



McDonalds Ballarat Football Netball League Inc

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2024 Ballarat Football Netball League Local Football By-Laws

1. Junior club alignment with seniors

Every junior club shall have alignment with a senior club in the Ballarat Football Netball League that will provide a pathway from junior football to senior football for all club members.

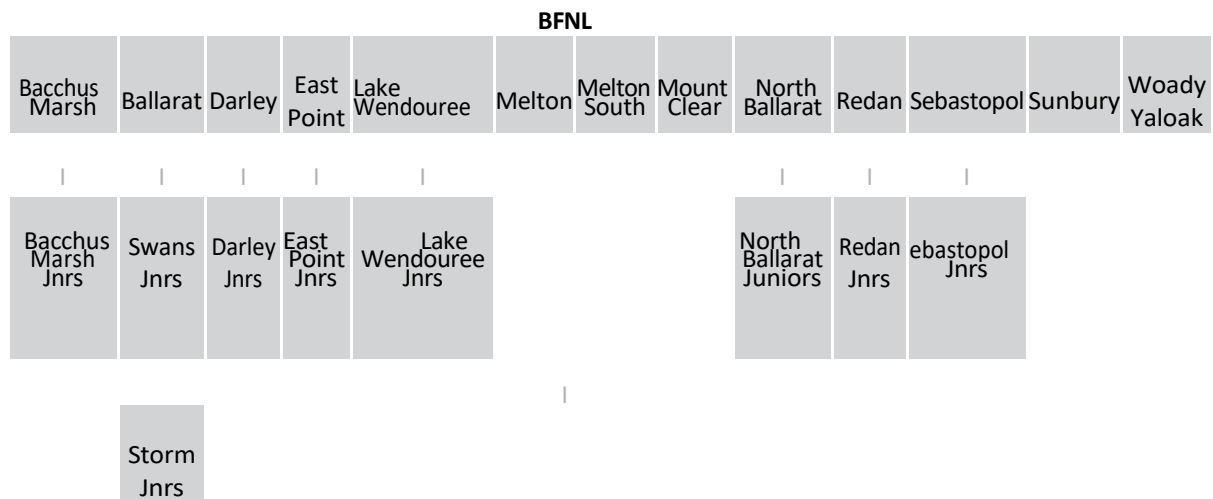
The Mount Clear JFC are the only junior club with no alignment to any senior club in the competition and all MCJFC players shall have an open clearance to play with any AFL Victoria Country club upon completion of their final year in the U/17 competition.

An interchange agreement will also exist for MCJFC players wishing to play senior football in the BFNL. This agreement will allow MCJFC top age U/17 players to play senior football with one selected BFNL club on permit. The BFNL club structure is as follows:

Therefore, the East Point FNC, East Ballarat JFC and Golden Point JFC equal one club and have the same voting rights as a club with senior and junior alliance.

The North Ballarat City FNC is an affiliate of the North Ballarat JFC therefore they fall under the banner of the juniors even though they are senior club.

The below table reflects the criteria used by the BFNL to determine memberships of the League (as per the BFNL's constitution). Clubs will be allocated the following membership/votes:



Bacchus Marsh	4	Ballarat Swans	4	Darley	4	East Point	4
Lake Wendouree	4	Melton	3	Melton South	3	Mount Clear	2
North Ballarat	4	Redan	4	Sebastopol	4	Sunbury	3



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2. Interleague policy

The Ballarat Football Netball League has a long tradition in the WorkSafe Victorian Country Championships and is recognised as one of the most successful Leagues ever. The League expects all member clubs to support the Interleague campaign and encourage players and officials who are selected to participate. From time to time, the League may approach clubs for the use of its facilities for training and/or matches.

The Match Committee, comprising of four Selectors plus one Chairman of Selectors and the Coach, shall coordinate the selection of the training squad, and from time to time any additions or deletions can be made.

All squad members (fit & injured) are expected to attend training unless excused by the coach or a member of the selection panel. Players who fail to attend training without notification or make themselves unavailable for Interleague may incur a suspension of a minimum of one match.

At the discretion of the match committee, allowances may be made for playing coaches and those who have given good service to the BFNL Interleague campaign in previous years, or to any other player in exceptional circumstances that are approved by the BFNL Board. All Interleague representatives will be supplied with shorts and socks if selected to represent the league.

3. Umpires

The Ballarat Football Umpires Association caters for all BFNL Matches and supplies umpires as negotiated on a year-to-year basis.

4. Interchange/Area Agreement

On an annual basis, all leagues affiliated with AFL Goldfields and AFL Central Victoria shall enter into an Area Agreement to allow those Clubs with Junior teams in those competitions to Interchange players to assist with player numbers.

The 2024 Interchange Agreement along with the leagues it covers can be found on our website: <https://bfnl.com.au/football/interchange-agreements>

Clubs need to be aware of the terms and conditions associated with the agreement and must have the appropriate approvals in place prior to allowing any player to take the field on an interchange/area agreement.



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5. Coach accreditation

- a) A Person must be Accredited to coach Australian Football at a Club or Controlling Body.
- b) A Club or Controlling Body may only appoint a Person as a Coach if that Person is Accredited.
- c) For the avoidance of doubt, the AFL does not represent that a Person who has obtained Accreditation is a fit and proper person to be appointed as a Coach. Without limiting the foregoing:
- d) it is a matter for the Club or Controlling Body appointing a Coach to satisfy itself that a Person is a fit and proper person to be appointed as a Coach;
- e) the function of the Accreditation process is primarily to ensure that all Coaches satisfactorily complete the required educational modules for their Accreditation level;
- f) as part of the Accreditation process a Person may be required to submit a National Police Check to the AFL.

For accreditation process details, refer to CoachAFL.

6. Ground manager duties

All Ground Managers employed by the BFNL or by Clubs affiliated with the BFNL shall be required to undertake the following as a minimum requirement for that position.

1. Open umpires' rooms 1 hour before commencement of first game & ensure rooms are clean & showers turned on.
2. Organise match ball (selection of 2 for Seniors) making sure they are tight before going to meet coaches & players.
3. Escort umpires to change rooms to collect team sheets, meet coaches, players & check boots & escort back to their rooms.
4. Escort umpires to ground centre & wait there until umpires' warm-ups are completed.
5. Collect umpire's tracksuit tops & store in a secure place.
6. Organise spare ball which the INTERCHANGE STEWARDS shall hold.
7. Ensure that both teams are on the ground 5 minutes before the appointed starting time.
8. Supply drinks (Home Club should provide) & tracksuits to umpires at each break.
9. Escort umpires in conjunction with INTERCHANGE STEWARDS off ground at halftime & at the conclusion of the game.
10. Ensure that a stretcher is placed by the home team inside the playing arena fence at the interchange area prior to the commencement of the game.



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11. Ensure the only occupants of the press boxes are Club timekeepers, members of the media & the ground manager.
12. At junior level, there is no time on. Except when a stretcher is required on the playing arena. It is the responsibility of the Ground Manager to request for the clock to be stopped. Time on is from when the stretcher crosses the boundary line onto & off the playing arena.
13. Ensure the score board attendant is accurate & watching the game & ensure that scoreboard signs are changed at the end of each match.
14. Ensure that the number in each coaching box doesn't exceed the maximum number allowed by the Ballarat Football Netball League.
15. Ensure that NO players or Spectators approach the umpires in the centre of the square during the quarter & three-quarter time break.
16. Ensures that nobody enters the Umpires room at any stage.
17. Escort umpires to after match function if requested, then escort umpires to their car on leaving venue.
18. Ensure that Water Carriers and /or Trainers do not linger on the ground, and that they perform their duties and quickly remove themselves from the ground. Further, the Ground Manager will ensure that Water Carriers and /or Trainers are correctly attired and that each sides number of Water Boys and Trainers do not exceed the maximum number allowed by the Ballarat Football Netball League.

Additional Finals Duties

7. Prior to the commencement of each match, make it quite clear to clubs that their five best players & all goal kickers are required to be handed to yourself at the completion of the game. This applies at all levels. It is not sufficient that the Courier has this information. You must also collect it.
8. Footballs are to be presented to the umpire at the beginning of the match & returned to the Ground office. Each Ground Manager will be issued with a ball per match & a spare.
9. Complete incident report sheet should any incident occur that needs to be brought to the Ballarat Football Netball League's attention. Incident report sheets should be sent in with the match day paperwork.
10. Ensure all clubs tidy up after themselves prior to leaving the facilities.

11. Time clocks

All time clocks displayed to the general public at BFNL venues must run from zero upward without stopping for time on. A fine of 2.5 penalty units per occasion the clock is not used (or used incorrectly) will be imposed.

12. BFNL Sounding of siren policy:

The BFNL understands the importance of keeping to the running sheet for match days and ensuring all games finish at their scheduled finishing times.



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Therefore, the following policy must be adhered to for all matches (except Senior football) competing in any BFNL competition:

- Both Timekeepers must make an assessment of time at half time of every match (except Senior football)
- If it is determined that the match is running behind schedule, the time remaining until the scheduled finishing time shall be split equally in half also factoring in enough time for a three-quarter time break (see division of breaks in By-Law 111).
- If further time is lost throughout the second half, regardless of how long the final quarter has been running for, the siren **MUST** be sounded at the scheduled finishing time.

A penalty of 5 penalty units will apply for clubs who fail to sound the siren at scheduled times as per the official BFNL running sheet provided to clubs prior to each season.

13. Pre-Match warmups

The Ballarat FNL has an expectation that clubs will avoid the opposing side during their entry onto the ground both at the start of the game and at half time, and during any on-ground "warm up".

The Ballarat FNL requires that each club will warm up at opposing ends of the ground, with the clubs using the eastern most Coach's Box to warm up at the eastern end of the ground, and the remaining club (who shall be using the most western of the Coach's boxes) to warm up at the westernmost end of the ground.

It is understood and accepted that when clubs enter the ground they shall do a lap of the centre square, and when doing so they need to ensure they avoid the other side and their warm up area if the opposing side is already at one end of the ground.

This By Law shall apply to ALL grades. It may also be applied to junior grades of football if an incident arises.

Clubs who breach this policy shall be determined to have acted in a provocative manner and may be fined up to an amount of \$500. In instances where this By Law is breached and the breach results to a more serious incident (e.g. a melee) the offending Club may face more serious charges as determined by the Board.

14. Teams not breaking from the Huddle

When the single siren is blown to indicate the end of a break the club/s not breaking from the huddle will be fined 5 penalty units per occasion with clubs to be named on the umpire's match report sheet.

15. Leaving playing field

Senior, Reserve & Under 19 sides, shall be permitted to leave the playing field during the half time interval - including the Finals Series. Junior grade sides must remain on the field at ½ time, except under extreme weather conditions. Clubs leaving the playing field inappropriately shall be liable to a fine of 20



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penalty units for all Senior, Reserve and Under 19 teams and a fine of 10 penalty units shall apply to all Junior teams.

Failure of Clubs to return to the playing field by the specified time will result in a fine of 2 Penalty Units per Minute being applied.

16. Late appearance

Clubs who fail to appear on the playing arena at the scheduled time shall receive a fine of 2.5 penalty units per minute. The offence shall be recorded by the officiating Umpire on the match report sheet following the match and the club will be informed of their fine by the General Manager.

17. Time-on

Senior Football quarters will remain 20 minutes plus time on. Please see below for timekeeping processes and all matters associated with time on. This also includes the processes of the Interchange Steward and the use of the interchange gate.

Time on for all senior Ballarat Football League matches

Continuing this year, all quarters will be 20 minutes plus time on. Time on shall be blown in accordance with AFL Laws of the Game 10.6 STOPPING AND RECOMMENCING TIME:

10.6.1 Stopping Time

The Timekeepers shall stop the clock which is used for the timing of a Match when:

- (a) directed to do so by a field Umpire in accordance with Law 10.6.3.
- (b) the goal Umpire signals that a Goal or Behind has been scored.
- (c) the boundary Umpire signals that the football is Out of Bounds or Out of Bounds On the Full; or
- (d) the field Umpire crosses their arms to indicate they are going to throw the football up.

10.6.2 Recommencing Time

The Timekeepers shall recommence the clock used for the timing of a Match when:

- (a) directed to do so by the field Umpire in accordance with Law 10.6.3;
- (b) the football is bounced or thrown up by the field Umpire;
- (c) the football is brought back into play after a Behind has been scored;
- (d) the football is thrown back into play by the boundary Umpire or brought back into play by a Player (as the case may be), after it has gone Out of Bounds or Out of Bounds On the Full;
- (e) the football is obviously in play; or
- (f) the umpire calls 'Play On'.



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10.6.3 Signalling

A field Umpire shall signal to the Timekeeper to stop the clock or re-start the clock used for the timing of the Match by blowing a whistle and raising one arm above their head.

10.6.4 Domestic Provisions

A Controlling Body may vary the provisions of Law 10.6.1 at its discretion.

Please Note: This is for SENIOR football only. Please refer to BFNL By-Law Sounding of the Siren policy for rules on making sure games run to time.

18. Jumpers

All jumpers in both Senior and Reserve matches must carry different numbers. Players must be wearing the number that corresponds to the Official League Program and the team sheet. Refer By-Law 116.

19. Submission of selected sides seniors:

Each club must submit their selected sides in the Senior, Reserve and U/19 grades into the system prior to 8:00pm on the Thursday night preceding a round of matches. Players must be named in their corresponding position and must also have their allocated number entered into the system.

Should any player take the field outside the 22 named players and up to 5 emergencies, a 25-penalty unit fine per player not named will be enforced upon that club unless the club can provide evidence to support a valid reason for the change.

Clubs participating in matches that are scheduled to play on a Sunday will be permitted to submit an extended bench of 7 players (4 interchange plus 3 emergencies) however sides still need to submit all players in position and with jumper numbers.

Failure of a Club to correctly submit a side to the system shall result in a fine of 25 Penalty Units.

20. Juniors & BFLW:

Each club must submit their completed team lists into the system any time prior to the commencement of their game with enough time to print out and use as the club's official team sheet for match days. All grades must print off copies of their team sheet from the system. Team sheets must represent a 100% accurate account of the players who take the field on a weekly basis.

Late changes may be recorded by hand on the official match day team sheet however these changes must be made prior to the start of the match and submitted on the system immediately following each game in time for submission of results deadline.

Refer to By-Law 13. Any changes made must also be replicated on any other team sheet in circulation on the day.

21. Incorrect team sheet listings

In the case where a club submits their team sheet prior to the start of the match to the Umpires and Opposition and it has been determined that specific players, who end up participating in the same match and have not been included on the official team sheet for that match, shall be subject to penalties as



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deemed appropriate by the BFNL Board of Directors.

Penalties may be distributed in the way of a fine, the loss of premiership points and percentage or a combination of both, depending on the set of circumstances surrounding the scenario. These penalties are on top of those issued for breaching other BFNL By-Laws in relation to the selection of sides.

Time clocks used by timekeepers may count down towards zero (stopping for time on in senior competition only).

22. Use of two footballs

In the event of extreme weather conditions, two footballs may be used in a match with the change of footballs occurring at each quarter time break to ensure no advantage is gained by either club. Both clubs must agree to the use of two footballs. If no agreement is met, only one football may be used.

23. Stretchers

Clubs must ensure a sports specific stretcher is placed at the interchange area. It is recommended an additional stretcher is also placed at the interchange area. Failure to comply shall result in a fine of 10 Penalty Units.

24. Officials in bench area

Only persons authorised may enter the playing arena during the playing of a match and Match Day Officials must remain within the marked area around the interchange box. Clubs competing in the BFNL senior competition are permitted to have up to 4 officials (including Coach, Asst Coach, Chairman of Selectors, etc) within the marked confines of the Interchange box. Junior clubs shall be permitted to have a maximum of one (1) coach and one (1) assistant coach. Furthermore, Clubs (Junior & Senior) are permitted to have up to two (2) runners, six (6) trainers and/or water carriers, and

four (4) interchange players. Junior clubs can refer to By-Law 119 for requirements on interchange players. Clubs will be allowed to use an additional two (2) water carriers in extreme weather conditions, however, this must be approved by the Umpire.

All, apart from Trainers and Water Carriers, are to remain seated in the coach's box at all times during play, or within the confines of the perimeter lines surrounding the Coach's Box. If no lines are marked, all must remain within the confines of the Coach's Box.

If there is insufficient space within the coach's box, or no box is provided, then remaining officials are to be situated outside the boundary line.

Trainers and Water carriers may be spread around the ground but must be positioned against the fence and not on the boundary line when at rest. All other personnel not mentioned above are considered unauthorized, and umpires have been instructed to remove them from the ground.

Any Club desiring authorisation of any other officials must apply to the League for such authorisation, prior to the commencement of the match.

Coaches and their coaching staff who don't remain within the perimeter lines surrounding the coaches box



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will be penalised 10 penalty units per offense.

For junior football – the head coach must wear the league approved and supplied coaches vest at all times during the game. This is to allow easy identification by the umpires of the coach of that particular team. If there are joint coaches, both coaches must wear the approved vest.

Clubs will be fined 10 penalty units per offence where a coach is not correctly attired with the approved coaches vest.

25. Water carriers

A maximum of up to 4 Water Carriers can be used by Senior & Junior Clubs. Water carriers must be of sufficient age that they do not impose risk to themselves and others. In extreme weather conditions, clubs will be permitted to appoint a further two (2) water carriers however this must first be approved by the Central Umpire(s).

Water carriers must be competent and able to fulfil the required duties of a water carrier and must be a minimum of 12 years of age. Water carriers are to run water to players and umpires and remove themselves from the playing arena immediately.

At no stage should a water carrier remain out on the ground if they are not handing water

to players. A fine of 5 penalty units will apply to clubs found guilty of using water carriers to fill spaces on the ground.

26. Runners

Runners are not required to use the interchange gate, however, clubs using two runners must ensure that only one runner is on the playing surface at a time. If two runners are found to be on the ground at the same time, the Umpire will pay a free kick against the offending team.

Timekeepers shall be responsible for timing yellow and red cards as issued by officiating umpires.



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27. Timekeepers

A Club shall for all grades provide a Timekeeper. The home club will be responsible for the provision and location of an audible signalling device and a backup device for the use of Timekeepers.

Timekeepers at all matches shall be required to keep the scores. The Goal Umpires scorecards are to be used on the day, but in case of a dispute, the timekeeper's scores will be forwarded as evidence to the League. A fine of 10 Penalty Units will apply should a Club fail to provide a Timekeeper for any BFNL fixtured match.

A fine of 20 Penalty Units shall apply if a Club fails to provide an audible signalling device and "back up" siren or bell.

28. Interchange stewards

The home and visiting clubs must each appoint one Interchange Steward per match at all levels. The steward will perform such functions as set out in rule 3.2 of AFL Laws of the Game, in the AFL Victoria Country Handbook. A fine of 2.5 penalty units will be imposed for each occasion these officials are sighted not correctly attired.

Both Interchange Stewards must sit with each other by the fence to record each player transaction and keep track of time a red or yellow carded player has spent off the ground, except in extreme weather conditions when it is permissible to sit in a covered area where all interchange exchanges are still highly visible.

A fine of 10 Penalty Units will apply should a Club fail to provide an Interchange Steward for any BFNL fixtured match.

29. Boundary umpires

A Club shall, where required, provide a Boundary Umpire who shall be attired in a white shirt or jumper. The Central Umpire(s) shall adjudicate in regard to the competency of the person, which must be complied within five minutes or the match is forfeited. Should a club fail to provide a Boundary Umpire where advised, a penalty of 5 penalty units may be imposed. This By-Law is relevant for all BFNL competitions when competing for points (senior and junior).

30. Goal umpires

A Club shall, where required, provide a mature person as a Goal Umpire who shall be attired in a white coat. The Central Umpire(s) shall adjudicate in regard to the maturity of the person, which must be complied within five minutes or the match is forfeited. All Goal Umpires supplied by clubs are to wear white coats and use white flags.

A 2.5 penalty units fine will occur for any of the above per item for Junior Fixtures, and 5 Penalty Units for Senior Fixtures.



PLAYING GUIDELINES

1. Commencing Times

All matches shall commence at such times that are fixed and appointed by the Board. Any Club unable to field 12 registered players (with the exception of By-Law 137 in junior football only) at the appointed time shall be fined such sum as is fixed by the Board, and if not ready by half an hour after the appointed time, shall forfeit the match (fines as per By-Law 38 for forfeiture of match also apply).

Commencement times will be as follows:

Senior Football

Grade	Start	Ground	Qtrs.	Breaks
Senior Football	2:15pm	Full	4 x 20min PLUS time on	5min - 20min - 5min
Reserve Football	12:00pm	Full	4 x 24min No time on	5min - 12min - 5min
U/19 Football	9:50am	Full	4 x 22min No time on	4min - 10min - 4min

Junior Football

Grade	Start	Ground	Qtrs.	Breaks
U/17 Senior	3:15pm	Full	4 x 20min No time on	3min – 5min – 3min
U/17 Reserve	1:35pm	Full	4 x 20min No time on	2min – 4min – 2min
U/15 Senior	12:15pm	Full	4 x 15min No time on	2min – 4min – 2min
U/15 Reserve	11:00am	Full	4 x 15min No time on	2min – 4min – 2min
U/13 Senior	9:55am	Full	4 x 12min No time on	2min – 4min – 2min
U/13 Reserve	8:55am	Full	4 x 12min No time on	2min – 4min – 2min
U/11 Senior	8:00am	Half	4 x 10min No time on	2min – 2min – 2min
U/11	8:00am	Half	4 x 10min No time on	2min – 2min –



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4. Interchange Players

For Senior, Reserve and U/19 age groups, clubs will be allowed a maximum of twenty-two (22) players that may be listed on the team sheet and participate in any given match.

Where a duplicate copy of Team Sheets is exchanged between competing clubs, that copy must be identical to which is handed to the Umpire.

Failure to comply - 5 Penalty Units.

At junior level, U/9 Reserves through to U/17 Seniors, the Ballarat Football Netball League will take the following stance in regard to interchange players:

- a) Clubs will be allowed to have up to six (6) interchange players per side in U/11 Senior, U/13 Senior, U/15 Senior & U/17 Senior competitions.
- b) Clubs will be allowed to have unlimited interchange players per side in U/9 Senior & Reserves, U/11 Reserve, U/13 Reserve, U/15 Reserve & U/17 Reserve competitions.
- c) Permission from opposition club is no longer required to arrange additional numbers on the bench.
- d) Clubs are encouraged to assist their opponent with numbers if sides are uneven.
- e) Clubs failing to follow this process will risk losing points and percentage

5. Clearances

Refer AFL Victoria Country Handbook, "Clearances".

6. Football Stops

A form of exposed metal studs is not permitted. Magnesium stops are acceptable.

7. Talking Devices Used on the Field of Play

Listening/talking devices (such as a walkie talkie) are banned from being used by club officials whilst on the field of play. This includes the banning of use by water carriers, trainers and runners. The only exception to this rule is for Coaching staff sitting in an elevated position away from the Coaches box where players cannot hear their instructions.

8. Wearing Gloves During Competition

Gloves are permitted to be worn in all BFNL competitions.



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9. Football - Minimum Numbers to Constitute a Game

For ALL football competitions (NOT including Senior Football), the following shall apply:

- a) Clubs who field a side with 12 (registered or borrowed) or more players will be eligible to play for points. This means, the score, percentage, best players and all goal kickers will stand.
- b) Please note, if one club lends another club players and the game progresses with 12 or more players per side, point a) shall apply.
- c) Clubs who field a side with 11 or less players will forfeit the points to the other side. Both teams are encouraged to still conduct a game with whatever players are available. The size of the ground can be reduced if need be.
- d) Where possible, clubs MUST assist their opposition to field a side of 12 or more players.
- e) In the event where one club assists another by lending them players, both sides must contain the same number of players for the game to go ahead. If there is an odd number, the team who has the most players (registered to their club) may play one extra player.
- f) In the event where both sides cannot field a side of 12 or more players, the points will be split. Clubs again are encouraged to still conduct a game however the score, percentage and goal kickers will not stand.
- g) In any round, the team that has been allocated the bye should assist other clubs by supplying them with as many players as they can.
- h) Borrowed players cannot receive Best & Fairest votes and goals kicked do not count in all League awards.
- i) If one team has less than 18 players, the opposition team must lend players to ensure even numbers take the field. Players must not be left to sit on the bench.



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Junior Football (U/17 Seniors Down)

10. Fielding a Senior Side First

Where a club only has enough players to field one side in a particular age group, the club must compete in the senior competition of that age group unless they are provided with approval from the League to compete in the Reserves.

11. Playing Against a Club With Reserve Grade Only

Where a club is set to play an opposition club who only has a reserve grade side (no senior side in that grade) the club will not be able to “drop” any player who played senior grade football the week/game prior. This rule brought in for 2023 onwards is to eliminate teams stacking a reserve game against the spirit of the competition. Any player from that specific age group who participates the week/game prior in seniors will be ineligible to play in the reserve grade game the following week if they play a club with one side entered only.

12. Yellow Cards (Juniors Only)

The following shall apply to all players in the Ballarat Football & Netball League junior competition (U/17 Seniors and below) to coincide with the BFNL Junior Code of Conduct:

- a) Any player who receives a red card during the course of any match, shall be asked to front the independent tribunal unless the set penalty applies. Red cards are shown for reportable offences.
- b) Any player who receives their first yellow card during the course of a season shall consider this as their first and only warning.
- c) Any player who receives a second yellow card during the course of a season shall be handed an automatic one match suspension.
- d) Any player who receives a third yellow card and every yellow after that, shall receive a two match suspension.
- e) Clubs wishing to appeal a card shown by an Umpire should do so by emailing the Football Operations Manager by no later than the close of business on the first business day after the match has taken place.
- f) The Tribunal shall deal with offending players via normal AFL Victoria Country procedures.

13. Underage Grades

Qualification for underage competitions will be as follows for each age group:

- Under 9 - Must be born prior to between 1/1/2015 and 30/4/2017.
- Under 11 – Born in 2013 or 2014
- Under 13 – Born in 2011 or 2012
- Under 15 – Born in 2009 or 2010



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- Under 17 – Born in 2007 or 2008
- Under 19 – Born in 2005 or 2006

Junior Age Dispensation – The By-Law to permit junior players to play as an overage player in lower age groups after special consideration against selected criteria has been abolished. Players must compete in the age group in which they are eligible, or in a higher age group.

14. Minimum Age

A player must have turned 7 years of age prior to April 30th of the calendar year to play U/9 football. Therefore, must have been born on or prior to 30/04/2017.

15. Junior Football Cap

In 2009, the Ballarat Football & Netball League introduced a cap on players per junior age group to the junior competition to assist clubs in spreading players across the competing clubs.

All grades of junior football from Under 9 to Under 17 shall have a cap of 50 players.

Any club found to have deliberately breached the cap by clearing or registering new players will be severely dealt with by the Board and the resulting punishment will be left up to the Board's discretion.

The only way a club can register more than 50 players in any age group is if they have more than 50 players wanting to re-register with the club from the previous year only. Any players who are not recognised as a registered player of the club in the previous year will be subject to the cap.

16. Niggling in Junior Football Matches (U/9 Reserves to U/13 Seniors)

For junior football in age groups from U/9 Reserves to U/13 Seniors, any player in the opinion of the Club Voluntary Umpire to be making unnecessary contact or "niggling" their opponent whilst the ball is not in the immediate area of play, shall be paid a free kick against them in the first instance.

If the behaviour continues throughout the course of the match, the Club Volunteer Umpire may use their discretion and issue the offending player a yellow card and send them from the ground.

17. More Than One Match Per Match Day

Clubs who have 44 or more registered and available players on any given match day in a specific age group shall only be allowed to play in one match that day. Clubs may only allow junior players to participate in senior and reserve games if clubs are short of numbers. Clubs who breach this By-Law risk losing premiership points and a fine.

To apply to Home & Away and Finals Matches. Finals Eligibility by-laws to be considered.



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BFNL FOOTBALL MATCH DAY POLICY

Please see below for match day policies for every junior grade of football in the Ballarat Football & Netball League:

1. U/9 Reserves & Seniors:

- a) The U/9 competition shall be a 15 player per side competition with as many players on the interchange as the club likes. Clubs must do everything in their power to ensure both sides have the same amount of players on the ground at the same time meaning clubs MUST lend the opposition players if they do not have enough to field a full side.
- b) Games will be played on Friday night with U/9 reserves to commence at 6:00pm and U/9 seniors to commence at 7.00pm
- c) Players must be Under 9 years of age at the 1st January 2024
- d) Clubs will compete in registered club colours, including shorts.
- e) A size 3 synthetic football (red or yellow) will be used for all U/9 matches
- f) Games will be played as 4 x 10 minute quarters with a 3 minute break at quarter, half and three quarter times.
- g) In line with AFL Victoria rules, females shall be allowed to compete in the U/9 Reserve competition
- h) 15 metre penalties only (not 50m) shall apply in all U/9 games
- i) The AWAY club will provide a club umpire to officiate the U/9 Reserve game
- j) The HOME club will provide a club umpire to officiate the U/9 Senior game
- k) Mentors are permitted in U/9 matches. Only 1 mentor is permitted on the ground at any time per club and be the team coach.
- l) Gloves are permitted in all BFNL junior competitions.
- m) Generally speaking, first year players and/or players who are slow to develop in this age group will be selected in the U/9 Reserve side.



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2. U/11 Reserves:

- a) The U/11 Reserve competition shall be a 18 player per side competition with as many players on the interchange as the club likes. Clubs must do everything in their power to ensure both sides have the same amount of players on the ground at the same time meaning clubs **MUST** lend the opposition players if they do not have enough to field a full side.
- b) Games will commence at 8:00am.
- c) Players must be Under 11 years of age at the 1st January 2024.
- d) Players must have turned 7 years of age prior to April 30th in the calendar year to register with a club.
- e) Clubs will compete in registered club colours.
- f) A size 3 synthetic football (red or yellow) will be used for all U/11 matches.
- g) In line with AFL Victoria rules, females shall be allowed to compete in the BFNL U/11 Reserve competition.
- h) 15 metre penalties only (not 50m) shall apply in all U/11 Reserve games.
- i) The AWAY club will provide a club umpire to officiate all U/11 Reserve games.
- j) Mentors are permitted in U/11 Reserve matches. Only 1 mentor is permitted on the ground at any time per club.
- k) All players competing in the U/11 Reserve competition may not change teams midway through a game and finish a match with the U/11 Senior side. Swapping of teams is not permitted.
- l) Gloves are permitted in all BFNL junior competitions.
- m) Generally speaking, first year players and/or players who are slow to develop in this age group will be selected in the U/11 Reserve side.



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3. U/11 Seniors:

- a) The U/11 Senior competition shall be a 18 player per side competition with as many players on the interchange as the club likes. Clubs must do everything in their power to ensure both sides have the same amount of players on the ground at the same time meaning clubs MUST lend the opposition players if they do not have enough to field a full side.
- b) Games will commence at 8:00am
- c) Games will be played of 4 x 10-minute quarters.
- d) Players must be Under 11 years of age at the 1st of January 2024. Therefore, they must have been born on or after the 1st of January 2013. Players must have turned 7 years of age prior to April 30th in the calendar year to register with a club.
- e) Clubs will compete in registered club colours.
- f) A size 3 synthetic football (red or yellow) will be used for all U/11 matches
- g) In line with AFL Victoria rules, females shall be allowed to compete in the BFNL U/11 Senior competition
- h) 15 metre penalties only (not 50m) shall apply in all U/11 Senior games
- i) The HOME club will provide a club umpire to officiate all U/11 Senior games
- j) Mentors are permitted in U/11 Senior matches. Only 1 mentor is permitted on the ground at any time per club.
- k) All players competing in the U/11 Senior competition may not change teams midway through a game and finish a match with the U/11 Reserve side. Swapping of teams is not permitted.
- l) Gloves are permitted in all BFNL junior competitions.
- m) Generally speaking, second year players and/or players who are faster to develop in this age group will be selected in the U/11 Senior side.

In addition to the above mentioned guidelines for U/9 and U/11 football, all U/9 and U/11 matches (seniors, reserves) will run under the following modified rules:



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Modified Rules for U/9 and U/11 Matches:

U/11 Reserve Matches: Club Volunteer Umpires:

- As there are no points or percentage at stake only one club umpire will be required for each of the U/11 Reserves games.
- Both clubs shall supply an umpire for U/11 Senior games

Team Numbers:

- Each team shall consist of the same number of players on the ground at all times. At no time should one side out-number the other. As per agreement, a minimum of 10 players per side can constitute a game and there has been no maximum placed on interchange numbers in U/9 and U/11 games as long as both sides have even numbers on the ground.

Team Members:

- Teams can be made up of both male and female players.

Resuming Play:

- To start play, at the beginning of a quarter or after a goal has been kicked, the Umpire shall choose two players of equal size to contest the centre bounce. Each side may have 4 players each, usually the on-ball players, to be inside the centre square (or within a 20m radius if no square is available) to contest for the football. If there are 15 players or less, only 3 players per side may compete for the ball at the start of each quarter or after a goal has been kicked.

Ball Ups:

- The ball must be hit out of the ruck and shall only be contested by the two nominated players. At no stage can a third player contest in the ruck and at no stage can the ball be taken out of the ruck and kicked or handballed.
- Around the Ground Ball Ups: Rules 2 and 4 apply to all field ball ups as well.

Out of Bounds:

- When the ball has been kicked out of bounds without being touched, a free kick shall be awarded to the nearest opponent. Where the ball has been touched and called by the umpire, play shall be restarted by a ball-up 10 metres in from the boundary line where the ball went out. Rules 2 and 3 shall now be applied.

Running & Bouncing with the Ball:

- A player is permitted only one bounce and then must dispose of the football by kicking or handballing to another player. If a player takes more than one bounce, a free kick shall be awarded to the nearest opponent. The player touching the ball on the ground constitutes as a bounce and the same rule shall apply.

Kicking Off the Ground:

- A player is not permitted to deliberately kick the ball off the ground. If a player is found to have deliberately kicked the ball off the ground, a free kick shall be awarded to the nearest opponent.



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Bumping and Tackling:

- Bumping is permitted only from the side, any front on bumps shall be penalised by awarding a free kick. Tackling is permitted, normal tackling rules apply here. Sling tackles are illegal, and the tackler shall be penalised with a free kick awarded to the player who was tackled.

Holding the Ball:

- A player must not attempt to barge past their opponent, they must try to evade them. Failure to do this shall result in a free kick being awarded to the nearest opponent.

Scoring:

- Normal scoring rules apply. No score will be kept by goal umpires.

Size of Ground:

- Clubs may choose to reduce the size of the ground for these two age groups using portable goal posts. Rules 2 to 4 apply for ball-ups.

Marking:

- A mark shall be paid when the ball is disposed of by foot. There is no restriction on distance travelled at this level.

Runners:

- Runners may be used at this level of football. Runners are to deliver a message to the player and leave the ground straight away. Runners are only permitted on the ground to talk to players who are not in the direct play. At no stage should a runner be anywhere near the ball. Runners are not allowed to carry a coaches board on the field whilst the match is being played.

Mentors:

- Club mentors can be the coach of the side. Mentors are not allowed to carry a coach's board on the field whilst the match is being played. Club mentors are only permitted on the ground to talk to players who are not in the direct play. At no stage should a mentor be anywhere near the ball. Mentors are to deliver their message to the player and return to the coach's box straight away. The difference between a runner and a mentor is that the mentor can deliver coaching advice whilst on the ground whereas a runner cannot. A runner is to deliver a message and leave the playing field immediately.

Mentors Inside the Forward 50m During a Kick-Out:

- As long as the mentor is nowhere near the play, mentors are allowed inside the forward 50m during a kick-out to provide coaching advice to the players. No free kick shall awarded for mentors who do not get out of the forward 50m.

Runners Inside the Forward 50m During a Kick-Out:

- Runners are not permitted inside the forward 50m arc when there is a kick out. A free kick may be awarded against a runner of either side if they are inside the forward 50m arc when the ball is being brought back into play from a kick out.



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Jumpers:

- Each team should be attired as per other sides who play within the club. Numbered jumpers should be worn and each player should be assigned their own number.

Interchange:

- Teams shall use the interchange bench as they see fit. There is no limit as how many kids can play in each team however there must only be 15 players on the ground per side at any one time and rule 2 must also apply.

Order-Off Rule:

- A Club Volunteer Umpire may order a player to leave the field for any of the below offences:
 - Fighting or unduly rough play
 - Persistent or deliberate breaking of the rules
 - Disputing the Umpire's decision
 - Objectionable language, remarks or behaviour
 - Swearing at or abusing another player or the Umpire

If a player has been ordered off the ground:

- They shall not return to the playing field for the rest of the match. The Umpire shall then choose whether or not they wish to take the issue further with their own club and punishment shall be handled internally. If the incident is deemed to have been serious enough, the Umpire may then refer the incident onto the League by filling out a report sheet and the League shall follow up accordingly.

15 Metre Penalty:

- There are no 50m penalties at this age level, the penalty shall be 15 metres. The Umpire shall award a 15m penalty as per normal rules.

Abuse from Official or Supporter:

- If it is obvious that the Umpire is being abused by a Team Official or Supporter, the Umpire should ask the offending person to control their actions as they are at a junior match. If the abuse continues, they can hold play up and ask the home and/or visiting side to remove the person in question. Play shall be suspended until such an issue has been resolved. The League must be informed if such an incident has occurred. Unfortunately, due to a tight schedule for the rest of the day, time cannot be made up.

Decisions Final:

- The Club Volunteer Umpire is in charge of the match and every decision made by that Umpire is considered final. Players and Officials must abide by the Umpire's decisions and at no stage shall they dispute any decision made. Any issues arising from the performance of a Club Volunteer Umpire should be referred to the league for further investigation.



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4. U/13 Reserves:

- a) The U/13 Reserve competition shall be a 18 player per side competition with as many players on the interchange as the club likes.

NOTE: BFNL interchange player policy (BFNL By-Law 119) must be followed

- b) Games will commence at 8:55am.
- c) Games will be played of 4 x 12-minute quarters.
- d) Players must be Under 13 years of age at the 1st January 2024. Therefore, they must have been born on or after the 1st of January 2011.
- e) Clubs will compete in registered club colours.
- f) A size 4 synthetic football (red or yellow) will be used for all U/13 matches.
- g) In line with AFL Victoria rules, female shall be allowed to compete in the BFNL U/13 Senior competition.
- h) 15 metre penalties only (not 50m) shall apply in all U/13 Reserve games.
- i) Each club will provide one club umpire each to officiate all U/13 Reserve games.
- j) Gloves are permitted in all BFNL junior competitions.
- k) Generally speaking, first year players and/or players who are slow to develop in this age group will be selected in the U/13 Reserve side.

5. U/13 Seniors:

- a) The U/13 Senior competition shall be a 18 player per side competition with up to six (6) players on the interchange.

NOTE: BFNL interchange player policy (BFNL By-Law 119) must be followed.

- b) Games will commence at 9:55am.
- c) Games will be played of 4 x 15 12-minute quarters.
- d) Players must be Under 13 years of age at the 1st January 2023. Therefore, they must have been born on or after the 1st of January 2011.
- e) Clubs will compete in registered club colours.
- f) A size 4 leather football (red or yellow) will be used for all U/13 senior matches.
- g) In line with AFL Victoria rules, female shall be allowed to compete in the BFNL U/13 Senior



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competition.

- h) 15 metre penalties only (not 50m) shall apply in all U/13 Senior games.
- i) Each club will provide one club umpire each to officiate all U/13 Senior games.
- j) Gloves are permitted in all BFNL junior competitions.
- k) Generally speaking, second year players and/or players who are faster to develop in this age group will be selected in the U/13 Senior side.

6. U/15 Reserves:

- a) The U/15 Reserve competition shall be a 18 player per side competition with as many players on the interchange as the club likes.

NOTE: BFNL interchange player policy (BFNL By-Law 119) must be followed.

- b) Games will commence at 11:00am.
- c) Games will be played of 4 x 15 minute quarters.
- d) Players must be Under 15 years of age on the 1st of January 2023. Therefore, they must have been born on or after the 1st of January 2009.
- e) Clubs will compete in registered club colours.
- f) A size 5 red leather football will be used for all U/15 matches.
- g) In line with AFL Victoria rules, female shall be allowed to compete in the BFNL U/15 Reserve competition.
- h) 15 metre penalties only (not 50m) shall apply in all U/15 Reserve games.
- i) If the BFUA do not appoint Umpires, each club will provide one club umpire each to officiate all U/15 Reserve games.
- j) Gloves are permitted in all BFNL junior competitions.
- k) Generally speaking, first year players and/or players who are slow to develop in this age group will be selected in the U/15 Reserve side.

7. U/15 Seniors:

- a) The U/15 Senior competition shall be a 18 player per side competition with up to six (6) players on the interchange.

NOTE: BFNL interchange player policy (BFNL By-Law 119) must be followed

- b) Games will commence at 12:15pm.



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- c) Games will be played of 4 x 15-minute quarters.
- d) Players must be Under 15 years of age at the 1st January 2023. Therefore, they must have been born on or after the 1st January 2009.
- e) Clubs will compete in registered club colours.
- f) A size 5 red leather football will be used for all U/15 matches.
- g) In line with AFL Victoria rules, female shall be allowed to compete in the BFNL U/15 Senior competition.
- h) 15 metre penalties only (not 50m) shall apply in all U/15 Senior games.
- i) Gloves are permitted in all BFNL junior competitions.
- j) Generally speaking, second year players and/or players who are faster to develop in this age group will be selected in the U/15 Senior side.

8. U/17 Reserves:

- a) The U/17 Reserve competition shall be a 16 player per side competition with as many players on the interchange as the club likes.

NOTE: BFNL interchange player policy (BFNL By-Law 119) must be followed.

- b) Games will commence at 1:35pm.
- c) Games will be played of 4 x 20-minute quarters.
- d) Players must be Under 17 years of age at the 1st of January 2023. Therefore, they must have been born on or after the 1st of January 2007.
- e) Clubs will compete in registered club colours.
- f) A full-size red leather football will be used for all U/17 matches.
- g) In line with AFL Victoria rules, female shall NOT be allowed to compete in the BFNL U/17 Reserve competition.
- h) 50 metre penalties shall apply in all U/17 Reserve games.
- i) If the BFUA do not appoint Umpires, each club will provide one club umpire each to officiate all U/17 Reserve games
- j) Gloves are permitted in all BFNL junior competitions.
- k) Generally speaking, first year players and/or players who are slow to develop in this age group will be selected in the U/17 Reserve side.



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9. U/17 Seniors:

a) The U/17 Senior competition shall be a 16 player per side competition with up to six (6) players on the interchange.

NOTE: BFNL interchange player policy (BFNL By-Law 119) must be followed.

b) Games will commence at 3:15pm.

c) Games will be played of 4 x 20-minute quarters.

d) Players must be Under 17 years of age at the 1st of January 2023. Therefore, they must have been born on or after the 1st of January 2007.

e) Clubs will compete in registered club colours.

f) A full-size red leather football will be used for all U/17 matches.

g) In line with AFL Victoria rules, female shall NOT be allowed to compete in the BFNL U/17 Senior competition.

h) 50 metre penalties shall apply in all U/17 Senior games.

i) If the BFUA do not appoint Umpires, each club will provide one club umpire each to officiate all U/17 Senior games.

j) Gloves are permitted in all BFNL junior competitions.

k) Generally speaking, second year players and/or players who are faster to develop in this age group will be selected in the U/17 Senior side.

10. U/19 Football:

a) The U/19 competition shall be strictly an 18 player per side competition with 4 players on the interchange bench.

b) Games will commence at 9:50am.

c) Games will be played of 4 x 22-minute quarters with no time on.

d) Players must be Under 19 years of age at the 1st of January 2023. Therefore, they must have been born on or after the 1st of January 2005.

e) Clubs will compete in registered club colours.

f) A full-size red leather football will be used for all U/19 matches.

g) In line with AFL Victoria rules, female shall NOT be allowed to compete in the BFNL U/19 competition.



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- h) 50 metre penalties shall apply in all U/19 games.
- i) If the BFUA do not appoint Umpires, each club will provide one club umpire each to officiate all U/19 games.
- j) Gloves are permitted in any BFNL Senior, Reserve and U/19 competition.

Under 19 Football - 23rd Player Development Policy

The Ballarat FNL will introduce a policy whereby clubs may use a 23rd player in the Under 19 competition to further promote and develop junior (Under 17) players.

- Each team is allowed to utilise one (1) player from their aligned junior club (Under 17 team) for each home and away game to play as a 23rd player in an Under 19 game. This policy will not apply through finals games.
- The 23rd player is to be selected from a senior clubs aligned junior club. In the instance of the Mt Clear JFNC, senior clubs may select an Under 17 player from this club by agreement of the Mt Clear JFNC
- Competing clubs may only play a 23rd player if this position is utilized by both clubs competing in a fixtured match.
- The 23rd player is not restricted by position or amount of game time.
- An individual player will be restricted to a maximum of three (3) games as the 23rd player in a given season.
- NAB League (or equivalent) listed players will not be eligible to play as the 23rd player.
- Once an Under 17 player makes his debut in the senior/reserve team at his club, he will no longer be eligible to be selected as a 23rd player.
- Players selected as the 23rd Player are to be noted on official team sheets for opposition clubs and umpires. They shall have "23P" recorded next to their name.
- Selected players shall not be eligible for league votes or awards in the U19 grade.

11. Reserve Football:

- a) The Reserve competition shall be strictly an 18 player per side competition with 4 players on the interchange bench.
- b) Games will commence at 12:00pm.
- c) Games will be played of 4 x 24-minute quarters with no time on.
- d) The Reserve competition is an open age competition and any male may compete provided all



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eligibility and registration criteria is fulfilled.

- e) Clubs will compete in registered club colours.
- f) A full-size red leather football will be used for all Reserve matches.
- g) In line with AFL Victoria rules, female shall NOT be allowed to compete in the BFNL Reserve competition.
- h) 50 metre penalties shall apply in all Reserve games.
- i) If the BFUA do not appoint Umpires, each club will provide one club umpire each to officiate all Reserve games.
- j) Gloves are permitted in any BFNL Senior, Reserve and U/19 competition.

12. Senior Football:

- a) The Senior competition shall be strictly an 18 player per side competition with 4 players on the interchange bench. Senior sides will be allowed to use four (4) interchange players for all matches.
- b) Games will commence at 2:15pm.
- c) Games will be played of 4 x 20-minute quarters PLUS time on.
- d) The Senior competition is an open age competition and any male may compete provided all eligibility and registration criteria is fulfilled.
- e) Clubs will compete in registered club colours.
- f) A full-size red leather football will be used for all Senior matches.
- g) In line with AFL Victoria rules, female shall NOT be allowed to compete in the BFNL Senior competition.
- h) 50 metre penalties shall apply in all Senior games.
- i) If the BFUA do not appoint Umpires, each club will provide one club umpire each to officiate all Senior games.
- j) Gloves are permitted in any BFNL Senior, Reserve and U/19 competition.