

RULES OF COMPETITION

Premier League

2026



Last accepted on 31 March 2026

ILLAWARRA DISTRICT NETBALL ASSOCIATION

2026

RULES OF COMPETITION FOR THE PREMIER LEAGUE WINTER COMPETITION

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ILLAWARRA DISTRICT NETBALL ASSOCIATION

RULES OF COMPETITION FOR THE PREMIER LEAGUE COMPETITION

INTRODUCTION

The Premier League competition is, and should be treated as, the flagship competition of Netball Illawarra. This document specially provides the rules under which the Premier League competition is to be conducted.

The onus will be on the Board, and the Clubs that have teams competing in the Premier League competition to ensure that the competitiveness of the competition is maintained at the highest level.

ANNUAL REVISIONS OF THESE RULES

The Rules of Competition for the Premier League Competition are to be reviewed at the completion of each Winter season. Should it be deemed necessary that changes are required, then a new edition will be issued no later than the last day of January of the following year. Where a revision has taken place and no changes are considered necessary, this shall be noted in this document.

A. TEAMS

A.1 TEAMS

Each team when registering, shall have a minimum of 7 registered players and a maximum of 12 registered players.

No player under 14 years of age may be registered with a Premier League Team.

A.2 GRADING OF TEAMS

- (a) The Board will invite teams to participate in the Grading for Premier League.
- (b) These may include top Senior A1 teams from the previous season, as well as Illawarra 15's representative team, are to play each other in a round-robin competition.
- (c) From the results of these games teams considered to be of Premier League standard, will be added to the Premier League competition. Any teams not allocated to Premier League will be added to the Senior A1 competition, or lower.
- (d) As provisions have been made for a maximum of 10 teams in the competition, there shall be no right to appeal a grading of any team resulting from their inclusion or exclusion into the Premier League, although, if there are more than 8 teams in the competition, a team may, however, seek to be regraded into the senior A1 competition.
- (e) Any team that does not have at least 7 players available for all on-court grading games, will be automatically excluded from any consideration for inclusion in the Premier League

Competition. Such an action by a team may also result in the imposition of fines and/or penalties being imposed by the Board.

A.3 LATE REGISTRATIONS

A player may be registered with a Premier League Team after the team has been graded provided there is no more than 12 players at any time throughout the competition.

A.4 TRANSFERS

A player may only be transferred from a lower graded team into a Premier League Team during the regular competition, however, there cannot be any more than 12 registered players at any time during the competition.

Players may be deregistered from the team to allow for the transfer of another player into the team. Such deregistered players cannot be re-registered with the Premier League Team.

Where a club has 2, or more teams in a Premier League competition once a player has been registered in one of the teams they shall not be permitted to be registered with, transferred to, or borrowed by another Premier League team in that year of competition.

Players cannot be transferred into a Premier League team that is competing in the Finals Series.

A.5 FINALS ELIGIBILITY

A player who has been registered for a Premier League Team after the 3rd last competition game shall not be eligible to participate in the Finals series for that team.

A player may be borrowed at any time.

A.6 PLAYING UNIFORMS

The playing uniform of a Premier League team shall be the same as the uniform used by the other teams of the Club of which the Premier League team is a member.

B. THE COMPETITION

B.1 VENUE

All games for the Premier League competition shall be played in the Illawarra Sports and Community Precinct, Fred Finch Park, Berkeley on Courts A and B. If there is a failure of either the lighting, or the goal rings, or there are safety concerns with the playing surface, which make one or both courts unusable only then the games shall be transferred to Courts C and D.

If such concerns or failures apply to courts C and D as well then, the playing of the Premier League games for that day may be delayed or abandoned, as determined by the Board.

B.2 THE PREMIER LEAGUE COMPETITION

- (a) The Premier League Competition shall consist of not less than 8 teams and no more than 10 teams. The actual number of teams shall be determined by the board each year.
- (b) The Premier League Competition shall be conducted over two (2) rounds followed by Semi-Finals, Finals and Grand Finals. The actual number of games scheduled being determined by the number of teams competing in the competition.
- (c) The Illawarra Under 15 representative team shall be given the opportunity to be one of the teams in the Premier League competition. This team must, however, prove that it is worthy of being in the Premier League as one of the top teams in the Illawarra each year.

B.3 LOCAL RULES FOR THE PREMIER LEAGUE COMPETITION

All games will be subject to the following rules:

- (a) All games shall be played in accordance with the World Netball Rules of Netball except where modified by the local rules created by the Board, as detailed in these Rules.
- (b) The competition will be controlled by the Board. Information relating to the competition will be sent to all clubs each year
- (c) No Competition games will be played on
 - Easter Saturday
 - Anzac Day
- (d) Competition games shall be scheduled for Saturday afternoons. For the 2026 season, an additional game shall be scheduled for Thursday, 11 June.
- (e) Games for the Premier League competition may be scheduled to be played prior to the start of the competition for other grades. Such games may be played during school holidays. The dates on which games are to be played each year will be determined by the Board, after the Premier League grading.
- (f) Each team nominated for the Premier League competition shall have a minimum of seven (7) registered players of Premier League standard and a maximum of twelve (12) registered players
- (g) Each team shall pay one umpire the amount of \$40 before the start of the game
- (h) If other senior games are cancelled due to adverse weather, the Premier League competition games shall proceed, unless otherwise advised by the Board.
- (i) Premier League teams may use Rolling Substitutions for the interchange of players during competition games and all games in the Finals Series.
- (j) Premier League teams either through the injured player or the team captain on court, may call for an injury time stoppage to replace an injured player and make other changes in the allowed 30 seconds of injury time.
- (k) Stoppage for an injury may also be called by the umpires that are officiating during the game.
- (l) Netballs for all Premier League competition games, and the Finals Series, shall be provided by Netball Illawarra
- (m) All teams in the Premier League Competition are required to provide representatives to undertake umpiring duty in accordance with the Club and Team Duty Requirements Policy

B.4 SCORE SHEETS

- (a) The score sheet for each game is to be collected from the Duty Room by a representative from one of the competing teams
- (b) Each team, prior to the start of the game, is to list the playing positions of the players starting the game. Any starting player not shown on the scoresheet is to have their full name legibly recorded, along with their playing position.
- (c) The playing position of each player starting each quarter shall be identified on the score sheet before the score sheet is returned to the Duty Room
- (d) For players used as an interchange through a Rolling Substitution, a tick must be added next to the player's name to indicate that they have taken the court after the start of a quarter.
- (e) The full name of all borrowed players, as well as their team's name, grade/division is to be printed on the score sheet prior to their participation
- (f) Any injury or illness occurring during a game is to be recorded on the appropriate accident form and submitted as soon as practicable
- (g) It is the responsibility of both teams to have a scorer with the scoresheet. The scorers are to be located opposite the Centre Circle
- (h) Scorers shall record goal attempts for each shooter
- (i) Scorers shall record who has taken each Centre Pass.
- (j) The Scorer is required to record details of any warnings, suspensions or where a player has been ordered from the court by an umpire during the game, on the back of the scoresheet
- (k) The winning team is responsible for the return of the completed Score Sheet to the Duty Room at the completion of the game.

B.5 BENCH OFFICIALS

Each team shall provide a timer and a scorer for each game, who shall be referred to as bench officials. Failure to do so shall incur a fine to the value of not less than \$50.

Teams that regularly fail to provide such officials may have the fine increased. There shall be no excuses and no right of appeal against such fines.

All persons undertaking the role of a bench official shall be required to attend a training session for these roles organised by Netball Illawarra, prior to the start of the Premier League competition, so that all bench official personnel are doing the role consistently.

Only those people who have participated in the Netball Illawarra training course, or who have completed the Netball NSW bench officials' course, shall be permitted to act as the team's scorer or timekeeper.

B.6 GAMES

B.6.1 Length Of Games

All Premier League games, including the finals series, shall consist of 4 x 15-minute quarters with a 2-minute break after the 1st and 3rd quarters and a 5-minute break at ½ time.

B.6.2 Timing Of Games

- (a) Each competition and each finals game shall be timed by team officials. For competition games there shall be no time off for injuries or other stoppages.

- (b) For finals series games timing shall include any stoppages for injury and any other stoppage indicated by the umpires.

B.6.3 Abandoning a Game

Where there has been a significant injury that does not allow the player, or umpire, to be moved from the court without paramedic assistance, or if there has been an equipment failure (e.g. goal posts, lighting problems, or a problem with the flooring etc), and there is no other indoor court available on which to continue the game, the game result shall be determined by the score at the time of the stoppage if it occurs at or after half-time. If it occurs before half time, then the result shall be declared as a draw.

In such cases, both umpires are to be paid.

B.6.4 Transferring a Game

If the situation arises where a player, or umpire, cannot be safely moved, and Courts C and D are available, the game shall be transferred to one of these courts.

If a Senior A1 game is being played on the court, then that game shall be transferred to an outside court at the end of a quarter and shall be permitted to complete their game as four 15-minute quarters.

In such an instance where a Senior A1 game must be moved, it shall be the game that will have the least impact on the Senior A1 top 4.

If this means that players are unable to fulfil their umpiring responsibilities because of this change, then the two teams involved shall not be penalised or fined because of this delayed game.

B.6.5 Umpires For Premier League Games

All Premier League games shall have umpires who have at least a current National "B" badge officiating or, working towards being badged for a National "B" badge.

B.6.6 Start and Finish of Play for Each Game

- (a) Where there are 8 or 9 teams, the competition shall be conducted in 2 timeslots. The first game shall be scheduled to start at 1.35pm and the second game shall be scheduled to start at 3.10pm. The actual start time for the second time slot shall be such that the teams have a minimum of 20 minutes in which to warm-up.
- (b) Where there are 10 teams, the competition shall be conducted in 3 timeslots. The scheduled start times being 12.00pm, 1.35pm and 3.10pm. The actual start times shall be such that teams have at least 20 minutes in which to warm-up.
- (c) Should a significant injury occur in a game prior to the start of a Premier League game then the start time of the second game on that court shall be such that it allows the first game to complete their full four quarters and to allow the teams for the second game to have suitable warm-up time.

B.7 DEFERRED GAMES

If a player is representing Netball Illawarra or Netball NSW at a representative level during the **FINALS SERIES**, and, that player is unable to be present at the scheduled time of the game because of this representation, then the club may make an application for that game to be deferred. Where a

deferred game has been granted, the date, time and venue of the game will be determined by the Board.

No deferred game shall be scheduled so that it disadvantages the other team involved in the game.

B.8 COMPLAINTS

All complaints must be notified to the Duty Room by the end of competition on the day of the incident by a team official. An Incident Report Form (on-line or in writing) must be lodged by 6pm Sunday following the incident to complete the complaint process with all supporting statements.

The Board may choose not to consider a complaint where they believe the complaint is vexatious or frivolous.

B.9 PENALTIES AND FINES

B.9.1 Penalties And Fines

- (a) Premier League teams shall make every effort to avoid forfeiting a game. Any Premier League team that fails to participate in scheduled Saturday games, excluding games scheduled for 11 July, shall be fined \$100 and lose 2 competition points. There shall be no right of appeal against any such fine or penalty.

To clarify the above, the fine and loss of points shall not be applied to any forfeits given in the 2026 competition for games scheduled on Thursday, 11 June, or Saturday, 11 July.

- (b) Any Premier League team that forfeits 2 or more times in one season shall result in any future team that includes 4 or more players from that team being banned from competing in the Premier League for 2 years. For the 2026 season, the 2 forfeits shall exclude any forfeits given on Thursday, 11 June or Saturday, 11 July.

Any player from a team who in the previous year forfeited 2 or more times, in accordance with the above, shall not be accepted as a late registration for a Premier League Team for 2 years.

- (c) FAILURE TO SIGN ON AND/OR FULFIL UMPIRING DUTY REQUIREMENTS – Fine per player per game not covered plus loss of 1 competition point per player not in attendance
- (d) PLAYING AN ILLEGAL PLAYER – Game result recorded as a loss for the offending team plus a fine
- (e) PLAYING AN INELIGIBLE PLAYER – Game result recorded as a loss for the offending team plus a fine
- (f) FAILURE TO RECORD A BORROWED PLAYER ON THE SCORESHEET – Game result recorded as a loss for the offending team plus a fine
- (g) INCORRECT BORROWING OF A PLAYER FOR FINALS SERIES – Game result recorded as a loss for the offending team plus a fine
- (h) PLAYING UNDER ANOTHER PLAYER'S NAME – Game result recorded as a loss for the offending team plus a fine

This will be considered as misconduct resulting in disciplinary action being taken against the player concerned, with the option of disciplinary action also being taken against the coach/manager, the team, and the Club.

Where a team has received more than one fine for the same offence the value of the fine may be increased by adding the same value of the fine for the second and subsequent fines.

B.9.2 Appealing Against Imposed Penalties or Fines

- (a) There shall be no right of appeal against fine or penalty relating to fines and loss of competition points for failure to participate in a scheduled game.
- (b) An appeal may only be lodged against the validity of the penalty/fine, not the severity of the penalty/fine.
- (c) An appeal against a penalty or a fine imposed on a team for a competition infringement must be lodged by the club to which the team belongs.
- (d) Such an appeal must be received by the Secretary within seven (7) days of receipt of the notification.

B.10 AWARDING COMPETITION POINTS

- (a) Competition points for games shall be awarded as detailed within this document and in accordance with the following:

Winning a game:	2 points
Losing a game:	0 points
Playing a drawn game:	1 point
Receiving a Bye:	0 points
Receiving a forfeit:	2 points

C. PLAYERS

C.1 REGISTRATION AND DE-REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS

The Registration and De-Registration processes for Premier League players shall be the same as that used for all other players.

C.2 PLAYER GRADING

A player registered to play Premier League shall retain that grading for 3 consecutive years.

C.3 PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES

It is a player's responsibility to ensure that:

- (a) they do not attempt to play or train when wearing a plaster cast or hard splints/apparatus
- (b) If they play whilst wearing gloves, that their nails are short and smooth, as per the uniform policy
- (c) As per the World Netball Rules for Netball, they do not take the court with any form of body jewellery or wearing one or more rings
- (d) if it is not possible to remove a wedding band, the ring shall be suitably and adequately taped to ensure that it will not cause injury to any player, including the wearer

- (e) If medical devices such as daith piercings for migraine treatment or continuous glucose monitors are worn, then they must be adequately padded and protected so as to not present a danger to the wearer or any other player
- (f) If jewellery is not able to be removed for religious / medical reasons, it is the player's choice to play with them, and this player accepts the risks involved. This jewellery shall be suitably and adequately taped to ensure that it will not cause injury to any player, including the wearer.
- (g) they do not resume play after a serious illness/injury or an operation until they have provided a Doctor's Certificate of clearance to play to their Coach
- (h) if they have sustained a concussion, that they adhere to the Netball Illawarra concussion policy. Failure to do so will be considered as player misconduct.

D. USING ROLLING SUBSTITUTIONS

D.1 BORROWING PLAYERS

No player younger than 14 years of age on 31 December in the year of competition may be borrowed by a Premier League Team.

The borrowing rules applicable to teams playing in the Premier League competition shall be as given below.

As a requirement for a club to enter a team into the Premier League competition is to have, a Senior A1 or A2 team, then only players from these club teams may be borrowed by a Premier League team.

An exception to this requirement is the use of a club player playing in the Illawarra Under 15 team, or, if playing in the Senior A1 competition, a club player who is 14 years of age playing in the Illawarra Under 14 team, or a 17's Representative Player from a Cadet A1 team

When a Premier League team does borrow one or more players, it is the responsibility of the club and the team to maintain the standard and integrity of the Premier League competition. As such every attempt should be made to provide borrowed players of the highest standard to their Premier League team. As such the following shall apply:

- (a) A club must take all necessary steps to field a Premier League team for EACH competition game, even if to achieve this means that a lower graded team must forfeit a game.
- (b) Where a team has less than 4 of its registered players available to start a game, the team may borrow as many players as is necessary to have 7 players start the game.
- (c) Any Premier League team abandoning a game for any reason other than those identified in these rules shall be considered to have forfeited the game and the relevant fine applied.
- (d) A Premier League team may borrow as many players as is required to ensure that they have 7 players on court to start a game.
- (e) Where a Premier League Team has four (4) or more of their registered players available to start a game, the team may borrow up to 3 players provided that there are no more than 12 players who can take the court during the game.
- (f) Limitations on the number of times a player can be borrowed apply. Where a team has 12 registered players, and another player has to be regraded to the Premier League team then one of the original members, or the regraded player of the team must be de-registered from the Winter Competition.

- (g) If a club's Senior A1 or Senior A2 must forfeit because of players being borrowed by the club's Premier League team, then it shall not be considered as a forfeit with respect to the number of allowable forfeits and no fines shall be imposed.
- (h) If the need to borrow players by the Premier League team is required and this results in the team from which the players are borrowed must forfeit after the deadline for a notified forfeit, then such a forfeit shall not be classified as an unnotified forfeit. There will be no fine incurred by the forfeiting team. The Club will, however, be required to pay the umpire allocated to that game.
- (i) Where a club with a Premier League team has both an A1 team and an A2 team borrowed players should preferably come from the A1 team.

D.2 ROLLING SUBSTITUTIONS

Rolling Substitutions may be used by teams in competition games and in the Finals Series.

A team using Rolling Substitutions may have a maximum of 12 players available for use. Of these 12 players, no more than 3 players may be from another team.

Borrowed players used as a rolling substitution, must comply with the limitations detailed in Sub-section B.6.5.

The process to be applied when using Rolling Substitutions is as follows:

- (a) Unlimited interchanges may take place during play.
- (b) Play will continue while the Rolling Substitution is being made.
- (c) The interchange must take place through the designated interchange zone, in front of the team's bench and no closer to the goal line than the transverse line. The interchange shall be done so as to not impede the view of the bench or movement of the umpire.
- (d) Multiple interchanges or substitutions may be made at any time and there is no limit to how many interchanges can be made.
- (e) The player entering the court must tag hands with the player leaving the court before entering the field of play.
- (f) Players must observe the offside rule when entering or exiting the court and not interfere with the umpire's movement during the substitution.
- (g) If any of these infringements occur during a substitution a free pass will be given from where the ball is when the infringement takes place.
- (h) If a team does not have 2 sets of identical tags to promote the rapid interchange of players the use of one set of tags and one set of training bibs of the same colour, to be used.

D.3 INTERCHANGE RESULTING FROM INJURY OR ILLNESS

Where injury time has been called, play shall be stopped at which time the player concerned may be replaced, and changes to player positions may also be made, or the player concerned is removed from the court, not replaced, and play will be restarted by the umpires. This would then allow the injured player to return to the court at any break in play.

E. SEMI-FINALS, FINALS AND GRAND FINALS

E.1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- (a) A club must pay all outstanding accounts, fees, and fines prior to any of their teams participating in the Finals Series
- (b) The semi-finalists shall be the four teams with the highest number of competition points
- (c) Should a team that is set down to play in a semi-final forfeit that game, it shall be considered as a loss. If it is in a minor semi-final, they shall take no further part in the finals series. If it is in a major semi-final, they shall play in the final the following week
- (d) When two or more teams have the same number of competition points, placings will be decided through the application of the following equation for each team involved:

$\frac{(\text{Total goals scored})}{(\text{Total goals against})} \times \frac{(\text{Games Played})}{(100)}$

The number of games played includes any games a team has forfeited but does not include any forfeits that a team has received.

Placings will be determined by the number calculated for each team. The highest number has the highest placing.

- (e) The scoring of the games is the responsibility of the team officials
- (f) Each team shall pay the umpires the amount specified for their relevant competition, prior to the start of the game

E.2 PLAYER ELIGIBILITY FOR THE FINALS SERIES

To be eligible to play in the Finals Series, a player must have played at least three (3) games for the team during the Premier League competition. There will be no player transfers to a Premier League team after the last regular game.

Players may be borrowed from an A1 or A2 team even if that team is playing in the finals series. Any player borrowed from a team playing in the finals series shall only be permitted to play one game on the day that they are borrowed.

It shall not be permitted to transfer a player from a lower graded team into a Premier League for the finals series. Players may only be borrowed.

E.3 THE FINALS SERIES GAMES

E.3.1 Semi-Finals

E.3.1.1 About These Games

- (a) Both the Minor and the Major Semi-Finals will be scheduled to be played on the first Saturday of the Finals series.
- (b) If the Semi-Finals for the other Senior competitions are postponed due to Adverse Weather conditions, the Premier League Semi-Finals shall continue as scheduled.
- (c) The Premier League Semi-Finals shall be played on court A of the Illawarra Sports and Community Precinct.
- (d) The playing order for the Semi-Finals shall be:

1.35pm **Minor Semi-Final** = Third Place V's Fourth Place
3.10pm **Major Semi-Final** = First Place V's Second Place

- (e) If at the end of normal time the results are a tie, then extra time shall be played in accordance with Sub-Section E6 to determine the winner and loser.
- (f) The loser of the Minor Semi-Final will be eliminated.

E.3.2 The Final

E.3.2.1 About This Game

The Finals shall be contested by the loser of the Major Semi-Final and the winner of the Minor Semi-Final.

The Premier League Final shall be played at 2.00pm on Court A of the Illawarra Sports and Community Precinct.

The loser of the Final will be eliminated.

E.3.3 The Grand Final

E.3.3.1 About This Game

The Premier League Grand Final is to be the last game of the Winter Competition.

The Grand Final shall be contested by the winner of the Major Semi-Final and the winner of the Final.

The stadium should be approached to ensure that the court surface is free from dust or anything else that would be deemed to limit players from playing to their full ability.

The benches for the two teams and the match officials (timers and scorers) shall be located on Court B, away from the spectators. An area behind the benches is to be roped off to stop spectators from encroaching into the teams and the official's area.

Court C and D are to be made available for the teams to warm up.

The start of proceedings will be an Acknowledgement of Country (if possible). This is to occur no earlier than 3.30pm. At this time access to the courts shall be stopped for the ceremony by closing the doors to Courts A and B. After the ceremony the doors will be re-opened.

Following the Acknowledgement of Country ceremony, any dignitaries, Netball Illawarra sponsors, and Netball Illawarra Life Members present shall be introduced.

The coaches and players from each team will be introduced as will the 2 umpires and the reserve umpire.

Prior to the start of the game the National Anthem is to be played.

The expected start time should not be before 4.00pm

E.4 PROCEDURES FOR EXTRA TIME IN ALL FINALS GAMES

E.4.1 All Finals Games

If, at full time, the score is tied, then extra time shall be played. Extra time shall be played in accordance with the following to determine the winner:

- (i) There shall be a 2-minute interval at full time, during this time the umpires will check the scoresheet to ensure that it is tie
- (ii) Two 5-minute halves shall be played with a 1-minute break at half time
- (iii) Teams shall change ends at half-time
- (iv) The Centre pass is taken by the team entitled to the next Centre Pass
- (v) During intervals, substitutions and/or team changes may be made.

E.4.2 For Semi-Finals and Finals

If, at the completion of the extra time the score is still a tie then the following process shall occur:

- (i) A toss for choice of centre pass or goal end is taken.
- (ii) Play shall continue until one team has a two (2) goal lead, or 10 minutes of play has elapsed.
- (iii) If after the 10 minutes of extra play neither team has a 2-point lead, then the process detailed in this sub-section shall be repeated until a result is determined

E.4.3 For Grand Finals

If, at the completion of the extra time the score is still a tie then the following process shall occur:

- (i) A toss for choice of centre pass or goal end is taken.
- (ii) Play shall continue until one team has a two (2) goal lead, or 10 minutes of play has elapsed.
- (iii) If after the 10 minutes scores are still tied, then the two teams shall be declared joint premiers.

E.5 TROPHIES AND AWARDS

A presentation ceremony will be held at the conclusion of the Premier League Grand Final. At this ceremony:

- (i) The "Val Curran" Premier League Memorial Trophy will be presented to the captain of the winning team
- (ii) The MVP Award for the most valuable player in the Premier League Grand Final. The Board will determine the selection panel and guidelines for the award
- (iii) Trophies will be presented to all players in the premiership winning team. Where there are joint premiers, trophies will be provided to all players from both teams
- (iv) All players in the runners up team will receive an award.
- (v) A presentation to the two officiating umpires and the reserve umpires