

MURRAY RIVER 7s

24th & 25th January 2026

Willow Park, Wodonga

COMPETITION RULES

RUGBY
VIC



1. INTRODUCTION

The 2026 Murray River 7s will be played under the World Rugby laws of the game and Rugby 7s law variations. The tournament is organised and managed by Rugby Victoria. All tournament officials will be supplied by Rugby Victoria and referees by the Victorian Rugby Referees association

1.1 POWERS OF THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR

The Tournament Director or his/her nominee shall have the power to deal with complaints and disputes relating to the administration and management of the Tournament. The decision of the Tournament Director or his/her nominee on these matters shall be final.

1.2 EXCLUSION FROM THE TOURNAMENT

Failure to abide by a decision of the Tournament Director or his/her nominee, or involvement in matters of a serious nature, will lead to exclusion from the Tournament, for either any individual or participating team.

2. TOURNAMENT FORMAT

2.1 COMPETITIONS

MENS COMPETITION

The Men's competition will be played in a round robin pool format followed by finals. Finals format will be dependent on the number of team entries.

WOMENS COMPETITION

The Women's competition will be played in a round robin pool format followed by finals. Finals format will be dependent on the number of team entries.

JUNIOR COMPETITIONS

The Junior's competition will be played in a round robin pool format followed by finals. Finals format will be dependent on the number of team entries.

2.2 POINTS SYSTEM

WIN	4 Points
LOSS	0 Points
DRAW	2 Points
4 OR MORE TRIES	1 Bonus Point
LOSE BY 7 POINTS OR LESS	1 Bonus Point
FORFEIT WIN	5 Points
FORFEIT LOSS	-2 Points

2.3 COMPETITION DATES

The 2026 Bendigo Murray River 7s will be played on Saturday the 25th and Sunday the 26th of October for both Junior and Senior grades.

2.4 DETERMINING LADDER STANDINGS

At the conclusion of the Pool rounds, in the event of two or more teams being equal on Competition points, for any position, the higher placed team will be determined by:

- (i) Highest Competition Points; then
- (ii) Highest match points difference; then
- (iii) Highest match points for; then
- (iv) Drawing of lots by the Tournament Director, with the first drawn team being allotted the higher position.

3. PLAYING TIMES

3.3 TIMEKEEPING

Time will be kept from a central point run by Rugby Victoria. Games will start and end on a hooter. All matches will be held within a 20-minute time block.

3.1 GAME LENGTH

All games including finals will be played as 2 x 7 minutes halves each. After each period teams will change ends. Teams will be allowed a 2min break at half time. If time expires after a try has been scored the referee allows time for the conversion kick to be taken. The right is reserved for the organising committee to reduce playing times. The referee is the sole judge of fact and law during a match.

3.2 CONVERSIONS

To limit the amount of dead ball time, there will be a 16m zone in the middle of the in-goal area where 7 points will be awarded. Outside of this zone, 5 points will be awarded.

4. TOURNAMENT SQUADS

4.1 TOURNAMENT SQUAD SIZE

Squad sizes for Senior and Junior competitions will be a maximum of 14 players in the tournament squad.

4.2 GAME SQUAD SIZE

Each senior team will have a maximum of 14 players for each game. Each Junior team will have a maximum of 14 players for each game.

4.3 ADDING A PLAYER

Teams will only be permitted to add a player to their squad if a player is ruled out of the tournament due to injury. If a player is ruled out and another added to the squad during the tournament the injured player will NOT be permitted to take part in the tournament again. Adding of players after the commencement of the tournament is at the discretion and approval of the tournament director.

4.4 MINIMUM NUMBERS

The minimum number of players which a team must have to commence a game is 5. Borrowing players from another team is NOT permitted and will result in forfeiting of the game if teams are found to play ineligible players.

4.5 *RUGBY XPLORER*

Rugby Xplorer will be used to manage the competition. All players must be registered to their team in Rugby Xplorer. All matches MUST be scored using the Match Day App.

4.6 *PROOF OF IDENTIFICATION*

The Tournament director or his/her nominee can, at any time throughout the tournament, request proof of identification from a player. Failure to produce identification when requested could result in a player being deemed ineligible to participate and subsequent action being taken against their team. It is the responsibility of the team to only play eligible players. Playing an ineligible player will lead to expulsion from the Tournament.

5. INJURIES

5.1 *TIME OFF*

There will be a maximum of 1 minute allowed for injuries, provided matches remain within the scheduled time window.

5.2 *SERIOUS INJURY*

The referee has the power to end the match at any time, if they believe that play should not continue because it would be dangerous for any reason. The Tournament Director or his/her nominee has the power to adjust the draw at their discretion in the event that a field becomes unavailable for any period of time throughout the tournament due to serious injury. If an injury to a player prevents subsequent games to be played on that field at all, each affected game will be counted as a 20-20 draw for the purposes of semi-final and finals calculations.

6. SUBSTITUTIONS

6.1 *GAME SUBS*

Players may be substituted with reserves during the game.

SENIORS - Each team will have unlimited interchanges.

JUNIORS - Each team will have unlimited interchanges.

6.2 *TECHNICAL ZONE*

The following is the maximum number of personal from each team that is permitted in the playing enclosure during any match;

2 x Medics (Orange bib)

2 x Water (Yellow bib)

1 x Team Manager (Green bib)

2 x Coaches (Red bib)

All reserves from both teams must be within the substitution area located adjacent to the match official tent

6.3 *ENTERING THE FIELD*

Players must only enter the FOP during a stoppage and once the AR has been notified. Players are not to enter without the play being at a stoppage.

7. FOUL PLAY

7.1 YELLOW CARD

If a player is temporarily suspended (Yellow Card) it will be for a duration of 2 minutes

7.2 TWO YELLOW CARDS IN ONE GAME

If a player receives two yellow cards in one game, the player shall receive a red card and be sent from the field for the duration of the game.

7.2.1 If the player is sent from the field as a result of two (2) **foul play** yellow cards, the player shall be subject to Rule 7.4

7.2.2 If the player sent from the field receive one (1) or no **foul play** yellow cards (i.e one or both yellow cards were the result of **technical** yellow cards), the player shall be eligible to continue playing in the tournament after serving their send off suspension during the game in which the two yellow cards were received, subject to rule 7.3.

7.3 THREE YELLOW CARDS

If a player receives 3 x YCs across the duration of the tournament this player will be ineligible for the next competition game for that team. Each subsequent yellow card shall result in a further 1 match suspension. Where the 3rd (or subsequent) YC is received in the player's final match of the tournament, the match suspension is required to be served at the next opportunity the player participates in rugby (e.g. sanctioned pre-season fixture or regular season match).

7.4 RED CARD

A player sent from the field (Red Carded), will not be permitted to play again until the matter has been dealt with, in accordance with the applicable tournament disciplinary rules. Efforts will be made to hear the matter as soon as possible. Grievance or disputes shall be lodged with the tournament directors and the tournament director shall have the discretion to convene a judiciary hearing, including determining the time the hearing shall occur.

7.5 BLUE CARD

A player is shown a Blue Card to indicate a concussion (or suspected concussion). Trained Medical Staff shall enforce the removal of players who suffer from concussion (or suspected concussion). For the avoidance of doubt, there is no HIA (Head Injury Assessment) process at this tournament – if in doubt, sit them out (Recognise and Remove applies).

8. SCRUM & LINEOUT

8.1 SCRUM

A minimum & maximum of 3 players must be in the scrum for each team

8.2 LINEOUT

A minimum of 2 players are required from each team for a lineout

8.3 KICKING OUT

A front row player must not intentionally kick the ball out of the tunnel or out of the scrum in the direction of the opponent's goal line. Sanction-Penalty Kick

9. FINALS

9.1 QUARTER/SEMI FINALS

For drawn games in the Quarter and Semi Finals there will be NO extra time played. If the score is tied at the completion of the match:

- most number of tries wins
- if tries are equal, the first try scorer wins
- if no tries are scored, the highest ranked team from the pool matches is deemed the winner.

For the avoidance of doubt, the highest ranked team will be determined in accordance with Rule 2.4

9.2 CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS (Men's, Women's & Juniors)

For drawn games in the Grand Finals there will be extra time played. The Extra time will be 2 x 3-minute halves with the first team to score declared the winner. If the score is tied at the completion of extra time:

- most number of tries in that Grand Final match wins
- if tries are equal, the first try scorer wins
- if no tries are scored, the teams shall be declared joint winners.

10. DISPUTES

10.1 DISPUTES COMMITTEE

A Disputes Committee shall be available to address any grievances, complaints or protests.

Any Ruling given by the Disputes Committee shall be final and shall be adhered to by all Teams participating.

The Referee in charge of a Match shall be the sole judge of fact in relation to the Laws of the Game. No protests will be accepted in relation to the Match Referees interpretation of the Laws of the Game, including the length of actual playing time for the match.

11. DISPENSATIONS & ELIGIBLE AGE GRADES

11.1 EXISTING DISPENSATIONS

Players that have received an age grade dispensation during the 2026 Rugby Victoria club rugby season are NOT permitted to use their dispensation during the 2026 Murray River 7s tournament. All players must play in their eligible age grade as determined by their year of birth. Exceptions are mandatory dispensations (e.g. Size for Age), where the player must only compete in their approved Age Grade.

11.2 NEW DISPENSATIONS

No new dispensations will be granted prior to or during the 2026 Murray River 7s tournament. All players must play in their eligible age grade as determined by their year of birth.

11.3 SIZE FOR AGE DISPENSATIONS

Size for Age dispensations will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by Rugby Victoria.

11.4 JUNIOR ELIGIBLE AGE GRADES

A player may play in the age group he/she is turning in the playing year and in the age group one year above. Eligible Age Grades are determined by a player's year of birth, see below:

U12 – Born 2014 or 2015

U14 – Born 2012 or 2013

U16 – Born in 2010 or 2011

U18 – Born in 2008 or 2009

U1x (Girls only) – 201x or 201x

12. **FIELD OF PLAY - STAFF RULES**

12.1 *MEDICS*

- Medics must wear RV official orange Medic's bib supplied by their team manager. They may not enter the Field of Play unless they are wearing these bibs.
- Medics may move along the sidelines. Medics are encouraged to work on either side of the Field of Play.
- Medics should keep 2m back from the sideline to avoid getting in the way of the Assistant Referee.
- Medics may enter the Field of Play whenever a player is injured, at their discretion.
- Medics are encouraged to offer to assist other team's medic(s) in cases of serious injury or if they have special knowledge of managing a specific injury.
- Medics may not offer water to anyone other than the player being treated for injury.
- Medics are allowed on the Field of Play at half-time.

12.2 *WATER CARRIERS*

- Each team should provide a minimum of 1 and maximum of 2 Water Carriers.
- Water Carriers must wear RV official yellow Water bib supplied by their team manager. They may not enter the Field of Play unless they are wearing these bibs.
- Water Carriers may be Assistant Coaches.
- The Head Coach may not be a Water carrier.
- Water Carriers must be positioned in the Team Zone unless they are delivering water onto the Field of Play.
- Water may only be delivered onto the Field of Play during:
 - Referee's official "Time-Out".
 - A conversion.
 - At the referee's discretion (e.g. hot day).
- Water may not be carried onto the Field of Play for any other break such as a free kick, penalty, scrum, line-out or any other situation.
- Water Carriers may offer players water during a penalty kick, but they must be positioned on the sideline at the Coaches' Zone.
- Water carriers are allowed on the Field of Play at half-time.

12.3 *TEAM MANAGERS*

- Team managers must wear RV official green Team Manager bib.
- The Team Manager may interact with the Referee at half time.
- The Team Manager should provide Water and Medic bibs to authorized personnel.
- The Team Manager may move to the Match Management Zone to liaise with the Match Manager, the Number 4 Official or a sin-binned player.

- The Team Manager may provide water and warm clothing to a sin-binned player but must not otherwise engage with them.
- Team managers are only allowed on the Field of Play at half-time.

12.4 COACHES

- Coaches include a Head Coach and up to two Assistant Coaches.
- Coaches must wear RV official red Coach bib supplied by their team manager. A maximum of two Coaches can be wearing red bibs.
- Assistant Coaches may be (but do not have to be) bibbed as Water Carriers.
- Coaches must remain within the Coaches' Zone or Team Zone.
- Coaches may not communicate with the Referee or Assistant Referees, even at half time.
- The Team Manager is the only person empowered to communicate with Match Officials including the Number 4 Official, Match Manager and the other Team Manager, where necessary, such as for substitutions.
- The Team Manager, not Coaches, should support a sin-binned player with water and warm clothing.
- Coaches may liaise with Medics (who work on the sidelines) and the Water Carriers (who must remain in the Team Zone when not in the Field of Play).
- Coaches are only allowed on the field at half-time.

13. **MEDICAL**

Teams are responsible for the fitness and safety of their players during the Tournament. Teams acknowledge that participation in the Tournament may carry with it certain dangers including the risk of injury, and agree, to the extent permitted by law, to waive all claims for liability against any participant (including but not limited to players, coaches, volunteers and administrators) and release every such participant from all liability that may be incurred in connection with participation in the Tournament. Rugby Victoria will be responsible for supplying qualified medical staff for the duration of the Tournament. Tournament medical personnel will attend to injured players only. In the event that a child participating in or present at the Tournament is injured and the parent/guardian of the child is not present Rugby Victoria will arrange such medical, ambulance or hospital care it deems necessary. The parent/guardian of the child will meet all expenses associated with that care.

14. **JUDICIAL PROCEDURES**

14.1 Judiciary

The judicial process as described in the [Disciplinary Rules](#) will be available for the tournament. A judicial chair is appointed for the tournament (offsite). The tournament director shall have the discretion to convene a judiciary hearing, including determining the time the hearing shall occur.

14.2 Citing Referrals

Citing referrals may be submitted in accordance with the [Disciplinary Rules](#). Citing referral evidence must be submitted by the referring team and the onus is upon the referring team to obtain and produce evidence. The tournament director has the discretion to accept or decline a citing referral. If accepted, citing referrals will be reviewed by a Citing Commissioner. For the avoidance of doubt, a player **is not** provisionally suspended when a citing referral is submitted. If that player is subsequently cited by a Citing Commissioner, then the player **is** provisionally suspended until they attend a judicial hearing.