



PAFL Australian Football

Official rule book as of 1 May, 2008

The PAFL (Philippine Australian Football League, Inc.) has developed a modified version of the “real” game to provide an opportunity for all Australian Football enthusiasts to enjoy participating in a game that has strong parallels with the traditional game. PAFL’s version of the game has a strong emphasis on fun and safety. Played in a friendly social environment, it enables people of all ages, nationalities, fitness and ability levels to participate. This modified version of the game can be played with as little as nine players per side. Where player numbers allow, players can be interchanged at any time and as often as required. The field has a maximum length of 120 metres. The field is divided into three zones – a mid zone and two scoring zones. Teams score by kicking the football to designated forwards in their attacking scoring zone (35 metre arc). A goal can be scored from anywhere within the 35 metre arc where a player has the opportunity to score.

• *The following laws should be read in conjunction with the Laws of Australian Football.*

1. Playing field and playing positions:

The playing ground measures a maximum 120 x 80 metres and is divided into three zones on a 35/50/35 basis, this can be modified depending on the age and ability level of participants. The field is oval in shape.

2. Zones

Players must be in their zones at the start of the match and after a goal has been scored. The number of players per zone will be determined according to the appendix on the last page.

Once the ball has left the umpire’s hand in the throw-up, or the ground in case of a centre bounce if the umpire bounces the ball, players may leave their zones. The boundary umpire(s) will assist the field umpire in ruling on these infringements with regard to the player’s positions in the arc at the commencement of play.

Regardless of how many players there are per team, there shall be no more than 6 players in the centre zone at each centre bounce or throw-up. This will consist of no more than four centre players and two wings (wingers will be allowed where player numbers permit). If there are wingers, a designated line is marked on the field at which they are to stand and cannot move from until the ball has left the umpires hand in each bounce or throw-up to start play.

3. The team

- a. There is no maximum to the amount of players per team. Before the game commences, it is up to the team captains to decide how many players they would like on the field and how many interchange players they would like. Once this has been decided, it is up to the umpire to determine how many players should line up in each zone according to the appendix on the last page.
- b. Interchange of players may take place at any time and as often as required.

4. Points table

The team that scores the most points in a match will be declared the winner of the match. The team with the most points accumulated at the end of the playing season will be declared the premiers for the season.

PAFL use the traditional AFL Points System of 4 points for a Win, 2 points for a Draw and 0 points for a Loss, with a For and Against Scoring System for calculating the scoring percentage.

If teams are on the same amount of points at the end of the season, the team with the highest percentage will be declared the premiers for the season.

5. The Umpire

The Controlling Body (PAFL) is to appoint an official to act as field umpire. This person must have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Laws of the modified PAFL Australian Football and the Laws of Australian Football.

6. Duration of the game

The game will comprise 4 x 15 minute quarters with no time-on. The 15 minute quarters allow for time-on due to stoppages, goals etc. There is a 3 minute interval between each quarter. The controlling body may vary the duration of the quarters and intervals depending on the number of players and the weather conditions.

7. The ball

A standard Sherrin match football is the preferred choice of ball.

8. Disposal of the ball

The ball must be disposed of by a handball or a kick (as per the Laws of Australian Football). If a player throws or hands the ball to another player, a free kick will be awarded to the opposing player. A player will not be penalised if the ball is incidentally knocked out as a result of being tackled.

9. Start of play

- a. Choice of goal/end: The umpire shall toss a coin and the captain from each team shall alternate each week in calling heads or tails. The captain of the team that wins the toss shall choose the end to which his team kicks.
- b. The game shall be started by a throw-up between two ruckmen in the centre circle. The ruckman is to make the ball his primary objective at all times. Care should be exercised

regarding player safety and protection. Ruckmen deemed not to be making the ball their primary objective are to be penalised.

c. No more than one player from each team can compete in a throw-up in the centre circle or anywhere on the ground. The umpire will ask at the time of the throw-up who has been nominated from each team to compete in the ruck contest.

d. The ball may be grabbed straight from a ruck contest by a ruckman only (either centre throw-up, field throw-up or boundary throw-in), however he must dispose of it prior to being tackled or having his shirt firmly grabbed or a penalty will be awarded against him (as in law 11).

10. Gaining possession of the ball

Players may intercept the ball in flight, but must try their best to avoid jumping into the back of a player or making any unnecessary contact. The primary objective of all players is to gain possession of the ball. Any solid contact should be incidental and avoided if possible. Contact above the shoulder and below the knee should be strictly avoided and will result in a penalty free kick.

11. Dispossessing the player in possession

If a player is in possession of the ball, he can be dispossessed by any two of the following methods:

(i) If the player has his shirt grabbed by an opposing player, and this grabbing is for a sustained period, he must dispose, or attempt to dispose of the ball, by hand or foot within three steps if running, or two seconds if stationary or a free kick will be awarded to the opposing team (as in rule 21a). An opposing player is not permitted to grab a player unless the player is in possession of the ball or a free kick will be awarded to the opposing team (as in rule 21 i).

(ii) A controlled tackle that does not go below the knees or above the shoulder of the player being tackled or a free kick will be awarded to the opposing team (as in rule 21a).

12. Retaining possession

A player may stay in possession of the ball for any length of time, except when:

(i) The player has his shirt grabbed firmly for a sustained period or is tackled (as in law 11).

(ii) The player is directed to dispose of the football by the umpire.

(iii) The player is moving while in possession of the ball, he must bounce the ball or touch it on the ground at least every 15 metres as in law 20.

13. Bumping/tackling/barging

Players cannot:

a. Hold an opponent with their hands.

b. Push a player in the back.

c. Deliberately bump another player unless it is a defensive measure. Refer to shepherding in Law 14.

d. Engage in a malicious full-blooded tackle to an opposing player that is not within the spirit of the game. The umpire has the discretion to apply the send off rule as in Law 29 should this occur.

- e. Sling another player to the ground with the intent to cause injury. The umpire has the discretion to apply the send off rule as in Law 29 should this occur.
- f. Conduct a late tackle, bump or short front to a player after he has disposed of the ball.

14. Shepherding

A player may shepherd his teammate from an opposing player as long as the opposing player is no more than 5 metres away from the player in possession of the ball except during a ruck contest. There is to be no “shirt front” style shepherding where players are targeted at a distance. It is limited to spreading the arms or blocking with the body. No bumping is permitted as per Law 13c.

15. Scoring

a. A player can shoot for goal after marking (catching) the ball or receiving a handball in his scoring zone (35 metre arc). If the ball is received by handball, the player must play on and either pass the ball by hand or foot to a team mate or shoot for goal. If received by foot, the recipient may shoot for goal as long as he is within the 35 metre arc.

b. If a player takes a mark (catch) just inside the 35 metre arc, he is permitted to shoot for goal from outside the arc. The player standing the mark must be inside the scoring zone see Law 19. If the player chooses to play on, he must run inside the 35 metre arc to shoot at goal.

c. From a running situation, a player may also run into the arc to have a kick at goal.

d. If a ball is kicked from outside the 35 metre arc and goes through for either a goal or behind without being touched first, no score shall be awarded and a defender from the opposing team will kick the ball back into play from the goal square as in Law 16b. If the ball is touched and goes through the goal or behind posts, one behind will be scored and Law 16b will apply.

A goal is worth 6 points and a behind is worth 1 point.

16. Restart of play

a. After a goal is scored, play is restarted from the centre as in Law 9.

b. If a behind (one point) is scored, the ball must be kicked back into play from within the goal square by a defender. The defender may kick to himself within the goal square and then play on from there. If he exits the goal square before disposing of the ball, the umpire will throw the ball up on the edge of the goal square at the point where the offence occurred.

17. Mark

a. A mark is taken if, in the opinion of the umpire, a player catches or takes control of the football after it has been kicked by another player from either team, **irrespective of the distance traveled.**

b. It is not a mark if the ball touched the ground or was touched by another player between the moment the ball was kicked and when it was caught or controlled by the player.

- c. The player taking the mark (catch) will have a reasonable opportunity to dispose of the ball or play on. If he delays, the umpire will start a five-second count for play to resume.
- d. It is advised for players to respect their opponent and take care in a high marking contest so as to minimize the chance of an injury by having someone jump in their back as in Law 10.

18. Playing on

The umpire shall call play-on when:

- a. A player, after taking a mark, runs around or over the spot (the mark) where he caught the ball.
- b. The ball, after being kicked, was touched in transit.
- c. The ball is received via a hand pass
- d. The ball after being kicked is not marked.

19. Standing the mark

When a player is awarded a mark or free kick, an opposing player may stand at the position from where the mark (catch) was taken or where the free kick is paid. If the player on the mark runs forward of the mark before the opponent has had reasonable opportunity to dispose of the ball, a 15 metre penalty will be awarded to player with possession.

20. Bouncing the ball

Where a player is moving while in possession of the ball, he must bounce the ball or touch it on the ground at least once every 15 metres, irrespective of whether the player is running in a straight line or otherwise. He must then dispose of it by hand or foot.

21. Free kicks

It is the spirit and intention of these laws that a Free Kick shall be awarded to ensure the match is played in a fair and safe manner.

A Free Kick maybe awarded when:

- a. A player fails to dispose of the ball as in Law 11.
- b. A player makes a malicious full-blooded tackle on another player.
- c. A player runs more than 15 metres in possession of the ball without bouncing it as in law 19.
- d. Unduly rough play.
- e. Kicking in danger as in law 25.
- f. A player engages in contact but is not making it his primary objective to obtain possession of the ball.
- g. If a non-designated player is outside the arc during a centre throw up as in Law 2. If this is so, a penalty will awarded to the opposing team at the point the indiscretion is determined by the umpire.
- h. If a ball is kicked from outside the 35 metre arc and goes through for either a goal or behind without being touched first, no score shall be awarded and a defender from the opposing team will kick the ball back into play from the goal square as in Law 16b.
- i. A player holds an opponent who is not in possession of the ball.

22. Playing the advantage

- a. Instead of awarding a free kick, the field umpire may allow play to continue by calling: “Advantage, play on.”
- b. If the advantage called results in no immediate advantage to the team, the umpire may call back play and award a free kick where the original incident took place.

23. Field bounces/ball-ups

The ball shall be thrown up:

- a. To start play as in law 9.
- b. When the umpire feels that neither team has had reasonable opportunity to dispose of the ball.
- c. Whenever he is in doubt as to the correct ruling. ie disputed mark where 2 players are claiming it.

24. Out of bounds

- a. When the ball goes out of bounds (completely over the line) by hand or foot, or touches a behind post not on the full, the umpire will throw the ball back into play 5 metres into the field of play from where the ball crossed the line or hit the post. If any portion of the football is on or above the boundary line, the football is not Out of Bounds.
- b. If the football, having been kicked, passes completely over the boundary line without touching the ground within the playing surface or being touched by a player, or the football has touched the behind post or passed over the behind post without touching the ground or being touched by a player. A free kick shall be awarded against the player who:
 - (i) Kicks the football Out of Bounds on the Full;
 - (ii) in the act of bringing the football back into play after a behind has been scored (or as in Law 15d), kicks the football over the boundary line without the football first being touched by another player;
 - (iii) intentionally kicks, handballs or forces the football over the boundary line without the football being touched by another player, a free kick will be awarded at the point where the ball crossed the boundary line.

25. Kicking in danger

A player is only allowed to kick the ball off the ground when the ball is out in the clear and there is absolutely no danger of kicking an opponent. If any player attempts to kick within a pack of players, or a congested area where other players are in danger of being injured, a free kick will be awarded against the offender.

26. Players exceeding permitted number

The captain of a team may, at any time during a match, may request that the umpire count the number of players of the opposing team who are on the playing field. Where a request is made the field umpire shall stop play at the first available opportunity and ask all the players from both teams on the playing field to remain stationary while the players are counted. Where a team has more than the permitted number of players on the playing field (as determined by the umpire), the following shall apply:

The field umpire shall reward a free kick to the captain or acting captain of the opposing team. This shall be taken in the centre of the ground or where play was stopped, whichever is the greater penalty.

27. Injured player

a. In the spirit of the game as played by PAFL, if a player sustains what appears to be a serious injury in the eyes of team mates, opponents and/or umpires, play is to be stopped by the umpire immediately. If the injury requires the player to leave the field, once the injured player has been removed from the arena, the field umpire shall recommence play by either throwing up the football or in the case of a free kick being paid to the injured player, the nearest teammate to the incident will be permitted to take the kick or dispose of the football. If a player not directly involved in the incident had advantage of the ball at the time play was stopped, that player will have the opportunity to dispose of the ball from the nearest area he was at the time the play was stopped. No time will added.

b. Where a player is awarded a free kick or mark and in the opinion of the umpire, that player is suffering from a temporary injury preventing the player from disposing of the football, then the nearest teammate to the incident may take the kick as in law 27a.

c. If a player engages in the “faking” of an injury in trying to seek an advantage for himself, a free kick will be awarded to his opponent and a 15 metre penalty will be applied.

28. Fifteen-metre penalty

A 15-metre penalty may be awarded when a player:

- a. Oversteps the mark.
- b. Engages in time-wasting.
- c. Uses abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language or behaviour towards an umpire or player.
- d. Enters the five-metre area around a player who has been awarded a mark or free kick.
- e. Has not returned the football directly and on the full to the player awarded the free kick or mark.
- f. Engages in any other conduct for which a free kick would originally be awarded.
- g. A reportable offence results in a fifteen metre penalty and a send-off for the remainder of the game (see law 29).
- h. Engages in faking an injury as in law 27c.

29. Send-off rule

A send-off rule will operate as follows:

- A player may be sent off at the discretion of the umpire for any reportable offence. The player sent off may be replaced. He shall take no further part in the remainder of the game. The period of suspension will depend on the offence (see chart below).
- A player may also be sent off by the umpire for a minor breach for a ‘cooling-off’ period of 5 minutes and may be replaced (umpire will ask for the scorekeeper to note the offending player). Two of these offences in the one game will lead two the offending player being sent off and taking no further part in the game.

30. Set penalties

The spirit of PAFL is to provide participants with an easy to play non-contact version of Australian Football in an enjoyable, social, fun and safe environment. Set penalties will be enforced as rough play, threatening language or behaviour has no place and will not be tolerated. Team captains will be informed of players who are to receive yellow or red cards. PAFL reserves the right to invoke heavier penalties if circumstances require. Repeat offenders may have their suspensions doubled from the previous time or have the prescribed penalty doubled if a different incident has occurred involving the same player.

Explanation Penalty

Using abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene language towards or in relation to an umpire – 1 week

For a second offence in the same season, the penalty shall be 4 weeks

Behaving in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards or in relation to an umpire 2 weeks

Disputing a decision of an umpire 1 week

Using an obscene gesture 1 week

I. Kicking another person 2 weeks

II. Striking another person 2 weeks

III. Tripping another person whether by hand, arm, foot or leg 2 weeks

IV. Engaging in time-wasting 1 week

V. Charging another person 2 weeks

VI. Throwing or pushing another player after that player has taken a mark, disposed of the football or after the 1 week
football is otherwise out of play

VII. Engaging in rough play against an opponent which, in the circumstances, is unreasonable 2 weeks

VIII. Spitting at or on another player 2 weeks

Attempting to kick another person 1 week

Attempting to strike another person 1 week

Attempting to trip another person by hand, arm, foot or leg 1 week

Intentionally shaking a goalpost or behind post when another player is preparing to kick or is kicking for goal or after the player has kicked for goal and the ball is in transit 1 week

Wrestling another person 1 week

Using abusive insulting, threatening or obscene language – 2 weeks

Failing to leave the playing field when directed to do so by a field umpire 2 weeks

31. Appeals

A player will have the right to appeal if he believes the umpire has made an error of judgment. The appeal must be lodged with the controlling body within 48 hours of the incident taking place. The controlling body will inform the player of the time, date and place of the hearing. Such a hearing will take place within seven days of the appeal being lodged. A player may withdraw the appeal within the seven-day timeframe. Upon hearing the evidence at such a hearing, the Appeals Committee may:

- a. Uphold the on-field decision.
- b. Overturn the on-field decision.

- c. Find the player guilty of a lesser offence and impose a lighter penalty.
- d. Find the player guilty of a more serious offence and impose a greater penalty.
- e. Find the player guilty of the offence, but, in light of the circumstances, impose a lighter penalty.

The decision of the Appeals Committee will be final and there will be no further avenue for appeals.

32. Controlling body

- a. The PAFL.
- b. Any league, association or body responsible for the organisation and conduct of matches of PAFL.

APPENDIX

With regards to Law 2 and 3, the umpires (not the team captains), will apply the following field restrictions based on the number of players nominated by each team captain to be on the playing field during the game:

No. of players on the field of play	Within Arcs	Centre	Wing(s)
9	3	3	0
10	3	4	0
11	4	3	0
12	4	4	0
13	4	4	1
14	4	4	2
15	4 and 5	4	2
16	5	4	2
17	5 and 6	4	2
18	6	4	2

Regardless of how many players there are per team, there shall be no more than 6 players in the centre zone (including wings) at each centre bounce or throw-up.