

## 2. KEY VARIATIONS FROM 2025 BY-LAWS

Clause	Change(s) Made	Addition/ Removal/ Modification	Explanation
1.1	For AFL Nines competitions, added in AFL Nines Rules and National Community Football Policy Handbook	Addition	-Added for easy reference.
9.26	Add in that league logo can be on a front leg of a team shorts.	Modification	-Historically clubs have had their own logos on either leg of shorts.
11.4 and 13.11	Changing the margin threshold for when adverse weather or an injury stops a match, for finals matches, from 36 points to 18 points.	Modification	-Reducing the margin threshold reduces the need to replay finals matches mid-week, which is challenging to accommodate and physically demanding for players. It is extremely unlikely that are a margin over 36 points would be overcome.
14.1	U8 Mixed player numbers to be changed from 14 (min)/18 (max) to 12 (min)/16 (max).	Modification	-Reduce player density, allowing each player on the field to get more touches and opportunities to score.  -Supports smaller clubs with trying to establish new teams.  -Having a minimum of 12 supports clubs with large numbers in U8 to go skinny with their teams, thus maximising match time (with the ability to freely have players play 2 games a weekend in modified rules as per current Bylaws). For example, with 25 players in an U8 squad, clubs could effectively run 2 teams rather than 1 large team.
14.1.1 and 14.1.2	Added in subclauses where matches can be played with extra numbers on the field in the following instances:  -Competitions with maximum 12 allowed on	Addition	-Allows instances where teams both have large number of players on the bench to play with additional numbers, increasing match time for all in the team.

	<p>field can play with 14 on field if 18 players on each team sheet at start of match.</p> <p>-Competitions with maximum 16 allowed on field can play with 18 on field if 22 players on each team sheet at start of match.</p>		<p>-It was decided that rather than requiring teams to organise on the day, which potentially could lead to disagreements when one team refuses to play extra players, these subclauses provide parameters for when extra players can be put on the field.</p> <p>-These numbers have been chosen for two reasons – 1) modified and U11 girls are played on modified fields, therefore prevents significant overcrowding on the field and 2) ensures clubs are protected from themselves, having benches with a minimum of 4 players at the start of the match in case of injuries.</p>
18.2	<p>Changed wording regarding the concussion protocols, from 'deemed to be concussed' to be 'suspected to be concussed'</p>	Modification	<p>-Greater clarity on expectations of officials/clubs when assessing players that have suffered head knocks.</p> <p>-Aligns with the AFL's concussion messaging 'if in doubt, sit them out'.</p> <p>NOTE – further Bylaw updates likely regarding concussion management, in line with new concussion reporting feature in PlayHQ.</p> <p>If changes made, they would be presented at Club Conference.</p>
20.3	<p>Rename Coach Development Program to Youth Coaching Program.</p>	Modification	<p>-This program name was changed to differentiate the program of similar name run by AFL Victoria.</p>
20.3 & 10.10	<p>Allowing a second assistant coach on the bench (three coaches in total), provided</p>	Addition	<p>-Supported by AFL Victoria, the reason behind the proposal is to provide more</p>

	<p>one of the three coaches identifies as a Women/Girl or Gender Diverse person.</p> <p>This additional Coach may perform any coaching role; this may be a Head Coach or an Assistant Coaching role.</p>		<p>Women and Girls opportunities to be involved in Coaching in Community Football, whilst also retaining those already in the system. This will encourage more positive and inclusive environments in clubs and junior football competitions.</p> <p>-A similar Bylaw is being adopted in other community football competitions.</p>
20.4-20.5	<p>Prescribing which Officials are allowed in the space between the boundary line and the outer perimeter of the oval (i.e., perimeter fencing).</p>	Addition	<p>-This is a safety piece to ensure photographers, including those accredited by the SMJFL, do not obstruct in the way of players and officials performing their duties.</p> <p>-Anecdotal evidence to suggest there has been near-misses with collisions involving photographers.</p>
20.15 & 10.10	<p>Runners not allowed in Modified Rules games.</p>	Addition	<p>-Runners in modified rules games often get in the way. Removing them allows players to play the game themselves.</p> <p>-Grounds are small enough for coaches to communicate messages from the Team Bench area.</p> <p>-Removes one volunteer role required to be filled by teams, which is beneficial with age groups with small player numbers.</p>
20.16, 20.17 and 20.18	<p>Opportunities for runners to enter the field of play reduced to align with water carriers – only when a set shot on goal is taken, after a goal has been scored or to assist removing a player safely from the ground.</p>	Modification/addition	<p>-Runner is the cause of most friction between teams on match days, including being on the field for too long, coaching, verbally abusing players and officials, getting in the way of play.</p>

25	Clarifying which rule variations apply to what age groups/competitions.	Modification	-Provide greater clarity
43 Appendix 3 - Fines	Increase in number of penalty units for an incorrect team sheet – from 2 to 4 penalty units	Modification	-To further disincentivise clubs from submitting incorrect information on the team sheet. We feel the previous penalty of 2 units doesn't do justice to the seriousness of this misdemeanour.
44 Appendix 4 – 1.2 (a-c)	<p>Modification of Bylaw – in girls' competitions, players will be locked out of lower ranked competitions once they have played a total of 8 matches in a higher ranked competition (up from 6 matches).</p> <p>NOTE – players in girls' competitions can still only play 6 matches in U19/senior competitions before being unable to return to the SMJFL competition.</p> <p>This is for those players not on an RPL.</p>	Modification	-These Bylaws have been adjusted to support girls' football at clubs by giving them greater player movement flexibility. Girls' squad sizes are typically lower than mixed/boy's squad sizes and some clubs only have girls' teams in every second age group.
44 Appendix 4 1.4 (a)	Only 6 players required to be submitted for RPL in 16-a-side competition	Modification	<p>-This Bylaw has been adjusted to support girls' football by giving clubs greater player movement flexibility and providing more players developmentally appropriate playing opportunities.</p> <p>-Given in relative terms girls' football is still in its infancy, there is not the same depth of talent across most of the teams as boys/mixed teams. As such, there are players who previously may be the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> best player, who should not be on an RPL, that were required to be in 2024 and 2025. These players who</p>

			ended up on RPLs anecdotally do not have an enjoyable football experience.
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