



FOOTBALL
NSW

ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIPS 2026

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SUMMARY

The Association Championships will kick off in July 2026, hosted by Football NSW to celebrate grassroots youth football and the development pathway that exists.

The tournament will be held each July during the school holidays annually, during which each Association in Football NSW (31 in total) can enter a representative (or select) team to compete against the other Association teams.

The Championships is similar to the dissolved 'State Titles' tournament, however players must be registered at a grassroots/community Club from within the Association they are representing.

The tournament is delivered by Football NSW in partnership with a host venue expected to be on a rotational basis around various regional NSW locations. Football NSW will coordinate referee coaching throughout the tournament, along with a coach workshop and talent identification of players.

The Championships will be delivered for Boys Under 13 & Under 14 age group, and Girls Under 14 & Under 15 age group each year. Match officials will be sourced from local Branches, with each Association participating accompanied by three match officials to represent their Association/Branch. These match officials must be a member of the Association local Branch in the year of the tournament and below the age of 21 years old.

TOURNAMENT DETAILS

AGE GROUPS	Boys – Under 13 & Under 14 Girls – Under 14 & Under 15
GENDERS	Boys & Girls
FORMAT	11 vs 11
FIELD	Full size field
REFEREES	3x match officials (1x MO, 2x AR)

DURATION	Under 13 – 20 min each way Under 14 – 25 min each way Under 15 – 25 min each way
NO. MATCHES	5x match in total (minimum)
LENGTH	Three day tournament (Tuesday – Thursday)

ASSOCIATION NOMINATIONS

Associations must submit their nomination to participate in the Association Championships by 1 May (post-April school holidays) each year.

Each Association can enter ONE team per age group, per gender.

Each Association must nominate three match officials from their local Branch to be included in the tournament.

Regional Associations are eligible to 'combine' with other Associations within their Branch region (ie. Griffith FA & South West Slopes FA, both part of Riverina Branch).

ELIGIBILITY

Players must be an active, financial registered player at a grassroots/community Club within their nominating Association for the season.

Coaches must be registered as a coach at a grassroots/community Club within their nominating Association for the season. Coaches must also :

- Hold a valid working with children number
- Complete the Play-by-the-rules safeguarding e-learning series
- Hold a current FA coaching qualification, Foundation of Football or higher

Referees must be an active and financial member of their local Branch/ Association for the season. Referees must also:

- Hold a valid working with children number if over the age of 18 years
- Hold a current FA Referee qualification, Junior Match Official (Level 4) or higher



TOURNAMENT REQUIREMENTS

Football NSW expects the following minimum/maximum number of players and officials to be adhered to.

The Association must choose to nominate ONE main Association coordinator (ie. Staff, Director, Volunteer) as the main point of contact in the lead up the tournament for Football NSW. This individual will receive all updates, official communication and the schedule for the tournament.

AGE	PLAYERS	COACHES	MANAGER	ASSOC. COORD.
Girls – Under 14	14 – 17	1 – 2	1	
Girls – Under 15	14 – 17	1 – 2	1	
Boys – Under 13	14 – 17	1 – 2	1	1
Boys – Under 14	14 – 17	1 – 2	1	



ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATION SELECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Football NSW encourages Associations to collaborate with their Clubs and Club coaches in the selection of their representative team as opposed to running 'open trials'.

Football NSW would recommend the following process:

COACH SELECTION

- Association selects an individual based on merit and recognition (ie. end of year coach award, nominated from a Club, committed individual etc.)
- Association release an EOI for local grassroots coaches to apply to become the Association Championship coach for the tournament and preparation.
- Association shortlists candidates and runs a short selection process including an interview, reference checks and/or live practical session demonstration

PLAYER SELECTION

- Association requests each Division 1 Head coach to submit their most valuable player in each positional line; Goalkeeper, Defense, Midfield, Attack.
- Association Technical &/or coaching staff visit weekend fixtures to identify players to form part of the squad and/or observe recommendations from coaches (as per above)
- Association delivers a 'closed trial' using the player list obtained via observations and nominations from Club coaches. The Association Championship coaches select a team.
- FNSW encourages Associations to be conscious of how many players from each team/club are selected and encourage a fair spread across all Clubs within Division One competitions as much as possible

PREPARATION AND TRAINING

Football NSW mandates the Association Championship squad to train at least 6 weeks prior to the tournament, completing one session per week. Associations may choose to train longer than mandated to provide additional development opportunities to their team, players and coaches.

APPAREL

All players will be required to wear uniform playing strips, including shirt, shorts and socks of their Association.

Football NSW encourages teams to have matching jackets and tracksuit pants (not least as the tournament is in July).

All team managers are required to wear a polo shirt/jacket with clear representation of their Association.

LOCATION

The Association Championships will be held across the Football NSW footprint on a rotational basis. For example:

Football NSW will seek expression of interest to host the tournament in late 2025.

YEAR	LOCATION
2025	Southern Branch
2026	Riverina Branch
2027	Western Branch
2028	Metro Sydney



FEES

To be confirmed.

Based on venue costs.

Expected to equate to roughly \$99 per player of \$1,700 per squad (excl. GST).

MATCH OFFICIALS

Match Officials will not be paid for their participation in the tournament. Nominated officials will be provided training, education and mentoring during the tournament by Football NSW Referee Technical Unit coaches.

Match Officials will participate in the tournament in a 'camp style', staying on site with all accommodation and meals covered by Football NSW.





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