee Appointments Officer.
2. For senior fixtures in the event of no official referee being in attendance at the scheduled starting time the home team shall appoint a substitute referee for the fixture. Failure to do so will be regarded as a forfeit to the opposition team. Failure by the visiting team to accept the appointed person will see the fixture declared a forfeit to the “home” team. The appointed person shall assume the full responsibility of a referee and shall be treated accordingly. In the event of a game where neither team is designated the “home team” and no official referee is in attendance then each team is to supply a referee for half the fixture.
3. For junior games where no official referee is in attendance each team is to supply a referee for half the fixture. Failure to do so shall be regarded as a forfeit for the team not complying.
4. In the event of an official referee failing to appear for a game the match card is to be clearly marked accordingly and submitted to the Competition Administrator.
5. If one or both Assistant Referee’s are not in attendance it is the responsibility of both teams to share the responsibilities of the lines person with duties being as directed by the referee.

### **RULE 14 – COACHES, OFFICIALS AND SPECTATORS**

1. Persons who are located within the “technical area” at each fixture are deemed to be part of the Club that is playing in the fixture. This provision means that persons within the technical area can be dealt with directly as per the Disciplinary Regulations. Match officials can report or take action (issue Red or Yellow Card) against any person in the “technical area”. The presence of a person other than a player within the technical area is deemed to be as an official.

2. The “technical area” at each fixture should only be occupied by a team coach, manager and those players listed on the match card.
3. Clubs are responsible for the behaviour of the Club Officials and players whether on the field or in the technical area and generally for the behaviour of their spectators.
4. All clubs are to appoint for every senior fixture a “ground official” or “duty officer” who is to make themselves know to the match official and is to wear a “hi viz” vest for the duration of the fixture, they are also required to follow any reasonable requests made to them by the Match official.

## SECTION F – DISCIPLINARY MATTERS, DISPUTES ETC

### RULE – 15 – GENERAL DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

1. All protests, disputes or reports of incidents by a Referee that impact on whether a player or team should or should not play in the next match must be submitted in writing to the Competition Administrator no later than 9am on the Monday following the incident.
2. All other complaints, protests or disputes are to be channelled through the club management to the Competition Administrator and must be on the Clubs official letterhead.
3. A player who is cautioned by a Referee or dismissed from the field of play will be dealt with summarily (no hearing) and will AUTOMATICALLY received the penalty for the offence as per the FFA Disciplinary Regulations. Players wishing to appeal against an automatic sanction can request an appeal hearing.
4. Should a person wish to appeal a suspension they may apply to NIF for an appeal on the matter. Appeals should state the grounds upon which the appeal is made and should be accompanied by any relevant documentation. Appeals are to be made within 7 days of the receipt of the sanction notification. A fee will apply.
5. A further appeal on any decision from NIF can be made to NNSW.

### RULE 16 – CAUTIONS, SEND-OFFS

1. A player may not play in any fixture under the jurisdiction of NIF whilst under suspension until the required suspension is served.
2. A player who accumulates five (5) yellow cards in any one season will automatically incur a one match suspension. Any subsequent yellow cards issued during the season may see the player suspended as per FFA Disciplinary Regulations.
3. A Coach, Manager or Team Official may be issued with a Yellow or Red Card by the match official, any sanctions that may apply will be as per FFA Disciplinary Regulations.



## SECTION G – FIXTURES IN DOUBT, WEATHER, DEFERRALS ETC.

1. Please refer to [northerninlandfootball.com.au](http://northerninlandfootball.com.au) for information regarding
  - Wet weather notifications
  - Deferral of a fixture
  - Cancelled fixture
  - Field Closure
  - Fixture transfer to alternate venue.

## SECTION H – FINAL SERIES

### RULE 17 – FINALS FORMAT (All Competitive age groups/divisions)

All Grand Finals fixtures will be played at a venue determined by NIF.

1. Semi Final (Week 1)
  - (A) 1<sup>st</sup> v 2<sup>nd</sup> (winner to play in grand final)
  - (B) 3<sup>rd</sup> v 4<sup>th</sup> (loser is eliminated)
2. Preliminary Final (Week 2)
  - (C) Winner of B v Loser of A (loser is eliminated)
3. Grand Final (Week 3)
  - Winner of A v winner of C

If the event of a draw at full time in a grand final extra time of 2 equal periods will be played (15 minutes for seniors & 10 minutes for women's and juniors) in accordance with FIFA Law 8.

If at the conclusion of extra time a winner has not been determined, then penalty kicks will be taken in accordance with FIFA Laws of the Game to determine the winner.

### RULE 18 – FINALS ELIGIBILITY

1. To be eligible to play in the final's series, players must have played a minimum of 5 matches for the Club in their respective competition. Clubs may seek special dispensation for a player returning from injury who has played less than 5 division games. All request for players returning from injury will be considered on an individual basis.
2. (Armidale – New England League Div 1 & 2 ONLY) – A player shall be eligible to participate in the New England League Div 2 grand finals series providing that they have participated in more matches in that division than Div 1.
3. (All Other Senior Competitions) – A player who has played in the Premier Competition (those competitions that have 1<sup>st</sup> & Res Grades) and played in at least 66% of their games in Res grade (provided that they have not been named in the starting line up for a higher grade for that round) during the competition is eligible

to play in Res Grade. This rule is not applicable whilst all grades are still participating in the final series.

4. Clubs may seek special dispensation for the specialist position of goalkeeper, all requests will be considered on an individual basis by NIF. It is recommended that 2 goal keepers be nominated per team.

## SECTION 1 – FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. Accounts not paid to NIF or New England Football referees by the due date may be subject to a late fee.
2. Overdue accounts may render the club ineligible to receive further competition points during the period that account remains unpaid in full UNLESS an agreement has been reached with NIF or New England Football Referees.
3. Any Club found to be “unfinancial” may be in-eligible to play in the final series.
4. NIF reserves the right to impose further penalty where financial obligations of members are not fulfilled in accordance with reasonable terms.

## SECTION J – GENERAL MATTERS

1. Local government ordinances over the distribution of alcohol and smoking at grounds controlled by council – unless otherwise sign posted any ground/field controlled by council are deemed to be alcohol and smoke free. Such a person breaking the ordinance can be refereed to the relevant authorities.
2. Nothing contained in any of the regulations for competitions will prohibit the Competition Administrator from making decisions for the proper conduct of the competition in the event of unforeseen circumstances.