



TO: League Administrator

RE: National Player Development Framework implementation 4/10/2022

This communication outlines important updates relating to the National Player Development Framework implementation across all Community Leagues in NSW in 2023.

In line with the game-wide strategy, the NSWRL Board endorsed the continued phased implementation of the National Player Development Framework at their August meeting.

The national initiative, developed by the Australian Rugby League Commission, is supported by the New South Wales Rugby League, Queensland Rugby League and affiliated states.

The implementation plan is supported by the Community Rugby League Association. The developments are key in encouraging the safety, wellbeing and retention of participants.

Key Points:

- The National Development Framework is a game-wide participation initiative developed and approved by the Australian Rugby League Commission.
- The initiative is backed by extensive research and is expected to be fully implemented across the country by 2026.
- The key changes by 2026 for ALL junior Rugby League participants in all states are: tag only (no tackling) for Under 6s (whole season) and Under 7s (first half of season); and development competitions for all modified games ages up to and including Under 12s.
- **It is important to note that in development competitions, scores are still maintained and children are encouraged to compete and try their best, learning valuable lessons on winning and losing but not playing for a premiership (and there are no ladders).**
- Some states have already implemented the framework in full, with the QRL having it in place since 2019.
- QLD has recorded strong and compelling participation outcomes since implementing the framework - growing from 62,058 players (2018 year of initial PDF implementation) to 64,329 players (2022).
- The overall QLD male participation rates at 54,979 are the highest since 2018.
- The overall QLD female participation rates at 9350 are at record highs growing 20 per cent on last year.
- Importantly, in the key impacted age groups, being 10 to 12 years, numbers in QLD have grown 5.6 per cent to 13,920 players.
- NSWRL adopted a staged approach to phasing all of the changes in.
- In 2023 in NSW the following are mandatory: no tackling for Under 6s; no tackling until June for Under 7s; development competitions (no grand finals or premiership points) for Under 6s, 7s, 8s and 9s.



- Some areas of NSW are advanced in implementing the framework including Hunter Junior Rugby League and Group 9
- **Group 9 JRL** - Gradual implementation of development comps starting in 2020 with 10s - progressed from 6s to 12s in 2022. Since 2017, Group 9 Junior Rugby League participation has increased by 20 per cent from 2856 to 3451 participants.
- **Hunter JRL** - Implementation of Development Competitions up to 11s in 2022. Since 2017 Hunter Junior Rugby League participation has increased 15 per cent from 5760 players to 6643 players.

RUGBY LEAGUE READY PHASE 2 NSWRL - 2023

In 2023 we move to **phase 2** of the Rugby League Ready implementation in NSWRL:

- In 2023 Under 6s will operate under a Tag format played for the duration of the season as per National guidelines and will be mandatory.
- In phase 2 we will transition the Rugby League Ready program into Under 7s where all teams will complete the Tackle Ready program and play Tag until mid-way through the season.

In line with the introduction of the Rugby League Ready program in all Community Rugby League competitions, all Under 7s matches in approximately the first half of the season will be played in a non-contact (Tag) format. Leagues must ensure that Tackle Ready training is delivered to all teams in the Under 7 age group before commencing Tackle games. After the successful completion of Tackle Ready training, games may progress to the contact (Tackle) format no earlier than the June Long Weekend. Please note in 2024 the full program will be mandated as per National Guidelines.

- NSWRL will supply Tags and Belts for the 2023 season. Licensed suppliers will be advised of the implementation plan and requirement for Velcro on 6s and 7s shorts



IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE RUGBY LEAGUE READY

| AGE | 2022 – Phase 1 | 2023 – Phase 2 | 2024 – Phase 3 |
|------------|---|--|--|
| 5s | Tag or play/mix with 6s | Tag all season – generally the 5s will be part of the 6s if played under Tag format | Tag or play with 6s |
| 6s | Implementation Tackle Ready. Tackle Ready April 1 to June | Tag all season – mandated as per National Guidelines | Tag all season – mandated as per National Guidelines |
| 7s | Played tackle in 2022 apart from Group 16 | Preference for Tackle Ready program operating from approx. April 1 to June Long Weekend whilst playing Tag in this period. | Mandated Tackle Ready program operating from approx. April 1 to June Long Weekend whilst playing Tag in this period. |
| 8s & older | | Continued education emphasising safety in making tackles and being tackled. Introduction of Tackle Ready specific camps/clinics | Established resources and schedule of camps/clinics focusing on Tackle safety and transition from Tag to Tackle |



DEVELOPMENT COMPETITIONS 6s to 12s

Additionally, in line with the game wide strategy under the NRL Player Development Framework the NSWRL Board endorsed a measured state-wide introduction of development competitions. The following timeline is a **minimum expectation** for Leagues to meet National guidelines meaning all Leagues will operate development competitions up to and including under 12s. Premiership competitions will commence from under 13s. In the development comp format players will still be encouraged to compete and learn valuable lessons in winning and losing however won't be playing for a premiership. The Community Rugby League Association has supported this implementation.

| YEAR | METRO DEV COMPS | REGIONAL DEV COMPS |
|-------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2023 | 6s to 9s | 6s to 10s |
| 2024 | 6s to 10s | 6s to 11s |
| 2025 | 6s to 11s | 6s to 12s |
| 2026 | 6s to 12s | |

Please note the NSWRL policies and procedures manual will be updated to reflect the implementation as per this correspondence. Additionally, NRL will be considering changes to the Laws of the game to reflect the player development framework. Insurers will also be notified.

Further information relating to the Player Development Framework is available via this link <https://www.playrugbyleague.com/framework/>

Yours sincerely

Peter Clarke

NSWRL Community Football Manager