

## 2023 Competition Rules – Batch 1 of 2

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Board notes the contents of this briefing note and endorses the 2023 Competition Rules for distribution, subject to approval and endorsement by the Game Development Committee (GDC).

### **ISSUE**

- Football West has reviewed its competition rules for the 2023 season.
- It is proposed that the rules are accepted for the 2023 season for the following:
  - [Annexure 1 - State League Men](#)
  - [Annexure 7 - Night Series Rules](#)
  - [Community Competition Rules](#)
  - [Disciplinary & Grievance Regulations](#)
  - [Match Scheduling Policy](#)
  - [NPLWA Competition Rules](#)

### **BACKGROUND**

- Football West's Competition Rules are reviewed at the conclusion of each season.
- Input has been sought externally from Standing Committees, Zone Representatives and from the public.
- Input has been obtained internally from those staff members operationally involved in running competitions.
- After consideration and input from management and the working group, the rules underwent external legal and have since been finalised for distribution.
- Given the time constraints, the rules have been sent to the GDC simultaneous to seeking approval by the Board.
- The Competition Rules must be approved by the Board prior to release each season.
- We request that the Board endorses Batch 1 of the 2023 Competition Rules, so they are ready for distribution, subject to endorsement by the GDC.

### **CURRENT SITUATION**

For reference, the draft working versions of the rules are linked below, with changes proposed clearly marked up.

- Draft - [Annexure 1 - State League Men](#)
- Draft - [Annexure 7 - Night Series Rules](#)
- Draft - [Community Competition Rules](#)
- Draft - [Disciplinary & Grievance Regulations](#)
- Draft - [Match Scheduling Policy](#)
- Draft - [NPLWA Competition Rules](#)



The major changes to the rules put forward for endorsement are outlined below, with reference to the relevant Article.

## Annexure 1 – State League Men

- Alongside automatic promotion for the team finishing in first place. Teams that finish 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> will go into a Play-Off with the 11<sup>th</sup> placed NPL team. Rules also clarify Play-Off conditions and account for ineligible teams. [A3 – A6]
  - The Play-Offs will replace the State League Top Four Cup
  - Play-Offs increase the challenge and therefore competition for NPL and allow mobility and movement within State League and NPL
  - Play-off system will keep all league games relevant towards the end of the season.
  - The Play-Off will encourage more clubs to apply for NPL Club Licensing and meet the Criteria.
- Promotion Eligibility Criteria will be replaced by FA Club Licensing System [Referred to in A3]
  - Providing State league clubs with this option helps them prepare for the requirements needed to obtain an NPL License.
  - Enables more clubs to get a head start on meeting higher competition standards.
  - Club Licensing cycle will take place by August for the following year, allowing Football West to ensure clubs eligibility prior to any Finals and Play-Offs.
- All Professionally contracted players are to be placed onto the First Team Roster [A3 and A4]
  - This ensures all clubs are compliant to professional contract rules and regulations and allows Football West to keep track of all professional players in WA.
- First Team Roster increased to a maximum of 25 players.
  - To accommodate for the rule above, that requires clubs to place all their First Team players on rosters.
- Maximum Gate Admission Fees have increased from \$5 (State League 2) and \$6 (State League 1) to \$10. [A18]
  - Gate Admission increase has not been considered for numerous years; the increase brings parity to the NPL gate fees.
- State Football Centre Admission [A18, P6]

## Annexure 7 – Night Series

- Introduced clarification of D&G Regulation and Suspension rules [A6, P4 and P5]
  - Night Series suspension rules can be difficult for clubs to understand and interpret, therefore it has been included in this annexure and amended for clarity.
- Women's League Night Series (Women's League Division 1 and below) [Part 5]
  - Alongside an NPLWA-W Night Series, will be a Women's League Night Series to accommodate for the demand of a night series.
- NPLWA-M, NPLWA-W and State League Players must be registered [A6 P1]
  - By Night Series, clubs will need to hand in their PPS and rosters.
  - This will aid in keeping track of our players.
  - This will allow use of the competition management system rather than manual team sheets.



## Community Competition Rules

- Clarification of rules on prohibited sponsorship categories for club apparel to include betting companies. [A9, 5d]
- Separated rules that pertain to Football West appointed Match Officials and Non-Football West appointed Match Officials. [A6]
  - For greater clarity on the rights and responsibilities of both parties.
- Included Three Strike Policy. [A6 P12-17]
- Introduced Article with the subject of Ground Marshals and clause which leaves a decision of whether to proceed with the match to the Match Official. [A7]
  - This article is reflected in all the individual annexures, however, was not in the community competition rules therefore has been added for greater emphasis.

## Disciplinary and Grievance Regulations

- Definitions – Changes to the following definitions: Australia Cup, Competition Management System.
- Article 5 (added paragraph 4) – Allow Football West to request raw video footage of an incident when conducting an investigation.
- Article 7 (paragraph 19) - A complete rewrite of the Match Review Panel. The terms of the 2022 D&Gs did not align with the National Regulations.
- Article 11 (added paragraph 4) – Three Strike Policy which is supplemented with Article 3.
- Article 17 – Relates to the changes in the Tribunal process which will move process to an online request form where clubs will have to acknowledge the fine print and pay the tribunal fee when they submit the request. The same changes have been made to Article 19 (General Purpose Tribunal) & Article 21 (Appeal Tribunal) all of which moved online.
- Article 24 – Relates to the changes of certain suspensions as follows:
  - Night Series matches no longer count towards the service of suspensions issued in the preceding Regular season.
  - Added the following to mitigate bad apples bending the rules to play in night series matches:
    - A Club Associate who is currently serving a Suspension for a Serious Offence (as defined in Article 3) or an Offence against a Match Official is not permitted to participate in the Night Series.
  - Changes to the service of suspensions imposed for a time period (I.e., 6 months) to align with the National Disciplinary Regulations
- Schedule 1 - Table of Offences
  - Removed offence, (23b) Recklessly makes contact with a match official.
  - The remaining offences; (23), "Makes uninvited contact with a match official", and (25), "Assaults a match official", cover all forms of contact (minor to serious) that would realistically be made with a match official during a game.
  - Legal definition of assault to the table of offences so Clubs and Players are under no illusions what the elements of the offence are.
- Table of Offences
  - Clarified which offences will trigger consideration under the Three Strike Policy (offences 19 – 25 and 28a, 28b)



- Schedule 2 - Prescribed Forms – Have hyperlinked the public facing forms for convenience.
- Schedule 3 - Three Strike Policy – A new addition to further explain the Three Strike Policy.

### **Match Scheduling Policy**

- Junior Matches must commence before midday and Senior matches must commence after midday, unless with the approval of FW or the opposition (guiding principle) [A7,7.1 and 7.2][A6,A6.1]
  - Recommendation from Junior Standing Committee
  - Avoids conflict with clubs whose seniors' players are parents or coaches of junior teams.
- NPLWA-W U21s matches must be within 4 hours of the First Team if played on the same day.
  - Recommendation from the Women's Standing Committee
  - This is to help support those spectators and parents who also play and is intended as a guiding principle.
- State League clubs can request a fixture change 6 weeks prior to a scheduled match without requiring consent of the opposition.
  - Recommendation from the State League Standing Committee
  - Previously the only opportunity was on release of the fixtures.

### **NPL Competition Rules**

- Promotion and Relegation (Men and Women) as mentioned in the State League rules [A22, A23, A41, A42]
- Professional Player Rules as mentioned in State League rules, however with roster size remaining 23 players max, as per PPS. [A24 and A39]
- Player movement rules reflect Women's League rules [A58]