

# MELBOURNE NETBALL PTY LTD BY-LAWS

## THE OVERARCHING PURPOSE OF THE BY-LAWS

- To ensure that the competition is conducted in accordance with the rules of the sport, based on principles of fairness for all participants and teams for every match and for the entire competition season.
- To promote a happy and healthy environment on and off court in which all participants, administrators and spectators can share their appreciation of Netball.
- To ensure that the administration of the competition is conducted in accordance with principles of fairness to all players and teams throughout the competition season.
- To promote an environment based on consideration and respect to all participants, administrators, umpires, and spectators.
- To promote the smooth and efficient functioning of the Competition.
- To ensure that players and spectators respect the umpires' knowledge of, and commitment to, the rules of the sport.
- To promote an honest and open environment in which all participants, administrators, umpires and spectators voice any queries or concerns they have with respect to the competition to the appropriate person and at the appropriate time.

## 1. CONDITIONS

- 1.1. These Terms and Conditions of Play ("By-Laws") apply to ladies, mixed and men's netball. These By-Laws are additional to the All Australian Netball Associated Limited rules ("AANA"), which are available for purchase. In the event that there is any inconsistency or conflict with the AANA rules and these By-Laws, these By-Laws shall take precedence.
- 1.2. Where there is any question as to the meaning of words or expressions within these By-Laws, or the expectations of persons with respect to the By-Laws, the By-Laws shall be interpreted in accordance with the *Overarching Purpose of the Bylaws*.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Dangerous play** includes (not exhaustively): not showing obvious signs of being aware of other players on the court and of other players' movements (including fellow team members), inadequate use of a player's peripheral vision, running out of control, making little or no attempt to change directions or reduce speed on approaching another player, failure to avoid contact.
- 2.2 **Inopportune Player** means a player who displays any of the following on the netball court during a netball game:
  - (a) inexperience and/or lack of netball training;
  - (b) confusion of their playing position;
  - (c) a lack of knowledge of how to properly play netball;
  - (d) a lack of understanding of infringements; and
  - (e) repeated infringements of the same rule.
- 2.3 **Misconduct** includes behaviour directed at players, spectators, umpires or Melbourne Netball employees, agents or consultants ("Melbourne Netball Staff"), both on and off court, and at any time, including before, during or after any netball match. For the avoidance of doubt, Misconduct can include physical gestures as well as oral and written communication.

Misconduct includes (not exhaustively) arguing with Melbourne Netball Staff, not cooperating with Melbourne Netball Staff, displaying vigorous dissent of an umpire's decision, degrading any member of Melbourne Netball Staff, abusive conduct including abusive language, gestures or actions of un-sportsman like conduct, combative arguing, abusive or negative comments, coarse language, deliberately holding up play, conduct against the spirit of the game, rough or dangerous play, threatening behaviour including intimidating or assaulting or attempting to intimidate or assault any player, spectator or any member of Melbourne Netball Staff.

- 2.4 **Qualified Player** means a player who has played at least 4 games with Melbourne Netball during the season for the same team (and in relation to 16.3 this being the team they will play for in the Finals). A game for the purposes of this definition includes Washouts (as defined on the Melbourne Netball website) and any forfeited game not caused by the team, but does not include Byes.

- 2.5 **Vesting of Powers:** Melbourne Netball officials may exercise any of the disciplinary powers vested in an umpire under these By-Laws.

## 3. CAPTAIN AND PLAYER RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 Captains are responsible for registering their Team online at [www.melbournenetball.com](http://www.melbournenetball.com). During the online registration process, Captains must read and agree with the Captain's Declaration and Captain's Contract. Captains must also undertake to read and agree to abide by the By-Laws prior to the commencement of each netball season.
- 3.2 Notwithstanding the registration of a team with Melbourne Netball, a team or person is not a member of Melbourne Netball until Melbourne Netball accepts the registration. Melbourne Netball, to the fullest extent permitted by law, reserves the right to refuse the registration of any team or person, for any reason, in its absolute discretion.
- 3.3 Upon activation of online accounts for individual players, an email is generated and sent to the player ("the inaugural email"). All players are required to read and agree with the inaugural email as well as follow the link to and read the By-Laws prior to playing their first game.
- 3.4 All information, notices and communications from Melbourne Netball for the teams throughout the season will be sent to the online team account messageboard, which will be linked to each team member's individual online account. Players are responsible for keeping up to date with all information, notices, and communications posted on their online team account messageboard by their Captain and Melbourne Netball and must check their online team messageboard on a regular basis. Captains are responsible for conducting regular communication with players through the team messageboard and email.
- 3.5 All teams and players must ensure that their online account passwords remain confidential. Online account passwords are not to be used or shared with other parties. Breach of this By-Law will result in the offending player's online account being suspended or terminated, or the player being suspended from the netball competition for the season at the discretion of Melbourne Netball.
- 3.6 Upon registration and prior to the commencement of a team's first game, the captain shall sign an undertaking that he/she will advise Melbourne Netball when a new, substitute or inexperienced player is playing. When a new or substitute player is playing, the Captain shall also ensure that the player is included on the Team Registration sheet and that the player has signed the team waiver form.
- 3.7 (a) All players are responsible for reporting to Melbourne Netball any injuries sustained during a game. The injury report must be recorded in writing by a member of Melbourne Netball staff and signed by the injured player and the Captain of the injured player's team.
- 3.7 (b) All injuries must be reported during or immediately after the game in which they were sustained. No injury reported after this time will be eligible for an insurance claim.
- 3.8 Captains and players are responsible for completing the weekly Team Registration sheet, recording the names of all players for the game. If a player's name is not recorded on the Team Registration sheet, that player will be deemed not to have played the game for the purposes of determining whether the player is a Qualified Player and the player will be unable to make an insurance claim for any injury sustained in that game.
- 3.9 Captains are responsible for ensuring that their team is available to play at the allocated game times. There will be no amendments to game times as a result of the unavailability of a team.

## 4. DANGEROUS PLAY

- 4.1 Umpires will use their discretion with respect to players who have limited skill or co-ordination. However, such players, as well as players with a large frame, must take special care not to engage in dangerous conduct.

## 5. THE GENERAL CONTACT RULE

- 5.1 No player shall come into personal contact with an opponent in such a manner as to interfere with his or her play either accidentally or deliberately.
- 5.2 All players are expected to make every effort to avoid contact with other players at all times.

## **6. THE PREVENTION OF CONTACT AND DANGEROUS PLAY RULE**

6.1 If in the umpire's opinion a player is:

- (i) making insufficient effort to become aware of others' movements and position on the court; and/or
- (ii) causing him/herself to become blinded as to the position of other players and/or
- (iii) putting him/herself in a position where he/she is in a blind spot to other players, and/or
- (iv) posing a potential risk of significant or serious injury to him/herself or to other players (including players from his/her own team),

the umpire may (whether or not a warning has previously been given) remove the player from the court and the player removed shall observe other players from the sideline for a period at the discretion of the umpire (the player may not enter the court again until after the second goal is scored). The umpire has absolute discretion to exercise this rule as many times as he/she deems necessary during the game.

6.2 Where a player is known to have been warned, and yet has persistently breached By-Laws 4-6 Melbourne Netball reserves the right to refuse such a player from playing in any further games under Melbourne Netball.

## **7. WEATHER CONDITIONS**

7.1 All players are expected to adjust their playing style to the playing conditions.

7.2 When playing in wet weather, players must adjust their playing style and skills so as to slow the pace of the game and avoid engaging in conduct that is dangerous in the circumstances.

7.3 When playing in hot weather:

- (i) The duration of game quarters may, in circumstances of extreme heat, be reduced by Melbourne Netball to 8 minutes. Players are responsible for their own re-hydration at the conclusion of each quarter.
- (ii) Players are permitted to wear sunglasses and singlets on court.
- (iii) For reasons of player safety, players are not permitted to wear hats or visors on court.

## **8. BLOOD RULE/INJURY**

8.1 A bleeding player is required to leave the court immediately and receive attention and the umpire will halt play immediately upon detecting a bleeding player. Such a player may be replaced by a substitute (subject to 9.1-9.7). The bleeding player may not return to the field until the bleeding has stopped and in the opinion of the umpire, does not pose a danger to the other players.

8.2 The bleeding player's team may change the position of its players (subject to 9.1-9.7) for the period the bleeding player is off the court. In such circumstances the bleeding player's opposing team is also permitted to change the position of its players.

8.3 A player who has recovered from bleeding may not re-enter the game until after the next goal is scored. Time will continue to run despite the play being halted for the blood rule. The game will not continue until the bleeding player has left the court and the umpire considers the court and the clothing of the remaining players to be safe for play and sufficiently free of blood.

8.4 Players with other injuries are subject to the By-Laws as 8.1-8.3. However, where a player has a minor injury, he or she may remain on court so long as the injured player is able to continue to make an effective contribution to the game and is not posing a risk to him/herself or any other player in the opinion of the umpire. An umpire has absolute discretion to require an injured player to leave the court.

## **9. MIXED TEAM PLAYER PLACEMENT**

9.1 Male players are permitted to play against female players and vice versa subject to 9.2-9.7.

9.2 No mixed team may have more than 3 male players on the court during play.

9.3 No more than one male player shall take a position in each "third" of the court (see below):

- (i) One male player as G.S. or G.A.
- (ii) One male player as W.A. or C. or W.D.

(iii) One male player as G.D. or G.K.

9.4 Every mixed team must have a minimum of five players and every mixed team must have a ratio of male and female players. No other combinations other than those listed in 9.5-9.7 are permitted.

9.5 A **FULL** mixed team shall be made up of the following combinations only:

- (i) Four females and three males; or
- (ii) Five females and two males.

Six female players and one male player are not permitted.

9.6 An **INCOMPLETE** mixed team of **SIX** players shall be made up of the following combinations only:

- (i) Five females and one male; or
- (ii) Four females and two males; or
- (iii) Three females and three males.

9.7 An **INCOMPLETE** mixed team of **FIVE** players shall be made up of the following combinations only:

- (i) Four females and one male; or
- (ii) Three females and two males; or
- (iii) Two females and three males.

## **10. ALL TEAMS – PLAYER PLACEMENT AND LATE PLAYERS**

10.1 No team may play with less than 5 players at the commencement of a game, in which case the team will be penalised 1 goal per minute until at least 5 players are able to take the court (subject to 9.1-9.7).

10.2 No changes to team positions can occur until an interval (time between quarters) or injury stoppage.

10.3 Late players are not permitted to take position on court until an interval, injury stoppage or a goal is scored after their late arrival. Such late player(s) may only take a position which is vacant and which does not breach 9.1-9.7. Team placement changes to accommodate late player(s) are not permitted until an interval or injury stoppage.

## **11. ALCOHOL AND DRUGS**

11.1 No person (including spectators) without the prior consent of Melbourne Netball, may consume, possess or use alcohol or illicit drugs on any premises where a Melbourne Netball game is or will be conducted.

11.2 All players have a duty of care to other players. No player is permitted to take the court while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

11.3 If in the opinion of the umpire a player is affected by an intoxicating liquor or drug (whether legal or illegal), having regard to the safety of that player or other players in the court, the umpire has absolute discretion to remove such a player from the court. Any such player removed shall take no further part in the game.

11.4 Umpires have an absolute discretion to approach any player which in the opinion of an umpire may be affected by alcohol or drugs, and question such a player as to whether or not he/she has consumed alcohol or drugs or is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Should such a player refuse to answer the questions of an umpire or provide inadequate responses, an umpire has the discretion to remove such a player from the court. Any such player removed shall take no further part in the game.

11.5 Should a player or players from either team have concern as to another player being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the **only** procedure permitted to raise such a query or concern is as follows: the captain or acting captain of either team is permitted to approach the umpire(s) in a discreet manner and in confidence, so as not to unnecessarily embarrass or offend any other player. The umpire may deal with the query in the manner in which he/she thinks fit and at his or her absolute discretion.

## **12. FORFEIT**

12.1 A team forfeits a game if it fails to field at least 5 players (subject to 9.1-9.7 & 10.1) by the tenth minute of the game.

- 12.2 In addition to 12.1 above, a forfeit may be awarded against a team if:
- (a) A player belonging to that team refuses to leave the court when directed to do so by the umpire pursuant to 13.4 below.
  - (b) A spectator belonging to that team continues to engage in Misconduct after being issued a warning by the umpire pursuant to 13.6 below.

12.3 If a team forfeits a game, that team is required to make the following payments to Melbourne Netball: 1<sup>st</sup> Forfeit: \$100.00 payment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Forfeit: \$150 payment, 3<sup>rd</sup> Forfeit: \$150 payment. In the event of a 4<sup>th</sup> Forfeit, the team may be removed from competition. Forfeit payments must be made before the team takes the court for its next scheduled game. Failure to pay the forfeit payment may, at Melbourne Netball's discretion, result in the disqualification and barring of the team.

12.4 The opposing team to the forfeiting team shall be credited with 4 points on its ladder score.

12.5 In the event of a forfeit, the opposing team to the forfeiting team may elect to conduct a "Scratch Match" where the game is conducted on the basis that the opposing team supplies players to the forfeiting team. Where a Scratch Match is conducted:

- (a) The result of the game is not officially recorded and, regardless of the outcome, the opposing team shall be credited with 4 points on its ladder score in accordance with 12.4 above.
- (b) The forfeiting team remains liable to pay forfeit payments in accordance with 12.3 above.
- (c) The opposing team is not required to pay any game fee.

12.6 In the event that both teams forfeit the same game, neither team shall receive any points and both teams are subject to the above By-Laws.

### **13. MISCONDUCT/DISCIPLINE**

13.1. Players must not engage in Misconduct.

13.2 An umpire may discipline a player for Misconduct in one or more of the following ways:

- (a) Warning the offending player.
- (b) Standing the offending player off the court for a period as long as the umpire thinks fit.
- (c) Ordering the offending player to leave the court and take no further part in the game.
- (d) Ordering an advance penalty to the opposition team of the offending player, whereby the opposition team is given an undefended shot at goal.
- (e) Penalising the team of the offending player with a scoring penalty, by awarding one or more goals to the opposing team (at the discretion of the umpire). (eg: a player argues a ruling, the umpire awards one goal to the opposing team, the player continues to argue the ruling and the umpire then awards a further goal to the opposing team).

13.3 Without limiting the disciplinary powers of the umpire under 13.2, the following conduct will result in the removal of the offending player from the court for the remainder of the game:

- (a) Engaging in dangerous play (as defined in 2.1) after the player has received a warning from the umpire not to engage in such behaviour.
- (b) Use of coarse or abusive language during the game.
- (c) Engaging in any misconduct that is directed at an umpire.

13.4 Where a player refuses to leave the court as directed by the umpire, the umpire will issue the player with a warning. Where a period of 30 seconds has elapsed since the warning and the player continues to refuse to leave the court, a forfeit will be awarded in favour of the opposing team, whereupon By-Law 12 will apply.

13.5 Without limiting the disciplinary powers of the umpire under 13.2, where a player disputes the decision or ruling of an umpire during the game (as opposed to during an interval), an advanced penalty will immediately be awarded to the opposing team of the offending player.

13.6 Where a spectator engages in Misconduct in support of a team, the umpire may, at his/her discretion:

- (a) Issue a warning to the spectator.
- (b) Order that the spectator be removed from the venue.
- (c) Award goals to the team not associated with the spectator.

If the spectator continues to engage in Misconduct, the umpire may award a forfeit in favour of the team not associated with the spectator, whereupon By-Law 12 will apply.

13.7 Melbourne Netball may discipline a player for Misconduct by issuing a Misconduct Card for a 1<sup>st</sup> offence. This constitutes a formal warning. If a player continues to engage in Misconduct after being issued with a Misconduct Card, that player will be suspended for six months from playing any further games at or with Melbourne Netball. Readmission of a suspended player is at the sole discretion of Melbourne Netball and will be considered only upon receipt of a written request from the suspended player.

13.8 Without limiting the powers of Melbourne Netball, the following conduct may, at the discretion of Melbourne Netball, result in Melbourne Netball issuing a Misconduct Card to the offending player:

- (a) Engaging in Misconduct. Where the offending player is also a Captain, he/she may also, at the discretion of Melbourne Netball, be replaced as Captain.
- (b) Sending to Melbourne Netball any written communications that are abusive, threatening, intimidating or obscene.

13.9 Notwithstanding clause 13.7 and 13.8 above, Melbourne Netball may suspend a player who engages in any form of Misconduct from playing the remainder of any game and/or from playing any further number of games that Melbourne Netball, in its discretion, thinks appropriate.

Melbourne Netball reserves the right to refuse a player who has been found to have engaged in any form of Misconduct, from playing in any further games at or with Melbourne Netball.

### **14. INTIMIDATION**

14.1 It is an offence for any player, on or off the court, to intentionally intimidate an umpire or any other player before, during or after a game.

14.2 Breach of this by-law will result in removal of the offending player from the game or a penalty pass or penalty shot being awarded where the infringing player is standing, unless this places the non-offending team at a disadvantage.

### **15. COACHING FROM SIDELINES**

15.1 An umpire is permitted during any stage of a game (excluding Netball Finals) to coach any individual player or team as a whole, in order to educate players and maintain a game flow and prevent injuries. This includes but is not limited to:

- (a) Stopping play and stepping in to coach/instruct an Inopportune Player who breaks the same rule more than once and explaining what the Inopportune Player is required to do to avoid repeatedly breaking the same rule.
- (b) Transferring an Inopportune Player from an existing position on the court to an alternative position on the court ("Player Transfer"), at the discretion of the umpire, if, after more than one infringement and coaching, the Inopportune Player is putting themselves or other players at risk of injury.

15.2 At no time are players to question an umpire's decision to implement coaching and/or Player Transfer of an Inopportune Player.

15.3 Coaching from the sidelines may be undertaken by umpires at their absolute discretion in order to prevent injury, facilitate a safe game or educate players in the rules and etiquette of netball. Nothing in these By-Laws is to be construed to impose a duty upon an umpire to undertake such coaching.

15.4 Coaching from the sidelines by umpires during Netball Finals is not permitted. Players in Netball Finals are, however, permitted to approach umpires during game intervals in order to ask questions regarding the conduct of the game.

## **16. RESTRICTIONS**

- 16.1 No player may take the court if he/she is below 18 years of age. Any players below the age of 18 will not be entitled to make any insurance claims and will be immediately removed from the competition.
- 16.2 The grading of a team is solely the decision of Melbourne Netball. A team's grading may be changed at any time during a season.
- 16.3 Only Qualified Players (as defined in 2.4) may play in a Netball Final. Any team that breaches this By-Law will receive a 12 month suspension from participating in games run by Melbourne Netball. No player from the suspended team will be permitted to play at any time, in any game, during the 12 month suspension period.

## **17. UNIFORM, BIBS, BALL**

- 17.1 All teams are required to provide their own bibs and netball.
- 17.2 The uniform for females and males is as defined in the Melbourne Netball Uniform icon on the website.
- 17.3 Notwithstanding any discretion, which may or may not have been exercised by Melbourne Netball during the season, all teams must adhere **strictly** to uniform requirements during Netball Finals.

## **18. RESOLVING A TIE IN NETBALL FINALS**

- 18.1 In the event that scores are tied at the conclusion of a Netball Final:
- (a) A further 4 minutes of play will occur, with teams swapping ends of the court after 2 minutes;
  - (b) In the event that scores remain tied, a further 2 minutes of play will occur, with teams swapping ends of the court after 1 minute;
  - (b) In the event that scores remain tied, a further 10 minutes of play will occur, with teams swapping ends of the court after 5 minutes; and
  - (d) In the event that scores remain tied, the game is to continue until a team obtains a 2 goal lead whereupon the game will immediately end and that team will be declared the winner of the Netball Final.

## **19. GENERAL RULES**

- 19.1(a) Umpires' decisions are final. Players are not to query, debate or protest an umpire's decision. A player may approach an umpire with respect to a decision, but only during an interval or after the game for clarification of any ruling that the umpire may have given.
- 19.1(b) Breach of 19.1(a) will result in the player immediately being awarded an 'Advanced Penalty' as defined in the AANA rules. A player who breaches this rule more than once will, at the discretion of Melbourne Netball, be immediately removed from the game and/or the venue.
- 19.2 Upon the completion of a Netball game, completed score sheets provided by the umpire are to be signed by each team Captain to validate and confirm their agreement to the final scores of the game.
- 19.3 The umpire has complete discretion to suspend or terminate the game where he or she considers that it is in the interests of the safety of players or staff to do so. This includes weather conditions.
- 19.4 An umpire may make any decision not otherwise specifically authorised by the AANA Rules or these Conditions where he or she considers it to be reasonably necessary and in the interests of the game, including decisions for safety reasons, fairness or for the proper conduct and flow of the game.
- 19.5 In the interests of fairness, safety or the proper administration of Melbourne Netball or the games that it conducts, Melbourne Netball may at any time at its absolute discretion require players to comply with any other additional rules or requirements in addition to these By-Laws as it sees fit and such further rules or requirements shall be binding on all players as if set out in these By-Laws.

## **20. CONCLUSION**

- 20.1 All decisions made by umpires and Melbourne Netball are final in nature and are not subject to challenge.