



HUNTER JUNIOR RUGBY LEAGUE

2026 COMPETITION

BY-LAWS



CONTENTS

COMPETITIONS	5
1. Age Groups.....	5
2. Match Durations.....	5
3. Competition Points.....	6
4. Facilities.....	6
5. Hunter JRL Logo Placement and Usage.....	6
ADMINISTRATION	7
6. Team Nominations.....	7
7. Trial Sanctioning.....	8
8. Hybrid Competitions (Modified Rules Age Groups).....	9
9. Registrations.....	10
10. De-registration / Unassigning Players from a Team	10
11. Player Transfers.....	11
12. Playing Higher Grade Competitions	13
13. Playing Higher Age Competitions.....	13
14. Playing Lower Age Competitions.....	14
15. Grading / Re-Grading	15
International Age Competitions.....	15
Development Competitions	15
16. Accreditation Requirements	16
17. Draws and Times	16
18. Forfeits	17
19. Washout Policy.....	18
20. Cancellation / Postponement / Abandonment of Matches.....	19
Emergency Circumstances	19
Ground Changes / Deferred Games	19
21. Fines	20
22. Appeals and Protests (Competition Related).....	20
23. Code of Conduct and Judiciary Procedures.....	21



GAME DAY RULES	22
24. Ground Managers	22
On Field Ground Manager.....	22
Crowd Control	22
25. Sign on Sheets / Results Sheets.....	23
26. Player / Team Staff Identification	24
27. First Aid / Sports Trainers.....	25
28. Head Injury and Concussion Management	25
29. On Field Playing Apparel (Uniforms)	26
30. Time Keeping.....	26
31. Time Off and Scheduled Time Delays.....	27
32. Sideline Area / Bench Locations	28
33. Interchange	28
34. Dismissed Players	29
Temporarily Dismissed Players (Sin Binned).....	29
Permanently Dismissed Players (Sent Off).....	29
FINALS SERIES	30
35. Finals Series Structure	30
36. Finals Eligibility	31
37. Loss of Time and Time Off (Finals)	31
38. Drawn Matches and Extra Time (Finals)	32
SITUATIONS NOT COVERED	33
39. Determinations	33
APPENDICES	34
Breach of Conditions to Team Entry Fines	34
Missing Match Data Entry Fines Scheduled	34
Forfeit Fines	34



HUNTER JRL COMPETITIONS INFORMATION

This handbook incorporates the rules and By-Laws for all Hunter Junior Rugby League (HJRL) Competitions. The Hunter JRL, in coordination with the NSWRL, will determine the team entry requirements for each competition.

This document will be a 'living' document. It will see additions and changes as the seasons pass, when new policies and procedures are introduced, or existing ones are amended. As such, it is recommended not to print and instead access when required online.

These By-Laws should be read in conjunction with the [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#).

Note: All correspondence regarding any HJRL Competition matter is to be directed through the NSWRL staff.

COMPETITION BY-LAWS 2026

COMPETITIONS

1. Age Groups

1.1. Mixed Tag

1.1.1. Under 5s

1.1.2. Under 6s

1.2. Mixed Tackle Development Competitions

1.2.1. Under 7s (First 6 weeks – TackleReady)

1.2.2. Under 8s

1.2.3. Under 9s

1.2.4. Under 10s

1.2.5. Under 11s

1.2.6. Under 12s

1.3. Male Tackle

1.3.1. Under 13s

1.3.2. Under 14s

1.3.3. Under 15s

1.3.4. Under 16s

1.3.5. Under 17s

1.3.6. Under 18s

1.4. Female Tackle

1.4.1. Under 12s

1.4.2. Under 14s

1.4.3. Under 16s

1.4.4. Under 18s

1.5. Female Tag

1.5.1. Under 6s

1.5.2. Under 8s

2. Match Durations

2.1 Under 16s, 17s and 18s (Male and Female) 2 x 30-minute halves

2.2 Under 13s, 14s and 15s (Male and Female) 2 x 25-minute halves

2.3 Under 10s, 11s and 12s (Mixed and Female) 2 x 20-minute halves

2.4 Under 5s, 6s, 7s, 8s and 9s (Mixed) 4 x 8-minute quarters

2.5 Half-time in all competitions is 5 minutes whistle to whistle maximum.



3. Competition Points

- 3.1 No competition points will be awarded for competition age groups U5 to U12.
- 3.2 Competition points for U13 to U18 are awarded as follows:
 - 3.2.1 Win = 2 points (also for a team receiving a forfeit)
 - 3.2.2 Draw = 1 points
 - 3.2.3 Loss = 0 points (also for a team receiving a forfeit)
 - 3.2.4 Bye = 2 points
 - 3.2.5 Abandoned = 1 points (foul play abandonment excluded)

4. Facilities

- 4.1. The HJRL, in collaboration with the NSWRL, reserves the right to deem a venue unfit to play and either move or postpone any matches if required.
- 4.2. It is to be noted that some local Community Rugby League venues have environments which may alter the rules of the game or bench/sin bin areas. These will be explained at each venue and are to be determined by the Ground Manager, Match Officials and NSWRL (approval is required from HJRL Competitions Committee and NSWRL prior to commencement of season).
- 4.3. See [NRL Junior League Preferred Facilities](#) guidelines for more information.

5. Hunter JRL Logo Placement and Usage

- 5.1. In order to participate in HJRL Competitions, on-field team apparel must include the HJRL logo along with the NSWRL logo.
- 5.2. The HJRL logo must be placed on the chest of the jersey, with the NSWRL logo to be placed on the left side lower hemline.
- 5.3. New sponsors that may come on board may have a requirement for logo placement on playing or off field apparel and as such clubs must adhere to the direction given anytime to them.
- 5.4. Fines and/or loss of competition points may apply for any breach of the HJRL Logo and Sponsorship requirements.



ADMINISTRATION

6. Team Nominations

- 6.1 Teams must nominate under a singular club entity. That is, separate teams cannot merge and play as a non-existent entity.
- 6.2 Clubs must submit team nominations to NSWRL by a determined date and time prior to the commencement of the competition using the correct nomination form (NSWRL supplied).
- 6.3 The HJRL, in collaboration with the NSWRL, reserve the right to add teams up until the completion of round three (3) in International age groups. Under exceptional circumstances, application for a team nomination after Round three (3) may be submitted to the HJRL for consideration.
- 6.4 Additional teams in Development Competition age groups (U6 to U12) can be accepted at any time.
- 6.5 For a team nomination in International Age competitions to be accepted, it must meet the below participation criteria:

Age Group	Minimum Registrations	Maximum Registrations
U13s	13	20
U14s	13	20
U15s	13	20
U16s	13	22
U17s	13	22
U18s	13	22

- 6.6 In International Age competitions, where a club intends on nominating two or more teams within the same age group, a team list for the highest graded team must be submitted on the Monday prior to Round 1. No members allocated to this team will be permitted to play down in the lower division team without prior approval.



7. Trial Sanctioning

- 7.1 Requests for trials, ranging from U5s to U18s, must be approved by NSWRL and HJRL via submission through the [NSWRL Event Sanctioning Form](#).
- 7.2 It is the responsibility of the host club to apply for sanctioning of their trials.
- 7.3 Requests for trials must be lodged at least 14 days prior to the proposed time to allow for referee scheduling.
- 7.4 A trial request will only be approved if the team has registered at least the minimum number of players required to take the field under the Laws of the Game for that specific age group.
- 7.5 All teams are entitled to a maximum of two trials per season.
- 7.6 Approval of trials will be dependent on referee and venue availability.
- 7.7 Annual event trials, such as Charity Games, will count as trials for the teams involved however will be given priority when it comes to approval.
- 7.8 HJRL, alongside NSWRL, will determine the calendar period for when trials can be held by clubs. This will be distributed alongside the season calendar at the beginning of the season.
- 7.9 All trial matches must have team lists and match results submitted to NSWRL post-match to ensure compliance with the NSWRL Policies and Procedures and Laws of the Game.
- 7.10 Trial match results may be used as part of the grading process for the regular competition season.



8. Hybrid Competitions (Modified Rules Age Groups)

- 8.1 In circumstances where a club is unable to field a complete team in International Rules competitions, it is recommended that club contact neighbouring clubs to explore a merged team option. This should only occur toward the end of the team nomination period.
- 8.2 To accommodate teams with minimal registrations in Modified Rules Age groups only, clubs may nominate a hybrid team for the lowest division of that respective age group within the club.
- 8.3 Hybrid requests are required to be submitted with a nominated player list for each team in the relevant age division.
- 8.4 Participants nominated in the higher division team will not be deemed qualified to participate in the Hybrid (lower division) competition.
- 8.5 For a team to qualify as a Hybrid team, they must have no more than 11 registered participants for the team in an U10 and U11s age division, or 13 in the U12s age group.
- 8.6 The minimum number of players a side can field in U10s and U11s is eight (8).
- 8.7 The minimum number of players a side can field in U12s is nine (9).
- 8.8 The maximum number of reserves a hybrid team can utilise on a match day is one (1).
- 8.9 The number of players participating in a hybrid game will be governed by the number of registered players for the season, minus one allowable reserve, of the team with the lesser registered players i.e.:
 - 8.9.1 If a team starts the season with 9 registered players, they will be expected to play with 8 players on field with 1 reserve. If the registered number of participants increases to 10, the team will be expected to play the remainder of the season with 9 players on the field with 1 reserve.
 - 8.9.2 If a team is permitted 10 players on field with 1 reserve, but only 9 players appear for a match, the hybrid team will be expected to field all 9 players (no reserve) whilst the opposition team can still field 10 players in line with the approved amount for the match.
 - 8.9.3 For opponents of Hybrid teams, the maximum number of players that can be listed on a team sheet remains as per the Interchange Section of this document, but the eligible amount allowed on field and for use as interchange players will alter in line with the Hybrid team allowance.
- 8.10 Hybrid teams will be identifiable by the team name within the draw on the Play Rugby League website. This will be in the format of (H10), where the H indicates Hybrid and the number indicates the number of players to be fielded.
- 8.11 Should a game be played 9 per side in an Under 12s competition, sidelines are to be moved 10 metres in on either side of the playing field.



9. Registrations

- 9.1 All players and team staff must register via MySideline with their participating club.
- 9.2 All returning players and team staff can participate as soon as registration is completed for the current season.
- 9.3 A player changing clubs cannot participate (including trials and training) in any competition until a clearance or permit has been fully approved within MySideline and the player has completed their registration with the new club.
- 9.4 A new player or team staff cannot participate in any competition until their pending registration has been approved by NSWRL.
 - 9.4.1 A pending registration will only be approved when it contains:
 - 9.4.1.1 An appropriate ID Photo.
 - 9.4.1.2 An ID verification document displaying Full Name and Date of Birth.
 - 9.4.1.3 In the case of Team Staff, a WWC Accreditation has been entered and verified by the club.
 - 9.4.1.4 Is not a duplicate of an existing profile.
 - 9.4.2 It is the responsibility of the club to notify NSWRL of any pending registrations that are ready for approval. Notification of pending registrations must be received before 12pm Friday to ensure that participant can play in a match the following weekend.

10. De-registration / Unassigning Players from a Team

- 10.1 If a player registers to a club and does not participate in any match, they may be de-registered.
- 10.2 A player cannot be de-registered from a club in the MySideline system if they have participated in a match however, they can be unassigned from that team. Players remain as registered participants for the remainder of the season.
- 10.3 All deregistration requests must be received by NSWRL prior to June 30 to ensure club's are invoiced the correct insurance fees.



11. Player Transfers

- 11.1 Any Player who has previously registered to play rugby league for a Club in the previous 2 seasons, before the player trains or plays with any other clubs, must obtain transfer permission from the relevant Existing Club, the Existing Club's League and, if applicable, the New Club's League.
- 11.1.1 A player can only begin training with a club once the transfer has been fully approved and the player completes the destination club's registration form. Breaches of this rule may result in the suspensions or sanctions against the team staff and players involved.
- 11.2 All Players requesting a Clearance to transfer will be considered as transferring into another team within their 'natural' age group.
- 11.3 All clearances are to be actioned in chronological order of when they were received.
- 11.4 NSWRL may refuse to grant Transfer Permission for a player participating in an U10s competition or above in any of the following circumstances:
- 11.4.1 If one (1) or more Transfer Permissions have already been granted in respect of Players, who played in the same team for the same Club in the last Season of Community Rugby League, to move to the same New Club for the next Season.
- 11.4.2 If two (2) or more Transfer Permissions have already been granted in respect of Players, who played for any Club within the HJRL competitions (including Group 21 clubs) concerned in the last Season of Community Rugby League, to move to the same age group in the same New Club for the next Season.
- 11.4.3 If two (2) or more Transfer Permissions have already been granted in respect of Players, who played for any Club outside of the HJRL in the last Season of Community Rugby League, to move to the same New Club for the next Season.
- 11.4.4 For the purposes of this policy, transfers from Group 21 and Central Coast clubs will be regarded as Internal Clearances.
- 11.4.5 In summary, a club can only recruit a maximum of four (4) players via transfer:
- 11.4.5.1 Two (2) Internal Transfers from clubs participating within the Hunter Junior Rugby League competitions, with a maximum of one (1) player from the same club.
- 11.4.5.2 Two (2) External Transfers from outside the Newcastle Maitland Region, also with a maximum of two (2) players from the same club.
- 11.4.6 If the Player has been registered in any Division 1 team; or Division 2 finalist team; or a team in a higher age group within any NSWRL Competition (this includes competitions with only one Division) at any time within the previous two (2) competition seasons, and where the Club which the Player intends on registering to play for qualified for the Division 1 finals series within the previous season.



- 11.4.7 If the Player is classified as a Representative Player, having played any level of representative football within the last 24 months as determined at the proposed start of the competition season (Andrew Johns, Harold Matthews, Laurie Daley or Lisa Fiaola), and where the New Club which the Player intends on registering to play for already contains the number of Representative/Development Players which is equal to or greater than the League's Representative Quota. This quota is currently set at five (5).
- 11.5 As well as the above, please refer to the Player Transfer Policy of the [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#) for any additional Player Transfer rules and requirements.
- 11.6 Clearances will not be actioned until 1st February, allowing time for returning participants to fill team positions, as per the NSWRL Player Transfer Policy.
- 11.7 Clearances not bound by any of the above rules (i.e. Minis or Junior to Senior Transfers) will be actioned from registrations opening in line with the National Clearance Policy.
- 11.8 A Clearance Review application can be made for any transfer requests that breach any rules stated under this section. The League or NSWRL may grant a Transfer Permission or a Registration Permission which would otherwise breach this Policy in what it determines to be "Exceptional Circumstances". In all examples, applications for consideration of Exceptional Circumstances will be assessed in the context of the best interests of the Game. These considerations are intended for use in providing some flexibility in the limiting of Player movement in lower divisions rather than compromising the application of the Policy in Division 1 competitions, particularly regarding rule 11.4.6 and 11.4.7.
- 11.8.1 If the exceptional circumstance proposed involves a change of usual place of residence, the Clearance review must include as a minimum two (2) forms of legal documentation confirming place of residency and/or school enrolment/workplace if relevant e.g., utility bill, rates notice, rental agreement etc. Documentation that may altered "over the counter," i.e., Driver's License, will not be accepted.
- 11.8.2 If the exceptional circumstance involved any reference to Mental Health of the player, a mental health plan provided by a Mental Health professional (not a regular General Practitioner), must be provided.
- 11.9 It is the responsibility of the Destination Club to advise the applicant of the requirements in changing Clubs.
- 11.10 A player that has been approved to transfer clubs must participate in the correct age competition for the current season. They will not be eligible for seasonal dispensation to play in a higher age competition but remain eligible to play in a higher age group under a temporary dispensation.
- 11.11 Approval to play down an age group under the 18-month policy will be reviewed as per normal circumstances.



12. Playing Higher Grade Competitions

- 12.1 Once a player has participated in three (3) matches with a higher graded team within the same age group, that player will be locked in to playing the remainder of the season with the higher graded team unless granted written approval from the HJRL.
- 12.2 Any teams found breaching this will have the affected matches marked as forfeits and/or incur a loss of competition points.

13. Playing Higher Age Competitions

- 13.1 Participants in Under 6s to Under 12s are strongly encouraged to play in their natural age group. Exemptions may be granted for participants to play up one age group only. Exemptions in these age groups to play two years or more above their natural age groups will not be considered as per the Laws of the Game unless extremely exceptional circumstances exist – i.e. it can be proven that a player totally dominates a competition due to their size and strength in their natural age and the age above.
- 13.2 Applications to play two years above a player's natural age group will not be considered in any Hunter JRL competitions.
- 13.3 Players participating in competition age groups Under 13s to Under 18s can request to play in a higher age group under two provisions:
 - 13.3.1 Temporary Dispensation – which allows a player to fill in for a higher age team on a week-to-week basis as required.
 - 13.3.1.1 Players who have been granted approval to play in a higher age group on a temporary basis may play up to replace an injured or absent player of the existing team for a maximum of three (3) games only, after which they must apply for and gain written approval from the Hunter JRL Competition Committee prior to participating in a fourth (4th) match.
 - 13.3.1.2 Requests for a player dispensation must be submitted by 5pm the Thursday prior to the day of the match. In extenuating circumstances, approval may be granted for late submissions beyond this timeframe.
 - 13.3.1.3 Players from an age group approved to play up on a temporary basis must not take the field before a healthy player of the original team and cannot enjoy more game time than a player of the original team.
 - 13.3.1.4 Players from a lower age group approved to play up can only participate in a competition division one (1) level lower than their correct age group's competition i.e., an Under 12 Division 1 player is only eligible to play in the Under 13 Division 1 and Under 13 Division 2 competitions.
 - 13.3.1.5 An application for Temporary Dispensation can be submitted after the player has taken the field, however, must be received by NSWRL before 9am on the Monday following the match.



- 13.3.2 Seasonal Dispensation – where a player is permitted to play up an age group on a permanent basis.
 - 13.3.2.1 A player granted seasonal dispensation cannot return to their natural age team within the current season.
 - 13.3.2.2 A player granted seasonal dispensation must be treated as a regular participant for the higher age team.
 - 13.3.2.3 In instances where a seasonal dispensation application has been made for a player, the application must be forwarded to NSWRL for final approval before the player can take the field in the higher age group.
 - 13.3.2.4 All Seasonal Dispensation requests must be submitted before the completion Round 3. All requests submitted after this time will only be considered for Temporary Dispensation only.
- 13.4 Clubs found with players not complying with any of the above rules set out above shall be deemed to have participated unqualified and may face fines and/or forfeit the match in line with the Fines and Fees outlined within the [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#).

14. Playing Lower Age Competitions

- 14.1 Players can request to play in a lower age group under three provisions:
 - 14.1.1 [NRL 18 Month Registration Window](#).
 - 14.1.2 NSWRL Weight and Age Guidelines (See [NSWRL Policies and Procedures](#) for details).
 - 14.1.3 Medical Exemption by application to the NSWRL CMO.
- 14.2 A Playing Lower Age Consent can be revoked at any stage throughout the season if the player exhibits the ability to play at their natural age group.
- 14.3 As per the [NRL Mixed Gender Policy](#), limitations apply to any seeking permission to compete in Mixed Gender Competitions within the calendar year they turn 12.



15. Grading / Re-Grading

- 15.1 Grading of age groups will be determined by the HJRL in collaboration with the NSWRL.
- 15.2 Previous season results and player movement will be taken into consideration.
- 15.3 Clubs will have the ability to nominate a division however, this will only be a recommendation and cannot be guaranteed.

International Age Competitions

- 15.4 Requests for regrades can be submitted by clubs before the commencement of Round Three (3).
- 15.5 The HJRL, in collaboration with the NSWRL, will have the ability to move teams from their current division at any point in the first half of the season.
- 15.6 Once the regrade period has been completed, no further requests will be considered.
- 15.7 If a team is promoted to a higher division, they will be placed in 4th position on the competition ladder with equal points and for and against as the current 4th placed team.
- 15.8 If there are multiple teams in 4th position, an average for and against points will be calculated.
- 15.9 If a team is relegated to a lower division, their points will carry across along with for and against points.

Development Competitions

- 15.10 For Development Competitions, regrading can occur at any point until the conclusion of the season.



16. Accreditation Requirements

- 16.1 Coaches must hold an age-appropriate accreditation as per the NRL National Coach Accreditation Scheme.
- 16.2 Sports Trainers must hold the appropriate accreditation for the role and team age group under the NRL On-Field Policy.
- 16.3 All volunteers, inclusive of Coaches, Trainers, Team Managers and general club volunteers, must also hold a current Patrons of the Game accreditation alongside their Working With Children Check.
- 16.4 Any team found to have participated in a match with an unaccredited team staff member may face fines, suspensions or loss of competition points as determined by Hunter JRL and NSWRL.
- 16.5 Clubs will be reminded at regular intervals throughout the season of any volunteers that do not meet the requirements as outlined by the NRL up until June 30. After this date, Squad Management will be locked in MySideline and unaccredited team staff removed from their team squads.
- 16.6 At all times, the NRL On-Field Policy must be complied with and minimum accreditation requirements need to be met by all teams before games can commence.
- 16.7 All Sports Trainers must comply with all aspects of the NRL On-Field Policy and related concussion management policies and procedures.
- 16.8 At all times, all Team Staff must comply with the direction of the Ground Manager/s and Match Officials.
- 16.9 At all times, all Team Staff should abide by the requirements of the NRL National Code of Conduct.
- 16.10 Only registered and appropriately accredited Team Staff are permitted to be inside the playing area.

17. Draws and Times

- 17.1 An annual season calendar, outlining dates of regular season and finals series rounds, will be distributed to all participating Clubs prior to the commencement of the season.
- 17.2 Draws will be created and managed by NSWRL.
- 17.3 NSWRL will allocate times in collaboration with the Newcastle Coalfields Referees Association.
- 17.4 Requests for fixture changes must be submitted through the Club Secretary to NSWRL by 5:00pm on the Friday of the preceding week to be considered i.e. seven (7) days before the scheduled fixture.
- 17.5 Match time allocation will be completed by Tuesday 5pm prior to scheduled fixture. Any changes beyond this deadline will be communicated directly with the affected clubs.



18. Forfeits

- 18.1 It is the responsibility of the Club Secretary to notify an intention to forfeit in writing to NSWRL at the earliest opportunity.
- 18.2 Forfeits must be notified in writing by no later than 12pm of the Friday before the match.
 - 18.2.1 Any forfeit after this point in time, the forfeiting Club Secretary will be responsible for notifying the opposition Club Secretary and Newcastle Coalfields Referees Association.
 - 18.2.2 Any forfeit submitted after this deadline will result in a fine equal to the match official fees for that game.
- 18.3 The result of a forfeited match will be recorded as 30 – 0.
- 18.4 All forfeits submitted will remain in effect if the match/round is later abandoned/washed out.
- 18.5 Any team that forfeits in the final three (3) rounds of the season and are final series contenders will need to show cause to the HJRL as to why they should not be disqualified from the competition.
- 18.6 Any team that forfeits three (3) times throughout the regular season will need to show cause to the HJRL as to why they should not be disqualified from the competition.
- 18.7 For finals eligibility purposes, all players listed on the Forfeit Receiving team list in MySideline will have the matches counted towards their participation. This team list must be submitted through MySideline Manager before the result of the match is finalised at 9am Monday.
- 18.8 See [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#) for conditions around forfeits and minimum player numbers.



19. Washout Policy

- 19.1 Every effort will be made by Hunter JRL and NSWRL to minimise the impact of wet weather on competitions. This may result in matches being moved to neutral venues in order to maximise game play.
- 19.2 No changes to match venues or times will occur after 12:00pm on Thursday.
- 19.3 If a match cannot proceed as scheduled, the match will be rescheduled by NSWRL at the earliest possible opportunity in consultation with the clubs involved.
 - 19.3.1 If a match cannot be scheduled within a reasonable timeframe despite genuine attempts from both clubs to facilitate the match, the result will be recorded as 0-0 with one (1) competition point awarded to each team.
 - 19.3.2 If a match cannot be scheduled within a reasonable timeframe due to one club being unable to facilitate the match, the result will be recorded as a forfeit by the non-complying club.
 - 19.3.3 The determination of what constitutes genuine attempts to schedule the match will be made by the Hunter JRL in collaboration with NSWRL.
- 19.4 All teams scheduled for a Bye during a washed-out round will receive two (2) competition points.
- 19.5 If a match is washed out and one of the participating teams is subsequently regraded or withdrawn from the competition, the result of the match will be as follows:
 - 19.5.1 If a team is regraded to a higher division, the match will be recorded as a 0-0 draw, with both teams receiving one (1) competition point.
 - 19.5.2 If a team is regraded to a lower division or withdraws from the competition, the match will be recorded as a forfeit by the team leaving the competition.
- 19.6 Any match deemed a Wash Out Draw will count towards Finals Series Qualifications, provided a team list has been submitted at the time the result is determined.
- 19.7 Any match deemed a Wash Out Draw will count as a game served for any suspended participant.
- 19.8 Under extreme circumstances, the Hunter JRL retain the right to extend the season when required. This will be done so in collaboration with NSWRL and the Clubs.



20. Cancellation / Postponement / Abandonment of Matches

Emergency Circumstances

- 20.1 Emergency circumstances may include any circumstances deemed to be an emergency by the HJRL, in collaboration with the NSWRL, or stipulated in the [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#).
- 20.2 If any such occurrence arises, the procedure shall be as follows:
 - 20.2.1 In collaboration, the participating clubs, Match Officials and Ground Manager, shall make the final determination if the match will continue.
 - 20.2.2 If a match is to be delayed due to severe weather conditions, the Ground Manager, in conjunction with the Match Officials, will make a decision on the length of delay or cancellation.
 - 20.2.3 See [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#) for more information.

Ground Changes / Deferred Games

- 20.3 If a change to the original scheduled venue is required, it must first be approved by NSWRL.
- 20.4 Any mass changes due to unforeseeable ground unavailability are required to be finalised and communicated by 12pm on the Thursday prior to the match (note: a small number of games may be moved in certain late notice circumstances due to unforeseeable reasons).
- 20.5 No venue changes will be accepted past this point in time.
- 20.6 Abandoned matches (excluding foul play abandonments) will be attempted to be rescheduled under the same provisions outlined under the Washout Policy.
- 20.7 It is the Hosting Club's responsibility to ensure that the NSWRL are notified of any abandoned matches that have occurred at the venue before 9am on the Monday following the match.



21. Fines

- 21.1 NSWRL and HJRL are the only entity permitted to issue fines for Rules and By-Law's breaches for clubs/teams playing in HJRL Competitions.
- 21.2 Payment is payable within seven (7) days of receiving the Fine Invoice. Non-payment will result in a forfeit by the offending team in the preceding competition match.
- 21.3 See [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#) in relation to fines schedule.

22. Appeals and Protests (Competition Related)

- 22.1 In relation to HJRL Competition rules, Protests can be lodged when a club believes the rules and/or procedures have not been adhered to.
- 22.2 Only Clubs can lodge appeals, not individuals.
- 22.3 If a Club wishes to lodge a Protest, a \$500.00 fee applies (payable to NSWRL). If the Protest is upheld, the \$500.00 fee will be refunded to the club lodging the Protest.
- 22.4 All Protests should be in writing and addressed to the NSWRL via email by 4.00pm on the Tuesday following the match.
- 22.5 In all finals series matches, a Protest will only be accepted if "intention to protest" is marked on the Official Match Sheet within 15 minutes of the completion of the match in question. The name of the Club and Team Official protesting must be included. Clubs will then need to outline the terms of the Protest.
- 22.6 The decision of a protest by the HJRL is final and binding and cannot be appealed against.



23. Code of Conduct and Judiciary Procedures

- 23.1 Clubs are responsible for the conduct of their players, parents or carers of players, coaches, officials and Club supporters.
- 23.2 All Judiciary, Code of Conduct and Appeal procedures are to be in line with [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#) and NRL Code of Conduct.
- 23.3 All HJRL Competition's Code of Conduct and Judiciary incidents will be reviewed by the NSWRL Incident Review Committee.
- 23.4 The NSWRL Tough Love in League Policy will be implemented across all competitions. See the Tough Love in League Policy under the [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#).
- 23.5 Breaches of the NRL Code of Conduct and Tough Love in League Policy may result in penalties, including but not limited to:
 - 23.5.1 Suspension of a match.
 - 23.5.2 Termination of a match (including potential forfeiture of competition points).
 - 23.5.3 Monetary fines.
 - 23.5.4 Suspension of a participant on a temporary or permanent basis.
 - 23.5.5 Suspension of a Team or Club on a temporary or permanent basis.
- 23.6 The above penalties may be in addition to any penalty which may be imposed by a Judiciary Panel.
- 23.7 All Judiciary or Code of Conduct Hearings will be conducted online via platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom or any other technology as required.

GAME DAY RULES

24. Ground Managers

- 24.1 Ground Managers are required to be visible at all times during matches either at the officials table or on the sideline, wearing the NSWRL provided purple Ground Manager vest.
- 24.2 Ground Managers will be heavily involved in the enforcement of the NRL Code of Conduct for off-field concerns, in particular being aware of the Hunter JRL Competition By-Laws and reporting of incidents.
- 24.3 Ground Management will be overseen by volunteers serving in two defined roles:
 - 24.3.1 On Field Ground Manager
 - 24.3.2 Crowd Control Ground Manager

On Field Ground Manager

- 24.4 Hosting clubs are responsible for appointing the On Field Ground Manager to each **International field** during matches.
- 24.5 On Field Ground Managers are responsible for:
 - 24.5.1 Ensuring sign on processes are followed.
 - 24.5.2 Ensuring results sheets are completed accurately and submitted promptly after each match.
 - 24.5.3 Maintaining general control of matches in accordance with [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#).
 - 24.5.4 Liaising with match officials.
 - 24.5.5 Enforcing appropriate behaviour of all team staff (coaches, trainers and managers).
 - 24.5.6 Ensuring appropriate incident reports forms are available and completed in the event of an incident.

Crowd Control

- 24.6 Each team participating in a Junior International match (13+) must provide a Crowd Control Ground Manager.
- 24.7 The appointed Crowd Control Ground Manager from the away team must report to the Compliance Manager before the match can commence.
- 24.8 The sole responsibility of a Crowd Control Ground Manager is to enforce appropriate spectator behaviour. They must not involve themselves in any on-field matters unless requested by the Compliance Manager.



25. Sign on Sheets / Results Sheets

- 25.1 All clubs must use the age-appropriate Single Team Sheet as generated by the MySideline database.
- 25.2 Each team is required to supply their own Team Sheet for game day.
- 25.3 The Ground Manager will be responsible for ensuring sign on sheets have been completed and verified as correct in a timely manner.
- 25.4 Both teams are required to go through the same process when signing on (this isn't to be different between home and away teams).
- 25.5 A player may sign on at any time during a match.
- 25.6 If a player does not sign on, they will NOT be deemed to have played in that match for finals eligibility purposes.
- 25.7 A player who takes part in a different division or age group to their primary team is required to be written on the sign on sheet if they have not been assigned via MySideline Manager beforehand and printed on the provided Team List. This player MUST be assigned to the match by the Team Manager before it is Finalised.
- 25.8 Each team manager is responsible for ensuring all players that participated in the match have been assigned to the Team List within MySideline Manager. This should be completed before the match is finalised.
- 25.9 Each team manager is responsible for ensuring all team staff that participated in the match have been assigned to the Team List within MySideline Manager. This should be completed before the match is finalised.
- 25.10 Failure to accurately record player and team staff participation in a match may result in fines and/or forfeiture of the affected match.
- 25.11 All sin bins and send offs must be recorded on the team sheet and MySideline Manager.
- 25.12 The home team manager is responsible for ensuring final match results are entered via MySideline Manager.



26. Player / Team Staff Identification

- 26.1 A condition of Hunter JRL Competitions is that a player or volunteer is NOT permitted to participate in a match without a digital player registration identification card being present. **NO CARD = NO PLAY.**
- 26.2 Digital Cards must be available and reviewed by the Ground Manager prior to the commencement of any competition match with all players/team staff to sign on accordingly.
- 26.3 Any issues with player/team staff identification must be submitted to NSWRL prior to 9am Monday following the match.
- 26.4 Teams found not complying with any of the above rules may be deemed to have participated unqualified and may face fines and/or forfeit the match in line with Fines and Fees of the [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#).
- 26.5 In the event Identification is unavailable due to exceptional circumstances, NSWRL should be contacted. If the circumstances were unforeseeable and it can be proven that registration on MySideline with an appropriate identification photo exists, no further action will be taken.



27. First Aid / Sports Trainers

- 27.1 All trainers are required to comply with the [NRL On Field Policy](#), including the performance of duties specific to their designated role, such as the provision of water to players and the management of on-field injuries.
- 27.2 As a minimum, a League Safe accreditation is required for any Team Staff to enter the field of play.
- 27.3 Each team must ensure that they have meet the minimum Sports Trainer requirements as per the NRL On Field Policy:
 - 27.3.1 Under 6s and 7s – 1 League First Aid or higher per 4 matches (1x International Field).
 - 27.3.2 Under 8s and 9s – 1 League First Aid or higher per 3 matches (1x International Field)
 - 27.3.3 Under 10s to 12s – 1 League First Aid or higher per match
 - 27.3.4 Under 13s to 15s – 1 League First Aid or higher per team
 - 27.3.5 Under 16s and above – 1 Level 1 Sports Trainer or higher per team
- 27.4 If a team does not meet the minimum requirements as per the NRL On Field Policy, then the match **MUST NOT** commence.
- 27.5 Coaches and players cannot act as a trainer in any match.
- 27.6 Trainers must comply with any direction or instruction from the match officials or ground manager.
- 27.7 Trainers must not make argumentative, disparaging, derogatory or offensive comments to any Match Official or Ground Manager.
- 27.8 All trainers who enter the field of play must possess proof of accreditation (e.g. MySideline Digital Card) and have it available to the Ground Manager.
- 27.9 Trainers must not enter the field of play in the line of sight of a player or interfere with an opposition player.

28. Head Injury and Concussion Management

- 28.1 See [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#), the [NRL Concussion Policy and Management Guidelines](#), and the [NRL On-Field Policy](#).
- 28.2 All players suspected of suffering a concussion must complete a [Medical Clearance Form](#) before being allowed to return to full contact training or match play.
- 28.3 Additional information and resources can be found on the [Play Rugby League Concussion Hub](#).



29. On Field Playing Apparel (Uniforms)

- 29.1 All clubs and teams must adhere to the NSWRL Licensing Program. See [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#) for more information.
- 29.2 When team colours clash, the away team should arrange to play in a different set of jerseys.
- 29.3 All jerseys are to be clearly numbered with NO duplicates.

30. Time Keeping

- 30.1 The home team, in conjunction with the away team if they so wish, will be responsible for the keeping of match time.
- 30.2 If the away team does not nominate anyone for this purpose, they must accept the timekeeping of the home team.
- 30.3 All decisions of the official timekeeper shall be final and not open to review or appeal, unless the HJRL Competitions Committee determines so in collaboration with the NSWRL.
- 30.4 In all cases, the referee will be the sole judge of when play shall cease after the half-time or full-time siren has sounded.
- 30.5 The referee may extend the match to award a penalty or to complete the play currently underway, at their discretion.



31. Time Off and Scheduled Time Delays

- 31.1 No time off will be allowed during regular season competition matches.
- 31.2 Matches abandoned with less than one full half of a game being completed will be replayed the following Sunday.
- 31.3 Matches unable to commence for any unforeseeable reason, injury or extraordinary event, will be replayed the following Sunday.
- 31.4 If a match cannot be played within two (2) rounds, the result will be recorded as 0-0 with one (1) competition point awarded to each team.
- 31.5 If a match cannot be played due to one team being unable to facilitate a match, the result will be recorded as a forfeit by the non-complying club.
- 31.6 The determination of the above will be made by the NSWRL in collaboration with Hunter JRL.
- 31.7 The result of matches abandoned after half time shall be recorded as the final score at the point of abandonment.
- 31.8 A team shall be allowed a maximum of 15-minutes after a match's scheduled starting time to take the field without any prior confirmation of delay. The match clock will however commence at the scheduled time. After 15 minutes the match will be deemed a forfeit.
- 31.9 See [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#) for more information.



32. Sideline Area / Bench Locations

- 32.1 Both the home and away team benches must be on the same side of the field.
- 32.2 Under no circumstances is “barracking” or abuse from the bench permitted. This also refers to advice or assistance to the match officials in relation to their performance or how they should carry out their duties.
- 32.3 Personnel on the bench may comprise only those people directly related to the conduct of the match itself e.g. coaches, reserve players, trainers and team manager with a requirement to be clearly identified with a vest or shirt and have official identification.
- 32.4 A maximum of five (5) team staff are permitted on the bench, inclusive of the Team Manager who may be seated at the score table.
- 32.5 Under no circumstances is a suspended player permitted inside the playing area or on the bench.
- 32.6 The Ground Manager may request any person on the bench to leave at any time.
- 32.7 Players and Team Staff on the bench must at all times remain at the bench allocated to their team (except for warm-ups).
- 32.8 No one besides the Ground Manager can approach the match officials.
- 32.9 Whilst Team Staff are not expected to sit during the entire match, they must not leave the immediate area surrounding their allocated bench or approach the field of play under any circumstances. Team Staff should be seated whilst not in an active role i.e. making an interchange.
- 32.10 No members of the general public are permitted within the playing area.

33. Interchange

- 33.1 The maximum number of players permitted per age group is as follows:
 - 33.1.1 Under 5s, 6s and 7s – Up to a maximum of ten (10) players are allowed to participate in each match. This includes the starting six (6) and up to four (4) reserves.
 - 33.1.2 Under 8s and 9s – Up to a maximum of twelve (12) players are allowed to participate in each match. This includes the starting eight (8) and up to four (4) reserves.
 - 33.1.3 Under 10s and 11s – Up to a maximum of sixteen (16) players are allowed to participate in each match. This includes the starting eleven (11) and up to five (5) reserves.
 - 33.1.4 Under 12s and above – Up to a maximum of nineteen (19) players are allowed to participate in each match. This includes the starting thirteen (13) and up to six (6) reserves.
- 33.2 Unlimited interchange will apply for all competitions.
- 33.3 Teams may only have the maximum number of players allowed to participate in each match, as outlined above, dressed for a match (i.e. where the maximum number of players is 19, a team cannot dress 20 players for a match).



34. Dismissed Players

Temporarily Dismissed Players (Sin Binned)

- 34.1 A player who is temporarily suspended (sin binned) must immediately retire from the playing field to an area designated by the Ground Manager until the period of temporary suspension has expired.
- 34.2 Time of suspension begins only when the referee restarts play or indicates time on (time is to be in accordance with actual playing time).
- 34.3 If more than one player is temporarily suspended in relation to the same incident, the period of temporary suspension commences at the same time and players will return to the field together.
- 34.4 When the temporary suspension expires, players must enter the field of play from an onside position.
- 34.5 Temporary suspension does not include time off and half time. The period of temporary suspension is the actual time that the ball is in play.
- 34.6 Periods of temporary suspension (sin bin) will be 10 minutes across all competitions.

Permanently Dismissed Players (Sent Off)

- 34.7 A player who is permanently dismissed (sent off) must immediately retire to the team's dressing room or an area outside of the playing area designated by the Ground Manager until they have changed out of their playing uniform.
- 34.8 After changing, the player must not re-enter the playing area under any circumstances and will be deemed as a spectator.
- 34.9 Ground Managers must ensure that any permanently dismissed players are made aware that a formal Notice of Charge will be issued the Tuesday following the match under the [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#).



FINALS SERIES

35. Finals Series Structure

35.1 The format of Competition Finals Series will be a four (4) team format played over three (3) consecutive weekends.

4 Team 3 Week

Week 1 – Highest Ranking Team to Host where practical

Game 1 (Qualifying Final) – 1st v 2nd

Game 2 (Elimination Final) – 3rd v 4th

Week 2 – Allocated Venue

Game 3 (Semi Final) – Loser Game 1 v Winner Game 2

Week 3 – Allocated Venue

Game 4 (Grand Final) – Winner Game 1 v Winner Game 3

35.2 At all Finals matches, each participating Club must provide a Ground Manager to assist the League Staff on game day.

35.3 If teams are on equal points at the end of the competition regular season, For and Against points will determine final standings for all positions. If equal, most points For will determine placings followed by least points Against. If the same, then individual results of both teams playing each other will be taken into account.

35.4 Any team breaching Competition By-Laws in any final's series match, regardless of their position, may be disqualified from the Competition.

35.5 If a team withdraws from any competition or is disqualified from any final's series match, any subsequent matches will be deemed a forfeit. No adjustment for previous matches will occur.



36. Finals Eligibility

- 36.1 The eligibility of a player to participate in any final series match (Semi Final or Grand Final) will be determined based on the participants playing record on the completion of the regular rounds of competition.
- 36.2 Players may only play in one (1) Finals Series, and it is to be where they played the majority of matches throughout the competition regular season.
- 36.3 In all competitions, the minimum number of matches required to qualify for a final's series will be three (3) with that specific team.
- 36.4 In the case of a player not being able to play the required three matches due to injury sustained during the season, such player may be permitted to take part in a play-off, semi-final, final or grand final provided:
 - 36.4.1 A doctor's certificate must be available covering the time the player was unable to play.
 - 36.4.2 The certificate must be received by the NSWRL no later than 5:00pm on the Wednesday prior to the last competition match.
- 36.5 Team Managers are expected to make themselves aware of player eligibility prior to the finals.

37. Loss of Time and Time Off (Finals)

- 37.1 In Semi-finals, Finals and Grand Finals, time off rules apply for the final five (5) minutes of the second half.
- 37.2 A maximum of 15 minutes will be allowed before the game is abandoned with the result at the current time to stand.
- 37.3 In the event a Semi Final match is abandoned with less than one full half of a game being completed (foul play abandonments excluded), the match will be replayed mid-week. If the match cannot be replayed before the next scheduled final, the highest-ranking team will progress through.
- 37.4 A Grand Final match will not be abandoned (foul play excluded) unless absolutely necessary to do so. In the event a Grand Final match is suspended with less than one full half of a game being completed, the match will resume and play out the remainder of what would constitute a half with the final result to stand. If it is impossible for the match to resume, both teams will be rewarded as joint premiers.



38. Drawn Matches and Extra Time (Finals)

- 38.1 In semi-final matches, if scores are equal at the conclusion of normal time, then a period of golden point extra time will follow in the form of two 10-minute periods (straight turnaround). If a team scores a try or kicks a goal/field goal at any stage within this extra time period, the referee will terminate the game with the team scoring the points declared the winner. If no points are scored at the conclusion of the 10-minute periods, the higher ranked team at the conclusion of the normal rounds will be declared the winner.
- 38.2 In Grand Finals, if scores are equal at the conclusion of normal time, then a period of golden point extra time will follow in the form of two 10-minute periods (straight turnaround). If a team scores a try or kicks a goal/field goal at any stage within this extra time period, the referee will terminate the game with the team scoring the points declared the winner. If no points are scored at the conclusion of the two 10-minute periods, both teams will be rewarded as joint premiers.



SITUATIONS NOT COVERED

39. Determinations

- 39.1 Hunter JRL determinations shall be final should any situation arise that is not covered under these rules, including making adjustments to these rules where applicable.



APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Breach of Conditions to Team Entry Fines

First Offence	\$500
Second Offence	\$1000
Third Offence	Removal from the competition

Appendix 2

Missing Match Data Entry Fines Scheduled

First Offence	Warning
Second Offence	\$100
Third Offence	\$200
Subsequent Offences	Any continued offences will result in the fine amount continuing to double in reference to the prior indiscretion, as well as a potential loss to the offending team.

Appendix 3

Forfeit Fines

Notified Forfeit	No Fine
Late Forfeit (after 12pm Friday)	Value Amount determined by cost of Match Officials Fees payable