

SPORTS ASSOCIATION FOR ADELAIDE SCHOOLS



SPORTS ASSOCIATION

for Adelaide Schools

SAAS

SENIOR FOOTBALL RULES

Updated 2026

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1.1 All members of teams shall be under 19 years of age, on 1st January in the year of completion.

1.2 First XVIII matches and 2nds teams that play as 1st XVIII teams, e.g. PAC2, SHC 2 will be 18 players per side, with a maximum of four (4) interchange players.

1.3 Reserves and Sup teams may enter sides with 15 or 18 players per side.

Teams playing with 18 players may have up to 6 interchange players (24 Max)

Teams playing less than 18 players have the right to a maximum of 2 reserves.

1.4 Where schools with 18 players are programmed against schools with 15 players, the lesser number becomes the match number for the day, unless prior arrangement has been reached.

1.5 A Team sheet must be provided to the Umpires before the start of play – this is used by the umpires for Games Votes and any indiscretions.

1.6 A quality game Football is to be provided by the Home team. Both teams are able to negotiate the use of a second ball at half time or a yellow ball if conditions are not suitable for a red ball.

2.1 Matches will commence at 12.30 pm and 2.15 pm

2.2 A 1st XVIII Division 1 or Division 2 game is not to commence unless there is a trained Goal Umpire or Adult to Goal Umpire the Match.

2.3 The First XVIII matches (Div 1-2-3 and 2nds teams that play as 1st XVIII teams (starting at 2.15 pm) shall consist of **4 x 25 minute quarters**. Other matches will consist of **4 x 20 minutes quarters**. Matches starting at 12.30 pm MUST finish NO LATER than 2.10 pm – all time after half time is to be divided equally for the last two quarters, ensuring allowance for the three quarter time break. This is to ensure the match finishes on time.

1st XVIII Breaks – Quarter Time = 7 minutes / Half Time = 15 minutes

2nd XVIII Breaks – Quarter Time = 5 minutes / Half Time = 10 minutes

The option is available for schools in Shield Games to negotiate with opposition schools to reduce quarters lengths from 25/20 minutes to 20/17 minutes. Through lessening the length of the quarters, it will help prevent blow out results in games.

Example – A school participating in the 10A2 competition made be weak and experiencing heavy losses, they can pre negotiate to play reduced game time.

2.4 AFL Sports-Person-Rules

*These rules do not apply in the 1st XVIII Division 1 and 2 competitions.

Once a team reaches one of the listed levels - 1 player is removed from the field.

If the opposition school scores and reduces the margin to under one of the listed levels a player may return to the field.

Level 1 10 goals (60pts) = 1 player

Level 2 15 goals (90pts) = 2 players

Level 3 20 goals (120pts) = 3 players

Once a margin reaches 10 goals, play is restarted from the half forward line with a free kick, not a bounce.

Should the margin then go back to less than 10 goals then revert to the bounce.

*The 6-6-6 setup needs to remain when this comes into play. The players at the centre square start behind the centre line while the ruckman is taking the free kick from the top of the half forward line. The First XVIII matches and 2nds teams that play as 1st XVIII competitions consist of 4 x 25-minute quarters. Other matches will consist of 4 x 20 minutes quarters.

The option is available for schools in Shield Games to negotiate with opposition schools to reduce quarters lengths from 25/20 minutes to 20/17 minutes. Through lessening the length of the quarters, it will help prevent blow out results in games.

Reduced quarters are an option before the start of play or by mutual agreement after the halfway point of the game.

- Primary (2-6) – 5 minutes
- Middle (7-9) – 3 minutes (15-minute quarters)
- Senior (10-12) – 5 minutes (15-minute quarters)

The score board is not to update scores once the 10-goal margin has been reached-score sheets can record the scores.

2.5 Time-off is only allowed where there is a prolonged delay in playing time – the Field Umpire is the sole judge of this.

2.6 When the wearing of the same colour shorts or Guernseys makes two teams difficult to distinguish, the visiting school will change to a different colour – this should be mutually arranged between the competing schools during the week prior to the match being played.

2.7 There are no Percentage points from game results, each game will be scored as a Win (2 points) or Loss. The schools who are in contention for a top positions and qualification for the State SAAS Finals/Knockout will have the Goals For/Against included in their **Head to Head** matches if a decider is required.

2.8 In the occurrence that we have teams on equal points, and have drawn games against each other, then the Head-to-Head results against teams above them on the ladder will be calculated to determine who sits in the highest positions.

- The total points difference between the results relating to the teams above them on the ladder. The current situation is shown below:

Teams Higher on the Ladder	Team A	Team B
	Game Margin (winning/Losing Against teams higher on the ladder)	
1 st	-10	-16
2 nd	-67	-20
3 rd	-62	-39
Total	-139	-75

GROUNDNS

3.1 Matches are to be played on the ground of the first-named team and at the scheduled commencement time unless indicated on the program.

3.2 If the ground is changed by the host school, the Umpiring Coordinator is to be notified by the Tuesday prior to the match being played. It is vital that this occurs, contact **MUST** be made with the - SAAS Office and also the SAAS Umpires Coordinator – Adnon Jafari via email (aflumpires@saas.asn.au) to inform Umpires of this change.

3.3 Schools cancelling matches or changing grounds without prior warning pursuant to clause 3.2 may be liable for the Umpires' fees.

3.4 The home team is to supply the match ball.

3.5 It is a requirement that SPECTATOR LINES (for grounds that are not fenced off) be marked three (3) metres out from the boundary line. ALL spectators MUST remain behind this SPECTATOR LINE. Only players, coaches, trainers and Umpires are permitted to be within the fence or spectator lines.

3.6 Coaches' Box Exclusion Zone

An area surrounding the coaches' box must be clearly roped or coned off to establish an exclusion zone. Spectators are not permitted to enter this area at any time during the match. Coaches must remain within the designated zone while the game is in progress and when actively coaching.

AFL RULES – AS APPLIED BY THE SANFL

4.1 All matches shall be played under the rules of AFL as interpreted and applied by the SANFL.

4.2 The Field Umpire (being appointed by SAAS) has the right to overrule any decision made by the Boundary or Goal Umpire.

4.3 TRADITIONAL PLAYING POSITIONS AT CENTRE BOUNCE – 6\6\6

- Teams must have six (6) players inside both 50-metre arcs with one (1) player required to be inside the Goal Square.
- Four (4) Midfield Players are positioned inside the Centre Square with the Wing player required to be placed somewhere along the Wing (no closer to either Goal than the Centre line)

Penalty

- Play will not commence until all players are in the correct position
- Players will be provided with a reasonable opportunity to move into the correct position. Umpires will work with Players during the break post goal.
- Failure of a Player(s) to move into correct positioning following direction or warning from the Umpire will result in a free-kick to the opposition. The free-kick will be paid from the centre circle to the opposing Ruck Player.
- A second failure to move to the correct position will result in a Yellow Card for misconduct (time-wasting/disobeying umpires instructions) in addition to the above kick being awarded.
- Free kicks will still be paid if a player(s) breach the line prior to the bounce – this includes the 50m arc, Goal Square and/or Centre Square. A free-kick will be paid in the Centre Circle to

the opposing Ruck Player. This breach is identical to the current breach of Centre Square rule.

4.4 KICK-INS FROM A BEHIND

- A Player will no longer need to kick to him or herself to Play-On out of the Goal Square.
- The Umpire will call “play-on” when the Player kicking-in exits the Goal Square.
- A Player cannot handball out of the square – they must be called “play-on” first – i.e. exit the Goal Square.
- Following the Behind, the Player on The Mark will be positioned ten (10) metres from the top of the Goal Square (previously 5 metres). No opposition Player can enter the “protected area” (from point post to point post, out to the Player on the Mark) until the designated kicker has played on or been called to “play-on” from the goal square.

Penalty

Any Player within the 10m area that is not actively exiting the area, but instead approaching the ball carrier before they have played on will have a free-kick and a 25m penalty awarded against them.

4.5 MARKS/FREE KICKS

- For all Defenders who take a Mark or gain a Free Kick within nine (9) metres of their own Goal, the Player on the Mark for the attacking team will be brought in line with the top of the Goal Square (which is 9 metres)

4.6 25 METRE PENALTY

A twenty-five (25) metre penalty may be enforced by a field umpire(s) where an umpire deems it to be applicable, taking note of the following points below:

- Stricter on the infringing player, allowing the player with the ball to advance The Mark by 25 metres without the infringing Player being able to delay the game.
- In addition, the Player with the Football will be able to “play-on” during the advancement of the 25 Metre Penalty.
- Once the player has played on (“play-on”) any opposition Player can pressure; however, it is crucial that all defensive Players are not caught within the protected area prior to the “play-on” call.

4.7 KICKING FOR GOAL POST SIREN – CENTRE OF GOAL LINE

- A Player who has been awarded a Mark or Free Kick once play has ended will now be able to kick across the body using a Snap or Check-side Kick.
- The Player shall dispose of the Football directly in line with the Player on the Mark and the Goal.
- If the Player goes over the line of the Mark, the Umpire will call “play-on”, and the shot at Goal will not count (end of quarter/match).
- The Player is advised to engage the Umpire if they choose to have a shot at Goal in this manner, to ensure they adhere to the rules.

4.8 MARKING CONTEST – HANDS IN THE BACK

- Hands in the Back rule interpretation to be repealed, allowing a player to place his or her hands on the back of his opponent to protect his position in a Marking contest but not to push the Player in the back.

- As long as the player does not push their opponent in the back, it will be a play-on call or mark.

4.9 RUCK CONTEST – PRIOR OPPORTUNITY

A Ruck Player who takes possession of the Football while contesting a bounce or throw up by a Field Umpire or a boundary throw-in by a Boundary Umpire, will not be regarded as having had Prior Opportunity.

4.10 UMPIRE CONTACT

Players will be prohibited from setting up behind the Field Umpire or at each Centre Bounce.

Penalty

- Umpire will ask the player to move to the correct position immediately.
- Failure to move to correct positioning once notified will result in a free-kick to the opposition (time-wasting free kick).
- A second failure to move to the correct position will result in a Yellow Card for misconduct (time-wasting/disobeying umpires instructions) in addition to the above free kick being awarded.

4.11 THIRD MAN UP

- The adoption of the 3rd Man Up Rule as implemented at AFL level – permitting only two players (one from each team) to contest a ruck contest.
- For the avoidance of doubt, if two players from the same team contest a ruck contest, a free kick will be paid against that team.

4.12 LAST POSSESSION OUT OF BOUNDS

- A free-kick shall be awarded against a player who:
- Kicks or Handballs the football over the Boundary Line without the football being touched by another player.
- Except where a Player who does not have possession, stops the football being touched by an Opposition Player by Shepherding the football across the Boundary Line, where the football could have otherwise been touched.

4.13 DANGEROUS TACKLE

The number of dangerous tackles has increased in the SAAS competition. At all levels of football (including AFL and SANFL), the dangerous tackle's focus has presented significant problems both on and off the field.

For consistency in penalising the dangerous tackle, the following TWO rules for a dangerous tackle have been introduced:

Situation	Penalty
Dangerous Tackle – Level 1	The free-kick is awarded to the player who is tackled, and a 25m penalty applied
Dangerous Tackle – Level 2	If the tackle is reckless and beyond excessive, the tackler will be issued a red card, and a free-kick is awarded, plus a 25m penalty.

4.14 STANDING RULE (*ONLY APPLIES TO FIRST XVIII and YEAR 10A1, NOT RESERVES MATCHES*)

- Standing the Mark is applied if a player is awarded a Mark or Free Kick.
- The player from the opposite team may stand on the mark indicated by the Umpire.
- This player cannot move until the umpire calls play-on or the ball has been passed back into play via kick or handball.
- If the standing player moves before appropriate the Umpire will award a 25 metre penalty.

4.15 UMPIRE DESSENT

- RESPECT of Officials in the game is paramount – Dessent towards Umpires will not be tolerated. Umpires can issue a Free Kick or 25 metre penalty if a player(s) do not demonstrate respect during the game.

4.16 SANFL ANTI – DENSITY rule does not apply in the SAAS Competition

YELLOW/RED CARDS

5.1 The Field Umpire has the power to send a player off the field with a YELLOW CARD, in the following instances.

- When a Player's actions are not within the spirit of the game but not serious enough for an official report
- Used to help a player calm down and focus again on playing the ball.
- Umpires are not required to accompany offending players off the field.

YELLOW CARD CONDITIONS

- The offending player ordered off with a Yellow Card offence cannot retake the field for a period of ten (10) minutes of playing time.
- Players sent off with a Yellow Card may be replaced immediately.
- In the event the Player /Official is issued with two (2) Yellow Card offences in the same match, the offending Player/Official shall not take further part in the match.
- If a player/Official ordered off for a Yellow Card offence fails to leave the field immediately when directed by the Field Umpire, then the Player/Official shall be reported for misconduct and consequently deemed to have committed a Red Card offence.

5.2 The Field Umpire has the power to send a player off the field with a RED CARD in the following instances.

- When a Player's actions result in a Reportable Offence, as prescribed under the Laws of Australian Football (Law 19.2.2), umpires are not required to accompany offending players off the field.
- All players committing a Red Card offence will be reported by the Field Umpire on the official SAAS Report Form. Once complete, the form will be handed to the Coach/Official of the offending Player's team.
- The Coach/Official is required to present it to the Principal for appropriate action. A copy of the SAAS Report Form with the result of any action taken is sent to the opposing school Principal (if necessary) and the SAAS General Manager.

RED CARD CONDITIONS

- An offending player ordered off with a Red Card offence CAN BE immediately.
- A Player/Official sent from the field with a Red card, may not partake in the remainder of the match. The Player/Official is not permitted to enter the playing arena including coaches box/interchange bench.

Yellow Card	Red Card
For an act of on-field behaviour deemed unacceptable by an umpire (which is not considered a reportable offence)	For ANY reportable offence
The offending player is SENT OFF for 10 minutes playing time	The offending player is SENT OFF for the remainder of the match
An offending player <u>can be</u> replaced immediately	An offending player <u>can be</u> replaced immediately

Report Category Matrix

Category 1 – Verbal Offences and Offensive Gestures

Conduct	Level	Lower - Sanction	High - Sanction
Threat	High	1 match	2-4 matches
	Medium	1 match	2-3 matches
	Low	1 match	2 matches
Abuse	High	1-2 matches	2-3 matches
	Medium	1 match	2 matches
	Low	Reprimand	1 match
Other	H/M/L	Reprimand	1 match

Category 2 – Physical Contact Offences

Conduct	Impact	Contact	Lower - Sanction	High - Sanction
Intentional	Severe	High/Groin	2-3+ matches	3-5+ Matches
		Body	1-3 matches	3-4+ Matches
	High	High/Groin	1-3 matches	3-4+ Matches
		Body	1-2 matches	2-3 Matches
	Medium	High/Groin	1-2 matches	2-3 Matches
		Body	1 match	1-2 Matches
Low	High/Groin	1 match	1-2 Matches	
	Body	Reprimand	1 Match	
Careless	Severe	High/Groin	1-3+ matches	2-4+ Matches
		Body	1-2 matches	2-3+ Matches
	High	High/Groin	1 match	2 Matches
		Body	1 match	2 Matches
	Medium	High/Groin	1 match	2 Matches
		Body	Reprimand	1 Match
Low	High/Groin	Reprimand	1 Match	
	Body	Reprimand	1 Match	

Field Umpire Report Procedure

The following is the SAAS panel umpires reporting procedure.

1. Player informed during the game they have been reported and issued with a red card
2. Umpire will complete the 'Umpire report referral' after the game. It is the responsibility of the school to pick up the referral form from the umpires change rooms.
3. The reporting umpire will contact the SAAS Umpires Coordinator or Umpire Coach to discuss the incident
4. The umpire will complete the 'Report by Field Umpire' form and send it to the SAAS Umpires Coordinator or Umpire Coach for review
5. After completion of the review, the SAAS Umpires Coordinator or Umpire Coach will send to the SAAS Office
6. The SAAS Office will send the 'Report by Field Umpire' to the relevant school contact to handle the report.
7. The school of the reporting player will review the report and apply to appropriate sanction as per the SAAS Football – Offence classification
8. Once the appropriate sanction has been finalised, the school will complete the 'Report by Field Umpire' form and return it to the SAAS Office.

5.3 CROSS COMPETITION SANCTIONS

SAAS has a cross sanction policy, that if any player receives a suspension in a school or club match he is ineligible to play football until the suspension issued by that league has been served in all competitions. Example if

Any player suspended in any SAAS football match will serve the same suspension in Club football (if applicable) and vice versa.

A player who receives a Red Card is not eligible to play club football until the SANFL or any other affiliated Football League have confirmed the outcome of the Red Card received by the player.

If a player receives a red card on a Saturday playing school or club football and the respective competition convenor is notified by 6pm that day, after which the respective convenor is to notify the SANFL via email to ensure the players SANFL Junior club or affiliated club is notified their ineligibility to play.

UMPIRES

6.1 FIELD UMPIRES

All matches will be controlled by the SAAS Umpiring Panel. Field Umpires will be appointed by the SAAS Umpires Coach, Angus Le Plastrier and the SAAS Umpires Coordinator, Adnon Jafari.

6.2 EACH TEAM shall provide ONE competent ADULT GOAL UMPIRE and ONE competent BOUNDARY UMPIRE, APPROPRIATELY DRESSED.

6.3 FIELD UMPIRES PAYMENTS

AFL Minor Rounds	
1 st XVIII Football Central Umpires	\$200 - 2 Umpires \$180 - 3 Umpires
Senior Reserves	\$120 - 2 Umpires
1 st XVIII Football Division 2 Central Umpires	\$180 - 2 Umpires
Senior Reserves	\$120 - 2 Umpires
Division 3, 4 and 5 Football Central Umpires	\$160 - 2 Umpires
Sup Senior Football Central Umpires	\$120 - 2 Umpires
Year 10A1 Football	\$110 - 2 Umpires/\$130 Solo
Year 10A2/10B Football	\$110 - 2 Umpires/\$130 Solo
Year 8/9 Football	\$70 - 2 Umpires/\$90 Solo
Year 7 Football	\$60 - 2 Umpires/\$70 Solo
Primary	Yr 5/6 - \$45 Yr 4/5 - \$35 Yr 2/3 - \$30 (9 aside)
AFL Grand Final Round	
1 st XVIII Football Central Umpires	\$220 - 2 Umpires \$190 - 3 Umpires
1 st XVIII Football Division 2 Central Umpires	\$190 - 2 Umpires \$150 - 3 Umpires
1 st XVIII Football Division 3 Central Umpires	\$170 - 2 Umpires
Year 10 Football	\$110 - 2 Umpires \$90 - 3 Umpires
Year 8/9 Football	\$75 - 2 Umpires
AFL Intercol Rounds	
1 st XVIII Football Central Umpires	\$190 - 2 Umpires \$170 - 3 Umpires
Senior Reserves	\$120 - 2 Umpires
1 st XVIII Football Division 2 Central Umpires	\$150 - 2 Umpires \$130 - 3 Umpires
Senior Reserves	\$120 - 2 Umpires
Year 10 Football	\$110 - 2 Umpires \$90 - 3 Umpires
Year 8/9 Football	\$75 - 2 Umpires

Match payments for the SAAS Umpires will be paid by SAAS, and Schools will be invoiced at a later date.

SEE NOTE 6.5 FOR FEES PAYABLE FOR A THREE FIELD UMPIRE SYSTEM

6.4 TWO FIELD UMPIRE SYSTEM

The SAAS Umpires Coordinator will appoint two (2) field umpires to each match at 2.15 pm, and where possible two (2) field umpires to each match at 12.30 pm. All appointed umpires should be present at the match they are appointed to 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.

6.5 THREE FIELD UMPIRE SYSTEM

In this instance, **EACH** Field Umpire will receive \$170 – therefore each school will pay \$255 for the appointed umpires on the day of the match.

The three Field Umpire system will apply to all Inter-Collegiate First XVIII matches and in some other specific matches, or as requested by schools if umpires are available.

BEST AND FAIREST MEDALS

7.1 Best and Fairest Medal Votes will be cast by the officiating Field Umpires in ALL First XVIII matches, on a 3,2,1 basis.

7.2 The Gosse Medal shall be awarded to the Best and Fairest player in the Premier League.

7.3 TEAM SHEETS – it is essential Umpires are provided with team sheets pursuant to 7.1 above.

Team of the Year

8.1 The SAAS Division 1 and Division 2 Team of the Year will be selected by players who have collate the most votes in the positions entered by the school. This information is entered into a shared Doc in the following categories.

Ruck

Mid

Key Forward

forward

Key Back

Back

8.2 Schools select their best 5 players after the conclusion of a weekend's game.

*Note it is the school's responsibility to enter their own best 5 players into the shared Doc, if this is not done it may impact their school players selection in Team of the Year.

SAAS FINALS QUALIFICATION

9.1 Top 2 Teams will qualify for the **SAAS** Grand Finals. This will be deemed by the final ladder positions at the end of the minor round.

9.2 Competition points – Team with the most points holds the highest position

If 2 teams have the same wins - **Head to Head**

If 3 teams have the same wins – **Head to Head and or if level Winning Margins against the teams above them on the ladder**

STATE KNOCKOUT – If SAAS Enters

10.1 Top Team (s) will qualify for the **State Knockout** Semi-Finals. This will be deemed by the final ladder positions at the end of the minor round.

10.2 Top 1-2 SAAS Teams progress to the **State Knockout**

Top SAAS team earns direct passage to the Grand Final

Second SAAS team plays in the All School Semi Final – Winner from this game goes into the GF

10.2 The SAAS ladder will be confirmed in the following way;

Competition points – Team with the most points holds the highest position

If 2 teams have the same wins - **Head to Head**

If 3 teams have the same wins – **Head to Head and or if level Winning Margins against the teams above them on the ladder**

SAAS Grand Finals

- 11.1 All matches must be played out to a result. In the event of a tie at full time, teams will play 5 minutes each way with only a short break to swap ends.
- 11.2 If the game remains tied after extra time, then a **golden point** system will apply. The first team to score (Point or Goal) will be the winner – no time limit.