



## Memo

**Date:** 27 Septmeber 2019  
**To:** All Affiliates  
**From:** Dean Russell, General Manager  
**Subject:** 2020 Junior State Cup – State Finals

Good afternoon all,

The NSWTA has previously acknowledged that the timing of the 2019 Junior State Cup – State Finals in April, while placed with all good intent, did not work for many of our affiliates and especially for our volunteers. We realised that before this year's event. In this realisation, many of you would be aware that senior staff of the NSWTA spoke to affiliates at the State Finals to gain insights and feedback. We followed this up with a formal engagement process to both verify what we had been told around several aspects of the event and give us accurate data for any changes we needed to make. To those affiliates who took the time to be involved in this process, we offer our thanks.

The outcomes of the engagement piece gave clear and abundant clarity in some elements of the event while throwing up challenges to us around the memberships' split views and elements that had contractual implications on us as an organisation. It is these areas that have taken some time to work through. Having worked through these based on the feedback we have received, we can advise the date and format of the 2020 Junior State Cup – State Finals have changed.

Clearly, in near-unanimous response, the date of late April for the State Finals does not work for the volunteers and many participants mainly due to the impact of winter sports participation. The feedback varied from having the finals the weekend directly following the Southern Conference to no more than a month after. On the surface, this seems an easy fix. However, with the combination of complications consisting of commercial arrangements, summer sport providing issues to field accessibility and the National Touch League taking place in mid-March, (right in the middle of the feedback preference window) made navigating this want a little difficult to fulfil. That said, I can advise that we have taken on board all the responses, both formally and verbal, to move the Finals far closer to the Conferences.

Although the timing request of the event was clear, not as clear cut was the feedback on the competition format. It would be fair to say that via the results of the engagement process, the feedback was split near equally across a variety of preferences:

- Winners of each Conference play in a three-game series
- The top 2 teams from each Conference progress to the State Finals
- Top 4 teams from each Conference progress to the State Finals





· Keep the status quo of the top 8 teams progressing to the State Finals. To be fully transparent while this had support, it was the least supported.

Considering the requested options, we needed to meld this with other feedback we have received via the process. These centred around reducing costs, less time commitment, flexibility around accommodation and other barriers to attend for participants and/or making the State Finals free:

- Depending on location, the price of accommodation meant extra financial burdens on parents/family.
- Bringing back the one event format but split particular age groups over different venues.
- Limit the State Finals event to one day.
- Difficulties in getting referees to commit to 2 days in April. As well as other elements offered in consideration.

Again in the want to be transparent, most negative feedback received was around costs, both to the participant and the affiliate. As such, we have taken measures to look to reduce costs. However, as affiliates would be aware from running their own events and competitions, seeking to minimise expenses for teams, sometimes mean having to remove certain elements of the event as unfortunately in this day and age nothing is provided for free and the plethora of infrastructure to run events of this magnitude is quite expensive.

However, in listening to the membership via the engagement process, we are taking measures to present the State Finals in a manner to look to meet a majority of the stakeholder feedback.

The State Finals will, for 2020, be a one-day event played at The Kingsway Playing Fields, home of Penrith Touch Association on Saturday, March 7, 2020. Being a one-day event, only the top 4 teams from each Conference will progress to the State Finals (i.e. Total of 8 per division). Each team will play a minimum four games. From this, the top 4 teams will progress to the Finals Series consisting of a semi-final and a grand final. For 2020, Under 10s and Under 18s will remain part of the State Finals program. Also for 2020 Under 8's and Development teams are still encouraged to participate in the Conferences. There will be no State Finals for Under 8's.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dean Russell', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dean Russell  
General Manager



## **FAQ Guide**

Q- How will the pools work?

A- The NSWTA are currently looking at the best options for this to occur and will advise in the JSC Conditions of Entry.

Q- What will the cost be?

A- NSWTA are currently working on ways and means to dramatically reduce costs. These will be advised well in advance of the competition.

Q- Are NSWTA accommodating referees?

A- In line with what occurred in 2019 the NSWTA will not be accommodating referees at the State Final. With looking to reduce costs to participants this can help offset any referee costs to affiliates. Being a one day event in the metropolitan area referee costs should be significantly reduced.

We will be having further conversations with the State Referee Panel around the referee situation and how best to handle given the tight turnaround that affiliates have requested between Conference play and the State Finals.

Q- What happens if a top four team decides not to attend?

A- Given the new format the NSWTA will invite next best placed team to attend. The next best placed team will be determined as outlined in the 2019/20 General Conditions of Entry.

Q- How many games are guaranteed?

A- Teams will have a minimum of four games.

Q- How long will the day go for?

A- Games will be scheduled to commence at 8am with the finals completed by 6pm.

Q- What times will Presentations commence?

A- Presentations for divisions will take place immediately following their finals completion at the Presentation area.



Q- Can development teams progress to the State Finals

A- No. Based on the feedback from the engagement process, a number of affiliates were not in favour of development teams be allowed to progress, some even suggesting that they should only participate in Affiliate/Regional events and not the State Conferences. We will be allowing Development teams to participate in the Conferences, however they can not progress to the State Finals. If this should occur the next best placed team will be invited to attend.