



Premier League Competition Manual

2026 VERSION 1 – TCNAI Competitions.

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to provide information regarding the Premier League Competition run for clubs and players associated with Townsville City Netball Association Incorporated (TCNAI).

TCNAI is an affiliated member with Netball Queensland. All TCNAI run competitions abide by the rules regulating the conduct of the game of netball, as determined by Netball Australia.

The Premier League competition is conducted as a separate competition to any Junior or Senior competitions that may be conducted by TCNAI. It is a peak competition platform modelled off the competition formats of higher representative competitions, such as Hart Premier Netball League.

2. Conduct of Games

The 'Official Rules of Netball' will apply to all games, unless otherwise stated in this document.

<https://netball.sport/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/World-Netball-Rules-Book-2024.pdf>

2.1 TCNAI responsibilities:

- TCNAI vests responsibility for the day-to-day operation and management of the competition to the TCNAI Competitions Officer.
- The official competition draw will be made available before the commencement of the competition.
- TCNAI will update the competition results and ladders after each round.
- TCNAI will manage the Bench officials and the Umpires for this competition.
- TCNAI will provide a Sports Trainer for Premier League, however their responsibilities will be restricted to assisting players injured during a game. All other sports training requirement, including strapping or the treatment of pre-existing injuries will be the responsibilities of clubs.

2.2 Club responsibilities:

- Clubs will complete all team details in Netball Connect by the due dates.
 - This includes:
 - Players
 - Coach - accreditation/qualification.
 - Assistant Coach (optional) - accreditation/qualification
 - Manager
- Clubs will ensure all members are registered and financial.
- Clubs will pay all registrations and fees by the due date/s.
- Clubs will submit the Team nomination by the due date.
- Clubs to submit Team uniform requirements to TCNAI. (This is done when applying for affiliation each year).
 - The uniform will clearly identify the Club and may be comprised of but not restricted to; skirt or shorts or leggings and shirt; OR bodysuit; OR full dress with briefs, shorts, or leggings.
 - Playing Attire will include briefs, socks, and sports shoes.
 - Components of uniform style and colour must be consistent. All items of clothing (tops, dresses, etc.) must be identical. Players found to be out of uniform (e.g., wearing a different dress, different colour bummers, etc.) will not be permitted to take to the court.
 - Clubs are to determine their own uniform policy and how it may differ for each Team.
 - Wearing of any jewellery is not permitted as per World Netball rule book.
 - An exception is made for a medical alarm bracelet or medical piercing.
 - They MUST be taped.
 - A medical certificate must accompany a medical piercing.
 - A copy of the medical certificate must be provided to the Competitions Officer before the player takes the court.
 - Where a club is aware of a delay in playing uniforms being available by the start of the season, that club is to give written notice to TCNAI prior to the first game and stipulate an approximate time when the club may be able to comply with the designated club uniform rules.

3. Fines and Penalties

ACTION	PENALTY
Player eligibility breaches	<p>a) If a breach is made by the winning team, a loss will be recorded against that team and the opposing team will be deemed the winner and receive three (3) competition points. No match score will be recorded for this game.</p> <p>b) If a breach is made by the losing team, points will be recorded as per standard competition rules and the final match score will be recorded.</p> <p>c) If the match is drawn, the offending team will be deemed to have lost the match and the opposing team will be awarded a win and receive three (3) competition points. No match score will be recorded for this game.</p> <p>d) Penalty: TCNAI may also at their discretion, impose an additional three (3) competition point deduction from the offending team.</p> <p>e) Matches that have been won / drawn by a team in breach of the rules will not be included in the Goal Percentage equation when determining final placings.</p>
Accumulative Loss of Points	A team loses three (3) points for each unregistered player/s in any given fixture.

Definition: *Breach (plural noun: breaches):* An act of breaking or failing to observe a law, agreement, or code of conduct.

The term, in this manual, refers to the act of breaking or failing to observe items within this competition manual.

3.1 Loss of points and appeals

- The Competitions Officer is to issue the breach notice (and penalty, if applicable) to the offending club within seven days of the breach occurring.
- Appeals are to be lodged with the Competitions Officer within seven (7) days of receiving the breach notice.
- Changes to the ladder (due to breaches) are to occur within seven (7) days of the outcome of any appeal; or if no appeal is received the ladder will be changed within two days of the expiry of the appeal period.
- Note: these timeframes may shorten if the breach/es occur within the last three qualifying rounds. This ensures that any required change/s to the ladder are finalised before finals.
- The Competitions Officer has delegated authority from TCNAI to decide the outcome of the appeal. Nonetheless, further, and final review may be considered and determined by resolution of the TCNAI Board upon written request from the appealing team.
- All appeal decisions are to be noted and ratified by the TCNAI Board at their next meeting.

4. Competition Structure

- Premier League is a separate competition.
- Each club is eligible to enter a team into Premier League.
- Clubs are to ensure their players are technically and physically prepared to play at this level, comply with the rules and take part safely and fairly.
- Games will not be played on any QLD public holidays or Townsville Show Day.
- Playing venue is the Townsville Stadium, where possible.

4.1 Season Dates for 2026:

Premier League Team/Club entry Due	27 th January 2026
Premier League Team List Due & Fees	6 th March 2026

Season Commences	16 th March 2026
No Fixture Dates	6 th April, 13 th April, 4 th May, 29 th June, 6 th July 2026
Final Round (18)	17 th August 2026
Semi Final	24 th August 2026
Preliminary Final	31 st August 2026
Grand Final	5 th September 2026

- Clubs are to nominate their team and pay the nomination fee by **27th January 2026**
- Team player list (minimum 10 players) to be added to Netball Connect by **6th March 2026**

4.2 Timing Rules

- The duration of the games is to run to the following times:
- 15-minute quarters
- With three-minute first and quarter breaks; and
- A five-minute half time break.

4.3 Injury Time Rules

- Injury/illness time is as per rule 3 of the Word Netball, Rules of Netball Book.

4.4 Rolling Subs

As per guidelines set out by Netball Queensland for use in Hart Premier League competition.

For centrally timed games, rolling substitutions will be used as per the guidelines to manage player rotations. Rolling subs can be used throughout the competition.

Rolling Substitutions

- The rolling substitution stands at the designated area. This is normally set up as a small box or line to the side of each team's bench, next to the score bench.
- Before leaving the designated area, the substitute tags (with hands) the player leaving the court.
- Only 1 rolling substitution per team can be made at a time.
- Play is not to be held up for rolling substitutions. If play is delayed, the player will be penalised under Rule 19.
- Players must observe the offside rules as they enter/leave the court, in the event a player goes offside:
Sanction: Free pass where the infringement occurred (offside area), unless this places the non-infringing team at a disadvantage when the sanction will be given where the ball was when play stopped, or advantage applied.
- Players must not interfere with the umpire's movement during the substitution. In the event a player interferes with an umpire, a free pass where ball was when play stopped will be awarded, unless this places the non-infringing team at a disadvantage.
- If a player leaves the court as a rolling substitution and there is no player at the designated area, the replacement player will be treated as a late player under the rules and can enter at a "break in play" (defined in rules) or at the umpire's discretion.

The use of the Rolling Substitution negates the need for the Tactical Substitution Rule and therefore should not be used. Clubs are responsible for providing two sets of bibs if they want to do Rolling Substitutions.

4.5 Competition Points

- 3 points for each win.
- 2 points for a draw.
- 1 point for a loss.
- 0 points for a forfeit.

4.6 Forfeits

- The club **MUST** advise the following people if they are forfeiting a game:

- the opposition team, the Competitions Officer, TCNAI Bench Supervisor, TCNAI Umpire Coordinator and TCNAI Information.
- All forfeits **must** be communicated by 2pm on the day of the game at the latest.
- A team that forfeits but does not communicate this prior to 2pm on the day of the game, in addition to the zero (0) points for forfeiting, will also be deducted three (3) points as a penalty for the lack of, or late communication.
- Show Cause - in the event of a team forfeiting two consecutive matches, they may have to show cause to the Competitions Officer why they should remain in the Competition.

Teams receiving a **forfeit win**:

- shall be awarded the three (3) points for the win.
- 20 goals towards the goal average total.

Teams receiving a **forfeit loss**:

- shall receive zero points.
- zero goals towards the goal average total.

4.7 Abandoned Games

If a team abandons a game due to an insufficient number of players or hadn't advised they're forfeiting:

Teams receiving an **abandoned win**:

- shall be awarded the three (3) points for the win.
- If the game is abandoned before half time, 20 goals towards the goal average total.
- If the game is abandoned after half time, the game score will stand.

Teams receiving an **abandoned loss**:

- shall receive one (1) point.
- If the game is abandoned before half time, zero goals awarded towards the goal average total.
- If the game is abandoned after half time, the game score will stand.

4.8 Game Day Roster

- As per the match day procedure that is released at the start of the season by the Premier League Supervisor.

4.9 Game Day Set Up

- Team benches will be placed at either end of the sideline nearest/next to the score bench.
- The first-mentioned team in the fixtures shall be seated to the right of the score bench, the second-mentioned team to the left of the score bench, when standing behind the score bench.
- Seating will be provided for up to (17) people. Please refer to the 'Team Benches' section of the Premier League Match Day Procedure document for further directives on how these 17 seats can be filled.
- All players and officials on the team bench must be dressed in the club uniform.
- Post-game, all team players and officials will vacate the team bench areas immediately, to allow the subsequent team to occupy the bench area.

Note: The bench area is to be left in a tidy and safe condition.

4.10 Electronic Clock

- As per the Netball Australia Bench Officials Manual.

5. Umpires

- Umpires shall be allocated in advance at the discretion of the TCNAI Premier League Umpire Supervisor. Umpires are expected to hold a minimum National B grade badge or be working towards that accreditation.
- It is the responsibility of the umpire to be aware of the rules and regulations of the competition.
- Umpires should arrive no later than 20 minutes prior to commencement of their rostered match and remain until completion of the last fixture round to which they have been rostered.

- Umpires are to meet in a designated area and warm up away from the courtside.
- Umpires bench - during a match, only umpires required for that match being played (2-umpires, 1-reserve umpire & Umpire Supervisor per match) are allowed in the umpires' bench area.
- Post-game, all umpires are to make themselves available to the teams at the completion of the games. Where possible, the match umpires and the Umpiring Supervisor for the fixture should be present.
- Umpires must wear clothing that is distinct from the teams' playing uniform and suitable sports footwear. Clothing should be predominately white, and the style must be approved by the Premier League Umpire Supervisor.

6. Bench Officials

- TCNAI will provide a Premier League Competitions supervisor, who will be authorised to supervise and control all bench officials and will coordinate with the Umpire Supervisor.
- TCNAI will provide Bench officials.
- Bench officials shall report to the Premier League Competitions supervisor on arrival at the venue.
- All scorers/timers should arrive no later than 15 minutes prior to commencement of matches.
- All scorer/timers should remain until completion of the last fixture round to which they have been rostered.

7. Manager Responsibilities

- Complete Team Sheets for the Bench BEFORE the game
- Complete Team Attendance and Player positions on the App
- Manage the rolling subs via the app
- Any Goal Shooter or Goal Attack changes must be given to the bench officials prior to changes taking place.
- Enter MVP's into Netball Connect and on voting slips as required.

8. Scorers and Timekeepers

- The scoring and timing will operate in accordance with the Netball Australia Bench Officials Manual.
- Scoresheets, substitution cards and team list for use during the competition will be supplied by TCNAI, if required.
- Live scoring via the Netball Connect App will be used.

9. Players and Composition of Teams

- A player must be a registered financial member of a TCNAI registered club to take the court in a sanctioned TCNAI fixture, this includes:
 - paid all relevant fees & registration owed to TCNAI in full, including representative payments and fines prior to taking to court, unless extension of payment plan agreed with TCNAI; and
 - been entered into a Team on Netball Connect.
- Teams can play up registered players from their clubs Senior or Junior teams to cover injury/illness/absence, as long as:
 - The player is registered and appears in Netball Connect in a Senior or Junior team from the same club.
 - The club informs the Competitions Officer by 2pm on game day that the player will be filling in for their club this week. Failure to advise the Competitions Officer by the cut off time, will result in the player not being allowed to take the court.
 - Players can play up a maximum of three (3) games during the regular season as a "fill in" player. After this, if clubs would like the player to take the court in subsequent games, they must become a fully registered member of the Premier League team to take the court.
- Any breach of the above regulations will result in the team being penalised as per section 3 - Fines and Penalties.

9.1 Premier League eligibility

- Players turning 15 or older are eligible to play in TCNAI Premier League competition.

9.2 Invitation Club

- An invitational club is a non-TCNAI full member.
- Prior to the start of each season, a non-member association (e.g., Burdekin or Charters Towers Netball Associations) or University Team may request to participate in the TCNAI Premier League.
- Renewal of participation is not guaranteed and must be re-applied for annually.
- Acceptance must be in writing through the Competitions Officer and approved by the TCNAI Board.

9.3 Players taking the court

The 'Official Rules of Netball' mandate a team must take the court with a minimum of five players.

This clause varies this rule.

- Teams must have five registered players from their registered team on the court to start the game; otherwise, the game is considered forfeited by the team who has breached this rule.

9.4 Injuries

All registered participants are covered for sports injury/personal accident through the Netball Australia National Insurance Program. For details on the Insurance Program, including what is covered and how to make a claim can be found at <https://www.howdengroup.com/au-en/netball-australia>

9.5 Restricted Players

TCNAI will seek to provide netball opportunities to all players regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

10. Finals

10.1 Composition

- Regardless of the number of teams in Premier League, the top four teams shall compete in the Final Series at the conclusion of the qualifying rounds.
- Teams shall be placed in order of merit based on number of points scored in the qualifying rounds.
 - In the event of teams tying on points at the end of the qualifying rounds, the respective placing shall be determined by ranking the teams according to the goal percentages achieved by each team during all the qualifying rounds.
 - When goal percentages are used for determining placings of teams under the above clauses, these shall be calculated in accordance with the following formula:
 - 'Goals For' divided by 'Goals Against', multiplied by 100, divided by number of games played.
 - If after ranking teams according to goal percentages to two decimal points, teams remain tied, the results of the matches between the two teams concerned during the qualifying rounds will decide the winner.
 - If the two teams drew their matches or won one match each, or if more than two teams have the same number of points and percentage at the end of the qualifying rounds, then goal difference will be applied (i.e., the difference between goals for and goals against).
 - In the event of a further tie, the team scoring the most goals during the qualifying rounds will be declared the winner.
- At the conclusion of the qualifying rounds, finals shall be played as follows:
 - **Semi Final** - the top four teams on for/against points shall play off as follows:
 - Game A - No. 1 team vs No. 2 team.
 - Game B - No. 3 team vs No. 4 team.
 - **Preliminary Final** (Game C) - The loser of game A plays the winner of game B.
 - **Grand Final** - the winner of game C plays the winner of game A; and
 - A drawn game – As per World Netball, Rules of Netball
- If scores are tied at full-time during grand finals, extra time will be played to determine a winner. The

length of each half is specified below.

- The following will apply as per the World Netball, Rules of Netball:
- There is an interval of four minutes at the end of full-time.
- Extra time consists of two halves of equal length, not exceeding seven minutes each, with a half-time interval of one minute. Teams change ends at half-time.

Interval	1 st Half	Half-time	2 nd half
4 Minutes	5 minutes	1 minute	5 minutes

- The first centre pass in each half is taken by the team entitled to the next centre pass.
- In the event of a tie remaining at the end of extra time, a visual signal is placed at the official bench to indicate that play will continue until one team leads by two goals.

10.2 Eligibility for Finals

For a player to be eligible to take part in the final series in the Premier League competition, players must:

- Be a current financial member of TCNAI and is not carrying debt with TCNAI.
- Be fully registered to the Premier League competition.
- Taken the court in a minimum of three (3) regular season games for Premier League.

10.3 Awards and Recognition

The following awards for Premier League are:

AWARD	CRITERIA
Premier League Division MVP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MVP is the most valuable player to a team. • In each match in the qualifying rounds of the Premier League division, coaches shall register votes on a 3-2-1 basis for the player in the opposing team. • The player with most point wins. • Voting slips shall be distributed by the Bench Supervisor during all qualifying rounds.
Premier League Players' Player	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Players' Player is the most popular, respected, enthusiastic or worthy player during the whole Premier League division season. • All players shall register (1) vote once, on a 3-2-1 basis for players in any team competing in the Premier League division (except for players competing in the players own team). This vote will only be sent to players who have met the minimum number of games required to qualify for the finals. • The player with most point wins. • To be conducted by SurveyMonkey or similar.
Team of The Year "All Stars"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most valuable player of each playing position during the whole Premier League division season makes up the team of the year. • Premier League division coaches will nominate a team of seven (7) using the 3-2-1 process for each position GS to GK. A list of players will be sent to coaches based on the position they play most frequently. • The player with most points for each position, wins. • To be conducted by SurveyMonkey or similar.
Most Valuable Player in The Grand Final	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable personnel, as authorised by TCNAI on the day, shall register votes on a 3-2-1 basis to select the Most Valuable Player in the grand final match. • The player with most point wins.

Premier League Division Grand Final – Umpires Medallion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award to all selected Premier League Division Grand Final Umpires (including Reserve) – to acknowledge and recognise the work, preparation, and commitment of the umpires to achieve selection for this match.
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11. Complaints

Townsville City Netball Association Incorporated (TCNAI) is committed to effective, efficient, and timely resolution of complaints and management of incidents that occur within our organisation, refer to or reflect on our Association.

Whilst we aim to proactively manage situations to prevent escalation, all complaints will be treated as legitimate and addressed in an appropriate manner in accordance with the TCNAI Incident and Complaint Management Policy, and without influence or prejudice.

Within the TCNAI Incident and Complaint Management Policy there is a Complaint Flowchart.

- This Complaint Flowchart details the formal complains process and should be distributed throughout each club/team and followed by each club/team.

Should the matter require escalated inquiry or investigation, an email detailing incident or complaint needs to be lodged with the TCNAI Operations Manager.

12. Child Safeguarding

Townsville City Netball Association Incorporated (TCNAI) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for all Children and Young People participating in netball.

TCNAI has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse, neglect. Grooming, exploitation, harassment, discrimination, or harm. This applies to all activities conducted under the authority of TCNAI, whether on-court, off-court, during travel, at events, online, or in any other context connected to the Association.

Child safety and wellbeing are fundamental to TCNAI's culture, governance, and operations. Safeguarding responsibilities are shared by all Board members, employees, volunteers, contractors, coaches, officials, parents, and any other persons engaged in TCNAI activities.

- Please refer to the TCNAI Child Safeguarding and Working with Children Policy for further information and clarification.

13. Code of conduct

Members and all people involved in any way with TCNAI will:

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of others—treat others as you would like to be treated yourself.
- Be ethical, considerate, fair, courteous, and honest in all dealings with other people and organisations.
- Be professional in and accept responsibility for your actions.
- Be aware of and always follow—TCNAI & Netball Queensland's standards, rules, policies and procedures and promote those standards, rules, policies and procedures to others.
- Operate within the rules and spirit of the sport, including the state and national guidelines that govern the sport of Netball.
- Understand the possible consequences of breaching the codes and/or this policy.
- Report any breaches of the codes or this policy to the appropriate PPA.
- Refrain from any form of abuse, harassment, discrimination, and victimisation towards others.
- Raise concerns regarding decisions of PPA through the appropriate channels and in a timely manner.
- Provide a safe environment for the conduct of activities in accordance with any relevant TCNAI and/or NQ/NA policy.
- Show concern, empathy and caution towards others that may be sick or injured.
- Be a positive role model to all.
- Respect and protect confidential information obtained through TCNAI & NQ activities; whether individuals and/or organisational information.

- Maintain the required standard of accreditation and/or licensing of professional competencies, as applicable to the role(s).
- Ensure that any physical contact with others is appropriate to the situation and necessary for the person's skill development.
- Refrain from intimate relations with persons over whom you have a position of authority.
- Agree to abide by the codes.
- Maintain a duty of care towards others.
- Be impartial and accept the responsibility for all actions taken.

Person in Position of Authority (PPA):

PPA include everyone who holds a position of authority in TCNAI/NQ/NA, whether paid or unpaid, and includes, but is not limited to, all NQ/NA Entity Individual Members. For the avoidance of doubt, PPA also includes Child or Young Person (CYP) who may hold a position of authority in TCNAI/NQ/NA over other CYP.

NA: Netball Australia

NQ: Netball Queensland

TCNAI: Townsville City Netball Association INC