



# HUNTER JUNIOR RUGBY LEAGUE 2024 Competition By-Laws

Updated January 2024



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## HUNTER JRL COMPETITIONS INFORMATION

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This handbook incorporates the rules and By-Laws for all Hunter Junior Rugby League (HJRL) Competitions for the Clubs participating. Hunter JRL along with the NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region will determine the requirements in terms of teams entering a 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 Newcastle Maitland Region staff.



# COMPETITION BY-LAWS 2024

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## COMPETITIONS

### 1. Age Groups

- 1.1. Mixed Tag
  - 1.1.1. 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
- 1.4. Female Tackle
  - 1.4.1. Under 13s
  - 1.4.2. Under 15s
  - 1.4.3. Under 17s

### 2. Match Durations

- 2.1 Under 16s and 17s (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) 2 x 20 minute halves
- 2.4 Under 6s, 7s, 8s and 9s (Mixed) 4 x 8 minute quarters
- 2.5 Half-time in all competitions is 10 minutes whistle to whistle maximum.

### 3. Competition Points

- 3.1 No competition points will be awarded for competition age groups U6 to U12.
- 3.2 Competition points for U13 to U17 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 Newcastle Maitland Region, 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 Newcastle Maitland Region (approval is required from HJRL Competitions Committee and NSWRL Newcastle Maitland prior to commencement of season).
- 4.3. See NRL Junior League Preferred Facilities guidelines for more information.



## ADMINISTRATION

### 5. Team Nominations

- 5.1 Teams must nominate under a singular club entity. That is, separate teams cannot merge and play as a non-existent entity.
- 5.2 Clubs must submit team nominations to NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region by a determined date and time prior to the commencement of the competition using the correct nomination form (NSWRL supplied).
- 5.3 The HJRL, in collaboration with the NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region, 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.
- 5.4 Additional teams in Development Competition age groups (U6 to U12) can be accepted at any time.

### 6. Trial Sanctioning

- 6.1 Requests for trials, ranging from U6s to U17s, must be approved by NSWRL and HJRL via submission through the [NSWRL Event Sanctioning Form](#).
- 6.2 It is the responsibility of the host club to apply for sanctioning of their trials.
- 6.3 Requests for trials must be lodged at least 14 days prior to the scheduled time to allow for referee scheduling and fixtures to be generated within MySideline.
- 6.4 All teams are entitled to a maximum of two trials per season.
- 6.5 Approval of trials will be dependent on referee and venue availability.
- 6.6 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.
- 6.7 In the event referees are unavailable for trial matches in age groups U6-U9 inclusive, these matches can proceed with permission from both coaches.
- 6.8 HJRL, alongside NSWRL, will determine the period of time trials can be held by clubs. This will be distributed alongside the season calendar at the beginning of the season.
- 6.9 All trial matches must have team lists assigned and match results entered, similar to regular competition season matches, to ensure compliance with the NSWRL Policies and Procedures and Laws of the Game.
- 6.10 Trial match results may be used as part of the grading process for the regular competition season.



## 7. Hybrid Competitions

- 7.1 In circumstances where a club is unable to field a complete team, 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.
- 7.2 However, to accommodate teams with minimal registrations, clubs may nominate a hybrid team for the lowest division of that respective age group.
- 7.3 Hybrid requests are required to be submitted with a nominated player list for each team in the relevant age division.
- 7.4 Participants nominated in the higher division team will not be deemed qualified to participate in the Hybrid (lower division) competition.
- 7.5 For a team to qualify as a Hybrid team, they must meet the below criteria:
  - 7.5.1 No more than 13 registered participants for that team in an International age division, or;
  - 7.5.2 No more than 11 registered participants for the team in a Modified Rules (10-11s) age division.
- 7.6 The minimum number of players a side can field in an International age competition is nine (9).
- 7.7 The minimum number of players a side can field in Mod age competitions is eight (8).
- 7.8 The number of players participating in a hybrid game will be governed by the number of registered players for the season in the lesser numbered participating team for that fixture i.e. (If a team arrives with lesser numbers than registered to play, the registered number will be deemed the minimal number to play as per the below scenarios):
- 7.9 Should a game be played 9 per side, sidelines are to be moved 10 metres in on either side of the playing field. All other rules, terms and conditions remain as per the Laws of the Game.





## 8. Registrations

- 8.1 All players and team staff must register via MySideline with their participating club.
- 8.2 All returning players and team staff can participate as soon as registration is completed for the current season.
- 8.3 A player changing clubs cannot participate (including 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.
- 8.4 A new player or team staff cannot participate in any competition until their pending registration has been approved by NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region.
  - 8.4.1 A pending registration will only be approved when it contains:
    - 8.4.1.1 An appropriate ID Photo.
    - 8.4.1.2 An ID verification document displaying Full Name and Date of Birth.
    - 8.4.1.3 In the case of Team Staff, a WWC Accreditation has been entered and verified by the club.
    - 8.4.1.4 Is not a duplicate of an existing profile.
  - 8.4.2 It is the responsibility of the club to notify NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region of any pending registrations that are ready for approval.

## 9. De-registration / Unassigning Players from a Team

- 9.1 If a player registers to a club and **DOES NOT** participate in any match, they may be de-registered.
- 9.2 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. Player Movement

### (Clearances)

- 10.1 Any Player who has previously registered to play rugby league for a Club at any time in the previous twelve (12) months/season must, before the Player plays or trains with any other Club, obtain transfer permission from the relevant Existing Club, the Existing Club's League and, if applicable, the New Club's League.
- 10.2 NSWRL may refuse to grant Transfer Permission in any of the following circumstances:
  - 10.2.1 If two (2) 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.
  - 10.2.2 If four (4) 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.



- 10.2.3 If four (4) 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.
- 10.2.4 For the purposes of this policy, transfers from Group 21 clubs will be regarded as Internal Clearances.
- 10.2.5 In summary, a club can only recruit a maximum of eight (8) players via transfer:
  - 10.2.5.1 Four (4) Internal Transfers from within the Newcastle Maitland Region, with a maximum of two (2) players from the same club.
  - 10.2.5.2 Four (4) External Transfers from outside the Newcastle Maitland Region, also with a maximum of two (2) players from the same club.
- 10.2.6 If the Player is classified as a Representative Player, has been registered in a Division 1 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 may also qualify for Division 1 within the current season.
- 10.2.7 If the player is crossing District Pathways as assigned by Newcastle Rugby League. For the purposes of this policy, see Appendix A for District Pathways.
- 10.3 A Clearance Review application can be made for any transfer requests that breach any rules stated under 8.1. A Clearance Review application must be made by the Destination Club, and 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 be altered “over the counter,” i.e., Driver’s License, will not be accepted.
- 10.4 It is the responsibility of the Destination Club to advise the applicant of the requirements in changing Clubs.
- 10.5 A player that has been approved to transfer clubs must only participate in the correct age competition for the current season. They will not be eligible for dispensation to play in a higher age competition. Approval to play down an age group under the 18-month policy will be reviewed as per normal circumstances.



#### (Crossing Age/Grade Competitions)

- 10.6 Once a player has participated in four (4) or more matches with a higher graded team within the same age group, that player cannot play in a lower division team within their natural age group without written approval from the HJRL.
- 10.7 Players can request to play in a higher age group or division under two provisions:
- 10.7.1 Temporary Dispensation – which allows a player to fill in for a higher age team on a week-to-week basis as required.
- 10.7.1.1 Players who have been granted approval to play in a higher age group/division on a temporary basis may play up to replace an injured or absent player of the existing team for a maximum of four (4) games only, after which they must apply for and gain written approval from the Hunter JRL Competition Committee prior to participating in a fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) match.
- 10.7.1.2 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.
- 10.7.1.3 Players from a lower grade or 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.
- 10.7.1.4 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 or Under 13 Division 2 competitions.
- 10.7.1.5 An application for Temporary Dispensation can be submitted after the player has taken the field, however, must be received by NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region before 9am on the Monday following the match.
- 10.7.2 Seasonal Dispensation – where a player is permitted to play up an age group on a permanent basis.
- 10.7.2.1 A player granted seasonal dispensation cannot return to their natural age team within the current season.
- 10.7.2.2 A player granted seasonal dispensation can be treated as a regular participant for the higher age team.
- 10.7.2.3 In instances where a seasonal dispensation application has been made for a player, the application must be forwarded to NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region for final approval before the player can take the field in the higher age group.



#### (Dual Age Group Competitions – Women’s Tackle)

- 10.8 If a player wishes to participate in a dual age group competition (e.g. Competitions where age groups offered are Under 13, then Under 15, then Under 17) from an age group that is not within that dual age group (e.g. player turning 14 wishing to play in Under 16s (that includes Under 15s and Under 16s)) then only under exceptional circumstances can the player apply to play in the higher age group using the process for PLAYERS PLAYING TWO YEARS ABOVE THEIR NATURAL AGE GROUP. An example of an exceptional circumstance would be where a player would be required to travel in excess of 45 minutes door to ground for training and home matches.
- 10.9 In instances where an application has been made for a player to participate in matches two (2) years above their natural age group, the application must be forwarded to NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region for final approval before the player can take the field in the higher age group.
- 10.10 Clubs found with players not complying with any of the above rules set out in Section 8 shall be deemed to have participated unqualified and may face fines and/or forfeit the match in line with Section 1.5 Fines and Fees of the [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#).

## 11. Grading / Re-Grading

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

#### (International Age Competitions)

- 11.4 The HJRL, in collaboration with the NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region, will have the ability to move teams from their current division at any point in the first half of the season. Once the regrade period has been completed, no further requests will be considered.
- 11.5 If a team is promoted to a higher division, they will be placed in 4<sup>th</sup> position on the competition ladder with equal points and for and against as the current 4<sup>th</sup> placed team.
- 11.6 If there are multiple teams in 4<sup>th</sup> position, an average for and against points will be calculated.
- 11.7 If a team is relegated to a lower division, their points will carry across along with for and against points.

#### (Development Competitions)

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



## 12. Accreditation Requirements

- 12.1 Coaches must hold an age-appropriate accreditation as per the NRL National Coach Accreditation Scheme.
- 12.2 Sports Trainers must also hold the appropriate accreditation for the role and team age group under the NRL On-Field Policy.
- 12.3 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.
- 12.4 All Sports Trainers must comply with all aspects of the NRL On-Field Policy and related concussion management policies and procedures.
- 12.5 At all times, all Team Staff must comply with the direction of the Ground Manager/s and Match Officials.
- 12.6 At all times, all Team Staff should abide by the requirements of the NRL National Code of Conduct.
- 12.7 Only registered and appropriately accredited Team Staff are permitted to be inside the playing area.

## 13. Draws and Times

- 13.1 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.
- 13.2 Draws will be created and managed by NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region.
- 13.3 Clubs will be allocated matches of which the NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region will allocate times in collaboration with the Newcastle Coalfields Referees Association.
- 13.4 The deadlines for match time allocation will be set at Tuesday 5pm of the week prior to each fixture. Any changes beyond this deadline will be communicated directly with the affected clubs.
- 13.5 All requests for fixture changes must be submitted to NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region before 5pm Tuesday to be considered.

## 14. Forfeits

- 14.1 It is the responsibility of the Club Secretary to notify an intention to forfeit in writing to NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region at the earliest opportunity.
- 14.2 Forfeits must be notified in writing by no later than 4pm of the Friday before the match.
- 14.3 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.
- 14.4 The result of a forfeited match will have the average of all winning teams from the same round in the same competition assigned to the forfeit receiving team, and the average of all losing teams from the same round in the same competition assigned to the forfeit giving team.
- 14.5 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.



- 14.6 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.
- 14.7 For finals eligibility purposes, all players listed in the Forfeit Receiving team's squad in MySideline will have the matches counted towards their participation.
- 14.8 See [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#) for conditions around forfeits (Policy 3.9 Forfeits) and minimum player numbers (Policy 4.24 Number of Players on the Field).

## 15. Fines

- 15.1 NSWRL are the only entity permitted to issue fines for Rules and By-Law's breaches for clubs/teams playing in HJRL Competitions.
- 15.2 See [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#) in relation to fines schedule (Policy 1.5 Fines and Fees).

## 16. Appeals and Protests (Competition Related)

- 16.1 In relation to HJRL Competition rules, Protests can be lodged when a club believes the rules and/or procedures have not been adhered to.
- 16.2 Only Clubs can lodge appeals, not individuals.
- 16.3 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.
- 16.4 All Protests should be in writing and addressed to the NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region via email by 4.00pm on the Tuesday following the match.
- 16.5 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 as per 14.4.
- 16.6 The decision of a protest by the HJRL is final and binding and cannot be appealed against.



## 17. Code of Conduct and Judiciary Procedures

- 17.1 Clubs are responsible for the conduct of their players, parents or carers of players, coaches, officials and Club supporters.
- 17.2 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.
- 17.3 All HJRL Competition's Code of Conduct and Judiciary incidents will be reviewed by the NSWRL Incident Review Committee.
- 17.4 The NSWRL Tough Love in League Policy will be implemented across all competitions. See section 5.4 Tough Love in League Policy under the [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#).
- 17.5 Breaches of the NRL Code of Conduct and Tough Love in League Policy may result in penalties, including but not limited to:
  - 17.5.1 Suspension of a match.
  - 17.5.2 Termination of a match (including potential forfeiture of competition points).
  - 17.5.3 Monetary fines.
  - 17.5.4 Suspension of a participant on a temporary or permanent basis.
  - 17.5.5 Suspension of a Team or Club on a temporary or permanent basis.
- 17.6 The above penalties may be in addition to any penalty which may be imposed by a Judiciary Panel.
- 17.7 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

### 18. Ground Managers

- 18.1 Home clubs are responsible for appointing Ground Managers to venues during matches.
- 18.2 Ground Managers are responsible for:
  - 18.2.1 Ensuring sign on processes are adhered to.
  - 18.2.2 Results sheets are filled in correctly and in a timely manner after each match.
  - 18.2.3 General control of matches in accordance with [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#).
  - 18.2.4 Liaising with match officials.
  - 18.2.5 Enforcing correct trainer/manager/coach and spectator behaviour.
  - 18.2.6 Ensuring appropriate judiciary reports forms/sheets are available to the match officials and provided to all parties concerned in the event of an incident.
- 18.3 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.
- 18.4 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.

### 19. Sign on Sheets / Results Sheets

- 19.1 All clubs must use the age-appropriate Single Team Sheet as generated by the MySideline database.
- 19.2 Each team is required to supply their own Team Sheet for game day.
- 19.3 The Ground Manager will be responsible for ensuring sign on sheets have been completed and verified as correct in a timely manner.
- 19.4 Both teams are required to go through the same process when signing on (this isn't to be different between home and away teams).
- 19.5 A player may sign on at any time during a match.
- 19.6 If a player does not sign on, they will NOT be deemed to have played in that match for finals eligibility purposes.
- 19.7 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. This player MUST be assigned to the match before it is Finalised.
- 19.8 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.
- 19.9 All sin bins and send offs must be recorded on the team sheet and MySideline Manager.
- 19.10 The home team manager is responsible for ensuring final match results are entered via MySideline Manager.





## 20. Player / Team Staff Identification

- 20.1 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.**
- 20.2 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.
- 20.3 Clubs 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 Section 1.5 Fines and Fees of the [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#).
- 20.4 In the event Identification is unavailable due to exceptional circumstances, NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region 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.

## 21. First Aid / Sports Trainers

- 21.1 The NRL On Field Policy must be adhered to with respect to trainers.
- 21.2 As a minimum, a League Safe accreditation is required for any Team Staff to enter the field of play.
- 21.3 Each team must ensure that they have meet the minimum Sports Trainer requirements as per the NRL On Field Policy:
  - 21.3.1 Under 6s and 7s – 1 League First Aid or higher per 4 matches (1x International Field).
  - 21.3.2 Under 8s and 9s – 1 League First Aid or higher per 3 matches (1x International Field)
  - 21.3.3 Under 10s to 12s – 1 League First Aid or higher per match
  - 21.3.4 Under 13s to 15s – 1 League First Aid or higher per team
  - 21.3.5 Under 16s and above – 1 Level 1 Sports Trainer or higher per team
- 21.4 If a team does not meet the minimum requirements as per the NRL On Field Policy, then the match MUST NOT commence.
- 21.5 Coaches and players cannot act as a trainer in any match.
- 21.6 Trainers must comply with any direction or instruction from the match officials or ground manager.
- 21.7 Trainers must not make argumentative, disparaging, derogatory or offensive comments to any Match Official or Ground Manager.
- 21.8 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.
- 21.9 Trainers must not enter the field of play in the line of sight of a player or interfere with an opposition player.



## 22. Head Injury and Concussion Management

- 22.1 See [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#) (Policy 4.17 Head Injury and Concussion Guidelines), the [NRL Concussion Policy and Management Guidelines](#), and the [NRL On-Field Policy](#).
- 22.2 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.
- 22.3 Additional information and resources can be found on the [Play Rugby League Concussion Hub](#).

## 23. On Field Playing Apparel (Uniforms)

- 23.1 All clubs and teams must adhere to the NSWRL Licensing Program. See [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#) (Policy 2.10 Licensing Program) for more information.
- 23.2 When team colours clash, the away team should arrange to play in a different set of jerseys.
- 23.3 All jerseys are to be clearly numbered with NO duplicates.

## 24. Time Keeping

- 24.1 The home team, in conjunction with the away team if they so wish, will be responsible for the keeping of match time.
- 24.2 If the away team does not nominate anyone for this purpose, they must accept the timekeeping of the home team.
- 24.3 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 Newcastle Maitland Region.
- 24.4 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.
- 24.5 The referee may extend the match to award a penalty or to complete the play currently underway, at their discretion.



## 25. Time Off and Scheduled Time Delays

- 25.1 No time off will be allowed during regular season competition matches.
- 25.2 Matches abandoned with less than one full half of a game being completed will be replayed the following Sunday.
- 25.3 Matches unable to commence for any unforeseeable reason, injury or extraordinary event, will be replayed the following Sunday.
- 25.4 If a match cannot be scheduled within a reasonable timeframe, with genuine attempts from both clubs to facilitate a match, the result will be recorded as 0-0 with one (1) competition point awarded to each team.
- 25.5 If a match cannot be scheduled within a reasonable timeframe, with one club unable to facilitate a match, the result will be recorded as a forfeit by the non-complying club.
- 25.6 The determination of 23.4 and 23.5 will be made by the Hunter JRL in collaboration with NSWRL.
- 25.7 The result of matches abandoned after half time shall be recorded as the final score at the point of abandonment.
- 25.8 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.
- 25.9 See [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#) (Policy 3.1 Abandoned Matches Due to Injury, Inclement Weather or Foul Play) for more information.

## 26. Sideline Area / Bench Locations

- 26.1 Both the home and away team benches must be on the same side of the field.
- 26.2 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.
- 26.3 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.
- 26.4 Under no circumstances is a suspended player permitted inside the playing area or on the bench.
- 26.5 The Ground Manager may request any person on the bench to leave at any time.
- 26.6 Players and Team Staff on the bench must at all times remain at the bench allocated to their team (except for warm-ups).
- 26.7 No one besides the Ground Manager can approach the match officials.
- 26.8 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.
- 26.9 No members of the general public are permitted within the playing area.



## 27. Interchange

- 27.1 The maximum number of players permitted per age group is as follows:
- 27.1.1 Under 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.
  - 27.1.2 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.
  - 27.1.3 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.
  - 27.1.4 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.
- 27.2 Unlimited interchange will apply for all competitions.
- 27.3 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).

## 28. Dismissed Players

### Temporarily Dismissed Players (Sin Binned)

- 28.1 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.
- 28.2 Time of suspension begins only when the referee restarts play or indicates time on (time is to be in accordance with actual playing time).
- 28.3 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.
- 28.4 When the temporary suspension expires, players must enter the field of play from an onside position.
- 28.5 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.
- 28.6 Periods of temporary suspension (sin bin) will be 10 minutes across all competitions.



### Permanently Dismissed Players (Sent Off)

- 28.7 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.
- 28.8 After changing, the player must not re-enter the playing area under any circumstances and will be deemed as a spectator.
- 28.9 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](#) (Policy 7.1 Judiciary Code of Procedure).

## 29. Washout Policy

- 29.1 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.
- 29.2 If 50% (fifty percent) of matches are completed in any one competition of a specific round, the round will be deemed as completed. Any matches that cannot proceed within these rounds will be rescheduled at the earliest opportunity.
- 29.3 If a match cannot be scheduled within a reasonable timeframe, with genuine attempts from both clubs to facilitate a match, and the round deemed as completed, the result will be recorded as 0-0 with one (1) competition point awarded to each team.
- 29.4 If a match cannot be scheduled within a reasonable timeframe, with one club unable to facilitate a match, and the round deemed as completed, the result will be recorded as a forfeit by the non-complying club.
- 29.5 The determination of 27.3 and 27.4 will be made by the Hunter JRL in collaboration with NSWRL.
- 29.6 For the purposes of player qualifications, any match deemed a Wash Out Draw will count towards both Finals Series Qualifications and count as a game served for any suspended participant.
- 29.7 Should less than 50% of competition matches in any one competition be completed, and the matches unable to be rescheduled within the defined season dates, the whole round for that competition will be deemed as Abandoned and no competition points will be recorded, regardless of whether a match has been played or not. All results will be reset, including Byes and Forfeits.



## 30. Cancellation / Postponement / Abandonment of Matches

### Emergency Circumstances

- 30.1 Emergency circumstances may include any circumstances deemed to be an emergency by the HJRL, in collaboration with the NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region, or stipulated in the [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#).
- 30.2 If any such occurrence arises, the procedure shall be as follows:
  - 30.2.1 In collaboration, the participating clubs, Match Officials and Ground Manager, shall make the final determination if the match will continue.
  - 30.2.2 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.
  - 30.2.3 See [NSWRL Community Rugby League Policies and Procedures Manual](#) (Policy 3.1 Abandoned Matches Due to Injury, Inclement Weather or Foul Play) for more information.

### Ground Changes / Deferred Games

- 30.3 If a change to the original scheduled venue is required, it must first be approved by NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region.
- 30.4 Any mass changes due to unforeseeable ground unavailability are required to be finalised and communicated by 4pm on the Friday prior to the match (note: a small number of games may be moved in certain late notice circumstances due to unforeseeable reasons).
- 30.5 No venue changes will be accepted past this point in time.
- 30.6 Abandoned matches (excluding foul play abandonments) will be replayed on the following Sunday preceding the original fixture.
- 30.7 It is the Hosting Club's responsibility to ensure that the NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region are notified of any abandoned matches that have occurred at the venue before 9am on the Monday following the match.



## FINALS SERIES

### 31. Finals Series Structure

31.1 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

Game 1 (Qualifying Final) – 1st v 2nd

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

##### Week 2

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

##### Week 3

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

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

31.3 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.

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

31.5 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.

### 32. Finals Eligibility

32.1 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.

32.2 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.

32.3 In all competitions, the minimum number of matches required to qualify for a final's series will be three (3) with that team.

32.4 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:

32.4.1 A doctor's certificate must be available covering the time the player was unable to play.

32.4.2 The certificate must be received by the NSWRL Newcastle Maitland Region no later than 5:00pm on the Wednesday prior to the last competition match.



32.5 Team Managers are expected to make themselves aware of player eligibility prior to the finals.

### 33. Loss of Time and Time Off (Finals)

- 33.1 In Semi-finals, Finals and Grand Finals, time off rules apply for the final five (5) minutes of the second half.
- 33.2 A maximum of 15 minutes will be allowed before the game is abandoned with the result at the current time to stand.
- 33.3 Semi Finals matches abandoned with less than one full half of a game being completed (foul play abandonments excluded) will be replayed mid-week. If the match cannot be replayed before the next scheduled final, the highest-ranking team will progress through.
- 33.4 Grand Final matches abandoned with less than one full half of a game being completed (foul play abandonments excluded) will result in both teams being awarded Joint Premiers.

### 34. Drawn Matches and Extra Time (Finals)

- 34.1 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.
- 34.2 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 declared joint premiers.





## SITUATIONS NOT COVERED

### 35. Determinations

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



## APPENDICES

### Appendix A – District Pathways

| <b>Hunter JRL Club</b>               | <b>Newcastle RL Pathways Club</b> |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Central Charlestown Butcher Boys JRL | Central Newcastle Butcher Boys    |
| Dudley Redhead Magpies JRL           |                                   |
| Cessnock Goannas ML                  | Cessnock Goannas                  |
| Greta Branxton Colts JRL*            | Kurri Kurri Bulldogs              |
| Greta Branxton Colts JRL*            |                                   |
| Kurri Kurri Bulldogs ML              |                                   |
| Belmont North Sharks JRL             | Lakes United Seagulls             |
| Lakes United Seagulls JRL            |                                   |
| Swansea Caves Beach Swans JRL        |                                   |
| Valentine Eleebana Devils JRL        |                                   |
| Windale Eagles JRL                   |                                   |
| Macquarie Scorpions JRL              |                                   |
| South Lakes Roosters JRL             |                                   |
| Wangi Warriors JRL                   |                                   |
| West Wallsend Magpies JRL            |                                   |
| Dungog Warriors JRL                  | Maitland Pickers                  |
| East Maitland Griffins JRL           |                                   |
| Greta Branxton Colts JRL*            |                                   |
| Morpeth Bulls JRL                    |                                   |
| Thornton Beresfield Bears JRL        |                                   |
| West Maitland Wallaroos JRL          |                                   |
| Woodberry Warriors JRL               |                                   |
| Karuah Roos RLFC                     | Northern Hawks                    |
| Mallabula Panthers JRL               |                                   |
| Myall River Hawks JRL                |                                   |
| Nelson Bay Marlins JRL               |                                   |
| Raymond Terrace Roosters JRL         |                                   |
| Kotara Bears JRL                     | South Newcastle Lions             |
| Stockton Sharks JRL                  |                                   |
| South Newcastle Lions JRL            |                                   |
| Waratah Mayfield Cheetahs JRL        |                                   |
| Cardiff Cougars JRL                  | Wests Newcastle Rosellas          |
| Glendale Gorillas JRL                |                                   |
| Wallsend Maryland JRL                |                                   |
| Wests Newcastle Rosellas JRL         |                                   |

**Note:** Greta Branxton Colts Juniors are encouraged to progress through to their senior club in Hunter Valley Group 21 association.