

A Guide for Umpires of Future Ferns Netball

Umpires need specific training on the rule modifications at this level of the game, as their role is that of coach as well as an umpire. Netball centres need to ensure that all umpires at this level demonstrate understanding and apply the rules in a gentle, non-aggressive manner that helps players learn the rules.

The aim is to promote a flowing game with minimum whistle and to ensure a fair contest, fairplay and the safety of all players. To achieve this the umpire needs to:

- **Relax** the 3-second rule (up to 6 seconds) to allow players time to gain their balance and make decisions - which takes longer at this level!
- **Relax** the footwork rule, allow players to gain balance, not progress down the court
- **Relax** the replayed rule, particularly in wet, cold weather
- **Enforce** the obstruction rule to allow players to get their passes away to promote a flowing game. The distance allowed is 0.9 m
- **Enforce** the contact rule
- **Do not penalise** for incorrect throw-ins, instead, explain to players if needed
- **Allow** players a moment to get back 'on side', penalise if the player remains in an offside area and impacts on the non offending team
- **Guide** players on the rules relating to toss ups to help players take up their correct positions
- **Explain** all decisions using simple language
- **Encourage** all players or both teams by acting in a supportive warm manner
- **Relax** the uniform code to allow players to wear track pants and long sleeved tops (in team colours wherever possible) on colder days. Allow also for players of cultures to wear acceptable standards of dress
- **Ensure** that all the teams are playing with a size 4 ball and that goal posts are at the correct height for 2.6m
- **Game scores** can be recorded. 1 point for a goal scored anywhere within the goal circle. Scores are to be used for re grading purposes
- **Allow** up to 2 minutes to have a drink at the end of each break and change bibs. Allow up to 3 minutes for half time and change of ends unless the game is played in thirds
- **Encourage** quick replacement of an injured player if necessary. Play should resume as quickly as possible after ensuring the injured player is in no danger of further injury.

As players improve and develop their skills, less modification will be required, particularly in their final year of Future Ferns Netball.

