

OPERATIONAL POLICY

GENERAL INFORMATION

Area:	2025 -26 Competition Rules
Procedure Title:	Player Eligibility Guidelines
Date Last Modified:	8 September 2025

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

- The underpinning philosophy of this process is to ensure each team playing in the finals series is a true reflection of that team throughout the season, as well as allowing players who do not qualify due to injury/illness the opportunity to provide evidence to obtain finals eligibility dispensation.
- It is the responsibility of clubs to ensure that all players are properly registered prior to the player taking the field in their first game for their club.

1. PROCEDURE: JUNIOR PLAYER ELIGIBILITY TO PLAY SENIOR RUGBY

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
1.1	Players turning 17 or 18 in a calendar year wishing to play senior rugby must follow the Rugby Australia dispensation procedure to determine their eligibility to play senior grade Rugby as outlined at http://www.rugbyau.com/about/codes-and-policies/safety-and-welfare/player-dispensation Clubs must apply to the NTRU for dispensation, and be granted dispensation by an appointed NTRU Assessing Coach, prior to the players first senior game. Completed forms must be submitted to NT Rugby Union no later than midday prior to the first senior game for NT Rugby Union to consider endorsing dispensation.	Clubs Team Manager Junior Coordinator NT Rugby Union L2 Assessing Coach

2. PROCEDURE: ELIGIBILITY TO PLAY IN THE FINALS SERIES

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
2.1	A player will be eligible to play in a Finals Series depending on the number of games they have played in a particular grade; 1. Juniors (Under 13's to Under 17's) = must have played 4 games prior to Finals. 2. Women's = must have played 4 games prior to Finals 3. B Grade = must have played 4 games prior to Finals 4. A Grade = must have played 4 games prior to Finals	Team Manager
2.2	Games played shall be recorded using the Match Day app. The details of games played as recorded on Rugby Xplorer will be considered to be a true record of a players playing record, unless a person has strong evidence to suggest that a player has not played in a particular fixture during the season prior to Finals	Team Manager
2.3	Players will be recorded as playing only for the highest team on that day where they were a starting run on player. Or; Should the player only have acted as a reserve they will only be recorded against the highest team that they were a reserve for on that day.	Competition Manager

3. PROCEDURE: ELIGIBILITY TO PLAY IN PARTICULAR SENIOR GRADE OF THE FINALS SERIES

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
3.1	A player may only play a finals match in the grade/team where they have played more than 49% of their fixtures during the regular season. Players may play a finals match in a grade higher than which they played the majority of their run on games during the minor rounds.	Club
3.2	If a club has more than one (1) team playing in the finals series in numerically consecutive grades on the same day, selection of players for those teams is the responsibility of the club proposing to play those players to ensure that they meet the criteria under Ref 1. If more than 23 players are eligible for the highest grade, then players not in the Match Day squad would be eligible to play for the lower grade provided they meet the eligibility criteria application below.	Club

4. PROCEDURE: PLAYERS UNABLE TO MEET ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Where a player is unable to meet the qualification for eligibility requirements under 2.1 of this policy due to injury or illness, or was required to play in a higher grade during the season due to a player in that grade having suffered an injury or illness the club should apply for finals eligibility by following the procedure set out in step 4.1:

STEP	DESCRIPTION OF ACTION	RESPONSIBLE
4.1	A player who does not comply with Step 2.1 may be granted eligibility to play in the Finals Series provided: 1. The player has played with the club a minimum of 4 matches during the Minor Rounds; or 2. The player has joined the club before round 5 of the Minor Rounds and has registered with another prior in the year of the competition; or 3. The player is returning from major injury with medical certification showing time of injury and clearance to play. 4. Other exceptional circumstances prevented them from meeting the requirements – case by case basis.	NA
4.2	A player who satisfies the competition rules in relation to eligibility either through the above circumstances, or through having been granted eligibility, shall have an unqualified eligibility which shall not be open to challenge provided that such a player may not play for more than one grade team in the Finals Series unless that player is replacing an injured/substituted player in a higher grade.	NTRU
4.3	Any application for finals eligibility must be submitted to the Competition Manager by COB on the MONDAY prior to each match in the Finals Series. Applications will only be considered with the relevant supporting documentation. A decision to grant a player exemption from the requirements in step 1, or dispensation as per Step 3, is at the absolute discretion of the NTRU, is final, and may not be appealed. CLUBS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO ORGANISE THEIR OWN PLAYER EXEMPTIONS AMONG THEMSELVES.	Clubs
4.4	The NTRU General Manager will determine by COB on the WEDNESDAY prior to each match in the Finals Series the eligibility of all players and reserves for the	NTRU

	finals series of all grades and consider any exemptions sought for situations that do not meet the eligibility criteria as stipulated in the Competition Rules. All clubs will be notified on the NTRU's decision in respect to the eligibility and/or exemption of players by Midday THURSDAY prior to the forthcoming matches.	
--	--	--

OTHER INFORMATION

- This document supports the 2025-26 Darwin Club Competition Rules
- Where this document and the Competition Rules do not align, the Competition Rules document will take precedence.
- A forfeit is still classified as a minor round fixture for the 'non-forfeiting team' as long as team sheets are submitted
- No player will be eligible for finals if they are financially indebted to their club or the NTRU.
- At all times it is the responsibility of the players Club to ensure that the player is eligible to play prior to the players first game with the club at senior level.
- Any decision of the NTRU in respect to player eligibility will be final.