

SOUTHERN INLAND RUGBY UNION

Junior Competition Rules – 2024



Table of Contents

1. Preamble	3
2. Health and Safety	3
3. Smart Rugby Accreditation	4
4. Overview of the Southern Inland Junior Rugby Union Rules	4
5. Entries for Competition	4
6. Entering the Competition and Draw	5
7. Eligibility of Players	5
8. Administration of Games	5
Grounds	5
Rugby Xplorer Registration	5
Team Sheets	6
Match Times and Length of Matches Played	6
Competition Points	6
Match Results	7
Deferment of Matches	7
Protests and Appeals of Match Results	7
Mercy Law	8
Judiciary, Citing's and Misconduct Reports	8
Dispensations	8
Code of Conduct and Expectation of Behavior Guidelines	9
Serious Injury Protocol and Reporting	9
Concussion	9
Rugby Australia Insurance Claims	10
9. Laws of the Game	11
U7s to U12s Pathway Laws	11
U13s to U19s Pathway laws	11

Tri Tag Rugby Laws	11
Misconduct, Suspended or Unregistered Players	11
Team Playing Numbers	11
<i>10. Gala Days – What is Required</i>	12
Referees	12
Ground Marshall Roles and Responsibilities	12
Gala Day Requirements	13
<i>11. Finals Series</i>	13
Eligibility of Players	13
Running Desk	14
Duration of Finals Matches	14
Finals Placing	14
Finals Format	15
<i>12. Appendices</i>	17

1. Preamble

The Southern Inland Rugby Union (SIRU) Zone is governed by a Board of Directors who are responsible for the overall management of the competition, the Southern Inland Rugby Union Constitution and SIRU Competitions Rules, the Laws of the Game, and Rugby Australia Policies. SIRU is an incorporated association and operates and manages Rugby Union within the Southern Inland area in accordance with the objects outlined in the Constitution. SIRU is referred to as the Zone. SIRU works in conjunction with ACT & SNSW Rugby Union to promote and foster junior rugby in the Zone.

The structure, format and commencement and completion dates of the Junior Competition shall be determined by the SIRU Board in consultation with the Junior Council.

The aim of the Southern Inland Junior Rugby Union Competition is to ensure all participants focus on the enjoyment of the game for Junior Participants. As such, the elements of fair play, sportsmanship, enjoyment, and the spirit of the game are the key focus for all players, coaches, officials, managers, administrators, and parents.

This Junior Competition Rules has been written to ensure the continued growth of the SIRU Junior Competition and should be used by Club Administrators to enable a well organised and run competition that allows our Junior Participants to play and enjoy the game of Rugby Union.

All clubs and their participants, administrators and parents/carers must adhere to the SIRU Board directives, the SIRU Constitution and the various RugbyAU policies, safety directives and the RugbyAU Smart Rugby Program.

2. Health and Safety

The safety of the players within the SIRU Junior Competition is paramount.

All clubs are to adhere to the RugbyAU Safety Directives and the RugbyAU Smart Rugby Program.

3. Smart Rugby Accreditation

All Coaches of tackle teams must complete their Smart Rugby accreditation via the Rugby Australia Learning Centre System. If any coach does not achieve Smart Rugby Accreditation the individual will not be able to take part in any matches, coaching or club activities during the season until the Smart Rugby accreditation is achieved.

Loss of competition points or monetary fines may also occur if Clubs are found to have Coaches without Smart Rugby accreditation.

To confirm this, all Coaches must register with their club so accreditation can be checked by the Competition Administrator as well as the individual's club. This will be checked leading into the season.

4. Overview of the Southern Inland Junior Rugby Union Rules

These Rules shall be read in conjunction with Southern Inland Rugby Union Senior Competition Rules.

In these Rules, "Juniors Executive" means the Vice-President of SIRU (Representing Juniors), a SIRU Board Director and the Full-Time Employees of Southern Inland Rugby Union (Development Officer and/or Competitions and Rugby Services Manager). The Junior Executive will also form the Match Committee.

The competition or competitions are determined by the SIRU Board and are conducted in accordance with SIRU Board directives, the SIRU Constitution, these Rules of Competition or as otherwise directed by the SIRU Board.

Competitions are open to Clubs affiliated with SIRU Juniors. Other junior teams may be invited by the SIRU Board, SIRU Junior Executive or ACT Brumbies Community Staff to participate in any particular year subject to the approval of the SIRU Board.

5. Entries for Competition

Entries for the various competitions each year must be made to the SIRU Competitions and Rugby Services Manager on or before the promulgated date each year.

All SIRU Junior Players are to be added, amended, or corrected on the Rugby Australia Rugby Xplorer database.

6. Entering the Competition and Draw

Entries into the SIRU Junior Competition will be required by the SIRU Junior Executive and will be due when nominations are called for by the SIRU Competitions and Rugby Services Manager.

Playing dates for the season will be determined by the SIRU Board after consultation with respective Club Presidents and the SIRU Junior Executive.

7. Eligibility of Players

Only members of affiliated clubs who are under the designated ages on the first day of January will be qualified to play in the respective competitions.

All Dispensation Requests must follow the Rugby Australia Dispensation Policies which can be found at <http://www.rugbyau.com/about/codes-and-policies/all-codes-and-policies>

The Juniors Executive reserves the right to refuse any applications, or request an independent assessment of any athlete.

8. Administration of Games

Grounds

The host club will appoint the venue of their home ground. It is the responsibility of the host Club to communicate the information to the visiting clubs and the SIRU Office at least two Fridays prior to the scheduled matches.

Rugby Xplorer Registration

All players must be registered within Rugby Xplorer (under their selected clubs) before they can take the field to play Rugby. Failure to do so will mean any games the unregistered players have taken part in will result in a loss for their team. Further infringements of this rule may see a loss of competition points in that division, or monetary fines enforced on the club as determined by the SIRU Board.

Team Sheets

Team Sheets may be printed for club use only. No team sheets will be collected by the hosting team at the end of the Gala Day. All results are to be entered into the Rugby Match Day App using an appropriate device (Smart Phone or Tablet). This is the responsibility of each team to complete by 9AM of the first business day following their match.

Match Times and Length of Matches Played

This information is to be communicated to the visiting clubs by at least two Fridays prior to the scheduled matches taking place on the Gala Day. This information will also be available on Rugby Xplorer once game times for the weekend have been finalised.

Length of matches played as per the age group is as follows:

- U6s – 2 x 15 min halves
 - U8s – 2 x 15 min halves
 - U10s Tackle – 2 x 20 min halves
 - U10s Tri Tag Rugby – 2 x 15 min halves
 - U12s Tackle – 2 x 22 min halves
 - U13s Girls Tackle – Match Length dependent upon format
 - U14s Boys Tackle– 2 x 35 min halves or 2 x 22 min halves dependent upon number of teams present at Gala Day.
 - U14s Tri Tag Rugby – 2 x 20 min halves
 - U15s Girls Tackle – Match Length dependent upon format
 - U16s Boys Tackle – 2 x 35 min halves or 2 x 22 min halves dependent upon number of teams present at Gala Day.
 - U17s Girls Tackle – Match Length dependent upon format
- Age Grades/Formats without a specific gender are considered “mixed”.

Note: Game times may be changed by any member of the SIRU Junior Executive to allow all games to be played at Gala Days. In this instance, the change of times will be communicated to all effected teams and referees through the Ground Marshall.

Competition Points

A win will count as four (4) competition points, a draw will count as two (2) competition points, a loss will count as zero (0) competition points.

One (1) Bonus Point will be given if a team scores four (4) or more tries in one match.

One (1) Bonus Point will be given if a team loses by seven (7) points or less in one match.

If there is an occurrence where a team attends a Gala Day and there are no opposing teams from other Clubs present, a Bye will be put against their record.

A Bye will count as four (4) competition points.

In U14s Boys Tackle and U16s Boys Tackle, if there is an occurrence where only two teams are present at a Gala Day, teams will play one extended match (see above) for double competition points. Results from the extended match will be duplicated in Rugby Xplorer so that the result is also duplicated in the appropriate Ladder.

Match Results

It is each club's responsibility to record their own match results on Rugby Xplorer for each game. This can be done on your own Smart Device with the Rugby Australia Match Day App. All results must be entered into the Rugby Match Day App and uploaded by 0900 hrs on the first business day following a match. Included in match results must be the player statistics. It is each individual club's responsibility to enter the data into Rugby Xplorer. This includes confirming results that another club has entered.

If results are not finalised by the above stated time, the matches will be closed with the result that was done on time. Any requested changes to this must be submitted to the Competitions and Rugby Services Manager.

Deferment of Matches

Deferment of matches can only be granted under extreme circumstances.

Where matches are not played due to inclement weather the SIRU Junior Executive will look at possible deferment. If deferment is not possible due to inclement weather, all scheduled matches will result in a 10 all draw.

Protests and Appeals of Match Results

Any protests or appeals of match results must be made in writing to the SIRU Junior Executive within 48 hours of the match's completion. Appeals will be heard on a case-by-case basis by the SIRU Junior Executive, or where necessary referred to the SIRU Board. All decisions made by the SIRU Junior Executive or the SIRU Board on these matters will be final.

Mercy Law

Any team who reaches a score of fifty (50) or higher, shall stop scoring through the Rugby Match Day App (or similar) regardless of any further scores that occur during the game. This rule applies in all scenarios unless the margin of the game is ten (10) points or less.

Team Coaches and Managers should be aware of the difference in ability between teams and if the score is likely to be drastically different, offer to share players to give the teams a more even game.

Judiciary, Citing's and Misconduct Reports

Club administrators must be familiar with the processes outlined in Rugby Australia's Disciplinary Rules. These principles should be incorporated into a coaching regime having regard to Age-Grade requirements. Refer to Appendix 13.

Dispensations

SIRU Dispensation Policy is aligned with Rugby Australia's Dispensation Policies.

Rugby Australia Participation Policy provides for dispensation outside the eligible age grades as follows:

- Players may move down one Age Grade
- Players may move up two Age Grades

Note: Due to the dual Age Grouping of Players in our Competitions, the above is relative to singular age grading. For example, a player turning or turned 11 in the calendar year can only move down to U10s.

The process for dispensation is below:

1. Player must register with their chosen club.
2. Request is put into their club for the participant to play in a different Age Grade is submitted through Rugby Xplorer.
3. Players Club is to review the application and choose to approve or decline the request.
4. Competitions & Rugby Services Manager will assign a qualified assessing coach.
5. Competitions & Rugby Services Manager passes on the Coaches Recommendation or asks for another assessment if deemed necessary.

Code of Conduct and Expectation of Behavior Guidelines

Club administrators should be familiar with Rugby Australia's Code of Conduct provisions which addresses the specific responsibilities and standards of behavior for players, coaches, administrators, match officials, spectators/parents, and other participants.

The Junior Executive will decide as to where there has been a breach and refer to the SIRU Board. SIRU Junior Rugby follows the same Code of Conduct and Expectation of Behavior Guidelines as set out by Rugby AU. Refer to Appendix 14.

Serious Injury Protocol and Reporting

In line with the Rugby Australia Policy around Serious Injuries and Reporting, all serious injuries must be reported through the Rugby Australia Serious Injury Website as soon as possible following the injury.

A serious injury is defined as:

- Any head or neck injury that results in a player being treated at emergency department, hospital or after-hours medical centre, or
- Any injury that results in the admission of a player into hospital (Note: This does not include players taken to an Emergency Department and allowed home from there).

Concussion

In line with the Rugby Australia Concussion Management Policy, SIRU Junior Rugby will follow the same policy and guidelines. Essential Guidelines are below;

“Australian Rugby provides guidance regarding concussion which applies to everyone involved in Rugby across Australia.

At all times, players, parents, coaches and officials need to act in the best interest of player safety and welfare by;

- *taking responsibility for the recognition, removal and referral of players to a medical doctor*
- *ensuring concussion is appropriately managed per the Australian Rugby Concussion Procedure.”*

The Rugby Australia Safety Policy states...

“The primary consideration in all participation decisions must be the safety of all participants as a requirement that overrides all others.”

The Australian Rugby Concussion Management – Guidance and Procedure will accompany the SIRU Junior Rugby Rules of Competition.

All Rugby Australia policies and guidelines can be found at this link [Concussion Management – Guidance and Procedure](#).

If a player is concussed, or suspected of having a concussion, in any game of Junior Rugby, they MUST NOT TAKE PART IN ANY RUGBY UNTIL THEY ARE SEEN AND CLEARED BY A DOCTOR TO RETURN TO PLAY.

Failure to adhere to this non-negotiable rule will result in harsh penalties imposed on the Club, teams, and individuals.

A concussed player must follow the Rugby Australia Concussion Management Policy. If a player is concussed playing Rugby, they must be removed from the field of play and the ‘Australian Rugby Concussion Referral and Return Form’ must be completed by the participants’ Coach or Medical Officer.

The minimum time away from playing their next Rugby match for any Junior Player (19 years or younger) is 19 days. Therefore, a player cannot participate in any Rugby match for a minimum of 19 days (or perhaps even longer) if they are concussed.

Before a player can return to play the “Rugby Australia Referral and Return Form” must be completed and signed off by a doctor. Once signed off by a doctor, this needs to be forwarded to the SIRU Competitions and Rugby Services Manager.

Rugby Australia Insurance Claims

All registered Rugby Australia participants are insured by Aon Australia. Information around what they cover can be found at their website – [click here](#). To make an injury claim, a serious injury report must be filled out first. From there a claim with Aon Australia can be lodged. When a claim is lodged with Aon Australia, please notify the SIRU Junior Executive.

9. Laws of the Game

The SIRU Junior Competition is to adhere to the Rugby AU Pathway laws listed below.

U7s to U12s Pathway Laws

Refer to Appendix 10

- U6s – U6s Laws
- U8s – U8s Laws
- U10s – U10s Laws
- U12s – U12s Laws

U13s to U19s Pathway laws

Refer to Appendix 11

Tri Tag Rugby Laws

Refer to Appendix 12

Misconduct, Suspended or Unregistered Players

Any player who is issued a Red Card by a referee will be suspended from playing in the remaining matches of a Gala Day (where applicable) and will be unable to play until their case has been dealt with in accordance with the Rugby Australia Disciplinary Rules.

If any player is found to be playing whilst unregistered, or playing whilst under suspension, the team they played for will be fined a minimum of 4 competition points. All red and yellow cards are to be entered into Rugby Match Day App.

If a Club knowingly plays an unregistered player, penalties may be brought against the whole Club, including loss of competition points; being ineligible for finals; or monetary fines. The SIRU Junior Executive will refer serious incidents of misconduct to the SIRU Board.

Team Playing Numbers

- U6s – Seven (7) players on the field at any one time with unlimited substitutions.
- U8s – Seven (7) players on the field at any one time with unlimited substitutions.
- U10s – Twelve (12) players on the field at any one time with unlimited substitutions.
- U12s – Fifteen (15) players on the field at any one time with unlimited substitutions.

- U14s – Fifteen (15) players on the field at any one time with unlimited substitutions.
- U16s – Fifteen (15) players on the field at any one time with unlimited substitutions.
- Girls Tackle – Dependent on the number of players available, teams will play with between 7 and 10 starting players.
- Tri Tag Rugby – Eight (8) players on the field at any one time with five (5) reserves and unlimited substitutions.

If a team arrives with less than the maximum number of players on the field, the opposition **must** share players with the other team so both teams are as close to the maximum number on each team. Each player should be able to have as much time on the field as possible. Both teams must always have even numbers. This is for player safety and is not negotiable. Any team not complying with the rules above will be investigated and penalised according to a decision made by the SIRU Junior Executive.

10. Gala Days – What is Required

Referees

It is the host club's responsibility to appoint referees for all matches for their Gala Day. The host club must communicate with the visiting clubs to ensure an adequate number of referees are available and that appointments are independent.

An Assistant Referee/Touch Judge is to be provided by both teams in U12s and above. Unless they are a qualified referee, they are only to provide an indication to the on-field referee when the ball, player or play goes into touch. At no time are they to provide any foul play reports (or similar) to the on-field referee unless they themselves are qualified. A qualified and/or SIRRA affiliated Assistant Referee, will be wearing a SIRRA supplied uniform, and they will be allowed to enter the Field of Play and provide Foul Play reports to the Match Official.

Ground Marshall Roles and Responsibilities

A Ground Marshall must be appointed by a club for home fixtures.

The Ground Marshall must have completed the Rugby Australia online training course.

A Ground Marshall has the following responsibilities:

- To ensure the grounds are marked correctly.
- To make themselves known to Match Officials and visiting Clubs where possible.

- Set up the ground correctly in accordance with the Laws of Rugby.
- Maintain appropriate levels of spectator and team behaviour in accordance with Rugby Australia's Code of Conduct.
- Ensure that spectators or animals do not enter the field of play area while a game is in progress for the safety of the spectators and/or the players. This includes young children.
- Wear a clearly visible shirt or vest that identifies them as the Ground Marshall to all spectators at the ground.

Gala Day Requirements

This is a checklist for each Club to use when hosting their Gala Day.

- Ensure First Aid is booked in advance.
 - You will know well in advance of your home games, book these dates with your first aid personnel.
 - First Aid should be equipped with an approved first aid kit (consult your local St Johns Ambulance or your Local Doctor), ice, bandages, splints, stretcher, and strapping tape.
 - Your first aid personnel may be a doctor, registered nurse, physiotherapist, accredited sports trainer, accredited first aid or medical officer.
- Organise a BBQ or canteen for the day and ensure there is plenty of water and ice available.
- Employ Ground Marshall from within your Club; The Ground Marshall will be
 - The first point of contact for all visiting coaches, officials, and teams.
 - In control of Off-Field behavior and ensure the general smooth running of the day. (Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance).
 - Actively present, highly visible, and contactable all day
- Consult with visiting clubs regarding referees.
 - Select referees from within your club first and foremost and use visiting referees if needed. Organise this early and give plenty of notice if you are unable to source referees easily.
- Mark your grounds at least one day before your Gala Day in accordance with measurements provided by Rugby Australia.
- Make sure your set up on the Gala Day is done early to ensure a hassle-free day.
- Designate and visibly mark where your first aid will be located on the day and make sure everyone is aware.

11. Finals Series

Eligibility of Players

Except with the permission of the Junior Executive, no player may take part in any finals matches in any competition unless they have taken part in a minimum of 50% or more of their team's competition matches across the season. Assessments of this

will be taken from team sheets entered on Rugby Match Day App. Hard Copy team sheets will not be accepted.

In cases where the club has multiple teams in any given age grade, the player must have also participated in 50% or more of the specific team's games during the season, not a mixture of teams.

Any request for Finals Eligibility Dispensation must be in by the advertised date, any request made after this will be disallowed. Finals Eligibility Dispensation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the SIRU Junior Executive and must be submitted on the Finals Eligibility Form (which will be sent to all clubs approximately four weeks prior to the start of the Finals Series).

Running Desk

All Semi Finals and Grand Final Days will have a running desk manned by SIRU/ACT Brumbies Staff. Any match related issues around any Finals being played on the day must be brought to this desk.

This desk will also be the location where hard copy team sheets will be dropped off.

These must include:

- Name of the Club
- Date of the Game
- Player Names
- Player ID Numbers
- Coach/Manager Signature

Duration of Finals Matches

Final matches will be played in two equal time periods according to the age of the competition. The periods of play will be determined by the Junior Executive and will be communicated to all participating clubs prior to the Finals Series.

Finals Placing

Finals placings will be determined by the number of competition points gained throughout the season, finishing in the Final Round.

In the event two or more teams are on equal competition points the teams will be separated based on the following conditions (in numerical order of importance):

1. Number of Wins (Teams with the most wins will be ranked higher).
2. Number of Losses (Team with the least losses will be ranked higher).

3. Points Difference Ratio.

If two or more teams still cannot be separated following this, then a toss of the coin will decide which progresses through.

All Finals will be played in a two-week series.

Finals Format

The following divisions will not participate in Finals:

- U6s
- U8s

The following age groups will participate in Finals:

- U10s
- U10s Tri Tag Rugby
- U12s
- U13s Girls
- U14s Tri Tag Rugby
- U14s Boys
- U15s Girls
- U16s Boys
- U17s Girls

The format of the Finals Series will follow the structure below for divisions with more than 8 teams:

- Week 1:
 - Semi Final 1 – 3rd v 6th
 - Semi Final 2 – 4th v 5th
 - Preliminary Final 1 – 1st v Lowest Ranked Semi Final Winner
 - Preliminary Final 2 – 2nd v Highest Ranked Semi Final Winner
- Week 2:
 - Grand Final – Winner of Preliminary Final 1 v Winner of Preliminary Final 2

The format of the Finals Series will follow the structure below for divisions with 8 teams or less:

- Week 1:
 - Semi Final 1 – 1st v 2nd
 - Semi Final 2 – 3rd v 4th
 - Preliminary Final – Loser of Semi Final 1 v Winner of Semi Final 2
- Week 2:
 - Grand Final – Winner of Semi Final 1 v Winner of Preliminary Final

If teams are drawn at the conclusion of a finals match, there will be 5 minutes extra playing time each way, without Golden Point. If at the conclusion of Extra Time, the teams are still even in Week 1 the team placed higher on the ladder following the final regular season round will advance to the next match. If teams are drawn at the conclusion of Extra Time in a Week 2 match, the teams will be declared Joint Premiers.

12. Appendices

- Appendix 1. [Medical Policy](#)
- Appendix 2. [Medical & First Aid Requirements](#)
- Appendix 3. [Safety Policy](#)
- Appendix 4. [Concussion Management](#)
- Appendix 5. [Serious Injury Protocol/Report](#)
- Appendix 6. [Blood Policy](#)
- Appendix 7. [Member Protection Policy](#)
- Appendix 8. [Privacy Policy](#)
- Appendix 9. [Age Grade Dispensation Procedure](#)
- Appendix 10. [Kids Pathway Law Book 2016 \(U6 to U12\)](#)
- Appendix 11. [Rugby Australia's U19 Law Variations 2018 \(U13 to U19\)](#)
- Appendix 12. [Tri Tag Rugby Laws](#)
- Appendix 13. [Disciplinary Rules](#)
- Appendix 14. [Code of Conduct](#)