



2024
QUEENSLAND WHEELCHAIR FOOTBALL LEAGUE



2024
BY-LAWS



These By-Laws relating to the Pathways to Care Queensland Wheelchair Football League have been formalised to provide official and binding rules for competing teams. Governed by the AFL, the Pathways to Care Queensland Wheelchair Football League provide footballers with a physical disability the opportunity to participate in Australian Football at the highest level in the State. It is the responsibility of each competing team to ensure that all appointed officials and players are fully aware of the contents of these By-Laws to enable the competition to be conducted efficiently and in the true spirit of sportsmanship.

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1. DEFINITIONS

The competition will be conducted by the AFL, who may determine any matter related to the competition, unless the determination of such matter is otherwise specifically provided for in these By-Laws or the policy handbook.

2. NAMING RIGHTS

The competition must be referred to be all associated parties at the 2024 Pathways to Care Queensland Wheelchair Football League in all written communication (other than these by-laws).

3. MANAGEMENT

The competition will be conducted by the AFL, who may determine any matter related to the competition, unless the determination of such matter is otherwise specifically provided for in these By-Laws or the National Community Football Policy Handbook.

5. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY AND/OR CLASSIFICATION

To compete in the competition, the following eligibility and classifications will apply:

- (a)** A player must be 16 years old as at the commencement date of the competition unless otherwise approved by the AFL in exceptional and compelling circumstances.
- (b)** Players with and without disability will be eligible to play, in the competition.

6. TEAMS

A total of four (4) teams will participate in the competition, representing the following community clubs.

- (a)** Beenleigh Buffaloes
- (b)** Morningside Panthers
- (c)** Ormeau Bulldogs
- (d)** Redcliffe Tigers

7. SQUAD SIZE

Each team may include a maximum of ten (10) players in each of its competition matches (submitted via PlayHQ). Each team must always have five (5) players on the playing court during each match, unless approved by the AFL in exceptional and compelling circumstances.

Clubs may match day permit players to ensure the five (5) on-court numbers are reached and this player, must not have represented Queensland in the previous year.

8. LIST MANAGEMENT

The AFL will competitively balance teams prior to player registrations opening for season 2024. Each team will have a minimum of one female player and two Queensland squad members from the previous years.

New players, can enter the draft pool or select a club of choice.

9. DRAFT

The draft will be activated when eight or more players, have selected to enter the draft with no club of preference. Ten (10) days out from the opening the round, the draft will be held virtually with Player-Coaches to select players in the following order (based on previous season placings).

Pick #1 - Ormeau Bulldogs

Pick #2 - Beenleigh Buffaloes

Pick #3 - Redcliffe Tigers

Pick #4 - Morningside Panthers

Where the minimum number hasn't been reached for the draft to be activated, the AFL will assign players to community clubs.

10. PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

All players must comply with the code of conduct set out in the National Community Football Policy Handbook. Failure to do so may result in removal from the competition or other disciplinary action under these By-Laws or the Policy Handbook.

11. COACHES AND OFFICIALS CODE OF CONDUCT

All coaches and football officials must comply with the code of conduct set out in the National Community Football Policy Handbook. Failure to do so may result in removal from the competition or other disciplinary action under these By-Laws or the Policy Handbook.

12. COMPETITION FORMAT

(a) The AFL shall be responsible for determining the Competition fixture and may amend the fixture from time to time at their absolute discretion.

(b) Round one (1), two (2), three (3) and four (4), will be fixtured with three (3) matches will be fixtured as a lightning rounds, where games will be managed in accordance with By-Law 21.

(c) At the conclusion of the lightning rounds, teams will be placed for finals, determined by the team's total competition points.

Finals will include the following matches

- **(i)** 1st v 2nd - Semi Final (SF)
- (Winner progresses to Grand Final)
- **(ii)** 3rd v 4th - Elimination Final (EF)
- (Winner progresses and loser is eliminated)
- **(iii)** SF loser v EF winner - Preliminary Final (PF)
- (Winner progresses and loser is eliminated)

The Grand Final will be between the team that wins the semi-final and preliminary final

13. COMPETITION POINTS

(a) Competition points will be awarded for all lightning round fixtures as follows:

- **(i)** Win = 4 points
- **(ii)** Draw = 2 points
- **(iii)** Loss = 0 points
- **(iv)** Forfeit to = 4 points
- **(v)** Forfeit against = 0 points

(b) In the case that two (2) or more teams finish on the same number of points after the lightning rounds, the team(s) with the higher percentage will finish higher on the ladder.

14. DRAWN MATCH

(a) In the event of a drawn match during the lightning rounds, the draw will stand and competition points for the match will be allocated in accordance with By-Law 13 (a).

(b) In the event of a drawn match during finals, teams will take a 5 minute break following the siren, before entering extra time, where two additional halves of five (5) minutes each will be played (with a two minute break for half-time)

(c) If the scores are tied at the end of extra time, play will resume two (2) minutes after the final siren and the team that scores first will be declared the winner.

15. AWARDS

(a) The following trophies and awards shall be awarded for the competition.

- **(i)** Premiers Cup
- **(ii)** Premiers Medallions
- **(iii)** Leading goal scorer
- **(iv)** Best on Ground Medallion - Grand Final
- **(v)** Most Valuable Player (MVP) Medal for competition
- **(vi)** Team of the Competition, five (5) players and one (1) coach.

(b) Leading goal scorer award will be awarded to the player who scores the highest total of goals during the competition for the lightning rounds.

(c) The best on ground award will be voted on by an independent three person panel during the Grand-Final.

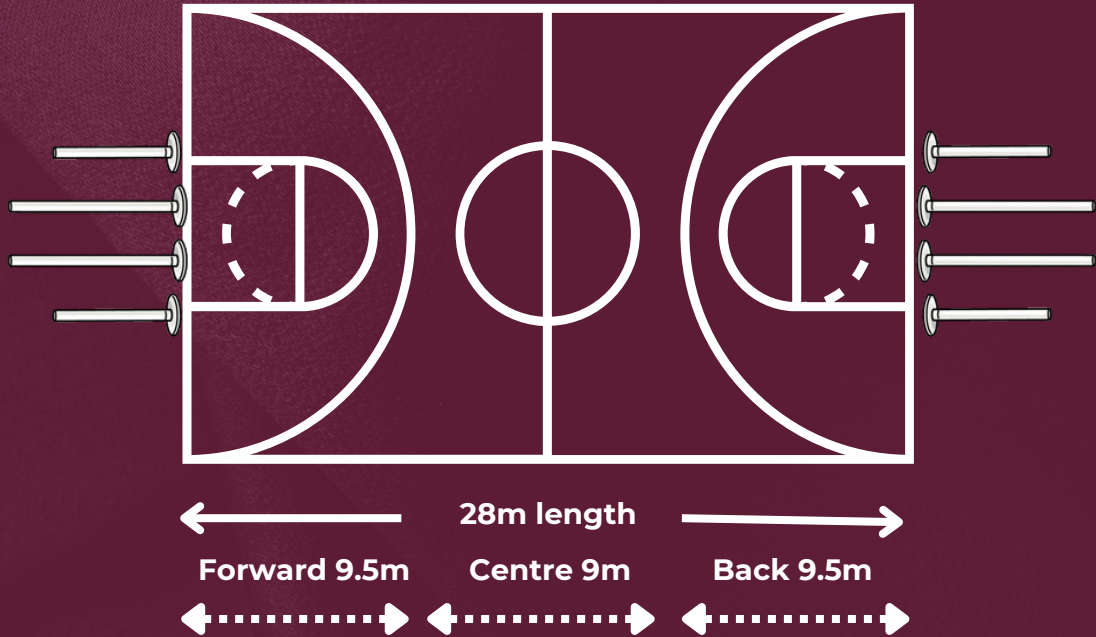
(d) The MVP award will be voted on by an independent panel during the lightning rounds that includes AFL officials and/or the umpires officiating in that match.

(e) The team of the competition will comprise the best performing players and coach during the competition lightning rounds and finals and will be determined by the AFL in consultation with the Head Coaches of all teams.

The team of the competition will include five (5) players and one (1) coach.

16. PLAYING COURT

Each match will be played on a basketball court, as per the specifications in the below diagram. Goal/behind posts are 1.5m apart from centre of post to centre of post



17. ZONES

There are designated zones (forward, centre and defence) on each playing court (as per By-Law 16) which dictate where assigned players can play. Refer to player movement and scoring provisions.

(a) Two (2) forwards. Can only move in the forward or centre zones, on the designated forwards can score.

(b) Two (2) defenders. Can only move in the centre and back zones.

(c) One (1) centre. Can move in all zones.

18. IDENTIFYING PLAYERS

(a) Each player will wear coloured wristbands to identify their playing positions. Each player is to wear a thick wristband (as approved by the AFL) on each wrist.

Red = defender, Yellow = Centre, Blue/Green = Forward

(b) Should a player not be wearing a wristband on each wrist, a free kick against will be awarded against the offending team.

19. WHEELCHAIR SPECIFICATIONS

All wheelchairs used by players in the competition must meet the following requirements.

(a) All players wheelchairs must be equipped with a seat strap and players must wear the strap at all times while playing.

(b) Wheelchair foot bars must be adjusted so the feet sit behind the edge of the bar.

(c) All wheelchairs must have one or two anti-tip devices utilising no more than a total of two small castors attached to either frame or rear axle and located at the rear of the wheelchair.

(d) The anti-tip devices must not protrude pass the line of the rear wheels and castors must be no more than 2cm off the floor.

(e) All wheelchairs must have a front fender bar, no more than 11cm to centre of bar off the floor.

(f) Rear wheels must be no more than a maximum of 27inches in diameter.

(g) Maximum height of wheelchair frame including cushion 58cm

(h) Wheelchair must have no protruding footplates or parts

(i) Tyres may be coloured as long as they don't mark the court

(j) If a wheelchair has a rear bar it must be covered with a soft material

(k) Player's will not be allowed to play in their everyday wheelchair.

(l) All sharp or protruding parts must be covered with padding.

(m) All chairs to be reviewed prior and during competition

20. FOOTBALL REQUIREMENTS

The footballs used in each match will be as follows:
Synthetic Sherrin Size 5, preferably red in colour.

21. LENGTH AND TIMING OF MATCHES

(a) All matches will be played with no time on. The only time the clock may be stopped during a match will be as follows.

- **(i)** Lightning Rounds/Finals - In the final half, should the umpire suspend play when a player falls from their chair for safety concerns, the umpires must call time off. It is the responsibility of the time-keeper to activate time off and on, following the umpires signal.
- **(ii)** Finals - In the final half (quarter two & three), after any score. The clock is to stop after the goal umpire signal, with the clock to turn back on once the ball is brought back into play following a behind. Or, once the ball leaves the field umpires hand at the centre ball up following a goal.
- **(iii)** Finals - At the umpire's discretion to uphold the integrity of the match (e.g time wasting/injury)

Should a team query whether the clock should be stopped, they teams captain may approach the field umpire first, who will then consult with the timekeeper. Teams are to not approach the timekeeper. The field umpire has the power to adjust the time clock in conjunction with AFL match manager.

21. CONTINUED....

(b) The length of and breaks in matches will be as follows:

- **(i)** Lightning Rounds: Four (4), 7 minute quarters with three (3) minute quarter and three quarter time and five (5) minute halftime.
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- **(ii)** Finals: Four (4), 8.5 minute quarters with three (3) minute quarter and three quarter time and five (5) minute halftime.
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- **(iii)** Grand Final: Four (4) 10 minute quarters with four (4) minute quarter and three quarter time and six (6) minute halftime.

(c) Timekeepers shall sound the siren (1 blast) one (1) minute prior to and at the commencement of time of each quarter/half.

(d) Teams are not permitted to leave the playing court during any of the intervals.

22. RULE ADAPTIONS

The competition will adhere to the Laws of Australian Football with the following adaptations and adjustments:

(a) Disposal

- **(i)** A handball is equivalent to a kick, and a single-handed underarm throw is equivalent to a handball in AFL Wheelchair.
- **(ii)** A player's arm when throwing the ball must remain under shoulder height for the disposal to be legal. A double-handed chest pass is classed as an illegal disposal. Handing the football to another player is also illegal disposal.
- **(iii)** Should a player not have full mobility to complete a handball, an exception can be made for that player, through a discussion with the umpire.
- **(iv)** Kicking is prohibited.

(b) Scoring: A goal is scored when the football is handballed completely over the goal line by a forward player of the attacking team, without being touched by any other player, even if the football first touches the ground.

(c) Bouncing: Players have the option of bouncing the ball the traditional way (bouncing or tapping on the ground) or by touching the ball on top of the wheel of their wheelchair.

22. RULE ADAPTIONS... CONT.

(d) Too far: There is no limit to the number of bounces a player can take before they dispose of the ball. Players must bounce the ball after three (3) pushes/wheelchair change in direction, or covered ten (10) metres across the court, whichever comes first.

For the purposes of this By-Law, a player shall be deemed to be in possession of the football during the period when the player disposes of the football to themselves and regains possession without the football touching the ground.

(e) Ball Up: Each team must have no more than one player contesting any centre bounce or throw-up and both centre players must contest the ruck.

- **(i)** Each team is permitted to have one additional player in the centre zone for a ball up.
- **(ii)** Should a team have more than one additional player in the centre zone during a ball up, a free kick will be awarded against the offending team.
- **(iii)** A ball up may also be called by the umpires if they deem: multiple players have the ball and the ball is not moving or a player has wheeled on top of the football with players surrounding.
- **(iv)** A field umpire shall award a free kick in a ruck contest against a player where the player: who is not a ruck and contests a ball-up. Unduly pushes or bumps/blocks an opposition ruck.

22. RULE ADAPPTIONS... CONT.

(f) Rushed Behind: Players shall be encouraged to keep the football in play. The umpire shall award a free kick against a player from the defending team who intentionally handballs or forces the football over the attacking team's goal line or behind line or onto one of the attacking team's goal posts, and the player.

- **(i)** Is greater than two (2) metres (length of goal square) from the goal or behind line.
- **(ii)** Is not under immediate physical pressure; has had time and space to dispose of the football or from a ruck contest, hits the football over the goal or behind line on the full.
- **(iii)** A free kick shall be taken from the middle of the goal line if the football crossed the goal line or hit the goal post, or at the point where the football crossed the behind line.

(g) Player falling out of chair: If a player falls out of their chair during play, the umpire will immediately suspend play if there is any safety concerns to the fallen player. Refer to length and timing of matches for when the clock should be stopped.

(i) If there is no immediate danger to player safety, play will continue until next stoppage or player safety is a concern.

(ii) If a player falls out of their chair to gain possession of the ball, or by falling keeps opponents from gaining possession of the ball, a free kick is awarded to the opposing team.

22. RULE ADAPTIONS... CONT.

(h) Tackling: Tackling is prohibited, a free kick is to be awarded against a shoulder a player tackle another player.

- **(i)** The equivalent to a tackle is a touch with one or two hands. You can't grab the player or their wheelchair.
- **(ii)** The umpire is to yell 'tackle' once they feel the ball carrier has been touched/tackled.

(i) Holding the ball: Should the player have prior opportunity to dispose of the ball, prior to being tackled/touched and doesn't, a free kick is to be awarded to the tackling player.

- **(i)** For no prior opportunity, and the ball carrier is touched/tackled, the ball carrier must dispose of the ball within three (3) seconds before 'holding the ball' is awarded.
- **(ii)** In the situation where a player is receiving the ball, and is immediately touched/tackled once taking possession of the football, but the ball carrier breaks away from the tackler into open space, the ball carrier will only have three (3) seconds to dispose of the ball before holding the ball is called. This is regardless of, if the player who applied the touch/tackle is not in close proximate of the ball carrier.

22. RULE ADAPTIONS... CONT.

- **(iii)** Holding the ball will also be awarded for any player that takes the ball out of the ruck contest.

(j) Holding the player: A player must not hold another player, with any part of their wheelchair or body, that will impede a player moving in any direction. PUSHing and pulling of the player constitutes the same as holding.

- **(i)** A team double teaming an opponent, for example sandwiching between two wheelchairs, which results in locking down the opponent's position on the court, is not permitted. Players who are double teaming must allow their opponent adequate space to move.

(k) Charging/Bumping: A player cannot charge or bump a stationary player in a reckless manner and must avoid contact where possible when travelling at speed/with momentum. At no time can a player bump another player in the rear axle of the chair.

- **(i)** A player is not permitted to make contact with an opposing player's wheelchair such that the wheelchair is made to rotate in the horizontal or vertical plane in a way that places the opposing player's safety at risk.
- **(ii)** A player cannot continuously ram their opponent to gain their position on the field. Initial contact can be made without the contact being reckless, however a free kick is to be paid should a player continuously pull their wheelchair back and ram their opponent.

22. RULE ADAPTIONS... CONT.

(l) Push in the back: Should a player push their opposition in the back, a free kick is to be awarded against the infringed player.

(m) Scoring Zones: Scoring can only take place within the forward and centre zones, this includes from outside the boundary, last touch out of bounds free kick by the designated forward.

- **(i)** In the situation where the centre or defender in possession of the football rolls across their oppositions goal line, whilst under pressure, a rush behind is to be awarded. This includes for ineffective disposes or fumble of the ball, causing the ball to cross the oppositions goal line.

22. RULE ADAPTIONS... CONT.

(n) Zones: If a player accidentally moves into a zone they are not allowed to enter and do not impact play, can immediately move out without a free kick being awarded. A player's momentum can sometimes bring them forward into a disallowed zone - but must be in their allowed zone to pass the ball.

- **(i)** Should a player be in a zone which they are not allowed to enter, and do impact the play, a free kick is to be awarded against the infringed player.

(o) Shepherding: A player can shepherd the ball carrier, provided they are within three (3) metres of the ball carrier. The shepherding player must not bring the opposition player to a complete stop otherwise it will be classed as "blocking".

- **(i)** Should the shepherding player shepherd in a reckless manner, a free kick will be awarded against the shepherding player.
- **(ii)** Further to this, a free kick will be awarded to the opposition, if a player blocks an opposition from reaching a contest where the ball is within a three (3) metre radius of the player's.
- **(iii)** A player cannot prevent an opposition player from attacking the football by block the path of the player.
- *Example: If a player attempts to place their wheelchair in front of their opponent's wheelchair, however doesn't reach the spot on the court before their opponent and causes their opponents wheelchair to stop, a free kick will be awarded against the player for blocking.*

22. RULE ADAPTIONS... CONT.

- **(iv)** A player can prevent an opposition player from attacking the football by finding 'good chair position' without making contact.
- *Example: If a player stops their wheelchair in front of their opponent's wheelchair, before their opponent to make contact with their wheelchair no free kick for blocking will be awarded and good chair position will be deemed.*

(p) Wheelchair Obstruction: A players backside must not rise from the seat of their wheelchair, should a player lift off their set, a free kick is to be awarded against the infringed player's. This is deemed unfair advantage.

- **(i)** If possible, both feet should be placed on the footplate. If a player is deemed to use movements to their advantage to gain possession or dispose of the ball a free kick may be awarded to the opposing team.

(q) Out of bounds: the last touched rule will be in effect. The ball must be completely cross the line. Should a player manage to keep the ball in ball but their wheelchair is out of bounds, this will be deemed play on. If the umpire is unsure, a ball up will take place two (2) metres in from the boundary line.

- **(i)** The closest player to the ball must take the free kick.
- **(ii)** If a forward is the closest player to where the ball went out of bounds within the scoring zone and the siren sounds, the forward can have a shot on goal.

22. RULE ADAPTIONS... CONT.

- **(iii)** If a centre is closest to the ball when it went out of bounds and the siren sounds, then the quarter is finished.
- **(iv)** In the situation where a player deliberately throws or handpasses the football into an oppositions wheelchair, causing the football to cross the boundary, last touch is not to be awarded and a free kick against is to be awarded against the player who completed the deliberate act.

(r) Marking: A mark is awarded to a player who marks the ball from a handball, that has travelled at least three (3) metres and has not been touched.

(s) 5 metre penalty: A 5-metre penalty may be applied on top of a free kick at the umpire's discretion. If the penalty is given to whereby a player cannot go (eg back into forward zone), the ball can be taken by the forward and is permitted to have a shot on goal.

(t) Playing on from a behind: Following a score of a point, the player may roll out of their defensive goal square once the goal umpire has signalled a behind. Defender or centre may bring the ball back into play. The mark will be set 2metre back from the top of the goal square.

(u) In Danger: A player second to the contest, has a duty of care to protect the hands and head of the player first to the contest.

22. RULE ADAPTIONS... CONT.

(v) Set Shot at Goal: Players have 15 seconds from the time the umpire sets the mark to have a shot at goal. Should the player not dispose of the ball in time, play on will be called.

(w) Interchange: Interchange of palyer's can occur at anytime during the match. Player's must enter and exit the court from interchange gates located in the centre zone. Players must wait off court until the exiting player is completely outside the boundary. No limit on interchanges.

(x) Front on contact: Players are not allowed to make forceful front on contact with an opponent in a marking content if they are not simultaneously attempting to mark or spoil the ball.

(y) Illegal Advantage: A player who does not have possession of the football may not leave the playing court deliberately to gain an advantage when the ball is live. The player may leave the playing court to avoid an injury to themself or others. If a player is to leave the playing court, they must return nearest the point where they exited.

23. PROTECTED AREA

(a) The protected area after a player is awarded a mark or free kick is a corridor which extends from two (2) metres either side of the mark and two (2) metres behind.

(b) No player shall enter and remain in the protected area unless the field umpire calls play on or the player from the opposing team is accompanying or following within two metres of their opponent. Any player caught in the protected area must make every endeavour to immediately vacate the protected area.

24. UMPIRE INDIRECT CONTACT

(a) If the football touches an umpire or any official, and in the opinion of the field umpire it has affected a score, play will be stopped and the umpires will determine if the score should be recorded.

(b) If the football touches an umpire or official, and in the opinion of the field umpire it has not affected a score, the field umpire shall play on.

25. FINAL ELIGIBILITY

A player must have played (taken the court) in at least one of the lightning rounds matches and listed on the team-sheet on PlayHQ to be eligible to play in the final series. The AFL may grant an exemption to players injured during the competition with the provision of requested medical advice.

26. UMPIRES

For all lightning round matches, a minimum of one (1) field umpire will be rostered by the AFL and clubs will need to supply one (1) goal umpire.

For finals, a minimum of one (1) field umpire and two (2) goal umpires will be rostered by the AFL.

27. JEWELLERY

No jewellery is to be worn on the court whilst playing. Should jewellery not be able to be removed, the player will be required to palce tape over the top if it, approved by the AFL match manager.

28. ORDER OFF RULES

Player's may be ordered off from the playing court by a field umpire for breaching the laws of the game, policy handbook or these by-laws.

29. YELLOW CARD

A player shown a yellow card by a field umpire must immediately leave the playing field and may return once the player has served the remainder of that quarter plus one more. Players receiving a yellow card can be replaced. A second yellow card, the umpire will show a red card.

30. RED CARD

A player shown a red card by a field umpire must immediately leave the playing court and is not permitted to return to the playing court for the remainder of the game. Players receiving a red card cannot be replaced.

(a) Should a player receive two yellow cards or a straight red card from the umpire, the player will receive an automatic one (1) match suspension. The one (1) match suspension is to be served directly after the game in which the incident occurred. If the incident occurs in the final match of the season, it will be served in the first game of the next series/season.

The tribunal can increase any suspension should they deem the matter serious enough.

31. WHITE CARD

To limit umpire abuse and inappropriate behaviour among coaches and officials, a card system is in place, which is a three-phase system managed by the field umpire/s as follows:

- **(a)** Phase one - a warning (white card shown)
- **(b)** Phase two - second warning, free kick and five (5) metre penalty for the opposing team.
- **(c)** Phase three - head coach will be reported, removed from the game and the opposing team will receive a free kick, five (5) metre penalty (Red card shown)

The head coach of each team will be responsible for managing the behaviour of the team's other coaches and officials.

32. NOTICE OF REPORT

The head field umpire may report a player or official for breaching the laws of the game, policy handbook or these by-laws. The head field umpire should their report to the match manager at the completion of the match in which the offence occurred.

33. TRIBUNAL

(a) The competition will have set penalties in place should a Player act outside the Laws of Australian Football, Policy Handbook or these By-Laws. The set penalties are set out in appendix one.

(b) At the AFL's request, an offending Player along with a team delegate must attend a tribunal hearing. The time and location of the tribunal hearing will be communicated to the Team manager from the relevant Player's Team. The tribunal may make any determination it deems appropriate having regard to the set penalties set out below.

(c) Tribunal Members

- **(i)** The Tribunal will be made up of no less than two (2) members representing the AFL
- **(ii)** The AFL may at their absolute discretion may appoint an independent person to sit on the Tribunal and that person will be deemed to be a member of the Tribunal.

34. COACHES AND OFFICIALS

All teams have the option of having the following officials present at match day unless approved otherwise.

- Head Coach (Required)
- Assistant Coach x 2
- Team Manager (Required)
- First Aider/Physio

Coaches that are not playing aren't permitted on court during play.

35. FIRST AID

The AFL will arrange a minimum of one accredited level 2 sports trainer to oversee all matches throughout the competition.

All players must bring their own strapping tape should they require strapping prior to their matches. Strapping tape will not be provided/supplied.

36. UNIFORM

All teams playing uniforms must have the competition logo as per guidelines outlined to community clubs and matching guernseys, shorts and socks.

Players wanting to wear compression garments must be black in colour. No other under garments that can be seen can be worn.

37. INJURIES

A player who is removed from the playing court by a stretcher cannot return to the playing court in that match. Players who suffer cuts and bleeding can be ordered from the ground at the discretion of the field umpire and may only return once they have received appropriate treatment from their trainer.

38. CONCUSSION

Section 19 (concussion) of the Policy Handbook will apply to the competition.

39. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Section 12 (Social Media) of the Policy Handbook will apply to the competition.

