



# AFL OPEN BY LAWS



THE GAME IS OPEN  
TO EVERYONE.



# **AFL OPEN: WHEELCHAIR**

These By-Laws relating to the Toyota AFL Open have been formalised to provide official and binding rules for competing teams.

Governed by the AFL, the Toyota AFL Open provides footballers with a physical disability the opportunity to participate in Australian Football at an elite level.

It is the responsibility of each competing team to ensure that all appointed officials and Players are fully aware of the contents of these By-Laws to enable the competition to be conducted efficiently and in the true spirit of sportsmanship.

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## 1. DEFINITIONS

In these By-Laws:

- (a) **AFL** means Australian Football League (ACN 004 122 211).
- (b) **OPEN** means the 2024 Toyota AFL Open.
- (c) **OPEN POINTS** means points awarded in accordance with By-Law 12.
- (d) **DIVISIONAL SERIES** means the divisional series Matches specified in By-Law 11(c).
- (e) **FINALS** means the finals Matches specified in By-Law 11(d).
- (f) **LIGHTNING ROUND** means the lightning carnival Matches specified in By-Law 11(b).
- (g) **MATCH** means a match played in the AFL Open, including Lightning Round, Divisional Series and Finals matches.
- (h) **PLAYER** means includes a player registered to play and/or participate in the AFL Open.
- (i) **ORGANISATION** means an organisation specified in By-Law 6.
- (j) **REGION** means a region specified in By-Law 6.
- (k) **POLICY HANDBOOK** means the National Community Football Policy Handbook (available [here](#)).
- (l) **TEAM** means a team representing a Region or Organisation participating in the Championships.

The definitions set out in Policy Handbook will otherwise apply.

## 2. EFFECT OF NATIONAL COMMUNITY FOOTBALL POLICY HANDBOOK

The Policy Handbook will apply to the AFL Open unless expressly stated otherwise. To the extent of any inconsistencies between the Policy Handbook and these By-Laws, and where the application of a specific section of the Policy Handbook is clearly unworkable when applied in conjunction with these By-Laws, these By-Laws will take priority.

## 3. NAMING RIGHTS

The AFL Open must be referred to by all associated parties as the *2024 Toyota AFL Open* in all written communication (other than these By-Laws).

## 4. MANAGEMENT

The AFL Open will be conducted by the AFL and Disability Sports Australia (DSA) who together may determine any matter related to the Championships, unless the determination of such matter is otherwise specifically provided for in these By-Laws or the Policy Handbook.

## 5. **PLAYER ELIGIBILITY/CLASSIFICATION**

To compete in the Open, the following eligibility and classification provisions will apply:

- (a) A Player must be 16 years old as at the commencement date of the Open unless otherwise approved by the AFL in exceptional and compelling circumstances.
- (b) Players with and without disability will be eligible to play, subject to an Individual Classification prior to the event.
- (c) Individual Classification: Players will be divided into Classes (1-5) based on their level of impairment and how it affects the way they perform key actions in wheelchair AFL, namely wheelchair movement, handballing, passing, marking, catching, and reacting to contact. For background, the Classes have been developed over 40 years of research in wheelchair basketball and modified to fit the context of Wheelchair AFL. The Classes also acknowledge the residual effects of serving in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and recognise Returned and Services League (RSL) players as 4 points. The table below provides a brief description of each Class, alongside one AFL skill example. A Wheelchair AFL Classification Manual is available upon request.

<b>TRUNK FUNCTION</b>	<b>AFL WHEELCHAIR EXAMPLE – HANDBALL</b>
<b>CLASS 1</b>	
Generally, a 1-point player sits back into their backrest. They have little or no control of their trunk when they lean forward and no control when they lean sideways. They have no active rotation of the trunk. When unbalanced, they use their arms on their wheelchair or knees to return upright.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Typically leans back into the backrest to counterbalance when handballing.</li> <li>• A handball is accompanied by a backward movement of the head and shoulders to maintain an upright position.</li> <li>• Lack of trunk rotation limits the ability to generate power in the handball.</li> <li>• Often overbalances during follow-through, requiring arm support to remain upright.</li> </ul>
<b>CLASS 2</b>	
A 2-point player has active control of their upper trunk but not the lower trunk. They can actively rotate their upper trunk without using their hands on the chair. They have partial controlled movement when they lean forward. They have no controlled sideways trunk movements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A handball is performed with minimal loss of stability, but the lower trunk is not used to gain power.</li> <li>• Able to lean the upper trunk forward for handballing, but more often remains on the backrest, particularly for longer-range handballs.</li> <li>• Can rotate the upper trunk towards the intended handball recipient if the backrest supports the lower trunk.</li> </ul>
<b>CLASS 3</b>	

A 3-point player has complete trunk control to rotate and lean forward from the backrest. They have no controlled sideways trunk movements and use their hands on their wheelchair or knees to return upright when reaching out into this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A handball is performed with no loss of stability using forward motion of the trunk to gain maximum power and momentum.</li> <li>• Can rotate their full trunk towards the intended handball recipient unsupported by the backrest</li> </ul>
<b>CLASS 4</b>	
A 4-point player has complete trunk control to rotate and lean forward from the backrest. They have complete sideways trunk movement to at least one side. These players' impairments could include lower limb injuries or PTSD from ADF duty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to handball forward without support from the wheelchair.</li> <li>• Can rotate their full trunk towards the intended handball recipient unsupported by the backrest.</li> <li>• Able to actively move their trunk to at least one side to handball and return to an upright position without losing stability.</li> </ul>
<b>CLASS 5</b>	
A 5-point player has no identified impairments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A player with no physical mobility issues</li> </ul>

d) **CONCESSION POINTS** Players who are female or aged under 18 will receive a 1-point concession to focus on the development of Players within these targeted groups. A Player can only use one deduction point.

e) **TEAM POINT CEILING:** The Team point ceiling is the maximum cumulative point value of the five players on the playing field. A Team may play under the Team point ceiling.

The 2024 Toyota AFL Open will use a staggered Team point ceiling, where Teams are divided into two categories based on the development of their state league and their pool of players (both in numbers and types of impairments). Each category has a different team point ceiling to which the listed teams and their opposition must not exceed. (N.B. Teams playing across categories play to the highest point ceiling.)

- Category A teams – 17 team point ceiling – NSW, QLD, TAS, WA, SA, VIC, NT
- Category B teams – 20 team point ceiling – ADF, RSL

## 6. **TEAMS**

A total of nine (9) Teams will participate in the Open, representing the following Regions and Organisations:



## *Regions*

- (a) New South Wales / Australian Capital Territory;
- (b) Northern Territory;
- (c) Queensland;
- (d) South Australia;
- (e) Tasmania;
- (f) Victoria – Country;
- (g) Victoria – Metro;
- (h) Western Australia;

## *Organisations*

- (i) Returned and Service League of Australia (RSL) Active

## **7. SQUAD SIZE**

- (a) Each Team may include a maximum of ten (10) Players in its Open squad.
- (b) Each Team must always have five (5) Players on the playing field during each Match, unless otherwise approved by the AFL in exceptional and compelling circumstances.

## **8. SQUAD SELECTION**

- (a) To be eligible for a Team representing a Region, a Player must:
  - i. be registered to play in a League affiliated in that Region; or
  - ii. if not registered, permanently reside in that Region.
- (b) To be eligible for Team representing an Organisation, a Player must be a registered member of that Organisation.
- (c) Where a Team cannot meet the Team size requirements under By-Law 7(b), the relevant Team may select Players that do not meet the eligibility requirements for that Team from a pool of players nominated by the AFL. Selection under this By-Law 8(c) will be administered by the AFL in a draft format based on the ladder positions of last years' Open.
- (d) Regions will be required to select players from their region as the first approach to selecting their squad. Regions will not be eligible to nominate for the draft should Regions want to access higher quality players than what is available locally.
- (e) No Player will be allowed to play for multiple teams whilst the Open is in progress.

## **9. PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT**

All Players must comply with the code of conduct set out in Sections 9.1 and 9.2 of the Policy Handbook. Failure to do so may result in removal from the Open or other disciplinary action under these By-Laws or the Policy Handbook.

## **10. COACHES AND OFFICIALS CODE OF CONDUCT**

All Coaches and Football Officials must comply with the code of conduct set out in Sections 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3 (for Coaches) of the Policy Handbook. Failure to do so may



result in removal from the Open or other disciplinary action under these By-Laws or the Policy Handbook.

## 11. CHAMPIONSHIPS FORMAT

- (a) The AFL and DSA shall be responsible for determining the Championships fixture and may amend the fixture from time to time at their absolute discretion.
- (b) Days One and Two of the Championships will be fixtured as a lightning round where game times will be managed in accordance with By-Law 20 and all teams will play each other once (**LIGHTNING ROUND**).
- (c) At the conclusion of the Lightning Round, teams will be split into two divisions determined by each Team's total Open Points in respect of the Lightning Round (1st – 6th, Division 1 and 7th – 9th, Division 2). Each Team will then play each other Team in their division once (**DIVISIONAL SERIES**).
- (d) At the conclusion of the Divisional Series for Division 1, the two teams with the highest number of Open Points in respect of the Divisional Series will playoff in the Division 1 Grand Final, and 3rd and 4th placed Teams will also playoff for third place, and 5th and 6th placed teams for fifth place (**FINALS**). At the conclusion of the Divisional Series, for Division 2, according to the ladder, 1st and 2nd will progress to the Division 2 Grand Final (**FINALS**).

At the conclusion of the Divisional Series, for Division 2, according to the ladder, 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> will playoff in Semi Final 1 and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> will playoff in Semi Final 2. The winner of each Semi Final will progress to the Division 2 Grand Final, and the losers of each Semi Final will progress to Third-Place Playoff (**FINALS**).

The Finals will include the following Matches:

- i. Division 1:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> v 2<sup>nd</sup> (Grand Final);
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> v 4<sup>th</sup> (Third-Place Playoff);
  - 5<sup>th</sup> v 6<sup>th</sup> (Fifth-Place Playoff).
- ii. Division 2:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> v 2<sup>nd</sup> (Grand Final);

## 12. OPEN POINTS

- (a) Open Points will be awarded for all Lightning Round and Divisional Series Matches as follows:
  - i. Win 4 Points
  - ii. Draw 2 Points
  - iii. Loss 0 Points
  - iv. Forfeit To 4 Points
  - v. Forfeit Against 0 Points
- (b) In the case that two (2) or more Teams finish on the same number of points after the Lightning Round or Divisional Series, the Team(s) with the higher percentage will finish higher on the ladder.

### 13. DRAWN MATCH

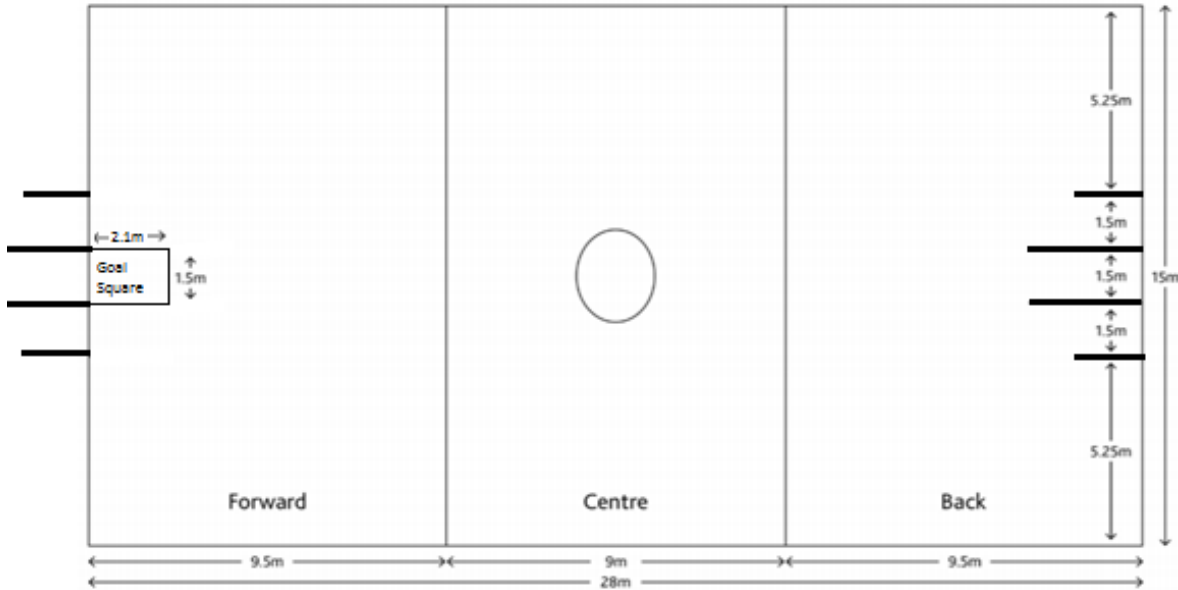
- (a) In the event of a drawn Match during the Lightning Round or Divisional Series, the draw will stand and Open Points for the Match will be allocated in accordance with By-Law 12(a).
- (b) In the event of a drawn Match during the Finals, Teams will take a 5 minute break following the final siren, before entering extra time, where two additional halves of five (5) minutes each will be played (with a two (minute) break for half time) (**EXTRA TIME**).
- (c) If the scores are tied at the end of Extra Time, play will resume two (2) minutes after the final siren and the Team that scores first will be declared the winner.

### 14. AWARDS

- (a) The following trophies and awards shall be awarded for the Open:
  - i. Premiers Cup (Perpetual) - Winner Division 1;
  - ii. Premiers Cup (Perpetual) - Winner Division 2;
  - iii. Premiers Flag - Winner Division 1;
  - iv. Premiers Flag - Winner Division 2;
  - v. Premiers Medallions - Winner Division 1;
  - vi. Premiers Medallions - Winner Division 2;
  - vii. Leading Goal Scorer – Division 1
  - viii. Leading Goal Scorer – Division 2
  - ix. Kevin Faulkner Medallion - Best on Ground for Division 1 Grand Final;
  - x. Brendan Stroud Medallion - Best on Ground for Division 2 Grand Final;
  - xi. Game Ball, Best on Ground – All Finals, excluding the Grand Finals;
  - xii. Best and Fairest Trophy, from each team;
  - xiii. ADF Spirit of the Championships Award; and
  - xiv. All Australian Team – Football Jumper and Certificate (one team and once coach across the entire championships).
- (b) Leading Goal Scorer awards will be awarded to the player who scores the highest total of goals during the Divisional Series and Finals, for Division 1 and 2.
- (c) The Kevin Faulkner and Brendan Stroud Medallions will be determined by the Umpires officiating the respective Division Grand Finals.
- (d) Best on Ground for all Finals Matches will be determined by the Umpires officiating the respective Finals Matches and awarded the Match football.
- (e) A Best and Fairest Trophy for each Team will be determined by each Team's coach.
- (f) The ADF Spirit of the Championships Award will be awarded by a panel of ADF, DSA & AFL members, to a player who best upholds the ADF's values.
- (g) All awards are to be judged against the AFL's values set out in Appendix 2.
- (h) The All-Australian team will comprise of the best performing Players and Coach during the Championships and will be determined by the AFL and DSA in consultation with the Head Coaches of all the teams participating in the Championships and having regard to the AFL's values set out in Appendix 2. Ten (10) Players and one (1) Coach will be selected as All Australian.
- (i) The All-Australian team should include four (4) defenders, two (2) centres and four (4) forwards.
- (j) The All-Australian team is a representative team selected from participants in the Championships. Selection in the team is the highest honour available in the AFL Disability Inclusion Pathways and represents a significant achievement.

## 15. PLAYING FIELD

Each Match will be played on a basketball court, as per the specifications in the below diagram:



## 16. ZONES

There are designated zones (forward, centre and defence) on each playing field (as per the diagram above) which dictate where assigned Players can play. Refer to below Player movement and scoring provisions:

- Two (2) x Forwards. Can only move in the Forward or Centre zones. Only the designated forwards can score.
- Two (2) x Defenders: Can only move in the Centre and Back zones.
- One (1) x Centre: Can move in all zones.

## 17. IDENTIFYING PLAYERS

- Each Player will wear coloured wristbands to identify their playing positions. Each Player is to wear a thick wristband (as approved by the AFL and DSA) on each wrist: Red = Defender, Yellow = Centre, Blue = Forward.
- Should a Player not be wearing a wristband on each wrist, a free kick against will be awarded against the offending team.

## 18. WHEELCHAIR SPECIFICATIONS

All wheelchairs used by Players in the Open must meet the following requirements:

- All Player wheelchairs must be equipped with a seat strap and Players must wear the strap at all times while playing;
- Wheelchair foot bars must be adjusted so the feet sit behind the edge of the bar;

- (c) All wheelchairs must have one or two anti-tip devices utilising no more than a total of two small castors attached to either the frame or rear axle and located at the rear of the wheelchair;
- (d) The anti-tip devices must not protrude pass the line of the rear wheels and castors must be no more than 2cm off the floor;
- (e) All wheelchairs must have a Front fender bar, no more than 11cm to centre of bar off the floor;
- (f) Rear wheels must no more than a maximum of 27 inches in diameter;
- (g) Maximum height of wheelchair frame including cushion 58cm;
- (h) Wheelchair must have no protruding footplates or parts;
- (i) Tyres may be coloured as long as they don't Mark the field;
- (j) If a wheelchair has a rear bar it must be covered with a soft material;
- (k) Player's will not be allowed to play in a rugby wheelchair or their everyday wheelchair;
- (l) All sharp or protruding parts must be covered with padding;
- (m) All sports wheelchairs will be reviewed prior to the start of the Open.

## 19. FOOTBALL REQUIREMENTS

The Footballs used in each Match will be as follows: Synthetic Sherrin Size 5.

## 20. LENGTH AND TIMING OF MATCHES

- (a) All Matches will be played with no time on. The only time the clock may be stopped during a Match will be as follows:
  - iii. Lightning Round - In the final half, should the umpire suspend play when a Player falls from their chair for safety concerns, the Umpires must call time off. It is the responsibility of the score bench to activate time off and on following the Umpire's signal.
  - iv. Divisional Series and Finals - In the final quarter, should the umpire suspend play when a Player falls from their chair for safety concerns, the Umpires must call time off. It is the responsibility of the score bench to activate time off and on following the Umpire's signal.
  - v. Lightning Round -In the final half after any score. The clock is to stop after the goal umpires signal, with the clock to turn back on once the ball is brought back into play following a behind. Or, once the ball leaves the field umpires hand at the centre ball up following a goal. It is the responsibility of the score bench to activate time on and off following a behind or goal.
  - vi. Divisional Series and Finals - In the final quarter after any score. The clock is to stop after the goal umpires signal, with the clock to turn back on once the ball is brought back into play following a behind. Or, once the ball leaves the field umpires hand at the centre ball up following a goal. It is the responsibility of the score bench to activate time on and off following a behind or goal.
  - vii. When a Player falls from their chair during the first three quarters or first half (as applicable), Umpires may, at their discretion, call time off (for example, where a Player is taking a long time to return to their wheelchair).
  - viii. Classification Review.
  - ix. At the Umpire's discretion to uphold the integrity of the Match (e.g. injury/time wasting).

Should a Team query whether the clock should be stopped, they need to approach the field umpire first, who will then consult with the score bench. Players are not to approach the score bench directly. If it is deemed the clock has been stopped prematurely or wasn't stop at all, the field umpire has the power to adjust the time clock with the score bench before resuming play.

- (b) The length of and breaks in Matches will be as follows:
  - x. Lightning Round: Two (2), 7 minute halves with four (4) minute half time;
  - xi. Divisional Series: Four (4), 7 minute quarters with three (3) minute quarter and three quarter time and five (5) minute half time;
  - xii. Finals: Four (4), 10 minute quarters with four 4 minute quarter and three quarter time and six (6) minute half time.
- (c) Timekeepers shall sound the siren (1 blast) one (1) minute prior to and at the commencement of time for each quarter/half.
- (d) Teams are not permitted to leave the playing field during any of the intervals.

## 21. **RULE ADAPPTIONS**

The Open will adhere to the Laws of Australian Football with the following adaptations and adjustments:

- (a) Disposal
  - i. A handball is equivalent to a kick, and a single-handed underarm throw is equivalent to a handball in AFL Wheelchair.
  - ii. A Player's arm when throwing the ball must remain under shoulder height for the disposal to be legal. A double handed chest pass is classed as an illegal disposal, handing the football to another Player is also an illegal disposal.
  - iii. A handball is the act of holding the football in one hand and disposing of it by hitting it with the clenched fist of the other hand.
  - iv. Should a Player not have full mobility to complete a handball, an exception can be made for that player, through a discussion with the umpire.
  - v. There is no kicking allowed.
- (b) Scoring
  - vi. A Goal is scored when the football is handballed completely over the Goal Line by a Forward Player of the Attacking Team without being touched by any other Player, even if the football first touches the ground.
  - vii. A Behind is scored when any of the following occurs:
    - the football passes completely over the Behind Line;
    - the football touches or passes over the goal post or touches any other attachment to the goal post;
    - a Forward Player of the Attacking Team Kicks the football over the Goal Line but before completely passing over the Goal Line, the football is touched by another Player; or
    - if a defending Player plays on from behind the Goal Line or Behind Line and subsequently changes direction before entering the Playing Surface.
  - viii. Where a football touches or passes over a behind post, the football shall be Out of Bounds.
- (c) Arm Chop
  - A Player when defending, must not deliberately chop the arms of the opposition Player when they are marking or passing the ball. A free kick will be given if this occurs.

(d) Bouncing

Players have the option of bouncing the ball the traditional way (bouncing or tapping ball on the ground) or by touching the ball on top of the wheel of their wheelchair.

(e) Too Far

- i. There is no limit to the number of bounces a Player can take before they dispose of the ball. Players must bounce the ball after three (3) pushes/wheelchair change in direction, or covered ten (10) metres across the ground, whichever comes first.
- ii. For the purposes of this By-Law, a Player shall be deemed to be in possession of the football during the period when the Player disposes of the football to himself and regains possession without the football touching the ground;

(f) Ball Up

- i. Each Team must have no more than one Ruck contesting any centre bounce or throw-up.
- ii. Both centre Players must contest the ruck. Each Team is permitted to have one additional Player in the Centre zone.
- iii. Should a Team have more than one additional team member in the Centre zone, a free kick will be awarded against the offending team.
- iv. A Ball Up may also be called by the Umpires if they deem:
  - Multiple Players have the ball and the ball is not moving.
  - A Player has wheeled on top of the football with other Players surrounding.
- v. A field Umpire shall award a Free Kick in a Ruck contest against a Player where the Player:
  - who is not a Ruck and contests a throw-up;
  - unduly pushes or bumps an opposition Ruck;
  - blocks an opposition Ruck;
  - makes contact with an opposition Ruck prior to the football leaving the field Umpire's hand;
  - who is a Ruck, enters their attacking half or moves outside the Centre Circle prior to the field Umpire throwing up the football; or
  - hits the football Out of Bounds On the Full from a throw-up by a field.

(g) Rushed Behind

- i. Players shall be encouraged to keep the football in play.
- ii. The Umpire shall award a Free Kick against a Player from the Defending Team who intentionally Handballs or forces the football over the Attacking Team's Goal Line or Behind Line or onto one of the Attacking Team's Goal Posts, and the Player:
  - is greater than two metres (length of goal square) from the Goal Line or Behind Line;
  - is not under immediate physical pressure;
  - has had time and space to dispose of the football; or
  - from a Ruck contest, hits the football over the Goal Line or Behind Line on the full.
- iii. A Free Kick shall be taken from the middle of the Goal Line if the football crossed the Goal Line or hit the goal post, or at the point where the football crossed the Behind Line.

(h) Player Falling Out of Chair

- i. If a Player falls out of the chair during play, the Umpire will immediately suspend play if there is any safety concern to the fallen Player. Refer to 'Length and timing of Matches' for when the clock should be stopped.
  - ii. If there is no immediate danger to Player safety, the Umpire will withhold their whistles until the particular play in progress has been completed.
  - iii. If a Player falls out of the chair to gain possession of the ball or by falling keeps opponents from gaining possession of the ball, the ball is awarded to the opposing team.
- (i) Tackling
  - i. Tackling is prohibited. A free kick is to be awarded against should a Player tackle another Player.
  - ii. The equivalent to a tackle is a touch with one or two hands. You can't grab the player or their wheelchair.
  - iii. The umpire is to yell 'tackle' once they feel the ball carrier has been touched/tackled.
- (j) Holding the Ball
  - i. Should the Player have prior opportunity to disposal of the ball, prior to being tackled/touched and doesn't, a free kick is to be awarded to the tackling Player.
  - ii. For no prior opportunity, and the ball carrier is touched/tackled, the ball carrier must dispose of the ball within three seconds before 'holding the ball' is awarded.
  - iii. In the situation where a Player is receiving the ball and is immediately touched/tackled once taking possession of the football, but the ball carrier breaks away from the tackler into open space, the ball carrier will still only have one second to dispose of the ball before holding the ball is called. This is regardless of if the player who applied the touch/tackle is not in close proximate of the ball carrier.
  - iv. For the avoidance of doubt, a Player does not elect to Incorrectly Dispose of the football when the Legal Tackle causes the football to be dislodged from the Player's possession.
  - v. Holding the ball will also be awarded for any Player that takes the ball out of a ruck contest.
- (k) Holding the Man
  - i. A Player must not hold another Player, with any part of their wheelchair or body, that will impede a Player moving in any direction. Pushing and pulling of the Player constitutes the same as holding.
  - ii. A team double teaming an opponent, for example sandwiching between two wheelchairs, which results in locking down the opponent's position on the field, is not permitted. Players who are double teaming must allow their opponent adequate space to move.
- (l) Charging/Bumping
  - i. A Player cannot charge or bump a stationary Player in a reckless manner and must avoid contact where possible when travelling at speed/with momentum. At no time can a Player bump another Player in the rear axle the chair.
  - ii. A Player is not permitted to contact an opposing Player's wheelchair such that the wheelchair is made to rotate in the horizontal or vertical plane in a way that places the opposing Player's safety at risk.
  - iii. A Player cannot continuously ram their opponent to gain their position on the field. Initial contact can be made without the contact being reckless, however a free kick is to be paid should a Player continuously pull their wheelchair back (forwards or backwards) and ram their opponent.
- (m) Push in the Back



Should a Player push their opposition in the back, a free kick is to be awarded against the infringed player.

(n) Ball Transition

The football does not need to be touched by a Player in every zone. The football can be passed from the defensive zone into the forward zone without a Player touching it in the centre zone.

(o) Scoring zones

- i. Scoring can only take place within the forward and centre zones (this includes from outside the boundary- last touch out of bounds free kick), by the designated Forwards.
- ii. In the situation where a Centre or Defender attempts to handpass to their Forward, and the Forward does not touch the ball, and it crosses the goal line, no score is to be awarded.
- iii. In the situation where a Centre or Defender attempts to handpass to their Forward, and the Forward does touch the ball, and it crosses the goal line, no score is to be awarded (e.g. reaching for a mark and brushes the fingers of the forward).
- iv. In the situation where the Centre or Defender in possession of the football rolls across their oppositions goal line, whilst under pressure, a rush behind is to be awarded.
- v. In the situation where the Defending team ineffectively disposes of the football, causing the ball to cross the opposition's goal line, a rush behind is to be awarded.
- vi. In the situation where the Defending team fumbles the ball across the oppositions goal line, a rush behind is to be awarded.

(p) Zones

- i. If a Player that accidentally moves into a zone they are not allowed to enter, and do not impact play, can immediately move out without a free kick being awarded. A Player's momentum can sometimes bring them forward into a disallowed zone – but must be in their allowed zone to pass the ball.
- ii. Should a Player be in a zone, which they are not allowed to enter, and do impact the play. A free kick is to be awarded against the infringed Player.

(q) Shepherding

- i. A Player can shepherd the ball carrier, provided they are within three (3) meters of the ball carrier. The shepherding Player must not bring the opposition Player to a complete stop otherwise it will be classed as 'blocking'.
- ii. Should the shepherding Player shepherd in a reckless manner, a free kick will be awarded against the shepherding Player.
- iii. Further to this, a free kick will be awarded to the opposition, if a Player blocks an opposition from reaching a contest where the ball is within a three (3)m radius of the Players
- i. A Player cannot prevent an opposition Player from attacking the football by blocking the path of the Player:  
e.g. If a Player attempts to place their wheelchair in front of their opponent's wheelchair, however, doesn't reach the spot on the field before their opponent and causes their opponents wheelchair to stop, a free kick will be awarded against the Player for blocking.
- ii. A Player can prevent an opposition Player from attacking the football by finding 'good chair position' without making contact

e.g. If a Player stops their wheelchair in front of their opponent's wheelchair, before their opponent reaches the same spot on the field, causing their opponent to contact their wheelchair, no free kick for blocking will be awarded and 'good chair position' will be deemed.

(r) Wheelchair Obstruction

- i. A Player's backside must not rise from the seat of their wheelchair. Should a Player lift off their seat, a free kick is to be awarded against the infringing Player's. This is deemed as an unfair advantage.
- ii. If possible, both feet should be placed on the footplate. If a Player is deemed to use movements to their advantage to gain possession or dispose of the ball a free kick may be awarded to the opposing team.

(s) Out of Bounds

- i. The 'last touched rule' will be in effect.
- ii. For the ball to be deemed out of bounds, the ball must completely cross the line. A Player's wheelchair being out of bounds will not characterise the ball being out of bounds. Should the Player manage to keep the ball in the field of play, even though their wheelchair is out of bounds, this will be deemed 'play on'.
- iii. Should the Umpire be unable to decide who the ball came off last, the Umpire will move two (2) metres in from the boundary line and throw the ball up.
- iv. When the football goes out of bounds, the closest Player to the ball must take the ball from the sideline, with the free kick to be taken at the point where the football crossed the Boundary Line.
- v. If a forward was the closest Player to where the ball went out of bounds within a scoring zone, and the siren sounds, then the forward can have a set shot on goal. However, if a centre was the closest to where the ball went out of bounds, then the quarter is finished.
- vi. In the situation where a Player deliberately throws or handpasses the football into an opposition's wheelchair, causing the football to cross the boundary, last touch is not to be awarded and a free kick against is to be awarded against the player who completed the deliberate act.

(t) Marking

- i. A mark is to be paid to a Player who marks the ball from a handball provided the handball has travelled at least three (3) metres and has not been touched in transit.
- ii. If the Player takes the mark right on the zone line, whereby an opposition Player cannot go into that zone. The opposition Player has the right to stand the mark, even if they are not allowed in that third. But once the ball has been moved on, they must go back to their allowed zones.

(u) 5 Metre Penalty

- i. A 5-metre penalty may be applied on top of a free kick at the Umpire's discretion. If the penalty is given to whereby a Player cannot go (for example, a back into a forward zone), the ball can be taken by the forward and is permitted to have a shot on goal.
- ii. Additional scenarios where a five (5) meter penalty may be awarded when a Player:
  - has moved off The Mark;
  - when in the immediate contest, unreasonably holds a Player after that Player has Marked the football or been awarded a Free Kick;

- when not in the immediate contest, holds a Player after that Player has Marked the football or been awarded a Free Kick;
  - enters or does not make every endeavour to immediately vacate the Protected Area, except when the Player is accompanying or following within two metres of their opponent;
  - has not returned the football directly and on the full to the Player awarded the Mark or Free Kick;
  - engages in any conduct which delays or impedes the play; or
  - engages in any other conduct for which a Free Kick would ordinarily be awarded.
- iii. When the field Umpire imposes a Five Metre Penalty, the following procedure shall apply:
- the field Umpire shall advance The Mark by five metres in a direct line with the centre of the Goal Line of the Team awarded the Five Metre Penalty;
  - if the Player who received the Five Metre Penalty is less than five metres from the Goal Line, The Mark shall become the centre of the Goal Line;
  - if any Player from the opposing Team impedes or delays the Player with the football whilst The Mark is being advanced, a second Five Metre Penalty shall be imposed by the field Umpire after the initial five metre advancement; and
  - the Player who is awarded the Five Metre Penalty may elect to Play On at any stage whilst The Mark is being advanced.
- (v) Playing on from a behind
- i. Following the score of a point, the Player may roll out of their defensive goal square once the goal Umpire has signalled a behind. The Player playing on, doesn't need to dispose of the ball to themselves to play on, they can simply push outside of the goal square to signify they are playing on. The defender or ruck may be able to bring the ball back into play.
  - ii. The Player standing the mark after a behind is scored, shall be placed two (2) metres back from the end of the goal square.
- (w) In Danger  
A Player second to the contest, has a duty of care to protect the hands and head of the Player first to the contest. Should any Player second to the contest fail to approach the contest with safety, a free kick will be awarded against.
- (x) Classification Breach
- i. Only a Team captain may call for a review of Team classification compliance (**REVIEW**).
  - ii. Should a Team breach the classification requirements or falsely accuse a team of breaching the classification requirements in relation to the then current Match, the penalty will be as follows:
    - 1 goal (6 points) automatically awarded to the score line of the other Team, with the other Team to start with the ball in the centre of the playing field, avoiding a ball up to commence play.
  - iii. Should a Team call for a Review after a score against their Team, the reviewing Team must call it prior to the ball up (after a goal) or kick out (after a point). The Umpire is to remove the goal/point scored, if the Review is successful and was called before the ball up or kick out took place. Should a Review called after the ball up or kick out be successful, the relevant score will stand and not be deducted.
- (y) Time to Take a Set Shot at Goal

Players have 15 seconds from the time the Umpire sets the mark to have a shot at goal. Should the Player not dispose of the ball in time, play on is to be called.

(z) Interchange

- i. Interchange of Player's can occur at any time during the match. Player's must enter and exit the field from interchange gates located in the centre zone. The entering Player must wait until the exiting Player is completely outside the boundary line before they can enter the centre zone.
- ii. There is no limit on the number of interchanges a team can make during a game.

(aa) Front on Contact

Players are not allowed to make forceful front on contact with an opponent in a marking contest if they are not simultaneously attempting to mark or spoil the ball. Should a Player not be making a genuine attempt at the ball, whilst going back with the flight of the ball, a free kick against the infringing Player is to be awarded.

(bb) Illegal Advantage

- i. A Player who does not have the possession of the football may not leave the playing field deliberately to gain an advantage when the ball is live. The Player may leave the playing field to avoid an injury to themselves or others. If circumstances cause the Player to leave the playing field, the Player must return to the playing field at the point nearest to where they exited. When the Player returns, they may not gain an advantage they did not have while on the court, and they may not reclaim any advantage they lost by leaving the court.
- ii. Should the Player take illegal advantage, and that Player's team has the football, the Umpire is to pay a free kick against the team who has the football. The defending team is to take the free kick wherever the football is located during the infringement, resulting in a turnover.
- iii. Should a Player from the defending team take illegal advantage, the Umpire is to pay a free kick against the defending team. The attacking team is to take the free kick wherever the football is located during the infringement.

## **22. PLAY ON & ADVANTAGE**

- (a) 'Play On': The football shall remain in play on every occasion when the field Umpire calls and signals 'Play On' or 'Touched Play On'. Should a Player want to play on after taking a mark, they can push off their line, and 'Play On' will be called. There is no need for the Player to touch the ball on their wheel to Play On.
- (b) The Advantage Rule: A field Umpire will call and signal 'Advantage' where a Team offended against demonstrates an intent to continue with play within a reasonable time.

## **23. STANDING THE MARK**

When a Player is awarded a Mark or Free Kick, one Player from the opposing Team may:

- (a) stand on The Mark; or

- (b) otherwise be directed by a field Umpire.

#### **24. PROTECTED AREA**

- (a) The Protected Area after a Player is awarded a Mark or Free Kick is a corridor which extends from two metres either side of The Mark and two metres behind, to two metres either side of, and two metre arc behind, the Player with the football.
- (b) No Player shall enter and remain in the Protected Area unless the field Umpire calls 'Play On' or the Player from the opposing Team is accompanying or following within two metres of their opponent. Any Player caught in the Protected Area must make every endeavour to immediately vacate the Protected Area.

#### **25. UMPIRE INDIRECT CONTACT**

- (a) If the football touches an Umpire or any Football Official, and in the opinion of the field Umpire it has affected a score, play will be stopped, and the Umpires will determine if the score should be recorded;
- (b) If the football touches an Umpire or any Football Official, and in the opinion of the field Umpire it has not affected a score, the field Umpire shall call 'Play On', and the football shall remain in play; and
- (c) If the football is Kicked by a Forward Player on the Attacking Team at the time when another Player is touching the football, the football shall be deemed to have been touched by that Player.

#### **26. WALKOVER/FORFEITS**

- (a) In the case of there being a walkover or forfeit, the non-forfeiting team will receive four competition points. Teams involved will further receive the average 'for' and 'against' scored, for that round, in their round/division.
- (b) If the average 'for' and 'against' cannot be taken (e.g. all games in the round were forfeited), the score line 30 - 0 will be recorded.

#### **27. GRAND FINAL ELIGIBILITY**

A Player must have played (taken the field) in at least half of their Team's fixtured Matches (Lightning Round and Divisional Series Matches) before being eligible to play in a Finals Match. The AFL may grant an exemption to Players injured during the Championships with the provision of requested medical advice.

#### **28. UMPIRES**

For all Matches, a minimum of two field Umpires and two goal Umpires will be rostered.

#### **29. JEWELLERY**

- (a) No jewellery is to be worn on the ground whilst playing. If an Umpire notices a Player wearing jewellery, the Player will be asked to leave the ground and may only come back on once the jewellery has been removed.

- (b) Should the jewellery not be able to be removed, the Player will be required to place tape over the top of it.

### **30. ORDER OFF RULES**

Player's may be ordered from the playing field by a field Umpire for breaching the Laws of Australian Football, Policy Handbook or these By-Laws.

### **31. YELLOW CARD**

- (a) A Player shown a Yellow Card by a field Umpire must immediately leave the playing field and may return once seven (7) minutes (Lightning Round & Divisional Series) or ten (10) minutes (Finals) of playing time has elapsed since their removal.
- (b) Players receiving a Yellow Card may be replaced.
- (c) If a Player commits a second Yellow Card offence, then the Umpire will show a Red Card.

### **32. RED CARD**

- (a) A Player shown a Red Card by a field Umpire must immediately leave the playing field and is not permitted to return to the playing field for the remainder of the game. Players receiving a Red Card cannot be replaced for that Match.
- (b) Should a Player receive two yellow cards or a straight red card from the Umpire, the Player will receive an automatic one (1) Match suspension. The one (1) Match suspension is to be served directly after the game in which the incident occurred. If the game in which the two Yellow Cards or Red Card are received by a Player is a Finals Match, the one (1) Match suspension will be served in the first game of the Toyota AFL Open in the next year the Player participates. The Tribunal can increase any suspension should they deem the matter serious enough.

### **33. WHITE CARD**

To limit umpire abuse and inappropriate behaviour among coaches and officials, a card system is in place, which is a three-phase system managed by the Field Umpire/s as follows:

- (a) Phase One – a warning (White card shown).
- (b) Phase Two - second warning, a free kick and 5m penalty for the opposing side (second White card shown).
- (c) Phase Three, the Head Coach will be reported and removed from the game. The opposing side will also receive a free kick and a 5m penalty (Red card shown).

The Head Coach of each team will be responsible for managing the behaviour of the team's other coaches and officials.

### **34. NOTICE OF REPORT**

The head field Umpire may report a Player or Football Official for breaching the Laws of Australian Football, Policy Handbook or these By-Laws. The head field Umpire

should make their report to the 'Match Manager' at the completion of the Match in which the offence occurred.

### **35. TRIBUNAL**

- (a) The Open will have set penalties in place should a Player act outside the Laws of Australian Football, Policy Handbook or these By-Laws. The set penalties are set out below.
- (b) At the AFL's request, an offending Player along with a team delegate must attend a tribunal hearing. The time and location of the tribunal hearing will be communicated to the Team manager from the relevant Player's Team. The tribunal may make any determination it deems appropriate having regard to the set penalties set out below.
- (c) Tribunal Members
  - i. The Tribunal will be made up of no less than two (2) members representing the AFL and DSA.
  - ii. The AFL Disability Inclusion Manager may at their absolute discretion may appoint an independent person to sit on the Tribunal and that person will be deemed to be a member of the Tribunal.
- (d) Set Penalty: 1 match penalty
  - i. Attempting to strike another person;
  - ii. Attempting to trip another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg;
  - iii. Using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language;
  - iv. Disputing a decision of an Umpire;
  - v. Using an obscene gesture;
  - vi. Engaging in time wasting;
  - vii. Engaging in an act of staging;
  - viii. Engaging in a melee, except where the Player's sole intention is to remove a teammate from an incident;
  - ix. Wrestling another person;
  - x. Interfering with a Player kicking for goal;
  - xi. Intentionally shaking a goal or behind post when another Player is preparing to kick or is kicking for goal or after the Player has kicked for goal and the football is in transit;
  - xii. Wearing prohibited jewellery and equipment, improper uniform or equipment;
  - xiii. Send off from the Match (2 Yellow Cards or 1 Red Card).
- (e) Set penalty: 2 match penalty
  - i. Intentionally or carelessly striking another person;
  - ii. Intentionally or carelessly charging another person;
  - iii. Intentionally or carelessly engaging in rough conduct against an opponent which in the circumstances is unreasonable;
  - iv. Intentionally or carelessly bumping or making forceful contact to an opponent from front-on when that Player has their head down over the football;
  - v. Intentionally or carelessly tripping another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg;
  - vi. Attempting to kick another person;
  - vii. Intentionally or carelessly scratching another person;
  - viii. Carelessly contacting an Umpire;
  - ix. Instigating a melee;
  - x. Pinching another person.
- (f) Mandatory tribunal hearing



- i. Intentionally or carelessly kicking another person;
- ii. Intentionally or carelessly kneeling another person;
- iii. Intentionally or carelessly head-butting an opponent or making contact to an opponent using the head;
- iv. Intentionally or carelessly eye-gouging an opponent or making unreasonable or unnecessary contact to the eye region of an opponent;
- v. Intentionally or carelessly making unreasonable or unnecessary contact to the face of an opponent;
- vi. Intentionally or carelessly making unreasonable or unnecessary contact with an injured Player;
- vii. Intentionally or carelessly scratching another person;
- viii. Intentionally, recklessly or negligently contacting or striking an Umpire;
- ix. Attempting to contact or strike an Umpire or official;
- x. Vilification of another Player, Umpire or official;
- xi. Spitting at or on an Umpire;
- xii. Spitting at or on another person;
- xiii. Using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards or in relation to an Umpire or official;
- xiv. Behaving in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards or in relation to an Umpire or official;
- xv. Failing to leave the playing surface when directed to do so by a field Umpire;
- xvi. Any act of serious misconduct (e.g. king hitting, head butting, etc.).

### **36. COACHES AND OFFICIALS**

- (a) All Teams have the option of having the following Football Officials present at match day unless specified as required;
  - i. Head Coach (required);
  - ii. Assistant Coach;
  - iii. Team Manager-First Aider-Physio (required)
  - iv. Water Carrier x 2.
- (b) No coaches are permitted to step onto the playing field during play to provide instructions to their Players. Water carriers are only permitted onto the playing field after a goal has been scored. Water carriers must exit the field of play prior to the ball being thrown up to start play. Should a water carrier be on the field when the ball is thrown up, a free kick is to be awarded against the infringed team.

### **37. FIRST AID REQUIREMENTS**

- (a) The AFL will arrange a minimum of one accredited level 1 sports trainer to oversee all Matches. The role of the AFL trainer is to act as the first point of contact for someone who may be injured or ill during a game. The competing Teams sports trainer will also be required to support the AFL trainer during the relevant Match.
- (b) All Players must bring their own strapping tape should they require strapping prior to their Matches. Strapping tape will not be supplied.

### **38. UNIFORM**

- (a) All Teams playing in the Open must have the Open's logo printed on their playing uniform, on field and off-field. For branding guidelines please refer to Appendix 1

Any team that does not comply with the branding guidelines in Appendix 1 may be penalised at the discretion of the Tribunal.

- (b) Water carriers are required to wear Hi-Vis blue bibs.
- (c) Players wanting to wear SKINS Compression must be black colour. No other under garments which can be seen may be worn.
- (d) Players and Football Officials are to wear their Team's uniform to all functions/events/activities coordinated as part of the Open.

#### **39. INJURIES**

- (a) A Player who is removed from the playing field by a stretcher cannot return to the playing field in that Match.
- (b) Players who suffer cuts and bleeding can be ordered from the ground at the discretion of the field Umpire and may only return once they have received appropriate treatment from their trainer.

#### **40. CONCUSSION**

Section 19 (Concussion) of the Policy Handbook will apply to the Open.

#### **41. ALCOHOL POLICY**

Alcohol consumption is strictly prohibited at the Open. It is strongly recommended that all State/Territory bodies set clear guidelines on the expectation around alcohol consumption with both Players and Football Officials prior to attending the Open.

#### **42. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Section 12 (Social Media) of the Policy Handbook will apply to the Open.

## APPENDIX 1 – UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS



# AFL OPEN

## WHEELCHAIR

## APPENDIX 2 – AFL VALUES

### Play to Win

This Player rose to every challenge and did what they say they would do – on and off the field.

### Play Fair

This Player oozes respect, integrity, honesty, empathy and has a great work ethic – on and off the field.

### Play with Passion

This Player loves what they do. Passion, energy, fun and perseverance is at the heart of their approach to this Championships – on and off the field.

### Play as One Team

This Player brings out the best in their team mates to achieve individual and shared success. They celebrate the wins and always have their team mates back – on and off the field

