



**INTERDISTRICT JOINT
COMPETITION**

**HANDBOOK FOR REFEREES,
ASSESSORS & MENTORS
2024**

WELCOME TO THE 2024 SEASON

Macquarie, Newcastle & Hunter Valley Zones welcome you as referees to the 2024 football season. We hope that all referees are looking forward to the season ahead.

This Handbook for Referees, Assessors and Mentors 2024 has been compiled to prepare referees with as much information as possible to assist them during the season ahead. The handbook contains important information relating to the playing rules for the competitions on which our referees officiate. It also details some of the more important regulations and procedures of the association with which referees are required to comply.

We extend our very best wishes to all referees for a season of success, enjoyment, and reward with matches full of skilful play, fine sportsmanship, and of course, excellent officiating!

COMPETITIONS

During the 2024 season, referees will officiate on matches in the following competitions administered by Macquarie, Newcastle & Hunter Valley Football Zones.

- Inter-District Joint Competition for junior age group divisions from Under 12 through to Under 25 age groups
- Inter-District Joint Competition for All Age Men's and Over 35, Over 45 Men's divisions
- Inter-District Joint Competition for junior girls' age groups and All Age Women's and Over 30 Women divisions

Referees of the associations may also officiate on matches in various school competitions, including but not necessarily limited to, Open Boys' and Open Girls' Competition matches, Bill Turner Cup Competition matches (for schoolboys), Bill Turner Trophy Competition matches (for schoolgirls)

Dual referees of the associations may also officiate with Northern NSW Football and will officiate on matches in the following competitions administered by Northern NSW Football:

- National Premier Leagues Youth Competition matches in Under 13, 14, 15 and 16 age groups
- National Premier Leagues Senior Competition
- NEW-FM Northern League One Youth Competition matches in Under 13, 14, 15, 16 and 18 age groups
- NEW-FM Northern League One Senior Competition
- Newcastle Herald Women's Premier League Competition
- Football NSW Women's Division 1 Competition
- Northern NSW Football Skill Acquisition Program (SAP Metro) matches in Under 11 and 12 age groups
- School fixtures played at the Lake Macquarie Regional Football Facility at Speers Point.
- Dual referees may also officiate on the Zone Premier League, Zone League One, Zone League Two and Zone League Three Competitions for senior men.

GROUND DIRECTORY 2024

Macquarie Football

Argenton United	Jack Edwards Oval, Cnr Mary and Montgomery Streets, Argenton
	Kindyerra Park, Cnr Mary and Montgomery Streets, Argenton
Barnsley	Taylor Park, Government Road, Barnsley
Belmont	Marks Oval, Floraville Road, Belmont North
Belmont/Swansea Juniors	Aitcheson Reserve, Turea Street, Pelican
Cardiff City	Evans Park, Myall Road, Cardiff
Croudace Bay United	Marks Oval, Floraville Road, Belmont North
Charlestown Juniors	Charlestown Oval, Lincoln Street, Charlestown
Dudley Redhead United Juniors	Liles Oval, Corner Kalaroo Road and Cowlshaw Street, Redhead
Dudley Redhead United Seniors	Lydon Oval, Gardner Street, Dudley
Edgeworth Juniors	Edgeworth Oval, Park Street, Edgeworth
Garden Suburb	Lance Yorke Oval, Myall Road, Garden Suburb
	Garden Suburb Field, Myall Road, Garden Suburb
Kahibah	Kahibah Oval 1, Cnr Bula and James Streets, Charlestown
	Andy Bird Field, Cnr Bula and James Streets, Charlestown
Lake Macquarie City FC	Tredinnick Oval, Eighth Street, Boolaroo
	Macquarie Field, Cnr Park Road and Creek Reserve Road, Speers Point
Morisset	Auston Oval, Cnr Dora and Ourimbah Streets, Morisset
	Bernie Goodwin Oval, Corner Newcastle and Stockton Streets, Morisset
Northern NSW Football	Lake Macquarie Regional Football Facility, Park Road, Speers Point
South Cardiff	Jack Neave Oval (Ulinga Park Complex), Cross Street, Cardiff South
Southern Lakes	Cooranbong Recreation Facility, Cooranbong
Swansea	Chapman Oval, Channel Street, Swansea
Toronto Awaba Juniors	Finnan Oval, Fennell Crescent, Blackalls Park
Valentine Eleebana	Croudace Bay Complex, Parklea Avenue, Croudace Bay
Warners Bay	John Street Oval, John Street, Warners Bay
Westlakes Juniors and Seniors	Fishburn Field, Cnr Rosemary Row and Stilling Street, Rathmines
West Wallsend Juniors	Gregory Park, Hyndes Street, West Wallsend

Hunter Valley Football

CLUB	VENUE
Abermain Rams FC	<u>Orange Street Oval, Abermain</u>
Bellbird JFC	<u>Carmichael Park, Sparke Street, Bellbird</u>
Bolwarra Lorn JSC	<u>John Wilkinson Reserve, Bolwarra Sporting Complex, Victoria Street, Bolwarra</u>
Cessnock City Hornets FC	<u>Turner Park, Aberdare Road, Aberdare</u>
Cessnock PCYC	<u>Harold Lett, Cnr Mills Crescent & Buckland Ave, Cessnock</u> (NB: Competition Teams play out of alternate venue)
Cessnock Stingers FC	<u>East End Oval, Victoria Street, Cessnock</u>
Cessnock United FC	<u>Baddeley Park, Evans Street, South Cessnock</u> (NB: Friday night Competition Teams play out of alternate venue)
Clarence Town FC	<u>Reg Ford Oval, Durham Street, Clarence Town</u>
Dungog SC	<u>Barnes Oval, Chichester Dom Road, Dungog</u>
Gresford Vacy FC	<u>Gresford Sporting Complex, 2 Gresford Road, East Gresford</u>
Greta Branxton FC	<u>Miller Park, Maitland Street, Branxton</u>
Hunter Hawks SAP	<u>Turner Park, Aberdare Road, Aberdare</u>
Hunter Valley Grammar School	<u>HVGS, Norfolk Street, Ashtonfield</u>
Kurri Kurri JFC	<u>Biralee Park Junior Ground, Grieves Street, Kurri Kurri</u>
Kurri Kurri Senior SC	<u>Biralee Park Senior Ground, Heddons Street, Kurri Kurri</u>
Kurri Kurri Womens FC	<u>Biralee Park Senior Ground, Heddons Street, Kurri Kurri</u>
Largs FC	<u>Ernie Jurd Oval, Largs Avenue, Largs</u>
Lochinvar Rovers FC	<u>Lochinvar Sports Complex, Robert Rd, Lochinvar</u>
Maitland Football For All	<u>Robins Oval, Maitland Park, 8 Bloomfield Street, South Maitland</u>
Maitland FC	<u>Cook Square Park, Cnr Brisbane & William Streets, East Maitland</u>
Maitland JFC	<u>Fieldsend Oval, Cnr Metford Rd & Fieldsend Street, East Maitland</u>
Metford Cobras FC	<u>Metford Recreational Oval, Schank Drive, Metford</u>
Muswellbrook FC	<u>Victoria Park, Hill Street, Muswellbrook</u>
North United Wolves SC	<u>Lorn Park, Melrose Street, Lorn (behind Bowls Club)</u>
Rutherford FC	<u>Norm Chapman Oval, Cnr Dunkley Street, Rutherford</u>
Scone FC	<u>Bill Rose Sports Complex, Kingdon Street, Scone</u>
Singleton Strikers FC - Junior	<u>Alroy Oval, Blaxland Avenue, Singleton Heights</u>
Singleton Strikers FC - Senior	<u>Howe Park, Singleton</u>
South Maitland	<u>Tenambit No.2, Houston Avenue, Tenambit</u>
Tenambit Sharks FC	<u>Beryl Humble, Metford Road, Tenambit</u>
Thornton JFC	<u>Allan & Don Lawrence Oval, Thomas Coke Drive, Thornton</u>
Thornton Redbacks FC	<u>Thornton Oval, Taylor Avenue, Thornton</u>
Weston JFC	<u>Varty Park, Swanson Street, Weston</u>

Newcastle Football

<u>CLUB</u>	<u>VENUE</u>
Adamstown	Adamstown No 2, Popran Rd, Adamstown
Beresfield Jnr	Tarro Park, Anderson Drive, Tarro
Broadmeadow Magic	Myer Park, Melville Rd, Adamstown
Cooks Hill	National Park, Union & Parkway Ave, Cooks Hill
Cooks Hill ZFL	Newcastle Athletic Field, Smith St Newcastle West ,
Hamilton Azzurri	Smith Park, Brisbane Rd, Hamilton North
Hamilton Azzurri ZFL	Connelly Park, Carrington ,
Jesmond Juniors	Heaton Park, Bluegum Rd, Jesmond
Jesmond ZFL	Jesmond Park, Newcastle Rd Jesmond ,
Kotara South	Nesbitt Park, Casey & Grayson St, Kotara
Lambton Jaffas	Harry Edwards Oval, Karoola & Elder St, Lambton
Mayfield Jnr	Stevenson Park, Stevenson Ave, Mayfield
Mayfield Senior	Mayfield Park, Crebert St, Mayfield
Medowie	Yulong Oval, Kirrang St, Medowie
Merewether FC	Myamblah Oval, Myamblah Crescent, Merewether
Merewether Advance	Jesmond Park, Newcastle Rd Jesmond ,
Minmi	Minmi Sportsground, Woodford St, Minmi
Fletcher	Federal Park, Boscowan St, Wallsend
Nelson Bay	Tomaree Sports Complex, Nelson Bay Rd, Nelson Bay
New Lambton FC	Novocastrian Oval, Orchardtown Rd, New Lambton
	Alder Park, Moonbi Street, New Lambton
Newcastle Croatia	Tarro Park/ Pasadena Oval
Newcastle Grammar	Smith Park, Brisbane Rd, Hamilton North
Newcastle Olympic	Darling St Oval, Darling St, Hamilton
	Islington Park, Power St, Maitland Rd Islington
Newcastle Suns	Connelly Park, Carrington ,
Maryland Fletcher	Kurraka Oval , Kurraka Dr, Maryland
Raymond Terrace	King Park, Newline Rd, Raymond Terrace
Seaham/Bowthorne	Bowthorne Park, Morpeth St, Wallalong
Shortland	Tuxford Park, King St, Shortland
South Wallsend	Walker Fields, Croudace Rd, Elmore Vale
Stockton	Corroba Oval, Meredith St, Stockton
Tilligerry	Mallabulla Complex, Lemon Tree Passage Rd, Mallabulla
University Men's	Ray Watt Oval, Wirra Crescent, Callaghan
University Women's	Ray Watt Oval, Wirra Crescent, Callaghan
Wallsend	George Farley Oval, Thomas & Brook St, Wallsend
Wallsend ZFL	Cook Park, Macarthur St, Birmingham Gardens

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- The Match Official Appointments Officer (MOAO), **Rachel Sager (Mob 0484094123, office 02 49530800)**, will appoint all referees and assistant referees within Macquarie, Newcastle, and Hunter Valley Football Zones to matches played in the Inter-District Joint Competition. The MOAO will also appoint match officials to school competition fixtures played across the three zones, except for matches played at the Lake Macquarie Regional Football Facility at Speers Point.
- **All** match fees to be paid by EFT to all referees for the matches on which they officiate in the Inter-District Joint Competition. These will be paid in the second week after the round on which you officiated
- The Match Official Appointments Officer will use the Squadi appointments system in 2024 to prepare and publish referee appointments to the Inter-District Joint Competition. **All Referees will use the Squadi digital team sheet system for all matches.**
- Squadi will not be used to appoint referees to school matches. These appointments are likely to be made by telephone or email with the Referee themselves and MOAO.
- Referees' appointments will be published on Squadi as soon as possible each week for the following weekend's matches. Appointed referees will receive their personal appointments through the Squadi App.
- Squadi operates on the basis that all referees are available for appointment to matches unless an individual Referee logs dates or times when he or she is unavailable. It is essential that as soon as referees know that they are unavailable on a particular date or at a particular time, they immediately log their unavailability into Squadi.
- Referees who become unavailable for their appointments after publishing will be required to notify the Match Official Appointments Officer, directly of their unavailability on the mobile number. Referees are requested to please contact the Match Official Appointments Officer during business hours from Monday to Friday, if possible, to advise of their unavailability. Contact can be via phone call, text message and will be replied to as soon as practicable. On weekends, referees should please contact immediately via Message or Call when they know of their unavailability. This will give MOAO time to rearrange the appointments accordingly across all three zones.
- Macquarie, Newcastle, and Hunter Valley Football have issued a strong reminder that any referee who officiates on a fixture of any nature, without having been appointed to it or receiving approval from the appropriate authority to officiate on it before the match commences, is **not protected by the Northern NSW Football Professional Indemnity and Public Liability Insurance Policies.**
To ensure that referees do not officiate without insurance coverage, any referee who is proven to have officiated on any fixture without such appointment being made or approved beforehand shall be liable to be strongly disciplined.
- Federal legislation requires any person working with children to obtain a Working with Children (WWC) clearance check through the Office of the Children's Guardian. The NNSWF Match Official Standing Committee has endorsed this requirement. It means that all Zone Referees, Assessors and Mentors over the age of 18 must have a WWC check that is for paid work. This cost will be reimbursed at the discretion of the relevant Zone to the referees on production of the NSW Services receipt. A voluntary WWC check is required for all referees over the age of 18. This is a free check and a WWC number will be issued by the Office of the Children's Guardian NSW. The Office of the Children's Guardian website has the application details on its home page. When the number has been attained, please let your Branch know as the Branch has to verify the number by law.
- Under Section 6A of the Smoke-Free Environment Act 2000, **smoking and vaping continues to be banned at public sporting grounds** and other recreational areas. This ban on smoking and vaping extends to match officials. Referees who are proven to have been smoking or vaping at grounds and at matches are liable to be fined by NSW Health up to \$550 under the Smoke-Free Environment Act 2000 and may otherwise be disciplined by the Joint Zones.

- Under its regulations and by-laws, the Zones continue to have the power and authority to directly discipline any individual person who is guilty of a serious offence or of bringing the game into disrepute.
- In all age group matches from Under 12 through to All Age, Over 30, Over 35 and Over 45 matches in the Inter-District Joint Competitions, the maximum number of players who can participate in a match again **is sixteen (16) players per team**. This represents eleven (11) players who commence the match and a maximum of five (5) interchange players. The number of times that players may be interchanged in a game remains unlimited.
- In the Inter-District Joint Competition matches, all the team officials (maximum of three) for both teams must wear their **Team Official identification tags** during the game. The only persons permitted at the bench area during the game are those team officials wearing their identification tags and the interchange players. Referees from all 3 zones have been requested to be more vigilant in 2024 in ensuring that team officials wear their identification tags. Referees have also been requested to please remove from the bench area any team official who will not wear his or her identification tag.
- The deadline for referees to send all Referee Send-Off Reports, Incident Reports and Match Fees Claim Forms this season is **24hrs after the conclusion of Match**. Referees who fail to complete reports or who fail to submit their properly completed report by the 24-hour cut off shall be liable to be disciplined by the Joint Zones. It is important for this to be done as soon as possible for Disciplinary to complete the sanction process.
- Any match that is abandoned in the Inter-District Joint Competition **may not be replayed**, irrespective of the circumstances causing the abandonment or when it occurs. Furthermore, the Zones have determined that match fees may not be payable to any match official who officiates on a match that is abandoned. You must advise the Match Official Appointments Officer of any Abandoned matches for any reason.
- The Zones have requested that **REFEREES DO NOT GET INVOLVED IN DISCUSSIONS** with players or team officials about whether players are eligible to play in fixtures, or whether an abandoned match will be replayed, or whether the score at the time of the abandonment will be regarded as the final score of the match.
- The match fees payable in 2024 to referees and assistant referees for matches in the Inter-District Joint Competition are published on the relevant website.
- In 2024, all referees and assistant referees will be paid their match fees for Inter-District Joint Competition matches by electronic funds transfer into their nominated bank account. The payments into referee's accounts will be made regularly by Macquarie Football. The Association Fees payable by referees shall be deducted from the match fees payment before the fees are deposited into referee's accounts. To ensure that match fees are deposited into their nominated account, a member must complete and return a Bank Account Details Form to Match Official Appointments Officer. This form can be found on your Zones Website. Please ensure a valid email address is given so remittance can be sent when payment is made.
- To officiate on Semi Finals, Finals and Grand Finals at the end of the 2024 season, referees must attend any compulsory requirements as determined by the Zones. This may include two compulsory Ordinary General Meetings at which important information relating to the commencement of the Interdistrict Finals.
- To ensure that no Referee is overlooked for the opportunity of being assessed and graded throughout the season, the Match Official Appointments Officer will keep and maintain a spreadsheet of all referee assessments carried out during 2024. The spreadsheet will detail the number of assessments carried out on every active member in the association and will provide valuable information to the Match Official Appointments Officer in appointing referees to suitable fixtures.
- Any Referee who are uncertain whether the playing surface on which their matches are being played is safe and fit for play should contact a member of the relevant Branch Management Committee or Match Official Administration Officer for advice.

- Referees are not permitted under any circumstances to ask or expect club canteen staff to provide them with **free food and drink** on match days. Even though clubs are under no obligation to provide food and drinks to referees at no charge, many clubs do so willingly. However, this privilege must not be abused. Referees who are proven to have asked or expected to receive free food and drink from club canteens shall be liable to be disciplined by the Joint Zones.

APPOINTMENTS

- Referees who are asked to officiate on matches to which they have not been appointed by the Match Official Appointments Officer or the association **must either decline** the request to officiate or **contact the Match Official Appointments Officer**, to obtain the approval to officiate **before** the match commences. No Referees should Officiate on Matches out of their capacity of Grading. If unsure of your Grade, please contact the Appointment Officer to gain the relevant information.
- **Referees are forbidden to swap or exchange their appointments.**
- Referees who wake up sick or injured on the morning of their appointments must in the first instance contact Match Official Appointments Officer **immediately** to inform her of their unavailability to officiate.
- A Referee who fails to officiate on a match to which he or she has been appointed, without notifying the Match Official Appointments Officer, will be required to show cause why he or she should not be disciplined.
- No Referee is to officiate as assistant referee on any match where a **club referee** is officiating as the referee of the fixture, unless given **prior** approval to do so by the Match Official Appointments Officer.

PUNCTUALITY

- When officiating on local Inter-District Joint Competition fixtures, referees are required to arrive at the ground a minimum of **thirty (30) minutes** prior to their first appointment for the day for the purpose of checking the ground, collecting the team sheet and match ball, and carrying out all their other pre-match duties.
- In the event of problems with the ground or markings, the referee must immediately consult the Ground Duty Officer of the home club in a courteous manner to have the problems remedied. Any problems, which cannot be resolved, **must** be reported as part of the Referee's Report in Squadi and be reported to the Match Official Appointments and Administration Officer within 24 hours of the match. An Incident Report in Squadi from the referee on the problems is required by the Joint Zone.

WET WEATHER CANCELLATIONS

- On match days when inclement weather prevails, referees must check the Wet Weather section of the Zone webpage to determine whether matches on the ground to which they have been appointed are proceeding or have been called off for the day. Also, Squadi will send a notification. Please don't look at Council webpage for Closed Fields.
- **If your Appointed Match has been Cancelled due to Wet Weather, you may be transferred to another Venue that is fit for play.** Please always assume you will be transferred to another facility if your field has been closed for one reason or another.
- A list of grounds unfit for play is listed in the Wet Weather section. The order of grounds listed in alphabetical by club name, but names of grounds will be given – for example, Liles Oval will be given where Dudley Redhead Junior Club occurs in the alphabetical listing. Updates on whether grounds are playing or have

been called off are available at **7.30am on Saturdays and Sundays, and 4.30pm on weekdays. Always keep an eye on the wet weather page as it updates regularly**

- Where Clubs have more than one ground, it is possible that only one ground at a venue may be unfit for play. In this situation, matches may still be played on the other ground or grounds at that club. However, once any individual ground has been deemed as unfit for play, then there will be no play for any competition on that individual ground for that day. However, matches may still proceed on the ground on the following day if the ground is then fit for play.
- Referees are requested to please **DO NOT TELEPHONE** the Match Official Appointments Officer to determine whether grounds are unfit for play unless it is an emergency. The Wet Weather Page on your Zone Websites or Squadi notification is for your information.
- In the event of wet weather during a match, referees who have been appointed to local Inter-District Joint Competition matches must determine if their ground is unfit for play.

PLAYERS EQUIPMENT

- Referees and assistant referees are reminded of their responsibility to thoroughly check all players' equipment before each match to ensure that it conforms to the Laws of the Game and is not dangerous in any way to any players or officials. In Inter-District Joint Competition matches, if a clash of colour of team playing strips occurs, the team listed on the team sheet as the **home team** shall change to an alternate strip in all cases.

KICK-OFF TIMES

- In Inter-District Joint Competition matches, the advertised starting time for a fixture is the time that the match should commence, and referees must make every effort to make this happen.
- If through no fault of the referee, a fixture starts later than the advertised time, then where necessary, an **equal** amount of time (**not exceeding five minutes from each half**) should be deducted so that the next match can start closer to its correct commencement time. The team officials of both teams **must** be informed by the referee or senior assistant referee of the deduction of playing time **prior** to the commencement of the match.
- If a match which commences late is the last or only match to be played on the ground for that day, then the full duration of that match **must** still be played.

FORFEITS

- Where there is a forfeit claimed in any Inter-District Joint Competition match, due to either or both teams not having the minimum required number of seven (7) players, all players from both teams who are present and ready to participate in the match must be listed on the Squadi team sheet.
- **Ten (10) minutes grace** is permitted after the commencement time of the match before a forfeit may be claimed. When a forfeit is claimed, the referee is to make a notation on the back of the team sheet giving details that a forfeit has been claimed and the reason for the claim. **The referee does not declare that a team has won or lost the match by forfeit.** The referee is to sign the back and front of the team sheet.

ABANDONMENTS

- When a match is abandoned for any reason, the referee **must** record a brief report on the abandonment in

the Referees Report section on the team sheet. The score of the match, at the time of the abandonment, **must** be recorded on the team sheet.

- The referee **must** telephone the Match Official Appointments and Administration Officer to report the abandonment, within 24 hours of the match in question. An Incident Report outlining the circumstances causing the abandonment will be required by the Joint Zone. Referees are required to submit an Incident Report which **must be** lodged within 24 hours after the Match Completion.

CAUTIONS

- The names, numbers and club names of **all cautioned players and team officials** are to be recorded on the team sheet together with the appropriate caution code. Referees who fail to record the details of cautioned players and team officials fully and correctly on the team sheet are liable to be disciplined by the Joint Zones.
- The marking of the square indicating a Red or Yellow card that has been given is to be indicated at the top right-hand corner of the Team Sheet.

SEND-OFFS

- The **names, numbers and club names of all dismissed players and team officials** are to be recorded on the team sheet together with the appropriate send-off code. This Information is important for Disciplinary to complete the process.
- The referee should comply with any reasonable request by a team official after a match to be informed of the details of the send-off code of **any dismissed player or other team official** from his or her team.
- Referees are urged to ensure that they have correctly recorded all the details of dismissed players and team officials in their match record books or taken a photograph of both sides of the team sheet, as soon as the match has ended. By doing this, the referee will have all relevant details available to him or her when the Referee Send-Off Report is completed afterwards.
- Referees who fail to record the details of dismissed players and team officials fully and correctly on the team sheet or in Referee Send-Off Reports are liable to be disciplined by the Joint Zones. Reminder all Reports need to be Submitted within 24 hours after the completion of the Match.

REFEREE SEND-OFF REPORTS

- Referee Send-Off Reports must be completed and submitted by referees in all instances when they have dismissed a player or team official from the field. Assistant referees and fourth officials are required to submit a Referee Send-Off Report when specifically requested to do so by the Referee or by Disciplinary if further Information is needed when involved in the incident which related to the dismissal of the player or team official.
- Completed Referee Send-Off Reports must be in the possession of the Competition Disciplinary Officer no later than 24 hours after the Completion of the Match.
- Referees who are responsible for the late submission or non-submission of Referee Send-Off Reports or for any incorrect or incomplete details in Referee Send-Off Reports, are liable to be disciplined by the Joint Zones.
- Send off Reports are available on the Squadi app.

INCIDENT REPORTS

- Referees who are submitting Incident Reports on unfit or poor ground conditions, crowd unrest, abandonments or any other serious matter **must** telephone the Match Official Appointments and Administration Officer to report this fact within 24 hours of the match in question. Failure to do so by the referee will result in the member being liable to be disciplined by our Joint Zone.
- Completed Incident Reports **must** be in the possession of the Competition Administrator Disciplinary Officer **no later than 24 hours after the Completion of the Match.**
- Referees who are responsible for the late submission or non-submission of Incident Reports or for any incorrect or incomplete details in Incident Reports, are liable to be disciplined by Joint Zone.
- Disciplinary is unable to complete their duties appropriately if Reports are not placed in on time and completed correctly.
- Incident Reports are available online on the Zones websites.

SECURITY OF BELONGINGS

- To prevent any possible theft, referees are strongly encouraged to never leave their **money, wallets, mobile telephones, expensive clothing or other valuables** in the referees' dressing room whilst they are on the field officiating. These items should be stored in referees' motor vehicles at the ground or left in a safe place in the custody of the home club. Alternatively, if the door of the referees' dressing room can be locked, referees should ask the home club to provide a key to the room so that it can be securely locked whilst the match officials are officiating.

PLAYING DURATION

Under 12	2 equal periods of 25 minutes
Under 13, 14	2 equal periods of 30 minutes
Under 15, 16	2 equal periods of 35 minutes
Under 17, 18, 19, 20	2 equal periods of 40 minutes
All Age Division A	2 equal periods of 45 minutes
All Age – Other Divisions	2 equal periods of 40 minutes
Over 30 – All Divisions	2 equal periods of 40 minutes
Over 35 – All Divisions	2 equal periods of 40 minutes
Over 45 – All Divisions	2 equal periods of 40 minutes

MATCH BALL SIZES

Under 12, 13	Size 4	25 – 26 inches or 63 – 66 cms
Under 14 to All Age, Over 30, Over 35 and Over 45	Size 5	27 – 28 inches or 67 – 72 cms

GOAL KICKS

Under 12 to All Age, Over 30, Over 35 and Over 45	Taken from within the goal area in accordance with law
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CORNER KICKS

Under 12 to All Age, Over 30, Over 35 and Over 45	Taken from the corner arc in accordance with law
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BENCH SYSTEM

- The Bench System operates during all matches in the Inter-District Joint Competition. The bench provided for each team must be capable of seating the team officials and interchange players. All persons must remain seated or stand immediately behind the bench during the match. **Team officials must wear their identification tags**, or they are not permitted at the bench area during the match. **No other person** apart from the team officials and interchange players is to be at the bench area during the match. For matches in the Inter-District Joint Competition, each team is entitled to a maximum of **three (3) team officials** at the bench area, if all of the team officials are wearing their **identification tags**.
- Controlled limited coaching is permitted from the bench or technical area by **one team official**.
- Any infringements by any person in the technical area is not to be tolerated and may result in the offender being cautioned with a yellow card or sent off with a red card, with the caution or send off then recorded by the referee on the team sheet. A send-off report must be submitted.

PLAYER INTERCHANGE RULE

- The Interchange Rule operates during **all** matches in the Inter-District Joint Competition. The substitution rule does not apply in these competitions.
- Interchange is limited to five players (that is, eleven (11) players start the match, five (5) others can be used as interchanges).
- The number of times that interchange occurs during a match has no limitation. However, interchange can only occur at a break in play and is controlled by the referee. The player coming onto the field must do so from the special interchange zone marked as a one (1) metre square just off the field on either side of the halfway line on the bench side of the field. The player leaving the field to be interchanged is to leave promptly by the most direct route to the interchange zone.
- An injured player being interchanged may be removed from the field of play by the most direct and convenient route, with the permission of the referee.

GROUND DUTY OFFICERS

- All Clubs must have an easily identifiable Ground Duty Officer in action during matches at their grounds. The Ground Duty Officer must be always available during all matches to deal with any problems as they arise and to provide any assistance needed by the match officials. The Ground Duty Officer **must** wear the vest marked "Duty Officer" which has been provided to all clubs.
- Players and team officials who are participating in a match in that capacity are not permitted to also act as the Ground Duty Officer in the same match.
- The Joint Zones require that referees **report in the designated space on the team sheet** whenever a club does not have a readily identifiable Ground Duty Officer present and officiating at the ground during matches.

REFEREE'S UNIFORM

- Referees must be neatly and professionally always attired when officiating. The official uniform of the association **must** be worn by referees on all occasions when officiating on matches. It comprises of:
 - An Umbro brand referee's shirt, being black, yellow, red or sky blue in colour **(and which must be always tucked into the shorts)**,

- An Umbro pair of referee's shorts, being black in colour.
 - An approved pair of referee's socks, being either all black, or black with white trim.
 - All black footwear with black laces or predominantly black footwear with black laces. (Grey, white, silver or another coloured footwear is not permitted. Basketball boots, gym boots, Ugg boots and any form of boots other than sports boots are also not acceptable footwear).
 - An official referee's cap or an all-black cap (without logos or emblems) or an all-black headband or a three-quarter length clear plastic raincoat may be worn by referees and assistant referees when officiating, as required.
- The only brand of referee shirt which our referees will be permitted to wear when officiating is Umbro.
 - Referees **must not wear** sunglasses when officiating, unless the sunglasses are medically prescribed, and approval has been given to the member to wear them. An approved tracksuit may be worn by assistant referees when officiating, but only during cold or wet weather. Referees may wear a tracksuit top or spray jacket when officiating, but **only when it is raining**. If wearing long skins on their arms, the skins worn by the referee must be the same colour as the shirt worn by the referee. Long skins are not permitted to be worn beneath the referee's shorts.
 - Referees when officiating are not permitted to wear rings or studs or any other form of jewellery in their ears, or on any other part of their face or any other visible part of their body.
 - Referees are not permitted to carry onto the field or use **a mobile telephone under any circumstances**.
 - When referees are present at matches in the capacity of player, team official or club official, they are forbidden to wear the official uniform of the association.
 - In the event of a clash of colour with the shirt worn by the match officials and the playing strip of one or both participating teams, the match officials are permitted to either change into an approved referee's shirt of a different colour, or to wear a bib or jacket over their referee's shirt.
 - Referees, who when officiating, fail to comply with the dress regulations of the association are likely to be required to show cause why they should not be disciplined by the Joint Zones.

JUDICIARY AND APPEALS HEARINGS

- Referees may be required to attend Interdistrict or Northern NSW Football judiciary and appeals hearings, but only if notified. When required to attend, referees shall be accompanied by a member of the Referees branch.
- If a Referee is required to attend any judiciary or appeals hearing, then the member concerned is not permitted to officiate on matches instead of attending the judiciary or appeals meeting.

TEAM SHEETS

- Space is provided on the Squadi team sheets used in the Inter-District Joint Competition for both teams to list up to five (5) interchange players only.
- Unless marked on the Team Sheet as a Borrowed Player the first eleven (11) players listed on the Squadi team sheet for each team **need not** be the first eleven (11) players to take the field. Furthermore, the player numbers in the first eleven (11) spaces on the Squadi team sheet need not be 1 to 11. Space is provided for each player's number to be completed. Player numbers on the team sheet **must** match their shirt numbers. Multi Registered Players can be listed anywhere on the Squadi team sheet.
- The names of the team officials for both teams are to be recorded by them in the appropriate section on the

Squadi team sheet. **Referees must check before the start of every match that the names of the team officials for both sides have been recorded on the Squadi team sheet.**

- In all matches, only players and interchange players whose names appear on the team sheet at the commencement of the match (it does not matter whether they have signed) are permitted to participate in that game. If a player or interchange player arrives late at the ground and his or her name was not on the team sheet at the commencement of the fixture, then **under no circumstances** may he or she play in that match.
- If a player or interchange player arrives late at the ground and his or her name was on the team sheet at the commencement of the fixture, then the player may enter the field to participate in the game during a stoppage in play **at any time during the match (even if there are only a matter of minutes left in the match).**
- At the completion of the match, the referee must record the number of **goals** scored during the match. The details of cautions, send-offs, forfeits, abandonments, serious injuries, or any other serious misconduct are to be recorded on the Squadi team sheet by the referee.
- **The referee should show the completed team sheet to the assistant referees so that they can check to ensure that no errors or omissions have occurred.**
- If the match was abandoned, the score at the time of the abandonment must be recorded on the team sheet by the referee. Also noting the time of the abandonment in the referee's report section
- **Referees and assistant referees must keep all their completed match record cards until the season has ended.** This ensures that if there are any subsequent disputes about the final score of a match or the identity of a cautioned or dismissed player, referees can provide appropriate evidence.
- Referees who fail to fully and correctly complete details on the team sheet are liable to be disciplined by Competition Administrator Disciplinary.

REFEREE SUSPENSIONS

- Referees who are also actively engaged as players, team officials, club officials or supporters and who receive a suspension by any football body or football refereeing body will have such suspension automatically recognised by the Joint Zones. Such referees are not eligible to be appointed to matches nor have the approval of the association to officiate on matches until their suspension is served in full.
- Any Referee who is sent from the field of play whilst playing, or acting as a team official, or who is suspended from playing, or as a team official, must inform Match Official Appointments Officer immediately of this fact so that the member concerned can be immediately removed from all further referees' appointments for the duration of the member's suspension from playing or acting as a team official.
- A Referee who is sent off as a player or team official, or suspended from playing or acting as a team official, and who fails to immediately inform the association of this fact is likely to be required to show cause why he or she should not be disciplined by the Joint Zones

BEST WISHES

On behalf of Macquarie Football, Newcastle Football & Hunter Valley Football, we wish all referees a very successful and rewarding 2024 season, no matter whether you are a match official, assessor, referee coach or mentor. Enjoy what you do, be proud of your invaluable contribution to the local football community, and accept our heartfelt thanks for your service, and support of your association.