



Juniors Competition Manual

2026 VERSION 1– TCNAI Competitions.

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to provide information regarding the Junior 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. There are a few exceptions to this, and they are noted where relevant.

This Junior competition is conducted separately from other competitions conducted by TCNAI.

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 Officers.
- The official competition draw will be made available before the commencement of the competition.
- Competitions will, whenever possible, not be scheduled on Public Holidays or during school holidays.
- TCNAI will update the competition results and ladders after each round.
- TCNAI will provide a Physiotherapist or Sports Trainer for Juniors, however, their responsibilities will be restricted to assisting players injured during a game. All other sports training requirements, including strapping or the treatment of pre-existing injuries, will be the responsibility of clubs.

2.2 Club responsibilities:

- Clubs will complete all team details in Netball Connect by the due date/s.
 - This includes:
 - Players
 - Coaches – accreditation/qualification
 - Manager
 - Scorers
- Clubs will ensure all members are registered and financial.
- Clubs will pay all required fees/payments, affiliation, and team fees by the due date/s.
- Clubs are to submit team uniform requirements to TCNAI. (This is done when applying for club affiliation each year).

2.3 Uniform

The purpose of the playing uniform is to clearly identify the Club and Team, while enabling participants to compete safely, comfortably, and in a manner that respects individual needs.

- Playing uniforms may include, but are not limited to:
 - Skirts, shorts or leggings with a shirt.
 - Bodysuit.
 - Full dress worn with briefs, shorts or leggings. The uniform will 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 footwear/Sports shoes.
- Uniform must be consistent in club integrity, colour palette, design elements and logos.
 - Core uniform components (e.g. Dress or top) must be identical in appearance
 - Approved variations must not alter the overall visual consistency of the team. Components of uniform style and colour to be consistent. All items of clothing (tops, dresses, etc.) are to be identical.
- Clubs are responsible for adopting an Inclusive Uniform Policy that allows reasonable variations to the standard uniform to accommodate.

- Religious or cultural requirements.
- Gender diversity or expression
- Body diversity
- Medical, disability or personal comfort considerations.
- Approved uniform variations may include adjustments to length, coverage, fit or layering, provided that:
 - Club colours and identifying features remain clearly visible.
 - The variation does not provide a competitive advantage.
 - The attire remains safe and suitable for playing.

2.4 Jewellery

- Wearing any jewelry is not permitted as per the [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 (which includes grading games), that club is to give written notice to TCNAI prior to the first grading game and stipulate an approximate time when the club may be able to comply with the designated club uniform rules.
- The Association reserves the right to request clarification or documentation where uniform variations impact officiating, player safety or competition integrity.
- Mixed teams are expected to wear the same-coloured shirts for 2026 (club shirts/singlets are preferred) should a competition be available.

3. Fines and Penalties

ACTION	PENALTY
Player eligibility breaches	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. 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. 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. d) <i>Penalty:</i> TCNAI may also, at their discretion, impose an additional three (3) competition point deduction from the offending team. 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.
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 (7) days of being informed of the breach.
- 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 any appeal; or if no appeal is received the ladder will be updated within two (2) days of the expiry of the appeal period.
- Note: these timeframes may shorten if the breach/s 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 maybe 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

- This competition has three Tiers / Age groupings as set by the players age as of 31 December of the current year.
 - 18 & Under
 - 18 League (club nominated team)
 - Divisions (teams are graded)
 - 16 / 17 / 18 years
 - Any players turning 13, 14 or 15 in the current year are permitted to play in the U18 tier if they are deemed suitable.
 - It is the club's responsibility to ensure that any underage players (13, 14 or 15 years) have the capability (socially, physically, skill set) to play in the U18 age group.
 - Games are played Wednesday nights.
 - 15 & Under
 - 15 League (club nominated team)
 - Divisions (teams are graded)
 - 13 / 14 / 15 years
 - Any players turning 12 in the current year are permitted to play in the U15 tier if they are deemed suitable.
 - It is the club's responsibility to ensure that any underage players (12 Years) have the capability (socially, physically, skill set) to play in the U15 age group.
 - Games are played Wednesday nights.
 - 12 & Under
 - 12 League (club nominated team)
 - Divisions (teams are graded)
 - Boys are permitted to play in the 12 & Under competition
 - Teams are permitted to have a maximum of 4 boys on the court at one time – 1 per goal third (GA/GS, GD/GK) and 2 per centre third (WA/C/WD)
 - 11 / 12 years
 - Any players turning 10 in the current year are permitted to play in the U12 tier if they are deemed suitable.
 - It is the club's responsibility to ensure that any underage players (10 Years) have the capability (socially, physically, skill set) to play in the U12 age group.
 - Games are played on Wednesday nights.

4.1 Season Dates for 2026:

Sign On	Wednesday 28 th January 2026
Team Names & Division Nominations Due	Friday 27 th February 2026
Player Names Added to Teams in Netball Connect	Friday 6 th March 2026
Grading Rounds	18 th and 25 th March, 1 st April 2026

Season Commences	22 nd April 2026
Holiday Break	1 st and 8 th July 2026
Final Round (14)	12 th August 2026
Semi Final	19 th August 2026
Preliminary Final	26 th August 2026
Grand Final	29 th August 2026

4.2 Grading

- Clubs will nominate their teams in Netball Connect.
 - Clubs will also nominate the divisions they believe their teams should be graded into.
- Team nominations MUST be completed and RECEIVED before teams will be placed in the draw.
- Teams must have a minimum of eight (8) players. Closing date for this is 6th March 2026.
- Grading will be held over three weeks in Term 1, 2026.
- Teams will play 3 normal length games over the 3 weeks of grading.
- Players MUST play in the team they are registered to on Netball Connect.
- Players CANNOT fill in for another team during grading.
- Clubs will be responsible for supplying an umpire for grading.
- TCNAI will take sole responsibility for grading teams in 2026.
 - Clubs will be advised and receive a copy of each grade's composition.
 - Club's will have the opportunity to provide feedback on or lodge a dispute regarding the grading results in writing, within a specified timeframe of seven (7) days.
 - Feedback will be reviewed by TCNAI, and the final grading decisions will be made at the discretion of TCNAI.
- All grading games will be conducted via Netball Connect. The draw will be available to all clubs at the beginning of each grading week.
- Once the grading is complete, no changes will be made to divisions throughout the season.
- In the event that 2 or more of the grading weeks are *washed out* or cancelled for other reasons, a contingency plan has been developed by TCNAI and will be executed.
 - A *Grading Game* will replace the scheduled Round 1 of the season.

4.3 Timing Rules

- The duration of the games is modified to run to the following times.
 - 10-minute quarters.
 - with two-minute first and third quarter breaks; and
 - a three-minute half time break.

4.3.1 Injury Time Rules

The following injury protocols are followed:

- No additional time is played when an injury, illness or blood occurs.

4.4 Scoring

- All matches will be Live Scored.
- One (1) scorer must be supplied by each team for each match.
- The two (2) scorers are responsible for recording the score and marking off the players who take to court. Scorers MUST sit together.
- Scoring is to be done as per the Live Scoring Policy on TCNAI's website – https://65b22c18-a614-4031-b9e8-77ac143ad466.filesusr.com/ugd/90ed4a_64617109caa544e3aa4604b5b99d12ee.pdf
- If this is not followed, teams will be unable to dispute the score.

4.5 Rolling Substitutions

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 substitutions will be used in all divisions.

Rolling Substitutions

- a) 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.
- b) Before leaving the designated area, the substitute tags (with hands) the player leaving the court.
- c) Only 1 rolling substitution per team can be made at a time.
- d) Play is not to be held up for rolling substitutions. If play is delayed, the player will be penalised under Rule 19.
- e) 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.
- f) 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.
- g) 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).

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.

4.6 Competition Points

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

4.7 Fixture Cancellation/ rescheduled games/wash-out round

- In accordance with any TCNAI's wet weather and heat stress policies, in the case of cancellations, the Competitions Officer will contact the Club contacts and post the cancellation on social media and Netball Connect by 3pm on the day of the game.
- Fixtures will be played in wet weather if the courts are deemed safe for play, however if lightning is present, matches will cease immediately and be cancelled if necessary.
- Rescheduled games will be played on the fixture's potential catch up round, if required.
- A *wash-out round* is an incomplete round; no competition points will be awarded to any team. Games will not be rescheduled.
 - If any rounds are washed out after the potential catch up date, then they will not be rescheduled.

4.8 Forfeits

- The club **must** advise the TCNAI Competitions Officer by email or phone if they are forfeiting a game:
 - The TCNAI Competitions Officer will then notify the opposition team/club contact and the TCNAI Umpire Coordinator.
 - The TCNAI Competitions Officer will then update the Netball Connect System to reflect the forfeit.
- All forfeits must be communicated by 2pm on the day of the game at the latest.
- Teams that forfeit without notifying TCNAI by 2 p.m. on the day of the game will receive a penalty of three (3) points in addition to the zero (0) points for the forfeit, due to the lack of timely communication.
- Show Cause - in the event of a team forfeiting two consecutive matches, they may have to show cause to the Competitions Officer for such forfeiture.

- Umpiring duties – Both Clubs are required to fulfil their umpiring duties.

Teams receiving a *forfeit win*:

- shall be awarded three (3) points for the win.
- 20 goals towards the goal average total (20 for and 0 against)

Teams receiving a *forfeit loss*:

- shall receive zero points.
- zero goals towards the goal average total (0 for and 20 against)

Teams/clubs that forfeit will also lose points when determining the Club of the Year.

4.9 Abandoned Games

If a team abandons a game due to insufficient number of players or hasn'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.

5. Umpires

- Each club must provide an umpire for a duty for every team they have competing in the Junior competition.
- Umpire allocations will be set by TCNAI.
- *Club Umpiring Coordinator (CUC)*
 - Each Club must nominate the name and contact details of a person(s) responsible for organising the fulfilling of the CUC duties.
 - The CUC must provide the names of umpires who will be undertaking the club's umpiring duties.
- Umpires must wear clothing that is distinct from the teams' playing uniform and suitable sports footwear. This will generally involve a white shirt.

5.1 Umpire Vests

- Those wearing a pink/orange vest are a Umpire Coach.
- Those wearing a yellow vest are umpires working towards their umpiring competency.

6. Players

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.
- Any breach of the above regulations will result in the team being penalised as per section 3 – Fines and Penalties

6.1 Playing Tiers

- A player cannot play in a lower division than the one in which they were originally registered for.
- For clubs with more than one team in the same division:
 - Players cannot interchange between the two teams or play for one of the teams and then play for the other.

- Players are to play in their registered tiers/age grouping / team unless they are playing up.

6.2 Playing Up/Borrowing of Players

- A player may play in a team/s other than the team in which that player is registered (the second team/s) providing all the following criteria are met:
 - (a) the second (2nd) team/s is in the same Club as the team in which the player is registered.
 - (b) the second (2nd) team/s is in a higher grade of the same age division or an older age division than the team in which the player is registered.
 - (c) the second (2nd) team/s is not in the same division (for clubs with more than one team in the same division, players cannot interchange between the two teams or play for one of the teams and then play for the other).
 - (d) a player can be borrowed by more than one team throughout the regular season if the above criteria are met, but if the player is to be borrowed for the same team for the fourth (4th) time, they must be registered to that team before taking the court.
 - (e) if the player filling in is registered in a Junior League or Division 1 team, they can only fill in for a Senior Division 1 or Division 2 team.
- When filling in for another team, players must sign in at the Competitions desk PRIOR to taking the court. If a fill in player takes the court without signing in, and the Competitions Officer confirms their participation in the game, the team will be in breach and will receive zero (0) competition points from the fixture. If this was to occur in a final, the game would be automatically awarded to the opposing team.
 - The Team Manager should add player into Netball Connect as a borrowed player.
- Any breach of the above regulations will result in a team being penalised (please see fines and penalties).

6.3 New Player

- A new player entering the Junior competition, after grading, can in good faith be placed in the team deemed most appropriate by their club, except for those players covered by Section 6.4.
- A new player is still required to meet the player eligibility requirements to play finals. (Refer to section 7.2).

6.4 Premier League, equivalent or higher competition Players

- There is no maximum number of Premier League Players allowed in a Junior team, however, all Premier League, equivalent or higher competition players, are expected to be placed in a League team.
- Requests for Premier League or North Queensland United players to be placed in teams outside of League (or the club's highest team) need to be made in writing via email to the Competition Officer for approval.
- There will be no restrictions on players competing in the Hart Premier Netball League Ruby North 2026. Clubs must place players in teams they believe they are qualified to play in, based on their abilities and in good faith.

6.5 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.

6.6 Restricted Players

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

6.7 Exemptions

- If Clubs and families feel that there is a need for a player to play in a lower classification / age grouping, they can apply to the TCNAI Competitions Officer for an exemption.
- Exemptions will only be considered for the following:

- Social, developmental disability, and/or intellectual disability.
- Players wishing to participate in a higher grade/division than their age group will not require an exemption. It is the responsibility of the club to facilitate this decision.

6.8 Senior/ Premier League Competition Eligibility

- Only players turning 15 or older are eligible to play in both the TCNAI Premier League competition and the Senior competition.

6.9 Injuries

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

7. Finals

7.1 Finals Structure

- Regardless of the number of teams in a division, the final series will be structured in accordance with this provision.
- 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 the 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 – See 7.1.2
 - Grand finals are the only final games that may be individually timed in all competitions.

7.1.2 Game tied at full time (Grand Final)

- In the event that scores are tied at full-time, extra time will be played to determine a winner. The length of each half will also be specified.
- The following will apply:
 - 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.

7.2 Eligible Players for Final

- Players need to have played a minimum of three (3) games in a team to qualify for that team in finals.
- Players can only play for one (1) team that they qualify for each final's week.
- Be currently a financial member of TCNAI and is not carrying debt with TCNAI.
- Be registered in the Junior Competition on Netball Connect.

7.3 Notification of Eligible Players

- The Competitions Officer will advise Clubs of all eligible players for each team of that club:
 - Within 48 hours after final round game.

7.4 Grand Final

- TCNAI will host a grand final day for Juniors and Seniors on Saturday 29th August 2026.

8. Awards and Recognition

- There will be a Most Valued Player (MVP) award given for each division within the Junior Competition, at the end of the season.
 - One player from each team is to be chosen as the MVP, by the opposing team/officials, after each game.
 - MVPs are not chosen during finals games.
 - Teams that do not select an MVP of the opposing team each week will not have their MVP recipient for the game receive their points.

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

10. 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.

11. 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 and accept responsibility for your actions.
- Be aware of and always follow —TCNAI & Netball Queensland’ 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 a 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