



FOOTBALL
VICTORIA

CLUB COMMUNICATION
2023 START UP GUIDELINES

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1. INTRODUCTION

Football Victoria (FV) would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all Clubs for the successful completion of the 2022 season. FV recognises and appreciates the challenges faced by the entire football family since March 2020. Together we have endured a once in a lifetime global pandemic, with varying impacts at all levels of our football ecosystem and we have managed to complete a full season of Football for the first time in 3 years. We thank everyone for their support and commitment during this time.

FV has also faced its own set of challenges during this time, and I would like to thank the entire FV Team for their hard work and dedication to complete the 2022 season.

As we look ahead, we have some very exciting opportunities. The Socceroos will compete in the Qatar 2022 FIFA Men's World Cup in November and The Matildas will compete on home soil for the FIFA Women's World Cup in July next year. 2023 will also see a game-changer for Australian Football with the opening of the world-class Home of the Matildas in Bundoora.

This document has been developed to outline the competition structures for season 2023 taking into account but not limited to such items as the impact of the global pandemic, the continual review of our competition structures, the effect on our Clubs, Players, Volunteers and Administrators, FV's resourcing and the extension of the FootbALLways strategy, with a particular focus in 2023 on driving our commitment to 50/50.

This has meant that we can progress in certain areas and others have been postponed allowing the appropriate time to deliver better football outcomes for all stakeholders in Victoria.

All proposed changes, start-up rules and other considerations impacting the 2023 season and beyond are outlined in this document below.

Note: Football Victoria (FV) at its absolute discretion may amend the 2023 start-up rules as required and any changes will be reflected in the Rules of Competition released to all Clubs prior to the 2023 season commencement.

Football Victoria (FV) would like to invite all Clubs the opportunity to provide feedback on the 2022 Rules of Competitions and processes.

Please read through the attached memo which provides the following information:

- [2022 FV NPL Competitions – Season Review](#)
- [2022 FV Community Competitions – Season Review](#)
 - Rules of Competition
 - FV Processes
 - 2022 FV Competitions – Season Review JotForm link

Please feel free reach out to the relevant Competitions Department, if need be, via email or phone:

NPL

nplvictoria@footballvictoria.com.au

Call 9474 1800 and press '1' for NPL competitions when prompted.

Community Competitions

competitions@footballvictoria.com.au

Call 9474 1800 and press '2' for community competitions when prompted.

2. THE PROPOSED SENIOR MENS (NPL, NPL 2 & NPL 3, STATE LEAGUE STRUCTURES FOR SEASON 2023

From 2023 the NPL men's structures will commence as follows:

- NPL up to 14 Teams
- NPL 2 up to 14 Teams
- NPL 3 up to 12 Teams

The proposed NPL Men's age groups for the commencement of the 2023 season are:

- Seniors
- U21's plus up to 3 x U23 players on the roster

The rules governing the startup of the competition structure will be:

- 2.1. Relegation will apply from the commencement of season 2023 for all top tier NPLM Clubs. For the avoidance of doubt the 2 Teams that finish bottom and second bottom on the table at the conclusion of season 2023 in the top tier NPLM may be relegated into NPLM 2.
- 2.2. The NPLM top division at the conclusion of the home & away fixture will compete in a top 6 finals series.
- 2.3. All Clubs must adhere and comply with the licensing requirements including the current approved FA PPS system & FA/FV Club licensing regulations & criteria.
- 2.4. A finals series for the U21's age groups applies across all NPLM competitions.
- 2.5. Promotion and relegation will apply from the commencement of season 2023 for all NPLM 2 & NPLM 3 Clubs. For the avoidance of doubt the top 2 finishing Teams on the table at the conclusion of season 2023 may be promoted into the next tier of competition and the bottom 2 finishing Teams may be relegated into the next tier of competition.
- 2.6. Although PPS does not apply for NPLM 2 & NPLM 3 for the home & away season, PPS regulations apply for NPLM 2 & NPLM 3 Clubs who make the last 32 of the Australia Cup.
- 2.7. All Clubs promoted into either the NPLM or NPLM 2 & 3 tiers will be required to adhere to the Licensing requirements for those leagues. FV reserves the right to review Clubs who cannot meet the criteria. Clubs who breach or cannot meet the criteria may be fined, removed, or not offered a position into that tier of competition.
- 2.8. FV reserves the right to determine competition formats, including but not limited optimal league numbers, naming conventions for each league, licensing requirements in conjunction with FA, competition criteria and fee structures.
- 2.9. State League structures will remain as per the start of the 2022 season. Promotion/Relegation may be enforced, and confirmation of the Promotion/Relegation rules will be confirmed prior to season commencement within the Rules of Competition.

3. THE PROPOSED JUNIOR BOYS NPL (JBNPL) MODEL FOR FOOTBALL IN VICTORIA FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF SEASON 2023 IS AS FOLLOWS:

From 2023 the JBNPL will commence with all eligible competing Clubs. Western United FC will be admitted into the 2023 season in line with previous communication.

No additional licenses will be issued in 2023. FV recognises there is a high demand for Clubs to compete in the JBNPL competition and there are currently a high number of boys' Teams competing in community 'A' grade competitions. FV will introduce a pre JBNPL competition (name of league to be confirmed) for all aspirational community Clubs who want to be considered for the JBNPL competition for season 2024.

This competition will be open to all community Clubs and FV will release an expression of interest document by the end of the year, detailing the minimum criteria required to be eligible to compete in this league.

FV will commence the 2023 season with the following mandatory JBNPL age groups.

- U18's Min 16 – Max 20 player roster
- U16's Min 16 – Max 20 player roster
- U15's Min 16 – Max 20 player roster
- U14's Min 16 – Max 20 player roster

Note: HAL programs have a Max 18 players per JBNPL mandatory age groups

The terms for regional Clubs shall remain unchanged for the 2023 season however its highly encouraged for those Clubs to field 4 age group Teams.

FV will review the JBNPL competition structure post its first full season of the new pre and post qualification format. Further work is needed to be completed prior to determining the optimal Club numbers, competition format, structure, and age groups. FV will continue to update stakeholders on the progress of any proposed changes for the 2024 season.

Under 13's non-JBNPL mandatory competition format will remain unchanged for the 2023 season.

- U13's will compete in a 9 vs 9 game format. (half pitch / box to box – flexibility based on specific Club facility availability requirements).
- Clubs can nominate their preferred grading. Football Victoria at its absolute will determine 'A' leagues for season 2023.
- FV at its absolute discretion may consider an alternative competition format for the commencement of the 2023 season. FV will communicate any such change prior to the commencement of the season.
- FV will continue to host pre and post season tournaments for these age groups.
- For 'A' leagues - competition season may be up to 22 games in a home & away fixture format + finals.
- For 'A' leagues - double header rounds (Saturday and Sunday fixtured games) may be required to fit 22 games.

- For 'A' leagues – fixtures may be placed during school holidays instead of catch up rounds to fit 22 games.
- Like U12s Clubs may request as many Teams as they like within this competition and/or field Teams in Under 13 B,C,D etc. competitions which will follow the 18 rounds + finals format. Regional NPL Clubs may also opt into this competition as per the arrangement between FV and the competing regional Clubs.
- **A League Clubs** are not eligible to compete in this competition.
- The Leagues are fixtured into geographical zones including both NPL and community Teams.
- Non-NPL fees: Community based registration fees and Team entry fees for the U13 age group applies.

Under 12's and Miniroos

- There will be no change to the U12's & Miniroos age groups for season 2023. U12's and Miniroos will compete as per the proposed scheduling and game format for season 2023.
- Regional NPL Clubs may also opt into U12's competition as per the arrangement between FV and the competing regional Clubs.

All other community age groups:

- There will be no change to the community competitions age groups and formats for season 2023.

Other Competition Information

- For the JBNPL competition (U14,15,16,18), four (4) geographical zones determined pools will remain. Each pool will play up to 11 qualification games to determine a finishing position on each pool's ladder. Teams that finish in the same band of positions on the ladder across all 4 pools will subsequently be re graded into newly formed 'best vs best' & 'like vs like' leagues where they will then play up to a further 22 home & away games.
- At the end of the season, all Teams return to their original geographically determined qualification pools and the following season begins the same way as 2023 season starts (i.e., the season always begins with the same number of Teams in qualification pool subject to Teams both remaining compliant with their license and any new Team/s application).
- Football Victoria reserves the right to consider new entrants into the JBNPL competition for season 2024 and beyond.

4. THE PROPOSED COMMUNITY MINIROOS, JUNIOR BOYS, METROPOLITAN & MASTERS MENS MODEL FOR FOOTBALL FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF SEASON 2023 IS AS FOLLOWS:

- 4.1 Community competitions Minirooms age groups will remain as per the start of the 2022 season.
- 4.2 Community competitions junior boys age groups will remain as per the start of the 2022 season for season 2023. FV at their absolute discretion may merge leagues or age groups based on Team entries.
- 4.3 Metropolitan Men and Metropolitan Master's competition formats will remain as per the start of the 2022 season.
- 4.4 All community competitions to enter season 2023 under the same conditions as the commencement of the 2022 season.

5. THE PROPOSED SENIOR WOMENS (NPL, VPLW & STATE LEAGUE STRUCTURES) FOR SEASON 2023

From 2023 the NPL women's structures will commence as follows:

- NPL up to 12 Teams
- VPLW up to 12 Teams

The proposed NPL Women's age groups for the commencement of the 2023 season are:

- Seniors
- U19's

NOTE: PRC applies as per the Participation License. Clubs must always comply with the PRC

The proposed VPLW age groups for the commencement of the 2023 season are:

- Seniors
- Reserves

The rules governing the startup of the competition structure will be.

- 5.1. Relegation will apply from the commencement of season 2023 for the top tier NPLW Clubs. For the avoidance of doubt the 2 Teams that finish bottom and second bottom on the table at the conclusion of season 2023 may be relegated into VPLW.
- 5.2. The NPLW top division at the conclusion of the home & away fixture will compete in a top 6 finals series. This may be amended at FV's sole discretion.
- 5.3. All Clubs must adhere and comply with the licensing requirements including the Rules of Competition that apply for the 2023 season.

- 5.4. A finals series for the U19's age groups applies to NPLW competitions.
- 5.5. Promotion and relegation will apply from the commencement of season 2023 for all VPLW Clubs. For the avoidance of doubt the top 2 finishing Teams on the table at the conclusion of season 2023 may be promoted into the next tier of competition and the bottom 2 finishing Teams may be relegated into the next tier of competition.
- 5.6. All Clubs promoted into either the NPL or VPLW tiers will be required to adhere to the Licensing requirements for those leagues. FV reserves the right to review Clubs who cannot meet the criteria. Clubs who breach or cannot meet the criteria may be fined, removed, or not offered a position into that tier of competition.
- 5.7. FV reserves the right to determine competition formats, including but not limited optimal league numbers, naming conventions for each league, licensing requirements in conjunction with FA, competition criteria and fee structures.
- 5.8. State League structures and competition rules will remain as per the start of the 2022 season. Promotion/Relegation will be enforced and confirmation of the regulations regarding this system will be confirmed prior to season commencement within the Rules of Competition.
- 5.9. From the commencement of the 2023 season NPLW Clubs will be permitted to enter Team/s in the Victorian State League Competition structure. Clubs who enter Team/s can do so up to State League Women's 2 competitions. The NPLW Clubs Team/s competing in State League Women's competitions will not be eligible for promotion beyond State League 2 Women's competitions.

NOTE: For the avoidance of doubt only 1 Team from a Club can compete in either the NPLW/VPLW/WSL1 in any given regular season.

Clubs with multiple Teams must comply with the relevant ROC's as prepared and communicated by Football Victoria each season

Any new Team entered in WSL will automatically be placed into the lowest Division of WSL (currently WSL5) as per the Rules of Competition.

6. THE PROPOSED JUNIOR GIRLS NPL (JGNPL) MODEL FOR FOOTBALL IN VICTORIA FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF SEASON 2023 IS AS FOLLOWS:

From 2023 the JGNPL will commence with all eligible competing Clubs. No additional licenses will be issued in 2023. FV will commence the 2023 season with the following mandatory JGNPL age groups.

- U17's Min 16 - Max 20 player roster
- U15's Min 16 - Max 20 player roster
- U13's Max 14 player roster

No additional licenses will be issued in 2023. FV will communicate the process for existing community Clubs who want to be part of the JGNPL program for the 2024 season by the end of the year taking into consideration the Women & Girls competition review recommendations and current competition information.

JGNPL Clubs can continue to field Teams in line with their license requirements.

In addition, current JGNPL Clubs can field additional Teams in community competitions made up of existing registered players and additional players required to fulfill Team numbers.

Rules will apply for both NPL & Community registered players in regard to their eligibility to compete in different competitions for that club.

From 2024 and subject to the expansion of the JGNPL, JGNPL Clubs will be permitted to field unlimited community Teams.

7. THE PROPOSED COMMUNITY MINIROOS GIRLS AND JUNIOR GIRLS COMPETITIONS:

All other community age groups:

- There will be no change to the community competition age groups and formats for season 2023. FV at their absolute discretion may merge leagues or age groups based on Team entries.

Under 12's and Miniros

- There will be no change to the U12's & Miniros age group for season 2023. U12's and Miniros will compete as per the proposed scheduling and game format for season 2023.