

JUNIOR FOOTBALL RULES

Best practice and recommended rules
for Junior Community Football



Bendigo Bank

What are we trying to achieve?

Encouraging
Participation

This project will deliver more kids playing AFL, having more enjoyment while playing, keeping them playing for longer.



Junior Community Football – Nationwide

The Background



The AFL developed the Junior Match Policy (2013), which was a recommended framework outlining how football should be delivered to help foster skill and player development.

Yet over the years, the purpose, function, and objectives of the Junior Match Policy have been lost, leaving it unused or ineffectively implemented by coaches and leagues across Australia.

Lack of consistency of delivery of junior football nationally

Junior Match Policy

The Challenges ▼



Name – Junior Match Policy

Challenge:

- Negative connotation with the word “Policy” for non-compliant leagues
- Increasingly difficult to ‘sell’ the benefits of the JMP
- Issues with stakeholder buy-in to its objectives and benefits.



Value proposition

Challenge:

- Lack of visibility and promotion of the JMP’s value proposition for participants and key stakeholder groups.



Effective communication

Challenge:

- Lacking communication to key stakeholders (parents, players and clubs)
- Lack of insight around what the JMP was and what it aimed to achieve.

Key Finding of Research

The Research ▾

The recommended rules still delivered ‘real footy’ with a focus on the contest, and that modified rules helped develop skills with the participants enjoying themselves more, leading to enhanced experiences.

The core rules of;

- Zones – to prevent “kick-chasing” and congestion greater opportunity to be involved in the play
- Smaller ground size and balls – resulted in kids being more regularly involved
- Progressive introduction of tackling – helped kids develop the right technique
- Reduced number of players – resulted in kids being more regularly involved
- No scoring or ladders – allowed coaches to focus on giving all team members a chance to participate, rather than focusing on winning at all costs



According to research by Deakin University, leagues which fully adopted the recommended rules increased team and player involvement **by more than 35%**.

Key Finding of Research

The Research ▼

Across the country there are three different league types:

Model Leagues

- Implement all modified Rules - Highest attraction of new participants (10% higher year on year than potential adopters)
- Were the only league type to experience a growth in participation in 2019

Potential Adopters

- Use some modified Rules - Lower attraction of new participants compared to model leagues
- Attrition rate has increased most years for Potential Adopters

Resisters*

- Lowest attraction of new participant

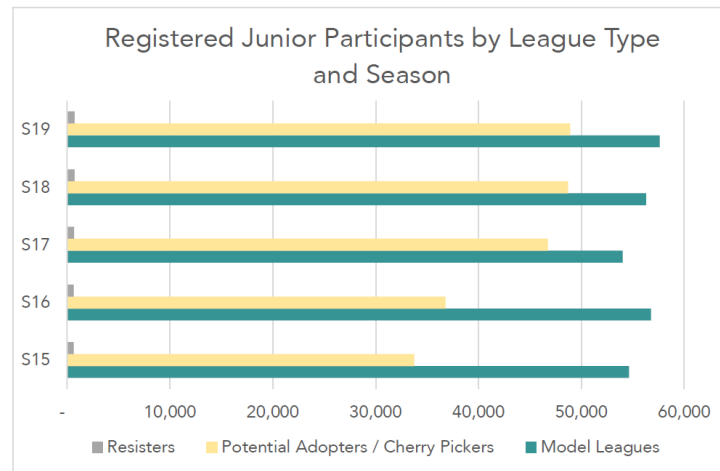


Figure 2 Registered Junior Participation by League Type and Season

Elite Participation

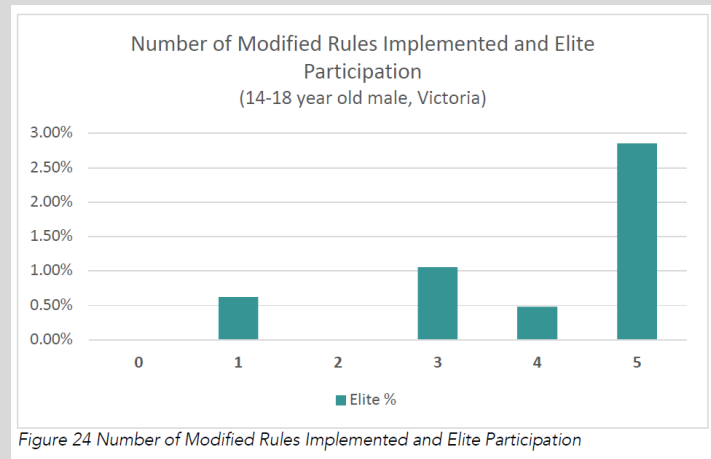
Skill Development ▼

Playing more years of football prior to reaching the age of 14 led to a greater likelihood to play at the elite level – Players who played five seasons were **three times more likely to play at the elite level** than those who played four seasons and 12 times more likely than those who participated in only three seasons (in the five year data set).

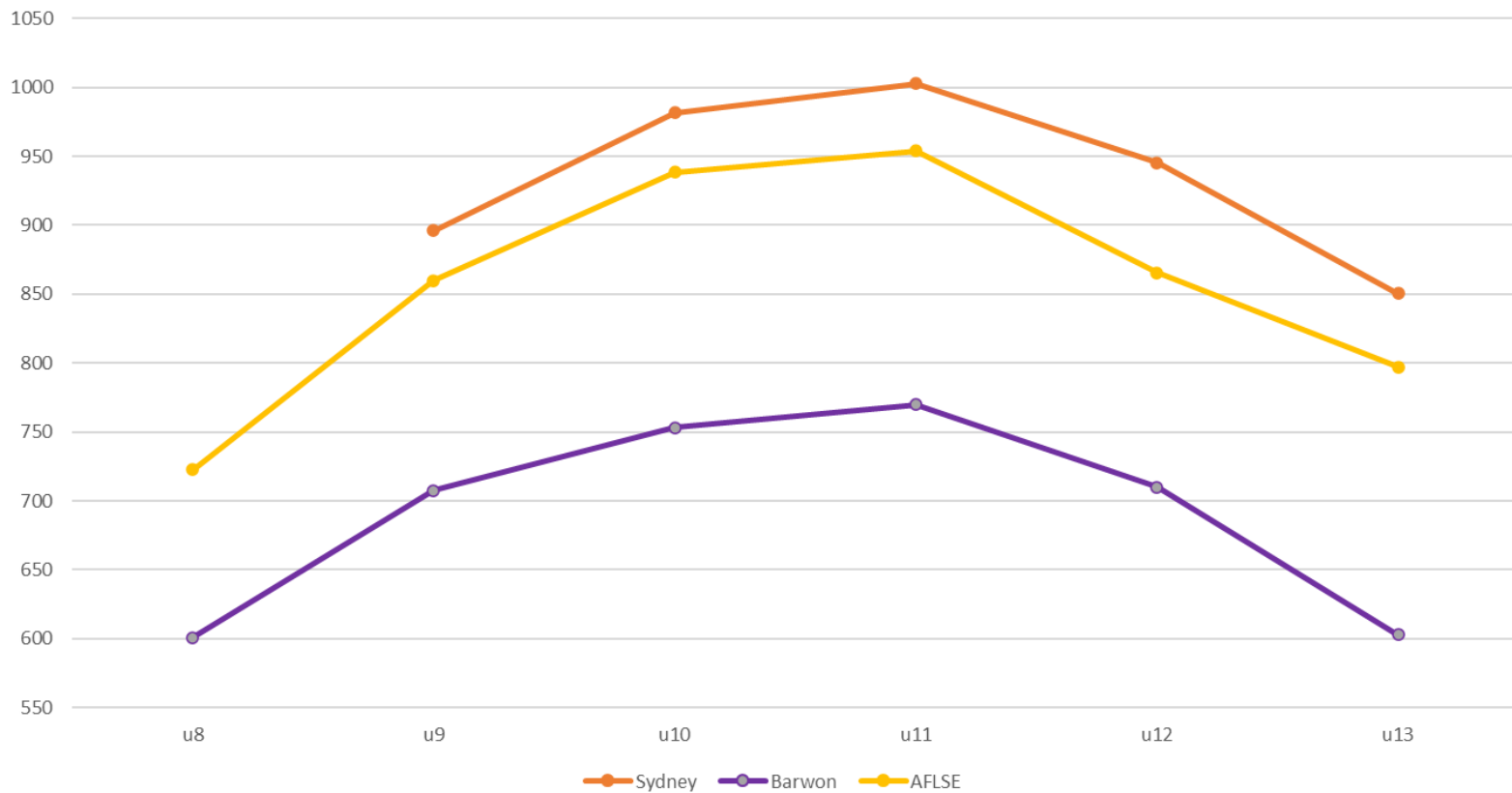
Model Leagues produce a higher proportion of elite level male and female players. A player from a Model League is almost **five times more likely to play at the elite level** compared with a player from a Potential Adopter League

Participants who played five seasons and spent these at a Model League were **2.5 times more likely to participate at the elite level** compared with players who played five seasons in a Potential Adopters League

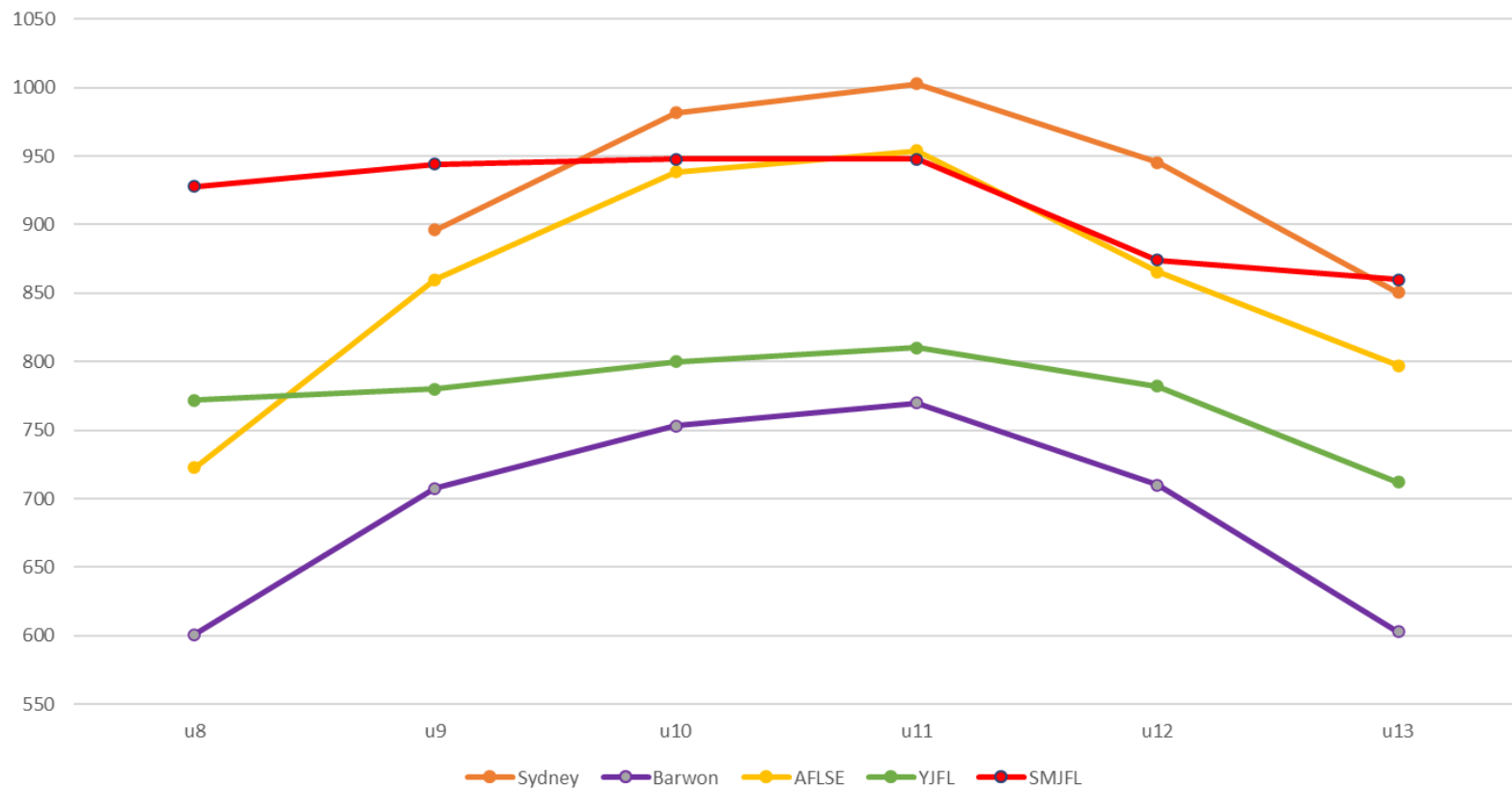
Players from leagues who implement the five core rules are **four times more likely to play at an elite level** than leagues who only implement four of the rules

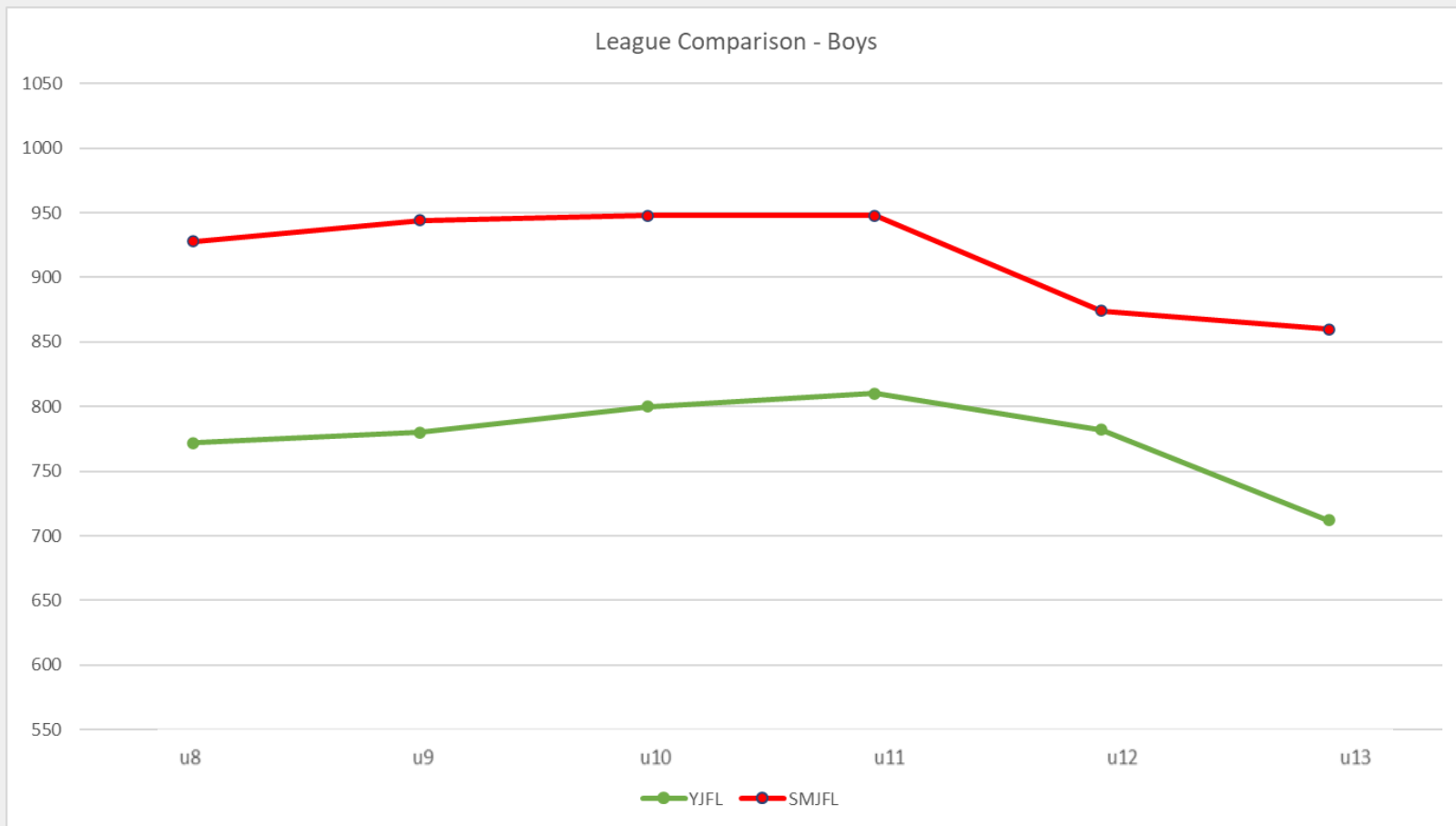


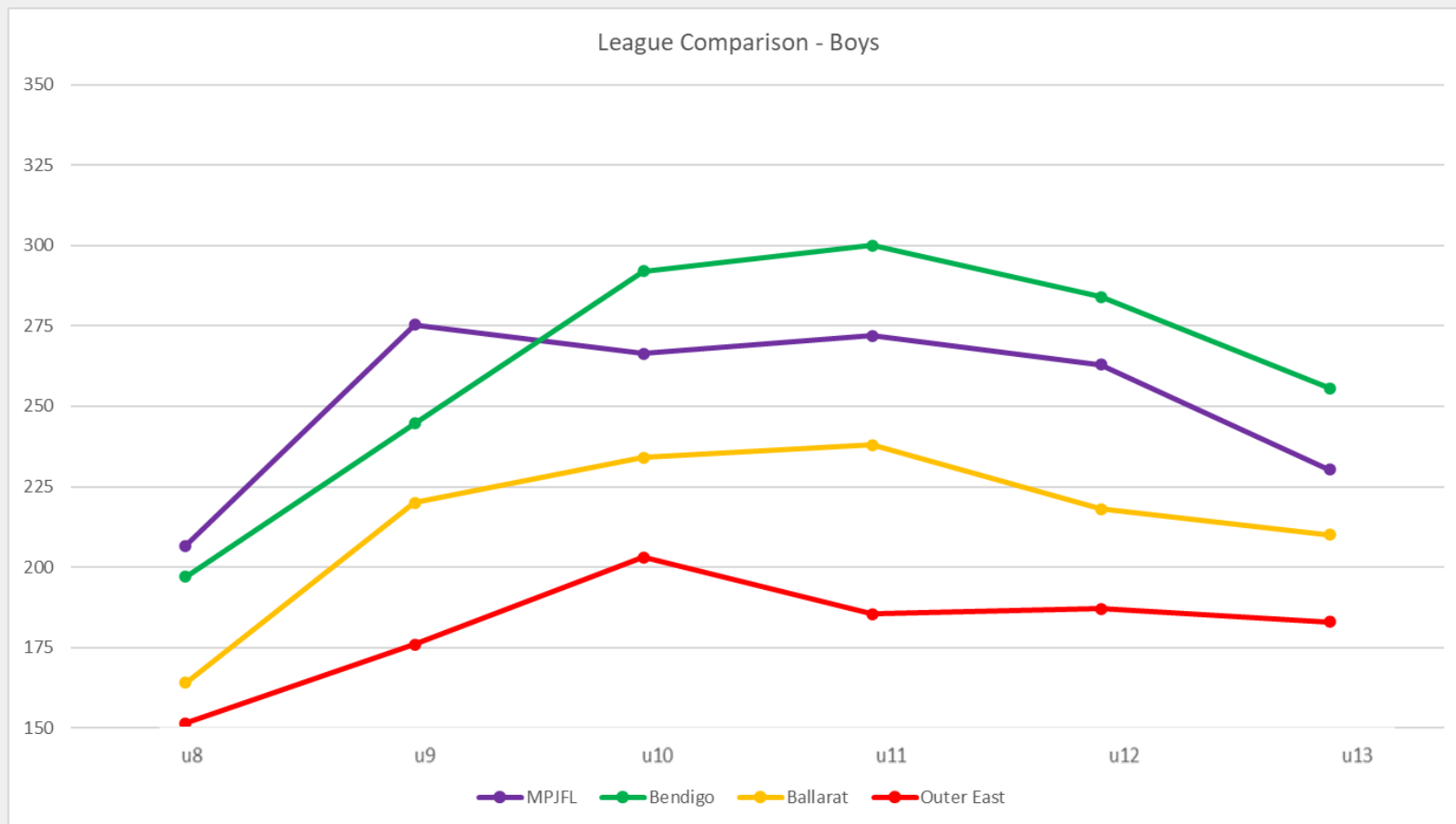
League Comparison - Boys



League Comparison - Boys







Development of the Junior Football Rules

The Ambition ▼



Skill development of participants from Auskick to Junior football to Senior football



Acquisition and retention of participants in the long term



Transition of participants across all age groups



Clear guidelines for national participation that increase consistency of delivery



Personal development within the community



Rules	Under 8	Under 9	Under 10	Under 11	Under 12	Under 13/14	Under 15 (Boys)	Under 15 (Girls)	Under 16/17/18 (Boys)	Under 16/17/18 (Girls)
Ground Size	70 x 50m (80 x 60m max)	85 x 65m (100 x 80m max)	85 x 65m (100 x 80m max)	115 x 75m (130 x 90m max)	115 x 75m (130 x 90m)	125 x 95m (140 x 110m max)	130 x 100m (150 x 120m max)	130 x 100m (150 x 120m max)	Full Ground	Full Ground
Game Time	4 x 10min qtr	4 x 12min qtr	4 x 12min qtr	4 x 15mins qtr	4 x 15mins qtr	4 x 15-20mins qtr	4 x 15-20mins qtr	4 x 15-20mins qtr	4 x 15-20mins qtr	4 x 15-20mins qtr
Break Times	5, 8, 5mins	5, 8, 5mins	5, 8, 5mins	5, 10, 5mins	5, 10, 5mins	6, 10-15, 6mins	6, 10-15, 6mins	6, 10-15, 6mins	6, 10-15, 6mins	6, 10-15, 6mins
Ball size	1	2	2	3	3	4	5	4	5	4
Ball type	Synthetic	Synthetic	Synthetic	Synthetic or Leather	Synthetic or Leather	Leather	Leather	Leather	Leather	Leather
Zones	✓	✓	(soft zones)	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Team No's	6 (9 max)	9 (12 max)	12 (15max)	12 (15 max)	12 (15 max)	15	15 (18 max)	15 (16 max)	18 max	16 max
Marking	Any distance, reasonable attempt	Any distance, shows control	Any distance, shows control	10m, direct catch	10m, direct catch	15m, direct catch	15m, direct catch	15m, direct catch	15m, direct catch	15m, direct catch
Tackling	✗	Modified (Wrap Tackle only)	Modified (Wrap Tackle only)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bumping, pushing, shepherding, smothering, stealing the ball	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bounces	✗	1 max	1 max	1 max	1 max	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Kicking off ground	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Scoring	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Prem Points	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ladders & Finals	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Publishing of Names	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rep Teams	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	State body decision	State body decision	State body decision	State body decision	State body decision
Coach on ground	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Runner	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Season Length	10-14 games	10-14 games	10-14 games	10-14 games	12-16 games	20 games max	20 games max	20 games max	20 games max	20 games max

THANK YOU

