

RUGBY VICTORIA

SENIOR RUGBY COMPETITION STRUCTURE

2026

2026 SENIOR MENS CLUB COMPETITIONS

- **DEWAR SHIELD**
- **WARD SHIELD**
- **CONFERENCE**
- **PREMIER 3^{RDS}**
- **COLTS**
- **U85KGS**
- **MEN'S 7S**
- **MASTERS**

2026 SENIOR DIVISIONAL MENS RUGBY (DEWAR SHIELD & WARD SHIELD)

**THE 2026 DIVISIONAL
RUGBY COMPETITION
(DEWAR & WARD SHIELD)
WILL BE MADE UP OF 4
ELEMENTS**

- 1 PLAY IN**
- 2 GRADING**
- 3 PLAY OFF**
- 4 SEASON**



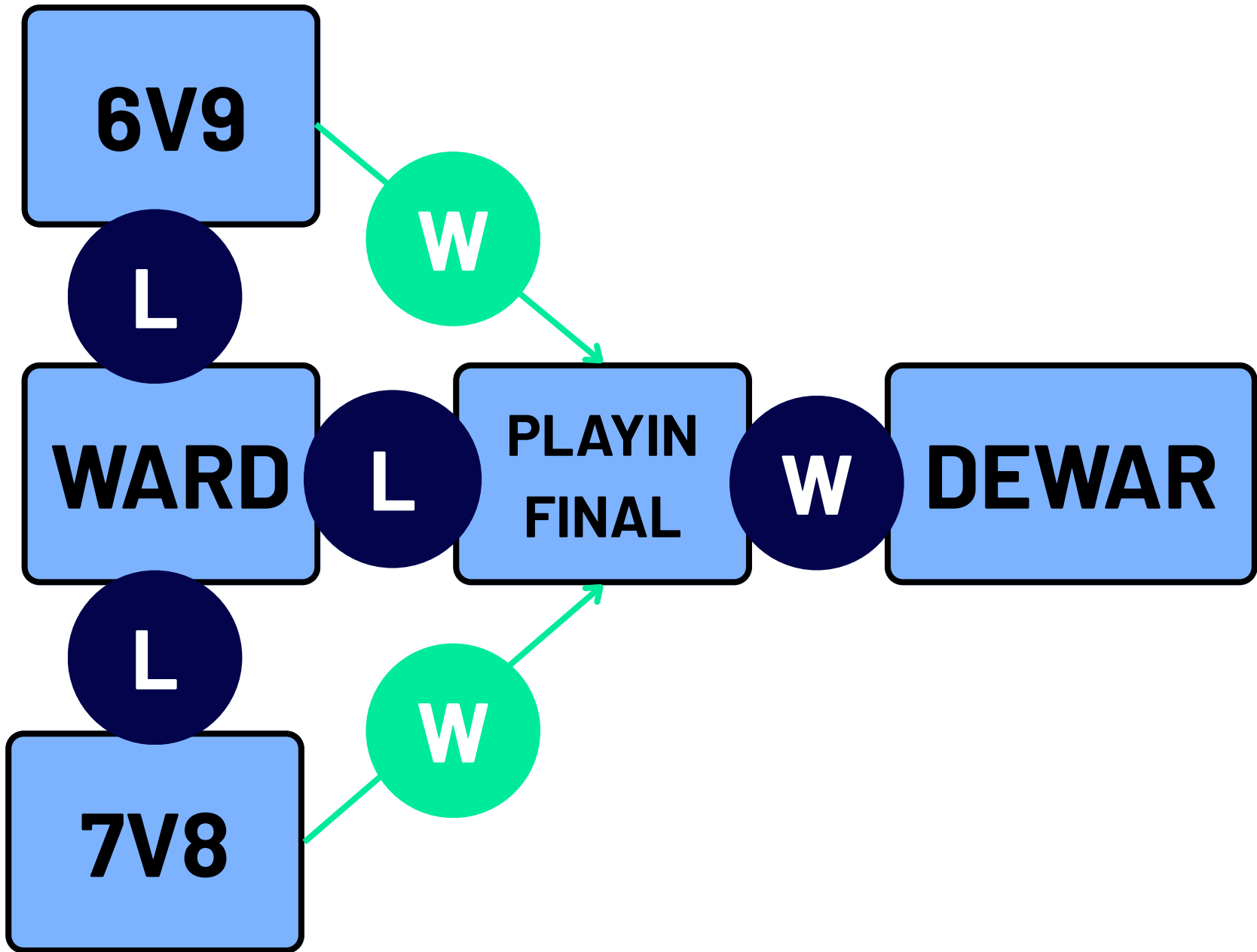
2026 SENIOR DIVISIONAL MENS RANKINGS, BASED ON 2025 LADDER

1	FOOTSCRAY	7	BOX HILL
2	POWER HOUSE	8	MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY
3	ENDEAVOUR HILLS	9	KIWI HAWTHORN
4	HARLEQUINS	10	SOUTHERN DISTRICTS
5	MELBOURNE UNICORNS	11	BRIMBANK
6	MOORABBIN	12	SHEPPARTON

Clubs ranked 6-9, based on 2025 ladder positions from the Dewar shield competition will participate in a **play in** tournament to determine the starting 6 for Dewar Shield and Starting 6 for Ward Shield in 2026.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE PLAY IN IS AS FOLLOWS

- Match 1: 6v9 (Winner progress, Loser move to ward)
- Match 2: 7v8 (Winner progress, Loser move to ward)
- Match 3: 6v9 winner v 7v8 winner (winner starts grading in Dewar, loser starts grading in Ward)

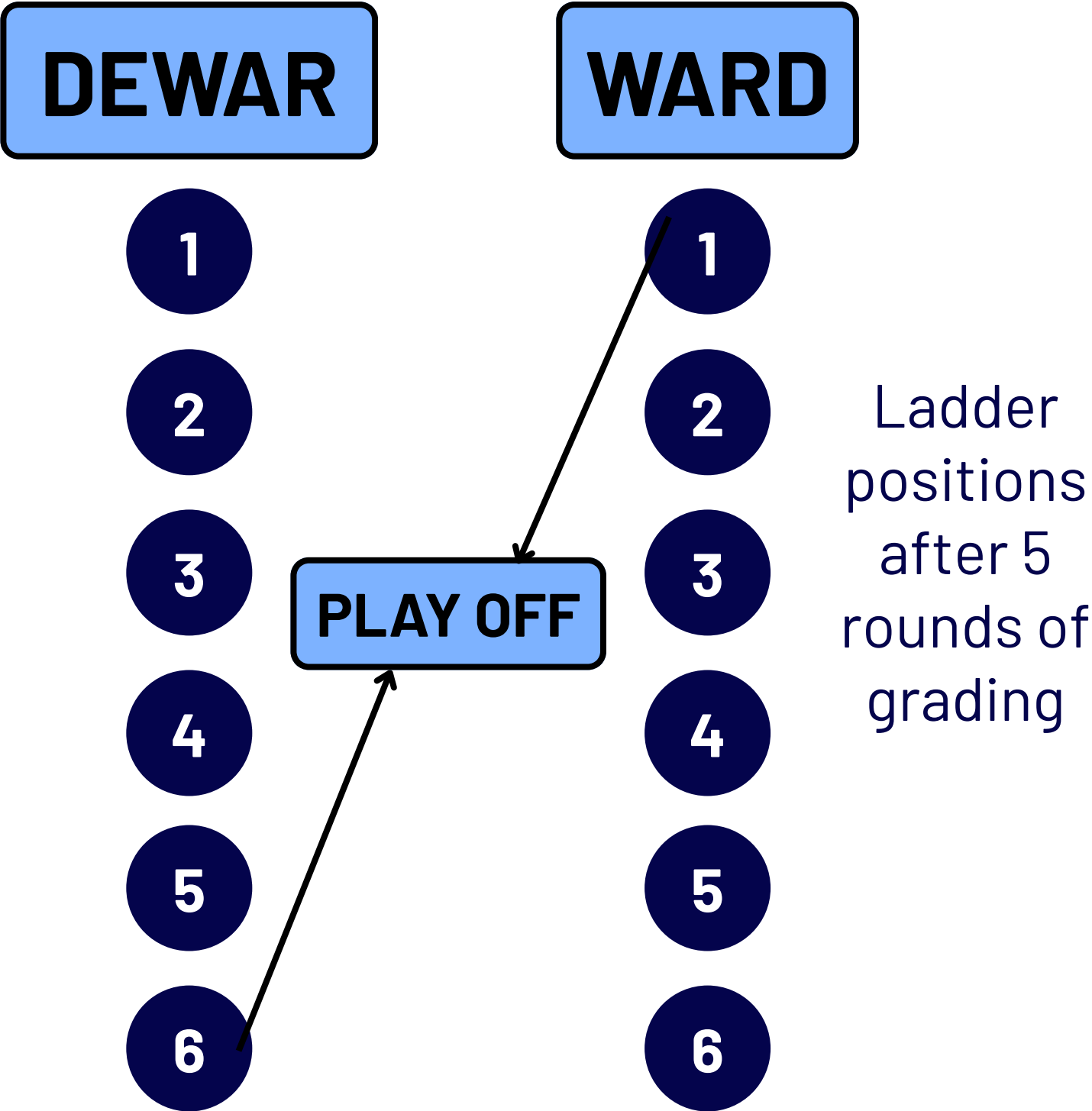


All divisional clubs 1st XV and 2nd XV will play a 5-week grading competition to determine the final Dewar and Ward structure for 2026. Results from a clubs 2nd XV will go toward a combined ladder (0.5x points for a 2nd XV win compared to a 1st XV win)

THE STRUCTURE OF THE GRADING IS AS FOLLOWS

Dewar grading will consist of 6 teams, all of whom will be scheduled to play matches against the other 5 opponents in the Dewar Division. After the 5 rounds, the team ranked 6th will compete in the Dewar-Ward play off.

Ward grading will consist of 6 teams, all of whom will be scheduled to play matches against the other 5 opponents in the Ward Division. After the 5 rounds, the team ranked 1st will compete in the Dewar-Ward play off.



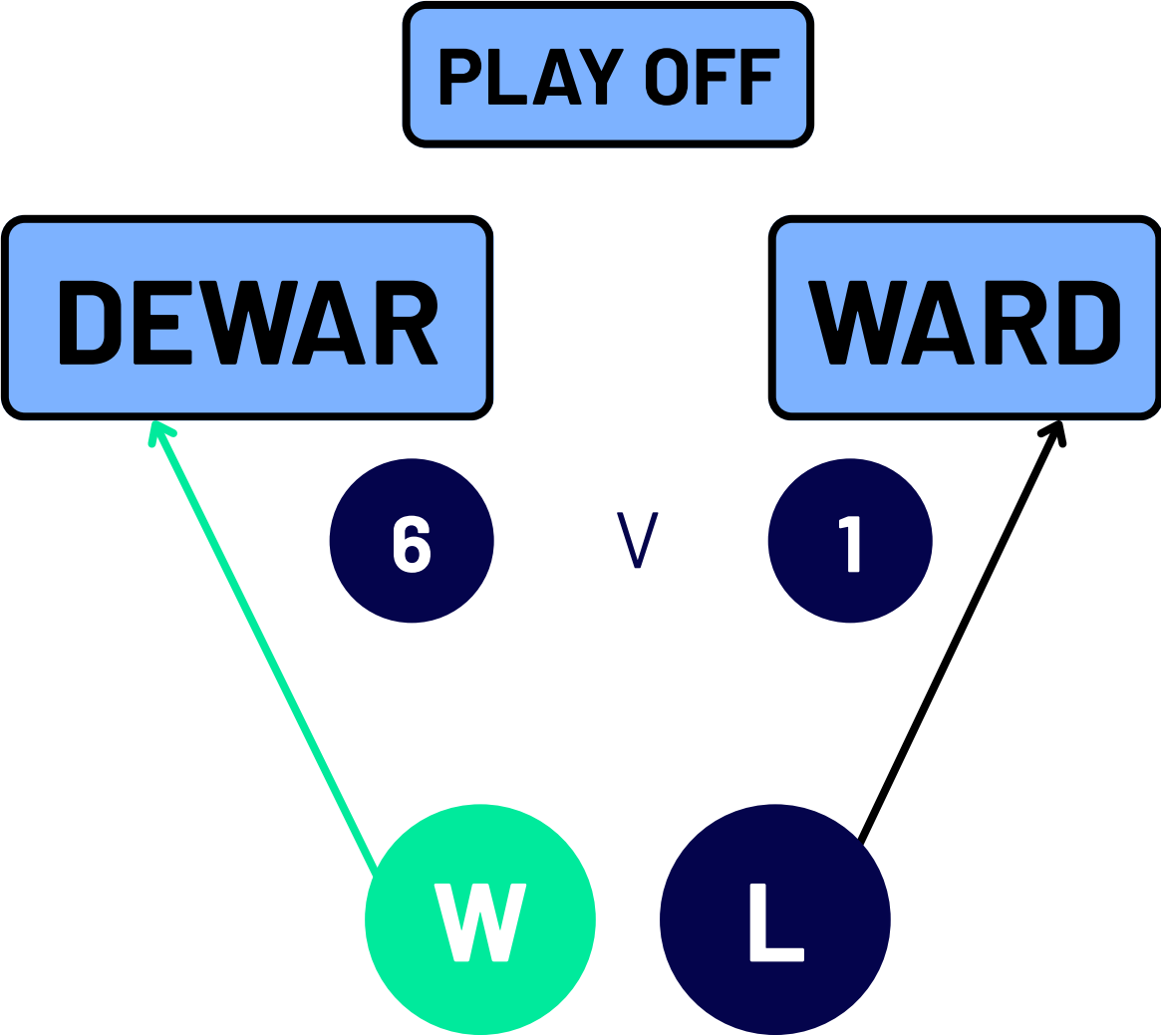
After the 5 round grading teams ranked 1-5 in the Dewar grading will play in the Dewar competition for the remainder of 2026.

Teams ranked 2-6 in the Ward grading will play in the Ward competition for the remainder of 2026.

A play off will occur between the 6th ranked Dewar 1st XV and the 1st ranked Ward 1st XV.

All teams not involved in the play-off will have a bye.

The winner of the play off will play the remainder of the season in the Dewar competition and the loser of the play off will play in the Ward competition for the remainder of the season.



2026 SENIOR DIVISIONAL MENS RUGBY SEASON

After the playoff game, the season will commence or continue:

- If the clubs in Dewar and Ward are determined to be the same as the grading period, then the season will continue and all results from the grading will be carried over, providing a 15 round season + finals.
- If the clubs in Dewar and Ward are determined to be different (the Ward club wins the play-off), the season will restart and consist of 10 rounds + finals for Dewar and Ward Shield.

Finals will revert to a 3-week finals series in the Dewar and Ward Shield, consisting of the top 4 sides in each competition

Promotion & Relegation will commence within the 2027 season, with the explicit model to be confirmed in 2026.

2026 SENIOR DIVISIONAL MENS - OVERVIEW

- All Clubs with Seniors (1st XV) and Reserves (2nd XV) will be involved in the Divisional Rugby Model for 2026
- Clubs will be ranked 1-12 based on End of Season ladder positions from 2025.
- 2 divisions of 6 will be created with one division consisting of the 1-6 ranked teams (Dewar) and another division consisting of the 7-12 ranked teams (Ward). Clubs 6,7,8,9 will play their 1st XV in a “play in” to determine the official ranking of 6,7,8,9. Once these rankings are established based on on-field results the 6,7,8 and 9 ranked teams will be placed into Dewar and Ward.
- Each club within each division will play their opponents once (5 rounds) and the 6th ranked team in Dewar and the 1st ranked team in Ward will play off after Round 5, with the winner playing in Dewar Shield in 2026 and the loser playing in Ward Shield in 2026 for the remainder of 2026.
- A Divisional Rugby bye will occur after 5 rounds (this is when the playoff will occur)
- If the team who wins the playoff, played in Dewar, the first XV and 2nd XV competition will continue and become a 15-game season. If the team who wins the playoff, played in Ward, the first XV and 2nd XV competition will restart and become a 10-game season.
- The Reserves' competition will play in line with the Senior team for the entire season.
- 0.5x points will be allocated for a Reserves (2nd XV) Win to the Club Ladder (1st VX) during the Grading period to ensure every game has meaning.
- As of 2027, Promotion & Relegation will be introduced to determine competition movement, with the model to be determined in 2026.



2026 SENIOR MENS - CONFERENCE
5 TEAMS PER CONFERENCE, 13 ROUNDS (2 X OWN
CONFERENCE, 1 X CROSS CONFERENCE)
3 WEEK FINAL SERIES

WEST

- MELTON
- BALLARAT
- BENDIGO
- GEELONG
- FOOTSCRAY 4TH XV

EAST

- ELTHAM
- CASEY
- MONASH
- POWER HOUSE 4TH XV
- MELBOURNE
UNICORNS/CHARGERS

FINALS WILL BE PLAYED IN CROSS CONFERENCE FORMAT



2026 SENIOR MENS – PREMIER 3RDS

6 TEAMS, 15 ROUNDS, 3 WEEK FINAL SERIES

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???	???
???	???

BASED ON TEAM SUBMISSION.
MUST BE A 3RDS TEAM
COMPOSITION ONCE TEAM ENTRIES HAVE BEEN
SUBMITTED. NO LONGER A REQUIREMNT OF DEWAR
SHIELD.



2026 SENIOR MENS – BOLTON CUP COLTS

8 TEAMS, 14 ROUNDS, 3 WEEK FINAL SERIES

FOOTSCRAY

POWER HOUSE

ENDEAVOUR HILLS

HARLEQUINS

MOORABBIN

WYNDHAM

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY

MELBOURNE UNICORNS

WHERE POSSIBLE, COLTS MATCHES WILL BE SCHEDULED TO ALIGN WITH A CLUBS OTHER SENIOR TEAMS.



2026 SENIOR MENS – U85KG

6 TEAMS, 5 ROUNDS, 1 WEEK FINAL SERIES

MONASH UNIVERSITY	MELBOURNE UNICORNS
POWER HOUSE	??
MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY	??

ANY CLUB CAN TO ENTER AN U85KG TEAM INTO THE U85KG COMPETITION.

ANY U85KG MERIT TEAM WILL BE SELECTED DURING THIS COMPETITION.



2026 SENIOR MENS - 7S

4 ROUNDS, 1 WEEK FINAL SERIES

WEST

- ??
- ??
- ??
- ??
- ??

EAST

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- ??
- ??
- ??
- ??

ANY CLUB CAN TO ENTER A 7S TEAM INTO THE COMPETITION.

FINALS SERIES WILL BE PLAYED IN A CROSS-CONFERENCE FORMAT.

2026 SENIOR MENS - MASTERS

4 TEAMS, 6 ROUNDS, SOCIAL RUGBY

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**ANY CLUB CAN TO ENTER A MASTERSTEAM INTO THE
COMPETITION.**

**A SOCIAL RUGBY OFFERING. WILL BE PLAYED
FORTNIGHTLY.**

2026 SENIOR MENS CLUB COMPETITIONS

PROPOSED CALENDAR

		Feb				March				April				May					June				July				Aug				
COMPETITION 2026	31	7	14	21	28	7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29
Dewar Shield								Play In			1	2	3	4	5	play off	6	7		8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	SF	PF	GF	
Ward Shield											1	2	3	4	5		6	7		8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	SF	PF	GF	
Conference												1		2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12	13	SF	PF	GF		
Premier 3rds											1	2		3	4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	SF	PF	GF	
Thirds												1		2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	SF	GF						
Colts												1		2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	SF	PF	GF	
Under 85kg's (Wednesdays)				1	2	3	4	5	GF																						
7s Series		7s	7s	7s	7s	Finals																									
Masters																1		2		3		4		5		6					

2026 SENIOR WOMENS CLUB COMPETITIONS

**LINDROTH CUP
LINDROTH DEVELOPMENT
WOMEN'S 7S**



2026 SENIOR WOMEN - LINDROTH CUP

6 TEAMS, 15 ROUNDS, 2 WEEK FINAL SERIES

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY

MELBOURNE UNICORNS

POWER HOUSE

FOOTSCRAY

ENDEAVOUR HILLS

WESTEN DISTRICTS

LINDROTH CUP GRAND FINAL WILL BE HELD THE WEEK PRIOR TO DEWAR SHIELD GRAND FINAL. THE GAME WILL BE THE FEATURE GAME OF THE ROUND.



2026 SENIOR WOMEN – LINDROTH DELEVOPMENT

5 TEAMS, 8 ROUNDS, 2 WEEK FINAL SERIES

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TEAMS WILL PLAY A FULL HOME AND AWAY SERIES, WITH
GAMES BEING PLAYED FORTNIGHTLY.

LINDROTH DEVELOPMENT WILL BE GAME-ON FORMAT.

ROUND 1 WILL BE HELD ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY
FOR ALL TEAMS AT CASEY FIELDS AS PART OF THE
REVISED MELBOURNE 7S EVENT.

[illegible]

2026 SENIOR CLUB COMPETITIONS

All clubs should indicate which competitions they intend on fielding teams in by emailing via the attached form elle.brinkworth@vic.rugby by 12th December 2025.

Rugby Victoria - Proposed Senior Team Entry 2026 -
Fill out form