

## **2015 Modified Rules for Junior Football**

### **3.1 LAWS OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL**

Unless otherwise specified in these by-laws, the AFL "Laws of Australian Football" shall apply in all games. Where discretion is available under the AFL "Laws of Australian Football" for controlling bodies to nominate rule variations, any such variations will be reflected in these by-laws.

### **3.2 MODIFIED RULES FOR JUNIOR GAMES**

#### **3.2.1 Spirit of Game**

All junior games must be conducted with an emphasis on fun, involvement, learning of skills and good sportsmanship. Within reason, coaches must ensure that all players, irrespective of ability, are given sufficient time on the playing field to experience the game and achieve a sense of involvement.

Club officials, parents and spectators must demonstrate behaviours and attitudes consistent with this spirit. Clubs must promote and enforce a "zero tolerance" to behaviours and attitudes inconsistent with the spirit, especially (but not limited to) abuse or dissent with umpires, officials and players. At the end of the game, players and officials of both teams must meet in the centre of the ground and shake each other by the hand.

#### **3.2.2 Under 9 and Under 10 Modified Rules**

The following modified rules shall apply in all Under 9 and Under 10 games. In all other respects, games shall be conducted in accordance with total WRFL by-laws.

Modifications to Game Conditions:

- a) Scores shall not be recorded
- b) No scoreboard shall operate
- c) No premiership points shall be awarded
- d) Ladders shall not be compiled/published
- e) No final series to be played
- f) No WRFL awards shall be made to individual Players.

##### **3.2.2.1 Playing Ground**

At the discretion of the home club, games may be played on grounds marked to range in size from full-size down to a minimum of half the size of a full ground. Home clubs must notify opposition clubs no later than the Thursday before the game should they determine to play on a reduced sized ground.

Clubs are encouraged to use reduced size grounds wherever possible for Under 9 and Under 10 games.

### **3.2.2.2 Teams**

Teams shall comprise of 18 players per side, unless the coaches of both teams agree to a lesser number. There shall be no limit to the number of interchange players and players may be interchanged at any time during a game. Players should be rotated every quarter, eg. centres, backs, forwards. Coaches are encouraged to share excess players with the opposition team if they are short. Except in the cases of injury, incapacity, discipline or a player ordered off the field by an umpire, all players shall be allocated a minimum on-field game time equivalent to of half the game.

### **3.2.2.3 Playing Time**

Game duration shall be four (4) quarters, each of 15 minutes duration (no time-on) with breaks as follows:

- a) Quarter-time: 3 minutes
- b) Half-time: 7 minutes
- c) Three-quarter-time: 3 minutes

### **3.2.2.4 Start of Play (each quarter)**

In each quarter, play shall be started by a ball up between rucks. Player must not grab ball at ball up. It must be knocked, palmed or punched. This applies to centre throw ups only.

### **3.2.2.5 Start of Play (following goals)**

Each time a goal is scored by either team, play will be restarted with a player of the team that did not score the goal given possession in the centre circle. The player awarded such possession will be selected at the discretion of the umpire. A maximum of four (4) players per team shall be permitted in the centre square until the player has disposed of the ball.

### **3.2.2.6 Scrimmage**

Ball up between two (2) players of equal height.

### **3.2.2.7 Out of Bounds**

When out of bounds from a kick, a free kick shall be awarded to nearest opponent. If in doubt to which team kicked it out, a ball up will take place five (5) metres in from boundary.

### **3.2.2.8 Tackling**

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 (i.e. push 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 penalised 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 accidentally knocked out of a player's hands by an opponent.

There is strictly no bumping, slinging or deliberately bringing the opposition player in possession of the ball to the ground.

Players cannot:

- a) knock the ball out of an opponent's hands;
- b) push the player in the side;
- c) steal the ball from another player; or
- d) smother an opponent's kick.

A free kick shall be awarded to any infringed player.

#### **3.2.2.9 Barging**

No barging, fending off or chopping past opponents is allowed. A free kick shall be awarded to the nearest opponent.

#### **3.2.2.10 Shepherding**

A player is not permitted to push, shoulder or block an opponent not in possession of the ball. A free kick shall be awarded to any infringed player.

#### **3.2.2.11 Mark**

A mark is awarded, no matter how far the ball has travelled, to any player who catches the ball directly from the kick of another player.

#### **3.2.2.12 Bouncing the Ball**

A player may bounce the ball only once, and then must dispose of it. In the case of any infringement, the umpire shall effect a ball-up at the spot where the second bounce occurs.

#### **3.2.2.13 Kicking off the Ground**

Deliberate kicking the ball off the ground in general play is not permitted and will result in a free kick being awarded against the offending player.

#### **3.2.2.14 Staying in Position**

Insofar as practical, players must stay in or near their allocated positions. Umpires will have discretion to stop play and demand players return to their positions when they deem play to be overly congested.

#### **3.2.2.15 Order off Rule**

The order-off rule applying in other WRFL grades will apply in Under 9 and Under 10 games.

### **3.2.2.16 Player Reports & Tribunals**

If a player is reported in an Under 9 or Under 10 game, he/she will not appear before the Independent Tribunal or the Independent Hearing Committee. Instead, the following will apply:

a) clubs to take action, and a copy of action taken to be forwarded to WRFL General Manager Football Operations, by Thursday 12noon after game;

Free kick penalty added, March 2015

Ball-up in case of infringement added, March 2015

Free kick penalty added, March 2015

b) If the General Manager Football Operations deems fit or the player has been previously reported or disciplined then the General Manager Football Operations can request the player and the club appear before a disciplinary panel consisting of a WRFL Executive member and a member of the Tribunal and/or IHC. The Board can deal with the matter as it deems fit and may impose any penalty that the Tribunal or Independent Committee can impose.

### **3.2.2.17 Coach on Ground**

The coach is allowed on the ground during play for the sole purpose of providing immediate feedback to players. He or she must not pressure, instruct or make comment to or about officiating umpires or decisions that they make. The coach must not pressure, instruct or make comment to players or officials of the opposition team.

When the coach elects to remain on the ground during play, then no runner for that team will be permitted on the ground at the same time as the coach.

The order-off rule (refer by-law 3.21) applies to all players and officials in all junior games.

### **3.2.3 Under 11 and Under 12 Modified Rules**

The following modified rules shall apply in all Under 11 and Under 12 games. In all other respects, games shall be conducted in accordance with total WRFL by-laws.

#### **3.2.3.1 Kicking off the Ground**

Deliberate kicking the ball off the ground in general play is not permitted and will result in a free kick being awarded against the offending player.

#### **3.2.3.2 Mercy Rule**

The Mercy Rule will apply to the U11 and U12 age groups and will be invoked by the umpires if the score differential at half time or three quarter time of a match is sixty (60) points or greater. Once invoked the rule will remain in place for the remainder of the match.

Once invoked the following change to match conditions will be implemented by the umpires:

- After any score by the winning team, play is restarted with the losing team given possession of the ball in the centre circle.

There is no discretion for club officials to agree to non-implementation of the Mercy Rule. The Mercy Rule does not apply in finals matches.

This rule is not designed to achieve an even sharing of the ball between all players irrespective of their ability. The purpose of the rule is, however, to create a more fair and even contest once one team has a significant lead in a match. The WRFL expects all team officials, players and supporters to adhere to the spirit of this rule and reserves the right to monitor all matches to ensure clubs are meeting this responsibility.

### **3.2.4 Evening Up of Player Numbers – Under 11 to Under 14 Games**

Where a team in grades up to and including Under 14 has less than 18 players on their teamsheet, the following modified rules shall apply:

3.2.4.1 If a team does not have 14 of its own registered players a scratch match will be played with the opposing team receiving a win by forfeit (as per by-law 3.5).

3.2.4.2 Where a team does not have a full 18 players, it must approach the opposing team and request that players be loaned to even up team numbers. This request should be made at least 15 minutes prior to the commencement of the match. If the team requiring players does not make this request, then the opposing team may take the field with an additional two players (up to the maximum player numbers of 18 eg.: team A has 15 players and does not request players be loaned, team B may take the field with 17 players).

3.2.4.3 Where a team has requested players be loaned and still takes the field with less than 18 players, the opposing team must also take the field with the same amount of players.

3.2.4.4 Any goals kicked or best player votes received whilst playing for the opposing team should appear for the player's regular team.

3.2.4.5 Players on loan can be rotated back each quarter.

3.2.4.6 If a club requiring players does not have sufficient jumpers available the evening up rule will not apply.

3.2.4.7 Player send offs or injuries occurred during the game will not result in evening up of players.

3.2.4.8 The evening up rule does not apply in finals matches.

3.2.4.9 The evening up rule can be used for junior grades above Under 14 with the mutual approval of both coaches.

Teams failing to comply with these by-laws will be subject to penalties at the discretion of the General Manager Football Operations.