



FINALS MANAGEMENT POLICY

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Introduction

Finals games can be exciting, competitive and high pressure for players, coaches, umpires, officials, families and supporters. This Finals Management Policy provides clear and practical guidance for staff and members on how finals are to be managed, particularly when a match is drawn or another similar situation arises. It is designed to ensure everyone understands the process, their role and their responsibilities before, during and after a finals match.

The aim of this policy is to support consistent decision-making and clear communication in moments where emotions may be heightened. By setting out expectations in advance, the policy helps protect the player experience and ensures that finals are managed fairly, calmly and in the best interests of a mostly junior, participation-focused community sport competition.

Members are reminded that while finals are an important part of the season, the competition remains community sport at its heart. Fun, friendships, fitness, participation and positive memories should remain the priority for every participant involved.

Scope

This Policy applies to all FDNA (including Peninsula Waves) competitions.

Finals Management Policy

FDNA is committed to providing a finals competition environment that is fair, equitable, safe and positive for all participants. This Policy will be guided by the principles of consistency, transparency, player wellbeing, child safety, respect for officials, and the protection of a participation-focused community sport environment.

FDNA competition staff will be the ultimate decision makers in relation to finals management matters. Where appropriate, FDNA competition staff will consult with umpires, club representatives, team officials, team captains, coaches or other relevant stakeholders before making a decision. Final decisions will be made in the safety of participants, the best interests of the competition, and the fair and orderly conduct of the match.

Communication during finals management matters will be limited to the designated team contact. For junior teams, this will generally be the coach or nominated club/team liaison. For senior teams, this will generally be the team captain or nominated representative. This approach is intended to reduce confusion, support calm communication and ensure that players, umpires and officials are able to focus on the game.

Clubs are responsible for managing the behaviour of their members, players, coaches, officials, families and spectators. Netball Victoria's required Zero Tolerance for Poor Sideline Behaviour will be upheld at all times, along with any applicable Codes of Behaviour, FDNA policies, competition rules and child safe requirements.

Umpires must be supported and protected from inappropriate behaviour, particularly in high-pressure finals situations.

FDNA By-laws will be complied with wherever possible. However, where FDNA Management determines that the safety, wellbeing or protection of any member or participant may be compromised, FDNA Management may make a decision at its sole discretion after consultation with relevant stakeholders. In such circumstances, participant safety and wellbeing will take priority.

The processes that support this Policy will be outlined in later sections and are intended to operate alongside the FDNA By-laws, Netball Victoria requirements, Codes of Behaviour, Child Safety obligations and any other relevant governance frameworks

Dispute Resolution

Where a dispute or concern arises during a finals match, the matter must be managed calmly, respectfully and through the appropriate channels. Communication will be limited to the designated team contact, such as the coach for a junior team or team captain for a senior team. Players, spectators and other members must not approach umpires, opposition officials or FDNA competition staff directly unless invited to do so.

FDNA competition staff are the ultimate decision makers for finals management matters and may consult with umpires, club representatives, team officials or other relevant stakeholders as appropriate. Any decision will be made having regard to the FDNA By-laws, applicable Codes of Behaviour, Netball Victoria requirements, child safe obligations, participant safety and the fair conduct of the competition.

If a club or team does not agree with a decision made during a finals match, the match should continue where safe and appropriate, and the concern may be raised after the match through the relevant FDNA process. Finals match disputes must not be managed through sideline confrontation, public argument or behaviour that places pressure on players, umpires, officials or volunteers.

Clubs are responsible for managing the conduct of their members and spectators while any issue is being considered. Netball Victoria's Zero Tolerance for Poor Sideline Behaviour and all relevant Codes of Behaviour will be upheld. FDNA may take immediate action where behaviour is inappropriate, where an umpire requires support, or where the safety or wellbeing of any participant is at risk.

Finals Management Procedures

1. Pre-Finals Briefing

Before finals commence, FDNA competition staff will brief Clubs, relevant staff, umpires, & officials on:

- finals rules and relevant by-laws
- drawn game procedures
- communication protocols
- dispute resolution expectations
- behavioural expectations for players, officials and spectators
- who has authority to make decisions on the day

2. Designated Contact

The approved contact for each team should be identifiable before the match starts:

- **Junior teams:** coach or nominated club/team liaison
- **Senior teams:** team captain or nominated representative

Only this person should communicate with FDNA competition staff about match management issues, disputes or clarification requests.

3. Drawn Match or Extra Time

Appendix 1 provides a step-by-step process for drawn matches, including:

- when the score is confirmed
- who confirms the draw
- how teams and umpires are informed
- whether a break applies
- how extra time is timed and managed
- what happens if the match remains drawn
- who communicates the final decision

4. Score Confirmation

At the end of a finals match, the score should be confirmed by the official scoring process before any next step is taken. This should include:

- confirmation by scorers
- review by FDNA competition staff if required
- notification to umpires and designated team contacts
- clear direction if the result requires extra time or further action

5. Umpire Support and Escalation

Where participant or spectator behaviour, pressure or safety concerns arise, Umpires should:

- Apply game management measures in accordance with the official rules
- Seek support from umpire supervisors or senior officials
- Pause communication with teams if required
- Record/report any incident after the match

6. Behaviour Management

Clubs are responsible for managing their own members and spectators and are expected to do so through their team Marshalls. FDNA Staff can assist and support as required. All participant behaviour (& remedies) is expected to comply with:

- FDNA By-laws
- FDNA Constitution
- Netball Victoria Codes of Conduct
- Netball Victoria Competition Regulations
- Netball Victoria Child Safety framework
- Other applicable FDNA policies

6a. Course of Action to be followed in the event of a warning being issued:

- As soon as a warning is issued clubs are responsible for asking an official to attend the court.

An official has the ability to:

- 1) Issue a warning to spectators quoting Netball Victoria's Zero Tolerance with the support of the court Marshalls,
- 2) Ask a spectator to leave the court area,
- 3) In extreme circumstances where safety is a concern for players, umpires or other spectators an FDNA competition official may call the game off,
- 4) Award the game accordingly with consultation with other senior staff that are in attendance on the day.

7. Dispute Resolution Process

If a dispute arises during a finals match:

- the match should continue where safe and appropriate
- communication should be through the designated contact only
- FDNA competition staff may consult with umpires and relevant stakeholders
- FDNA competition staff make the final decision
- unresolved concerns may be raised after the match through the appropriate FDNA process (refer to 6a)

8. Safety and Wellbeing Override Process

FDNA may depart from ordinary by-law processes where participant safety or wellbeing is at risk. This process should include:

- identifying the risk
- consulting relevant stakeholders where practical
- making a decision in the best interests of safety
- recording the reason for the decision
- communicating the outcome clearly to affected parties
- FDNA staff may decide to refer to 6a.

9. Incident Recording Process

Any significant final issue should be recorded after the match, including:

- drawn game or extra time decisions
- disputes or protests
- behavioural incidents
- safety concerns
- umpire support matters
- decisions made outside standard processes

This protects FDNA, supports transparency and assists with future review.

10. Post-Finals Review Process

After finals, FDNA will debrief & review any issues that arose and consider:

- whether the process was clear
- whether communication worked effectively
- whether umpires and participants were appropriately supported
- whether any by-laws or procedures need to be updated
- whether clubs require further education or reminders

11. Club Communication Process

Before finals, FDNA should provide clubs with a short finals communication that outlines:

- key policy expectations
- who can communicate with FDNA staff
- drawn match procedures
- sideline behaviour expectations
- consequences for inappropriate conduct
- reminder that finals remain part of a participation-focused community competition

12. Child Safety and Participant Welfare Process

Because the competition is mostly junior, the process should ensure:

- children are not placed in the middle of disputes
- adults manage issues calmly and away from players where possible
- child safe principles guide decisions
- player enjoyment, safety and wellbeing remain central
- communication is age-appropriate and respectful

Supporting Documentation

- [Rules and regulations – Frankston District Netball Association](#)
- [Bylaws](#)
- [Constitution](#)
- [Code of Conduct - Netball VIC](#)

FINALS PROTOCOLS

- One official from each team must check in at Reception/Competition Office 30 minutes before the final, to confirm player selections & any requests for special consideration.
- Both teams are required to supply a scorer. The Home or first named team scorer will manage the live scoring on the provided device. The Away or second named team will score on the provided manual scoresheet for all Finals matches (Semi, Pre-lim and Grand Finals).
- Scorers must stand side by side level with the center of the court, and away from spectators. Scorers must agree on the final score before confirming the result on Netball Connect.
- Umpires will bring the approved manual scoresheets to the court & hand to the scorer after they have verified the players.
- In Semifinals and preliminary finals, the Home or first named team will take the first center pass and the Away or second named team will choose the goaling end to start the match.
- In Grand Finals team Captains will toss a coin. The winner will take the center pass, and the loser will choose their goaling end to start the match.

IN THE EVENT OF A DRAWN GAME

- In the event of a draw, there will be a 1-minute break before extra time commences where positional changes are permitted.
- One representative from the home team will immediately inform the Competitions Office of the draw.
- Extra time will be three (3) minutes at each end for Junior matches.
- Extra time will be four (4) minutes at each end for Open matches.
- Tactical Substitutions are permitted during extra time.
- **2nd EXTRA TIME** - If the match is still a draw after extra time the following applies(excluding 13&U matches):
 - Umpires to reset the Centre pass and remind players of the process: no break, positional changes or substitutions.
 - The team to win by a margin of 2 goals shall be declared the winner (not necessarily consecutive goals).
- For 13&U where the final is still drawn after extra time has been played: at the end of extra time, play continues with no break and the next goal wins the match.