



National Titles Event Rules

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1. INTRODUCTION

The CFFA is responsible for organising and overseeing the National Titles. This document details what is required of both the CFFA and sending bodies while preparing for and competing in the National Titles.

2. CFFA RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. General Responsibilities

The CFFA will be responsible for undertaking the following tasks:

- organisation of referees of suitable quality for the event
- organisation of suitable trophies, medallions and awards etc. for each division
- preparation and publishing of fixtures prior to the event
- recording of all result details as provided by referee match reports
- publishing of all results and maintenance of ladders for each division
- administration of all yellow and red cards issued
- administration of disciplinary actions issued to players by the Disciplinary Committee
- issuing all invoices for the tournament and collection of monies.

2.2. CFFA Roles

The CFFA will create a Nationals Subcommittee each year consisting of, but not limited to, the following roles:

2.2.1. Tournament Director

The role of this person is to oversee all aspects in relation to all duties listed in this document and is to be the first point of contact for:

- fixture queries
- disciplinary appeals
- all general queries
- issues not covered within these guidelines.

2.2.2. Referee Coordinator

This person is responsible for sourcing, managing and overseeing all referees involved in National Titles, is the sole point of contact for teams and sending bodies for any matters concerning referees.

2.2.3. Nationals Administration Coordinator

This person is responsible for overseeing all team registrations, entering fixtures (including semi-finals and grand finals) into the database, producing match cards for all matches, and post-tournament administration support.

2.2.4. Tournament Chaplain

This person will provide spiritual leadership and support during the Nationals tournament and organise the opening ceremony.

2.2.5. Treasurer

This person is responsible for the creating, overseeing and maintaining the budget, and for tracking and payment expenses.

2.2.6 Venue and Logistics Manager

This person is responsible for overseeing all venue-related operations for the Nationals tournament and will liaise with venue and council staff to ensure venue-related needs are met.

2.2.7. Volunteer Coordinator

This person will recruit and manage the volunteers and create a roster to ensure adequate coverage of all the tasks (e.g. refilling bathroom consumables, emptying bins, distributing match cards) required for smooth operation of the tournament.

3. SENDING BODIES RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1. General Responsibilities

3.1.1 Player Selection

The selection of players to compete at the event and the criteria used in their selection is the sole responsibility of the sending body providing the CFFA's general rules for eligibility are met.

3.1.2. Coaches, Managers & Support Staff

Outside of the mandatory requirements laid out in this document, the number of support staff required for a particular touring party is the sole responsibility of the sending body.

3.1.3. Transport for the Event

This includes any and all air fares and/or local transport requirements to get a sending body's touring party to and from accommodation, church services, opening and closing ceremonies, grounds, airports and any other transport component from their place of residence to the event venue.

3.1.4. Accommodation

Where accommodation is not being provided by CFFA, the sending body is solely responsible for the selection and costs of accommodating its touring party for the event.

3.1.5. Meals for the Event

Where meals are not being provided by CFFA, the sending body is solely responsible for the provision of all meals for its touring party before, during and after the event.

3.1.6. Player Registration Details

The sending body will provide player details one (1) month prior to the event start date in the format requested by the tournament organisers. The registration details will include a process

for each player to agree to a code of conduct, confirm eligibility and give permission for photography.

3.1.7. Squad Selection Policies

Each sending body is responsible for its own selection criteria and processes it employs to select teams and team members participating at the National Titles. The CFFA has no power to reject any particular player's participation at National Titles as long as his or her application for involvement has been signed off by the sending body and they meet the eligibility criteria in Section 4.

3.1.8. Squad Sizes

Each team participating is limited to a squad of 20 players maximum. Of those 20 players, only 16 are permitted to participate in a match (11 on-field players + 5 substitutes). Prior to the start of the competition, every team player and his/her shirt number must be submitted as part of player registration. Shirt numbers may not be changed from those entered in the player database without advising the Tournament Director in writing of the changes prior to the commencement of the next scheduled game.

In the event there is a depletion of available players in a particular division, teams are able to borrow players from a lower age division to ensure they are able to supply up to 16 players for a particular game. This provision may only be accessed once approval has been obtained from the Tournament Director. Approval is only granted once sufficient evidence has been supplied to the Tournament Director. The team will be unable to compete without receiving this approval. **This provision will not be made for finals.**

3.2 Roles

Each sending body is required to have as a minimum the following nominated people to fulfil the following roles:

3.2.1. Tour Leader

This is the primary contact point between their touring party and the CFFA and event organisers (e.g. mealtimes, all stars voting, tour leader briefings, etc.).

3.2.2. Chaplain

Each sending body needs to have a person who will be responsible for the pastoral care of their touring party for the entirety of the event.

3.2.3. Disciplinary Committee Representative

Each sending body shall supply one member representative to be available to sit on any disciplinary committee that does not involve its teams. The nomination is to be made as part of the team nomination.

3.2.4. Player Voting Personnel

Each sending body will organise coaching staff or other suitable representative to complete the player award voting for each match it is allocated. See Section 7 for more details.

4. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

4.1. Participation

All members of the CFFA are eligible to send teams to contest nominated division competitions at National Titles.

4.2. Age Determination

Division	Cut-Off Date
Under 15	Must have turned a maximum of 15 years of age prior to the 31st of December in the year competing
Under 17	Must have turned a maximum of 17 years of age prior to the 31st of December in the year competing
Women	Must have turned a minimum of 15 years of age prior to the 31st of December in the year competing
Men	Must have turned a minimum of 17 years of age prior to the 31st of December in the year competing

4.3. Eligibility Criteria for Players

4.3.1. Amateur Players Only

Players participating at National Titles are to be registered as an **amateur player only** with their relevant sending body. Players who receive payment from their relevant sending body or a member of a relevant sending body are not eligible. Players holding professional or semi-professional status **are not eligible** for selection in teams competing at National Titles.

4.3.2. Registration Status

Players may hold dual registration status with other football organisations providing they meet all the requirement limitations below.

4.3.2.1. Limits for Competition-Based CFFA Members

(That is, members who administer competition seasons for their club members and who recruit CFFA National players from their member clubs):

- Dual registration status players must participate as a player in a minimum of five (5) matches with the relevant sending body in the current season. The relevant sending body must be able to produce evidence of this upon request.
- Dual registration status players may not have income for participating as a player in football or football-related activities (e.g. indoor soccer, futsal, etc.) as their main source of income or their occupation.
- Dual registration status players may not receive payments for participating as a player in football or football-related activities (e.g. indoor soccer, futsal, etc.) of more than \$5,000 gross per year.

4.3.2.2. Limits for Academy-Based CFFA Members

(That is, members who recruit CFFA National players through a player development focus and do not have a competition-based season):

- a. Dual registration status players may not be paid in any capacity for participating as a player in football or football-related sports (e.g. indoor soccer, futsal, etc.).
- b. Dual registration status players may not play football above a FA division or equivalent level to be determined by the CFFA Executive each year, localised for different States and Territories where required.

4.3.3. Compliance

Compliance with player eligibility is the responsibility of the relevant sending body. Any clarifications for specific player situations should be sought from the CFFA prior to the tournament. Violations of player eligibility discovered at the tournament will be reviewed by the Disciplinary Committee.

4.3.4. Exemption Requests

A member can apply for an exemption with the CFFA no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the commencement of the competition for review. All decisions made by the committee will be final without opportunity for appeal.

4.3.5. Evening of Division Team Numbers

If a division has three (3) or fewer teams or an odd number of teams, the members within the state that CFFA Nationals are being held will be encouraged wherever possible to provide an additional team in each division to assist in ensuring even-numbered teams in respective divisional draws.

NOTE: CFFA reserves the right to invite teams of a suitable standard to compete in the competition in each division to even out divisions. Teams invited under this clause shall be deemed “invitational” and will hold all the rights and carry the same responsibilities of member-affiliated teams for the purposes of the tournament.

5. COMPETITION RULES

5.1. Competition Format

Wherever possible each team in a division will play each other team at least once.

A league table will be maintained and will be used to determine finalists. Normally a team shall play a minimum of two (2) games per day in preliminary rounds of the competition and a maximum of three (3) games per day.

Where there are eight (8) or more teams in any one division, that division may be split into pools to ensure that the competition can be completed within the allocated playing window. The top two (2) teams in each division will contest the championship final.

Where there are 4 teams or more in a division, the third and fourth teams and each subsequent pair of teams (where there is an even number of teams) will contest a place final where there is field availability and sufficient time.

Any prospective finals series shall be altered on an event-by-event basis to suit the needs of the tournament and the availability of fields at the discretion of CFFA executive management committee in consultation with the Tournament Director.

CFFA reserves the right to alter the competition format from tournament to tournament to reflect the number of teams entered in any one division and the availability of suitable playing surfaces.

5.2. Laws of the Game

The current published Australian edition of FFA “Laws of the Game” shall be used as the overriding laws governing competition for scheduled matches during the event. Variations approved to the above currently include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Interchange rules shall apply to all levels of the competition.
- Due to time restrictions on field availability, time will not normally be added on for stoppages of any kind including serious injuries. At the sole discretion of the match referee, time may be added on at the end of each half if significant time losses have occurred. This is to be kept to a maximum of three (3) minutes in each half and is at the sole discretion of the referee. CFFA reserves the right to alter this ruling on a tournament-by-tournament basis.
- The appointed referee of the match is the sole and only timekeeper for the match.
- In the situation of an unforeseen match abandonment (i.e., abandonment, weather, injury, etc.) that is **not** related to behaviour or discipline issues, if more than half of the match has been completed, the score at the time of the abandonment will be the result of the match. If the unforeseen abandonment occurs before half of the match has been completed, the outcome of the match (i.e., declared score, nullified result, re-match, etc.) will be determined by the Tournament Director and two CFFA Board members with advice from the Referee Coordinator.

In the situation of an abandonment due to behaviour or discipline issues, the result of the match (i.e., forfeit, declared score, re-match, etc.) will be determined by the Disciplinary Committee.

CFFA reserves the right to alter the match format from tournament to tournament to reflect the circumstances and field availability at the time of a major incident occurring.

5.3. Match Duration

Match duration times and half-time breaks may vary from event to event and game to game depending on local conditions, availability of fields and local council statutes regarding use of pitch lighting. The table below is a typical guidance of match durations for the tournament.

Division	Halves	Half-time Break	Total Match Time	Stoppage Time
Under 15	25-30 min.	10 minutes	50-60 minutes	Up to a maximum of 3 minutes per half
Under 17	30-35 min.	10 minutes	60-70 minutes	Up to a maximum of 3 minutes per half

Women	30-40 min.	10 minutes	60-80 minutes	Up to a maximum of 3 minutes per half
Men	30-45 min.	10 minutes	60-90 minutes	Up to a maximum of 3 minutes per half

It is the responsibility of the relevant sending body to check draws to ensure it is aware of the match duration times for any particular tournament. The Tournament Director, in consultation with the CFFA Executive, reserves the right to alter match duration times during an event if playing time is lost due to environmental or lighting conditions during the tournament.

5.4. Interchange (Substitution)

Interchange will be used in all matches instead of standard substitution. Each team is allowed an unlimited number of interchanges during all games; however, interchange must not proceed without the referee's consent in any circumstance. In all matches the player being rested shall leave the field of play before the interchange player enters the field of play, and this shall take place only after the referee has acknowledged the team officials and assistant referee's signal that an interchange is required. Players entering the field of play must do so at the halfway line. Exiting players can leave the field of play under the direction of the referee. At no time shall more than the permissible number of players in a team be allowed on the field during play.

If an interchange is made without the permission of the Referee, or if an interchange player enters the field of play before the player being rested has left the field of play, the play shall, if necessary, be stopped and the offending player cautioned and removed from the field as per the current published Australian edition of FIFA "Laws of the Game".

Referees can limit a team's interchanges should they believe that the team is time wasting. If this occurs, the referee will inform the captain and bench of the offending side that for the remainder of the game their ability to interchange players will be limited to when they are in control of the ball or at an injury interruption.

Players may only be interchanged at a stoppage in play.

5.5. Determination of Teams for the Finals

If teams are even on points in a division at the end of the preliminary rounds, the following will be used to determine finals positions:

- most goals for
- most goals against
- winning result against each other (results are combined if sides have played each other twice or more)
- best disciplined team – least number of red cards issued to the team
- best disciplined team – least number of yellow cards issued to the team

Points Table

Win	4 points
Draw with a Score	2 points
Scoreless Draw	1 point
Loss	0 points

5.5.1. Further Determination

A penalty shoot-out to decide finalists will be performed at a time to be advised by the Tournament Director if:

- 1st, 2nd and 3rd cannot be separated by the above; or
- 2nd and 3rd cannot be separated by the above; or
- lower placed finals positioning shall be determined by coin toss if the above has been exhausted.

5.6. Finals Series Matches

All players competing in finals series games must have played a minimum of two (2) games in the preliminary rounds in that division for the team competing in the match. Any deviation from this must be approved by the Tournament Director prior to the commencement of the match. Any non-approved player found to be competing in a finals match will force the team he or she is playing for to forfeit the match.

A player is only allowed to play finals for one team.

For each Championship Final that is played where the score is tied at the end of regulation time, the match will proceed directly to penalty kicks. There is no allocation for any periods of extra time.

- Each team will alternately take five (5) penalty kicks.
- If after five (5) penalty kicks each the score is still tied, each team will take alternate penalty kicks until a winner is determined.

5.7. Minor Placing Finals Matches

For each minor placing championship final that is played where the score is tied at the end of regulation time, the match will be deemed a draw and the team finishing higher on the table at the end of the preliminary rounds shall be deemed to be the winner of the fixture.

5.8. Medical Clearances

Match officials are to record details of players who require on-field medical treatment and submit them with their match report.

Where a player requires offsite medical care as the result of an on-field incident, the player must obtain a medical certificate stating that he or she is cleared to continue playing in the event. The certificate must be given to the Tournament Director before the player can resume playing in the tournament.

6. DISCIPLINE

6.1. For Red and Yellow Cards

Accumulating three (3) yellow cards in different games will result in a one (1) match penalty which is to be served in the very next game that the player's team is scheduled to play regardless of whether it is a preliminary round or finals series game.

Accumulating two (2) yellow cards in one game (thus resulting in a red card) will result in a minimum one (1) match penalty which is to be served in the very next game that the player's team is scheduled to play regardless of whether it is a preliminary round or finals series game.

Red card offences by players that have been issued for the following offences will result in a hearing by the Disciplinary Committee:

- serious foul play
- violent conduct
- spitting at an opponent or any other person
- using any language or behaviour deemed to be racial in nature.
- Remaining red card offences will have an automatic one (1) match penalty which is to be served in the next scheduled game. These include but are not limited to denying the opposition a goal or obvious goal-scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball. (This does not apply to a goalkeeper within his or her own penalty area.)
- denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent moving towards the player's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick or penalty kick
- receiving a second caution in the same match
- using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures or blasphemy

This committee will advise the team coach of the penalty to be imposed after the judicial hearing. Yellow and Red Card offences are defined as those listed in the current FFA Rules of the Game – Law 12: Fouls and Misconduct.

6.2. Disciplinary Committee

Prior to the event, sending bodies are to nominate one (1) person to be a member of the Disciplinary Committee. In the event that a player receives a red card as per the above discipline section, or a referee refers any incident they consider warrants a Disciplinary Committee review, the committee will be convened as soon as possible after the match's conclusion and after the match report has been lodged with the Tournament Director. The committee will consist of the following members:

- the Referee Coordinator for the event or his or her nominated representative
- a CFFA representative nominated prior to the event by the CFFA management committee
- One (1) nominated sending body representative from a non-involved sending body.

The committee will meet and decide on the necessary penalty to be applied in relation to the offence being heard.

The relevant sending body may send the Tour Leader, the relevant coach or chaplain, and in the case of a junior, a parent or guardian, with one spokesperson identified, in addition to the player

or team official who is fronting the Disciplinary Committee. For the avoidance of doubt, the player or team official who is fronting the Disciplinary Committee may speak in addition to the spokesperson identified.

6.3. Discipline Appeals Committee

Any competing sending body that wishes to appeal a suspension applied to one of its players must submit an appeal request in writing to the Tournament Director via their tour leader. It must state the grounds for the appeal within three (3) hours of being notified of the suspension. Appeal request forms are available from the Tournament Director.

Please note that yellow card offences **CANNOT** be appealed and will stand as issued by the match official.

A Discipline Appeals Committee will be convened to hear an appeal and shall consist of the following members:

- a CFFA executive member
- two (2) nominated sending body Disciplinary Committee members from non-involved sending bodies and not involved in the original decision.

If the appeal is received a minimum of four (4) hours before the next scheduled match of the player involved, all endeavours will be taken for the appeal to be heard before that match. Until such a time as the appeal is heard and a decision made, the original penalty administered by the Disciplinary Committee will continue to stand, and the player is still suspended from competing in a match, regardless of whether it is a regularly scheduled match or a final.

The result of the hearing is binding and final. There will be no further means of appeal.

7. PLAYER AWARDS

The CFFA awards a number of special awards in each division contested at National Titles. These awards are voted on by coaching staff or other representatives (see Section 3.2.4) during the National Titles. It is essential that sending bodies ensure that player's numbers and names match as only player numbers and not names will be recorded as part of the nominations at the conclusion of each scheduled match.

7.1. Voting Allocations & Procedures

The Tournament Director will organise a roster for sending bodies for specific matches to facilitate the voting process. This roster will be distributed prior to the tournament to all tour group leaders, who are to ensure that the assigned representative designated by the sending body is made aware of the responsibilities for that match.

Whilst it is our preference for coaches to be used in the voting process, it is at the discretion of the Tournament Director to ensure that all games are covered. He or she has the right to go outside the coaching pool to do this. For example, a CFFA executive member or one of the many sending body chaplains may be utilised.

Forms are available at the halfway line of each pitch for assigned representatives to complete. At the conclusion of the match in each division, the assigned representative is required to award 4, 3, 2, & 1 points to the players they deem as being the best during the match, as well as identifying the best goalkeeper (i.e. individual player).

Consider the following general guidelines when making point allocations:

- A yellow or red card issued to a player in a match would normally see him/her not receive any points for that match.
- Observers are requested to look at all players and to remember that often the best player is not the one who scores the goals, but the hard worker who assists in either the attack or defensive process. After all, goal scorers are also competing for the Golden Boot award.

Award points are to be recorded on the form provided and handed back to the match referee (at the conclusion of the match and not before) who will submit the form with his or her match report.

7.2 Divisional Best and Fairest of the Tournament

The player in each division that receives the highest total of points at the end of the competition rounds will be deemed to be the Best and Fairest for that division. Should a tie occur, the player with the superior number of maximum points in a match shall be awarded the winner. If still tied, 4-point allocations will be used, followed by 3-points, 2-points, and then 1-point allocations until a clear winner can be decided. If players are still tied, then each player's disciplinary record will be used as a tie breaker. If still even on points, then the award will be shared.

7.3. Divisional Goalkeeper of the Tournament — Golden Gloves Award

The goalkeeper in each division that receives the highest total of nominations will be deemed to be the best goalkeeper for that division. Where a tie occurs, each player's disciplinary record will be used as a tie breaker. If still even at this point, then the award will be shared.

7.4. Divisional Top Goal Scorer — Golden Boot Award

At the conclusion of each match in each division, the officiating referee is to indicate the goal scorers for the match on the match report. The player in each division that scores the highest number of goals will be awarded the Golden Boot for that division. Where a tie occurs, each player's disciplinary record will be used as a tie breaker. If still even on points, then the award will be shared.

7.5. Divisional Best on Ground Award in Championship Final

At the conclusion of the Championship Final of each division, the central referees, in consultation with their assistant referees, shall award the Best on Ground award which is to be presented at the awards ceremony. He or she will also be named as the captain of the All-Stars team for that division. In divisions where there are no finals, no Best on Ground award shall be awarded.

7.6. CFFA All-Star Team Selection

At the conclusion of the tournament, the 4, 3, 2, & 1 votes allocated to identify the best players in each game and the awards listed above will be used as the basis for naming an All-Star team for each division. The All-Star Team for each division will consist of:

- Best on Ground (captain)
- Golden Boot
- Golden Gloves
- Best and Fairest (from the 4, 3, 2, 1 votes)
- and the following 11 players who received the most votes.

Additional players may be added to the team at the discretion of the Tournament Director when divisions are combined due to insufficient entries in a particular division. Conversely, fewer players from the 4, 3, 2, 1 votes can be added in cases where other awards have joint winners.

7.7. Presentation Awards Ceremony

The CFFA will determine the best way to present CFFA All Star awards in planning for the CFFA Nationals Tournament.