

Competition Rules - U15 Boys & Girls



General	2
1. Game Rules	2
2. Coaching	5
3. Responsibilities	5
4. Exceptions	6
5. Sanction(s)	6
6. Gridiron Victoria's Coach's code of ethics	7

GENERAL

Gridiron Victoria is the governing body for American Football, or as it's known in Australia, Gridiron, for the State of Victoria, Australia. Formed in 1997, Gridiron Victoria was an amalgamation of the two existing governing bodies of the time: the Victoria Gridiron Football League and the Gridiron Association of Victoria. It is an approved State Sporting Association under Victorian State Government regulations and is a member of Gridiron Australia Ltd (GA) & International Federation of American Football (IFAF).

Our vision is to inspire all Victorians to enjoy our great global game, making Gridiron a game for all. This is aimed at ensuring that as many people as possible can participate in Gridiron; however, it must be safe and fair for all participants. When participants with broadly compatible attributes compete with one another, this environment can be created.

Gridiron should be safe, inclusive and fair.

All endeavours must be made for Gridiron participants with broadly compatible physical development in conjunction with ability and/or experience to play with and against each other.

REVIEW HISTORY OF GRIDIRON VICTORIA RULES OF COMPEITION (JV) POLICY

VERSION	DATE REVIEWED	CONTENTS	DATE ENDORSED
One	February 2018	New Policy	April 2018 (GV Executive & CoM)
Two	May 2018	Revisions only	
Three	July 2018	Revisions to capture updated rules	July 2019 (GV Exec endorse)

1. GAME RULES

Games will be played using the current Gridiron Australia sanctioned rules, with the following modifications:

1.1 GV administration rules

- The minimum player weight for this competition will be **105 lbs (46.6 kg)**

EXCEPTION: Players below this weight may participate provided that they wear a jersey of contrasting colour from their teammate and opponents. Tackling of these players is to be by two-handed touching only, making a ball in their possession immediately 'dead by rule'. Forceful tackling of these players is a personal foul.

- b) One coach from each team is permitted on the field during play
- c) A 'Mercy Rule' shall apply any time the margin in the score is more than 27 points. For more information, please see rule 2 **Mercy Rule**.
- d) A player leaving the game due to injury shall not re-enter the game without the approval of medical personnel. Should the medical person be a parent/guardian of the player, then the Referee shall provide approval based upon information provided by the Medic & Head Coach. The Referee shall have sole discretion as to what constitutes an injury.
- e) Each competing team shall provide one (1) person accredited to Level 0 AGOA Officials, to officiate each of their teams' games.

1.2 Team Composition

- a) Each club and individual at the club is to be registered as per the guidelines in Rule 9 Team Registration from the Gridiron Victoria Ops Rules <http://www.gridironvictoria.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/2017-Gridiron-Victoria-Operating-Rules.pdf>. As per the guidelines, each team must have a minimum of 10 registered players in order to compete in the coming season.
- b) Any person being named as a Coach, must be accredited to a minimum Level 1 Coaching standard and complete all Gridiron Australia Coaching standards and courses outlined on <http://gridironaustralia.org.au/education/coaching-accreditation/>
- c) Minimum numbers and all coaching information are required to be submitted 30 calendar days prior to round one of the season.

1.3 Game Format

- a) The season construct would consist of between 6-8 home/away rounds, with Post Season competitions based on Top 4 teams.
- b) The game format shall be 7 v 7 on the field at the same time.
- c) The team composition can be a mixture, however have a minimum of 7 players on the field, across the below positions:

- i. Offence

Offence line players (Mandatory) x 3 (1 x Centre 2 x Guards)
Quarterback
Wide Receivers
Running back

- ii. Defence

Defence line players
Defensive Backs
Safety
Line-backer

1.4 Playing field

- a) Games are to be play using existing ground formats currently in use by all approved Gridiron Victoria Clubs.
- b) Total yards for play are 100 yards, including end-zones
- c) The width of the field must be reduced to 44 yards and is dependent on the set-up for the competition on that day.
- d) Field width to be marked out using cones at every ten-yard line.
 - a. 8 pylons for the corners of the end-zone
 - b. 14 cones on each 10-yard line (sidelines)
- e) Host Club is responsible for ensuring the set up and break down of the field prior to any other competition

1.5 Game length/Timeouts

- a) Games will consist of 4 x 13-minute quarters (running clock), with a field switch at quarter time periods.
- b) A 10-minute break at half-time

- c) Each team is permitted 3 timeouts per half
- d) The clock stops for injury timeouts.

1.6 Playing rules

Further to the rules provided by the VGOA and based on the Pop Werner 2014 competition rules, Gridiron Victoria provide further modified rules below.

- a) A kick-off will only occur at the start of each half. There must be three players on each side of the kicker when the ball is kicked.
- b) Positional eligibility rules apply. Any number from 1 through 99 can be worn in any offensive position.
- c) Offensive formations must consist of 3 ineligible players (Centre and 2 Guards) as well as 1 eligible player on the line of scrimmage.
- d) Remaining 3 players must be off the line of scrimmage
- e) After a score, the team scored upon will next put the ball in play at their own 20-yardline.
Exception: After a safety, the team scoring the safety will next put the ball in play at their own 20-yardline.
- f) Penalty enforcements are as per NCAA / IFAF provisions except that all **15yd enforcements are modified to 10 yards.**
- g) Any player leaving the game due to injury shall not re-enter the game without the approval of an officially licenced athletic trainer or medical professional who is not the coach, parent/guardian of the player. The Referee shall have the discretion as to what constitutes an 'injury'.
- h) There shall be no clipping, blocking below the waist, butt blocking (using the helmet to generate leverage), **face/head tackling or any intentional forceful contact above a player's shoulders.** The Referee shall have the discretion to disqualify players guilty of the above.

Penalty yardage shall be modified as follows;

- 15-yard penalties reduced to 10 yards
- 10-yard penalties reduced to 7 yards
- 5-yard penalties reduced to 2 yards

1.7 Mixed Gender

- a) Subject to available dispensations, males and females can participate in mixed gender Gridiron up to and including the calendar year (1 January - 31 December) in which they turn 12 years of age. Best practise is for participation in mixed gender teams to be permitted only up until the end of the season (including the following off-season) in which the player turns 12 years of age.
- b) In exceptional circumstances a player over 12 years of age may play on a mixed gender team where no other option in continuing to play Gridiron other than this exists. In order to ensure the suitability of players in such circumstances, the following criteria should be met:
- c) Written agreement from the player's parents or guardians to play and acceptance of the associated risk with playing with people who may be stronger and more physically developed than them;
- d) Written confirmation from a medical practitioner with an understanding of the demands of Gridiron to whom the player is known that the player is in a physical condition to play Gridiron at the desired level and that this view is supported by a musculo-skeletal evaluation and/or other appropriate assessments;
- e) Written confirmation from a coach with an appropriate understanding of the physical attributes required and of the risks to players in Gridiron and to whom the player is known that the player has the requisite skills and experience to play Gridiron at the desired level; and
- f) Such other consents, agreements or confirmations (if any) as may be required by Gridiron Victoria or to comply with the local jurisdiction.
- g) A player should not participate in Mixed Gender teams once they have reached the age of 15.
- h) Players irrespective of their age and gender should be prepared in a manner to play the game safely and should have undertaken a safety awareness through the clubs training program.

1.8 Eligible Age Grades

- a) The competition will be known as Under 15
- b) Available for both boys and girls
- c) Players under 11 years of age are eligible to participate provided;
 - a. Gridiron Victoria receives written parental consent
 - b. the player passes an ability assessment completed by GV

- c. they wear a different coloured bib during games to indicate that they are two hand touch only.
- d) Subject to any available dispensations, a player may play in the age group he/she is turning in the playing year and in the age group one year above. For example, a player turning 15 in the calendar year (1 January – 31 December) is eligible to play in the Under 15 age group and the Under 19 age group.

1.9 Mercy Rule

- a) In the interest of preserving the integrity of the game, there shall be a mercy rule implemented if the margin in the score is more than **27 points**.
 - i. The ball becomes dead immediately when the team ahead in the score recovers a fumble when on defence or intercepts a pass. The next snap will be from the spot of the turnover
 - ii. The team ahead in the score shall replace starting players with reserves where possible
 - iii. The team ahead in the score may not pass the ball or run sweeps outside the tackles
 - iv. Penalty: 5 yards plus loss-of-down (Illegal procedure)
 - v. Note: Should the points spread fall back under this margin, this provision no longer applies
 - vi. No blitzing is permitted (Line-backers or Safeties rushing the QB)
 - vii. No on-side kicks by the winning team are permitted
 - viii. Penalty: 5 yards (Illegal procedure)
- b) The Referee has the discretion to further modify timing rules if he/she feels that such action is warranted
- c) Once the mercy rule is invoked it cannot be un invoked

2. COACHING

- a) All coaches must meet the following requirements in order to be one of those named on the Team Registration Form, and in order to be eligible to coach at training or during a game. As per the guidelines outlined within Gridiron Victoria's **Gridiron Victoria - Coaching Accreditation Roadmap 2018**, all coaches are required to be fully qualified to the appropriate level prior to any training or competition. This includes, but does not limit to;
 - ix. [Working with Children's](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/) Check – Volunteer or above
(<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>)
 - x. Sports specific Level 1 accreditation
 - xi. ASC General Principals Community Coaching
 - xii. [AGOA Club level Officials](https://agoatraining.ispringlearn.com/organization/1/view/17723-bPoBt-t8pqG-hjxn4) course
(<https://agoatraining.ispringlearn.com/organization/1/view/17723-bPoBt-t8pqG-hjxn4>)
 - xiii. [Child Protection \(ASC\)](https://learning.ausport.gov.au/mylearning/catalogue/index?menu=Home#/detail?page=2&pageSize=10&tab=none&details=%2Fmylearning%2Fcatalogue%2Fdetails%2F4dc53cfd-15c1-e311-8ac2-0010189e35e6)
(<https://learning.ausport.gov.au/mylearning/catalogue/index?menu=Home#/detail?page=2&pageSize=10&tab=none&details=%2Fmylearning%2Fcatalogue%2Fdetails%2F4dc53cfd-15c1-e311-8ac2-0010189e35e6>)
 - xiv. [Introduction to the Integrity of Sport \(ASC\)](https://learning.ausport.gov.au/mylearning/catalogue/index?menu=Home#/detail?page=2&pageSize=10&tab=none&details=%2Fmylearning%2Fcatalogue%2Fdetails%2F9092cad5-52fd-e611-80c1-0003ff4939e6)
(<https://learning.ausport.gov.au/mylearning/catalogue/index?menu=Home#/detail?page=2&pageSize=10&tab=none&details=%2Fmylearning%2Fcatalogue%2Fdetails%2F9092cad5-52fd-e611-80c1-0003ff4939e6>)
- b) Each coach must adhere to the Gridiron Victoria & Gridiron Australia's Coaches Code of Ethics

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a) This policy applies to all participants associated with Gridiron Victoria in all positions whether paid, unpaid / voluntary.

- b) It is the responsibility of all participants to use the starting policy parameters and the options for dispensation to achieve inclusion in the safest and fairest manner for each individual.
- c) For example, utilising the options for flexibility to 'fill' teams may be deemed a breach of this Policy.
- d) Likewise, negating to apply the intent of this policy for reasons that are motivated by a 'win' mentality may also be deemed a breach of this Policy.

4. EXCEPTIONS

- a) This policy does not apply to any form of Non-Contact Gridiron, including but not limited to Flag Football

5. SANCTION(S)

- a) It is an obligation under the Gridiron Victoria's Code of Conduct for all participants to comply with this Policy and its related policies and guidelines. Intentional or reckless disregard for this Policy **may result in disciplinary action pursuant to the Gridiron Victoria Code of Conduct.**

6. GRIDIRON VICTORIA'S COACH'S CODE OF ETHICS

1. Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every human being	Within the context of the activity, treat everyone equally regardless of sex, ethnic origin or religion
2. Ensure the athlete's time spent with you is a positive experience	All athletes are deserving of equal attention and opportunities
3. Treat each athlete as an individual	Respect the talent, developmental stage and goals of each individual athlete Help each athlete reach their full potential
4. Be fair, considerate and honest with athletes	
5. Be professional in and accept responsibility for your actions	Language, manner, punctuality, preparation and presentation should display high standards Display control, respect, dignity and professionalism to all involved with the sport - this includes opponents, coaches, officials, administrators, the media, parents and spectators Encourage your athletes to demonstrate the same qualities
6. Make a commitment to providing a quality service to your athletes	Maintain or improve your current NCAS accreditation Seek continual improvement through performance appraisal and ongoing coach education Provide a training program which is planned and sequential Maintain appropriate records
7. Operate within the rules and spirit of your sport.	The guidelines of national and international bodies governing your sport should be followed The Australian Sports Drug Agency provides regulations to operate within
8. Any physical contact with athletes should be:	
- appropriate to the situation - necessary for the athlete's skill development	
9. Refrain from any form of personal abuse towards your athletes and game officials	This includes verbal, physical and emotional abuse Be alert to any forms of abuse from other sources (moved) directed towards your athletes whilst they are in your care and game officials
10. Refrain from any form of sexual harassment towards your athletes and game officials	
11. Provide a safe environment for training and competition	Ensure equipment and facilities meet safety standards Equipment, rules and the environment need to be appropriate for the age and ability of the athletes
12. Show concern and caution towards sick and injured athletes	Provide a modified training program where appropriate Allow further participation in training and competition only when appropriate Seek medical advice when required Maintain the same interest and support towards sick and injured athletes
13. Be a positive role model for your sport and athletes	

Coaches should.....

- Be treated with respect and openness
- Have access to self-improvement opportunities
- Be matched with a level of coaching appropriate to their level of competence