

HERITAGE RUGBY LEAGUE NSW



OPERATIONS MANUAL 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

KEY CHANGES FOR 2026	3
CHARTER	4
1. AGE GROUP	5
2. REGISTRATION FEES AND INSURANCE	5
3. NSWRL RULES.....	6
4. PARTICIPATING TEAM REQUIREMENTS.....	6
5. REGISTRATION OF COACHES & TRAINERS	7
6. TRAINERS	7
7. TEAM MANAGERS.....	7
8. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY.....	8
9. REFEREES.....	8
10. DUTIES OF HOST CLUB(S) OR BODY/BODIES	8
11. RESPONSIBILITY OF CLUBS.....	8
12. GROUNDS	9
13. QUALIFICATIONS.....	9
14. LICENSING	10
15. MATCH REGULATIONS.....	10

KEY CHANGES FOR 2026

This is a summary of changes listed. Please read the manual for more information on this list.

#	Area	Section	Change, modification or addition	Reasons for change
1	Insurance amount agreed	2.1 a	This includes an administration fee.	Allows HRL to supplement the costs of administering the association.
2	Non-eligible players	13.4	Minimum number of eligible players in a matchday squad (minimum 13 eligible players in 13-a-side, 9 eligible players in 9-a-side).	Quantifies the section on permitting non-eligible players under "exceptional circumstances" to ensure support for this principle of HRL.
3	Junior representative players provision		Minimum of 13 non-representative players per matchday squad, with written permissions from elite club obtained and provided to HRL and NSWRL. This is listed in a separate policy document.	Aim to maintain a focus on development, creates opportunities for more players, considers player workload and wellbeing for junior representative players and their programs.

CHARTER

The key objectives of Heritage Rugby League NSW (HRL) are:

- Increase multicultural Rugby League participation in NSW, encouraging harmony and stronger community understanding across Cultural and Linguistically Diverse groups.
- Aim any games and fixtures primarily on development, with a focus on cultural celebration, and acknowledgement of heritage.
- Promote and foster positive relationships between HRL affiliated clubs and their respective home nations, particularly emerging Rugby League nations, encouraging support of Rugby League development programs abroad.

These rules are to be read in conjunction with the HRL constitution and the NSWRL Community Policies and Procedures manual available at [nswrl.com.au](https://www.nswrl.com.au)

<https://www.nswrl.com.au/siteassets/community/2023-policies-and-documents/nswrl-community-rugby-league-policies--procedures-manual-2023-final-2-feb.pdf>

1. AGE GROUP

1.1 Open aged competition players must be aged 17 years and above. Parental consent is still required for players 17 years of age. Please refer to NSWRL Policies and Procedures for further information regarding age criteria.

1.2 Standard age groups for competition are:

- 1.2.1 Under 16
- 1.2.2 Under 18
- 1.2.3 Open age

Under 16 is the minimum age group sanctioned. Players can play up an age group based upon provisions in the NSWRL Community RL policies and procedures manual.

2. REGISTRATION FEES AND INSURANCE

2.1 Player insurance fees for tackle and tag competitions are as follows:

- a) For season 2026, each club will be charged \$1,500 plus GST.
- b) Insurance for Public Liability and Management Liability will be covered for all NSWRL affiliate registered players along with personal injury and accident cover under AJ Gallaghers, and icare benefits, as per coverage provided to Community Rugby League clubs through NSWRL.
- c) Insurance is extended on the basis that all Heritage NSW affiliation requirements are met, NSWRL Rules and Regulations are adhered to, and all players, volunteers, coaches and officials are properly registered onto MySideline, Rugby League's national registration database.
- d) Non-Australian residents will not be permitted to register unless appropriate travel and medical insurance is purchased. Proof of insurance is required as part of the registration application. If a club registers a non-Australian citizen, then the club/player will need to take out and show proof of specific cover.
- e) It is compulsory for all players to be covered by insurance. Insurance cover will be included in any fees payable under NSWRL sanctioned insurance policy in which a player registers properly as per game policy. No player may take the field unless they are fully registered and included on the MySideline database.
- f) Insurance is extended on the basis the clubs are permitted 8 games/rounds of community level football within the 12-month period under the Heritage RL NSW banner. The calendar window of matches for 2025 is as follows. It is assumed with the

majority of games played mid-September to end of November, but on application other games maybe played from February to mid-March:

Window	Season	Start	End	Weeks
1	Summer	Saturday February 1 st 2025	Sunday March 16 th 2025	6
2	Spring	Saturday September 27 th 2025	Sunday November 30 th 2025	8

Fixtures outside this window require express written permission from Heritage RL NSW, NSWRL, Asia Pacific Rugby League and International RL.

- g) Insurance is extended for HRL clubs to host matches in NSWRL territory (i.e. in NSW and ACT). Upon application, clubs can apply to play interstate (within Australia), but not as the host body.
- h) Insurance is not extended for matches played outside Australia.

2.2 The registration fee also includes an annual administration fee, which will be used to pursue the objects of the association, as per the HRL Constitution.

3. NSWRL RULES

3.1 All participants including players, coaches, officials, referees and spectators will abide by the below NSWRL Rules as per SCHEDULE 6 RULES, POLICIES, LAWS AND CODES OF THE ARLC ADOPTED BY NSWRL.

- 6.1 NRL Official Laws of the Game
- 6.3 NRL National Safe Play Code
- 6.5 NRL National Code of Conduct
- 6.6 NRL On Field Policy

4. PARTICIPATING TEAM REQUIREMENTS

4.1 All teams will be required to have the following to participate in HRL competitions, events and matches:

4.1.1 Level 1 Community accredited coach;

4.1.2 Non-playing team manager who will attend gala days and carry out team manager duties.

4.1.3 A level 1 sports trainer. Each team is to provide their own level 1 sports trainer at every game, however if they are unable to provide a sports trainer, then they should notify the fixture convenor prior to any games being played to ensure a sports trainer is available at all necessary matches.

4.1.4 Games cannot proceed without required active Sports Trainers in attendance as per NRL On Field Policy https://www.playrugbyleague.com/media/3098/nrl_on-field-policy_p005_v31_05_02_20192.pdf

5. REGISTRATION OF COACHES & TRAINERS

- 5.1 All team coaches and trainers must be accredited and register on MySideline. Folio/Accreditation numbers are to be provided on all Registration Sheets.
- 5.2 Coaches must hold a current NRL Coaching Certificate whilst trainers must have a current minimum qualified Level 1 NRL Sports Trainer accreditation. The remaining trainers must have a minimum accreditation of 'League Safe'.
- 5.3 A copy of trainer's accreditation to be submitted to the Competition Committee prior to the start of the season. If you are having trouble locating suitably qualified coaches/trainers etc, please contact us ASAP so we can help you out.

6. TRAINERS

- 6.1 All trainers to abide by the NSWRL Rules 6.6 NRL on Field Policy.
- 6.2 Each team may engage and use a maximum of two trainers during matches. In all cases when trainers enter the field of play either, attend to injured players, carry water or deliver individual messages, they must immediately leave the field once their assigned task has been completed and returned to the player's bench. At all times trainers must enter and leave the field as quickly as possible (i.e. Running). They are not permitted to "Walk the sideline".
- 6.3 Trainers must be identified by the following colours;
 - 6.3.1 Orange Shirt – Head Trainer (Minimum qualification Level 2 Sports Trainer equivalent)
 - 6.3.2 Blue Shirt – Trainer (Minimum qualification Level 1 Sports Trainer equivalent)
 - 6.3.3 Yellow Shirt – Trainer 'Water Runner' (Minimum qualification League safe).

7. TEAM MANAGERS

- 7.1 Every team is required to nominate a non-playing team manager to be present at every gala day or sanctioned fixture to assist with official duties.
- 7.2 If a team manager is unable to attend a gala day or sanctioned fixture, they may nominate a replacement non-playing team manager to fulfil their duties on the day.

- 7.3 Before the commencement of any game, both team managers must check in at the time-keepers table to assist where needed. If team managers are not needed at the time-keepers table, they must remain on the player's bench as to be available to assist if required.

8. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of each club participating to ensure that every player is registered through the online registration form prescribed on MySideline.
- 8.2 Birth Certificates and/or Passport must be sighted by the competition administrator or delegate in order to verify each player's correct birth dates.

9. REFEREES

- 9.1 The relevant affiliated host Referees Association will appoint referees for each fixture or event.
- 9.2 A set fee will be paid to all Referees' by the event or fixture host body.
- 9.3 An added fee maybe added to each participant's registration fee to cover referee fees.

10. DUTIES OF HOST CLUB(S) OR BODY/BODIES

- 10.1 The Club(s) hosting the gala day/fixture is considered responsible for the following:
- 10.1.5 Providing a Ground Manager - who will be responsible for the conducting of all matches ensure National On-Field Policy is adhered to.
- 10.1.6 Set up and pack up of grounds.
- 10.1.7 Run a canteen and or arrange a delegate.
- 10.1.8 Where required provide additional Sports Trainers.

11. RESPONSIBILITY OF CLUBS

- 11.1 If a group wants to participate in heritage matches/events, a minimum commitment is:
- 11.1.1 Incorporation and completion of HRL club affiliation form, OR affiliation through an existing HRL club, with sub-affiliation agreed by HRL (and recognised in a club's constitution, if required by HRL)
- 11.1.2 Payment of fees for season

11.1.3 Commitment to field age grade teams in the NSW Harmony Nines e.g. through completion of an HRL season participation agreement.

11.1.4 Once these tasks have been completed, then teams can play in 13-a-side matches.

11.2 It is the responsibility of every participating club to use MySideline for teamlist entry and matchday scoring. In the MySideline Manager app does not work on matchday, or cannot be used on matchday to record scoring, then each participating club and team must

11.2.1 keep paper teamsheets and scoresheets

11.2.2 supply teamsheets and scoresheets to the league by Monday following the weekend.

12. GROUNDS

12.1 All grounds must have Ambulance access in the case of an emergency.

12.2 Ground hire fees and bookings are the responsibility of the host club(s) or host body.

13. QUALIFICATIONS

13.1 The eligibility of a player to participate in any match included in the heritage schedule is based on the individual's cultural heritage. Clubs are required to ensure the integrity of Heritage Rugby League is maintained with respect to primarily promoting development and participation.

13.2 Eligibility is based upon IRL eligibility rules, in particular part ii, with the following modifications

- a. Eligibility to play for the HRL club representing a Nation of Origin based upon the birthplace further back than a grandparent may be considered upon request, and in exceptional circumstances only.
- b. The League may ask the club to indicate how a player or players qualify for the nation or culture of their heritage e.g. club to indicate in writing that player's paternal grandfather was born in town/suburb/city B in nation C. However, the League reserves the right, at its discretion, to ask for more documentary evidence of a player's eligibility for the nation of origin.

13.3 Non-world ranking games at Senior Level, with the mutual consent of the HRL clubs participating, and written approval from Heritage RL NSW, will be permitted to proceed with selection of non-heritage players. Any such request should be in exceptional circumstances only.

13.4 A cap on the number of non-heritage players able to be selected in

- a. 9-a-side – a minimum of 9 players in the matchday squad must have heritage (i.e. IRL Grandparent rule or heritage back) or be eligible through residency.
- b. 13-a-side = a minimum of 13 players in the matchday squad as listed in 13.4 a

- c. If two communities each contribute at least 6 eligible players to an age grade team, then the team can play using a hyphenated name combining the names of both communities e.g. Spain-Portugal (subject to agreement by the League).
- 13.5 Members are reminded that exclusion of a bona-fide heritage player to include a potentially higher performing player without genuine heritage specific to club's assigned nation is not acceptable.
- 13.6 An HRL club selecting a non-eligible player that is eligible for another HRL club must inform the league and the second club that they intend to select the player.
- 13.7 An HRL club representing a region or continent should not select players that are eligible for an HRL club representing a single nation or country of origin in the region or continent, without first obtaining the approval of that stand-alone HRL club.
- 13.8 Senior International Matches to require eligibility as per International Rugby League (IRL) rules, particularly for world ranking games. These require sanctioning by the IRL.

14. LICENSING

- 14.1 Clubs are required to comply with NSWRL Licensed Suppliers Program for further info <https://www.nswrl.com.au/about/nswrl-licensed-suppliers-program/>. For matches staged in 2025 onwards, affiliated clubs are required to display NSWRL on playing apparel.

15. MATCH REGULATIONS

- 15.1 For 13-a-side matches, the maximum number of players per matchday squad is 20 players (with an interchange bench of 4 players), unless Community RL heat policy is implemented.
- 15.2 Clubs may apply to play a 9-a-side format. the maximum number of players per matchday squad is 13 players (with an interchange bench of 4 players), unless Community RL heat policy is implemented.
- 15.3 The maximum size of a season squad for an age grade team is 22 players. An HRL club may apply in writing for dispensation to bring players in based upon extraordinary circumstances such as injury.