



SA COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

RULES OF OPERATION



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1. Establishment of By-laws (Rules of Operation)

- 1.1. The By-laws (Rules of Operation) apply to all divisions. There are some differences and where this is the case it is noted in the By-laws (Rules of Operation).
- 1.2. Association delegates should acquaint themselves with the responsibilities within the By-laws and ensure the relevant Association personnel are aware of their individual responsibilities.
- 1.3. The onus of knowledge and compliance with the By Laws lies with the Association.

2. Variation to the By-laws

- 2.1. The By-laws may be amended only by approval of the Council Executive (CE) or any urgent matters may be considered for adoption by the Country Championship Sub-Committee (CCSC) at their discretion.

3. Management of By Laws

- 3.1. The Executive Officer (EO) shall interpret and apply the By-laws in the first instance and make decisions based on them.
- 3.2. The CCSC shall act as a point of appeal for decisions made by the EO in relation to the By-laws. There shall be no further appeal.

The EO and CCSC are empowered to apply penalties in accordance with the By-laws.

4. Appeals

- 4.1. Appeals relating to decisions made by the EO shall be referred to the CCSC. There shall be no further appeal.
- 4.2. Associations must lodge an appeal, in writing through the EO, within seven (7) days of the decision being notified with a bond of \$100. If the appeal is dismissed at the discretion of the CCSC, the bond may be forfeited.

5. Appeal process

- 5.1. An appellant seeking an appeal must submit the appeal in writing with the full details of the matter and the decision made by the EO including:
 - 5.1.1. Ground (s) on which the appeal is made; and
 - 5.1.2. Reason (s) or circumstances supporting the ground (s) of appeal.
- 5.2. Upon receipt the EO will forward the submission to the Chair of the CCSC. The Chair will ask the CCSC to consider the appeal within seven (7) working days of receipt.
- 5.3. No appellant has the right to appear before the CCSC, the CCSC will deal with the matter(s) on written submission only.

- 5.4. The CCSC shall have the power to:
- 5.4.1. Dismiss the appeal;
 - 5.4.2. Uphold the appeal;
 - 5.4.3. Impose any penalties in accordance with the By-laws;
 - 5.4.4. Reduce, increase or otherwise vary any penalty of the initial decision of the EO in such a manner as it thinks fit.
- 5.5. The CCSC is not obliged to provide a reason for the decision.
- 5.6. At the conclusion of the appeal, the Chair of the CCSC shall ensure that the appellant and the EO are informed of the determination by the CCSC.

6. The Championships

- 6.1. All matches shall commence at the advertised starting time.
- 6.2. No team shall take the court with less than five players.
- 6.3. If a team is unable to take the court at the advertised time of commencement of a match in which it is participating:
- (a) One point for every minute, or part thereof, that such team is unable to take the court will be awarded to their opponents.
 - (b) The team shall forfeit the match if it cannot take the court within ten minutes of the advertised time of commencement, the Venue Supervisor in consultation with the EO may waive such forfeiture for just reason.

Note: It is the responsibility of the Coach/Team Manager to see that their team is ready to play on time.

Note: If a team forfeits a finals match, they will be excluded from the remainder of the final series.

- 6.4. The Championships will be conducted under the official FIBA Rules except for the specific rule changes for the championships detailed in these By-laws.

7. Players

- 7.1. To be eligible to play in the Country Championships, players must be:
A registered financial player of the Association nominating the team, or an individual player registered directly with SA Country Basketball.
- 7.1.2. Have no outstanding debt with SA Country Basketball, unless an approved payment arrangement is in place.
- 7.1.3. Under 12 – Under 16 Juniors Championships – players must have played a minimum percentage (30%) of games for a team competing in the Association's current summer season or the previous season immediately prior to the current summer season.

7.1.4. Under 18 Junior Championships – players must be registered, financial and active with their Association for the current season or have played a minimum percentage (30%) of games for a team competing in the Association’s winter or summer competitions immediately prior to the current summer season.

7.1.5. Senior Championships – players must have played a minimum percentage (30%) of games for a team competing in the Association’s competition in the current or a past season.
Have represented that Association in a previous SA Country Junior or Senior Country championships.

CCSC may request proof games played.

When calculating player’s games played and where the number is not a whole number, the number will be rounded up to the next whole number e.g 3.1 goes to 4.

7.1.6. A player, who due to injury/illness fails to qualify with the minimum number (30%) of games played in an Association’s competition may apply in writing to CCSC at least fourteen (14) days prior to the Championships for permission to play. Applications subsequent to the timeline may only request consideration due to injury /illness, which has occurred within the fourteen (14) day period to the start of the Championships. In considering the application CCSC shall have regard only to two criteria:

- a) Whether the player is a bona-fide player for the team as indicated by the player being registered and have played for the team prior to the date of the injury/illness or commencement of the season;
- b) The validity of the injury/illness preventing the player from otherwise qualifying to play in the Championships as indicated by submission of a medical certificate with dates the player was medically unfit to play from a suitably qualified medical practitioner (doctor).

7.1.7. In the case of a Junior player (Under 18 and below) they must satisfy Rule 7.1 but are exempt from Rule 7.1.3 if the family home is within the country area of the Association referred to in Rule 7.1 and they have represented that Association in a previous SA Country championships.

7.1.8. Player registrations for masters competition (over 35 years of age), are exempt from 7.1.3 as long as 7.1 is satisfied.

7.1.9. Teams from Associations not directly affiliated with SA Country Basketball Council may be accepted, subject to the approval of the Council Executive.

7.2. Junior Country Championships

- 7.2.1. Associations **MUST** nominate their 'number 1' (or best) team in Division 3 or higher in each age group. No exceptions.
- 7.2.2. A player who is a member of the SA Country Under 16 or 18 State teams in the previous year and/or a member of an SA Country junior development team (such as Southern Cross Challenge, Australian Country Junior Basketball Cup or similar, for U14-18 age groups) team in the current year, must be indicated on the official Team Registration Form.
- 7.2.3. Any Team containing two or more players in the categories in 7.2.2 must nominate in Division 1 of that age group. Teams may apply for an exemption to play in Division 2, based on overall team personnel.
- 7.2.4. Associations may make a request for a review of the division nominated pursuant to 7.2.1 or 7.2.3. A request to review the Division nominated will be considered in accordance with the grading criteria set out in 7.2.5.
- 7.2.5. Teams may be regraded in Divisions and Pools in accordance with criteria which can include the following:
 - a) All Junior Association tournament results in twelve months prior to the Championships;
 - b) The results from the Junior Country Championships of the age group below two years prior;
 - c) Number and level of development and/or representative players in a team;
 - d) Ability and/or number of top or bottom age players within the team;
- 7.2.6. Competition balance. Divisions and Pools may be capped to ensure even and manageable Divisions and Pools.
- 7.2.7. Pools will be seeded in accordance with the above grading criteria.
- 7.2.8. If a player is registered and qualified to play with more than one Association, the Association nearest to the player's place of residence will have first claim on that player's services provided that both Association's teams are playing in the same division. Where the Associations' teams are playing in different divisions, the player is entitled to play in the highest division.
- 7.2.9. If the Association nearest the place of residence of a player (the player's home Association) is not nominating a team in the player's age group, the player may request to play for the next nearest Association that has a position available for the player.
 - 7.2.9.1. The player need only have qualified with the minimum percentage of games with the player's home Association.

- 7.2.9.2. The request must be made in writing to the CCSC by the player's home Association or must be accompanied by written confirmation from the player's home Association that the Association is unable to nominate a team in the player's age group and consents to that player playing for the nominating Association.
- 7.2.10. Under 12s – Under 16s Players must be underage of grade as of December 31st of the current year. CCSC may request proof of age. SAC will send out Year of birth dates along with Competition information.
- 7.2.11. Under 18 competitions players need to be under the age of 18 by December 31st of the following year.
- 7.2.12. No team will be able to nominate or play with more than 2 players from a lower age group. e.g U12 > U14 > U16 > U18, unless approved by CCSC.
- 7.3. Overseas players contracted to play Basketball and/or with a sporting visa are not eligible to play. Overseas players who have been registered with FIBA for at least three (3) years are eligible to play in the SA Country Basketball Senior Country Championships. Players must still qualify under 7.1, 7.1.2 & 7.1.5.
- 7.4. Any senior player who plays in a higher grade than any Country Association competition (i.e. NBL1 or equivalent) must be listed on the Country Championships Nomination form.
- In senior divisions, a player must be 14 years of age prior to the Championships in which the player seeks to register and play.
- 7.5. Any Association, which plays an ineligible player, will be subject to a penalty, which will include forfeiting all matches in which the player took part.
- 7.6. A team may use as many different players as they desire providing all players are named on the official Team Registration Form and have registered online into the GameDay system, the maximum number of players in a team in any one match is ten.
- 7.7. Players (Senior or Junior) may only play for one team during a Championship weekend.
- 7.8. In an exceptional case, an Association may seek exemption from the above rules for one or more of its players. In such a case, a written request to CCSC including the appropriate justification must be submitted to CCSC at least 48 hours prior to the start of the Championships.
- 7.9. A fully completed Team Sheet must be sent to the SA Country Basketball office by the nominated date. All players must register in the Basketball Connect online registration system prior to the nominated date. The Basketball Connect system needs to be checked prior each game and only those participating in that game are to be selected. Players cannot be added

courtside after the Team Sheets have been submitted without the express permission from SAC.

7.10 Any changes made to the original Team Sheet submitted must be approved by the CCSC.

8. Eligibility for semi-finals and/or grand final

8.1. In order to be eligible for finals a player shall:

- a) Have his/her name on the appropriate team sheet or in the iPad and,
- b) Have played in two previous matches (which can include a ¼ Final) for his/her team in the Grade or Division in which they are participating.

9. Uniforms

- 9.1. A player shall not take the court unless wearing his or her team's correct uniform. Correct uniform refers to uniformity of tops and shorts. The tops must bear legal numbers.
- 9.2. T-Shirts are not to be worn under playing uniform unless a medical certificate is provided justifying the need to wear a T-shirt. If a T-shirt is worn it must be the same singlet colour as the playing uniform.
- 9.3. Undergarments can be worn in accordance with the FIBA rules.
- 9.4. It is essential that ALL TEAMS are properly dressed. Teams should bring an alternative set of uniforms (different colour) to avoid any clash in colours during the weekend. Team B is to wear an alternate uniform if there is clash of colours. All teams should check their draw to see if there are any potential uniform clashes and organise their alternate set prior to the game.
- 9.5. In the event of a clash and Team B does not have an alternate playing strip, Team B will forfeit the match.
- 9.6. Team bench attire – Including Coaches, Team Managers and other officials than players.
 - a) Must be in Association merch (polo, jumper etc.) if no Association branded attire available a plain polo same colour as team, black or white.
 - b) Must be in enclosed shoes (no slides, thongs, Birkenstocks etc.)
 - c) Must be in appropriate length shorts.
 - d) No SAC branded clothing
 - e) No hats or sunnies

10. Points

10.1. Points will be allocated as follows:

Win	- three (3) points,
Draw	- two (2) points,
Loss	- one (1) point,
Forfeit (team forfeiting)	- nil (0) points.

10.2. In competitions in which team have an equal number of games played, ladder positions are classified as follows:

- a. Win-Loss record (championship points)
- b. If two (2) or more teams have the same Win-Loss record, the following tiebreakers shall be applied in order until the tie is broken;
 1. Championship points gained in head-to-head (H2H) games between tied teams only.
 2. Score differential in the games between the tied teams.
 3. Higher scores for in the games between the tied teams.
 4. Tournament score differential.
 5. Tournament score for.

10.2.1. In competitions where teams have an unequal number of games played, ladder positions will be determined as in rule 10.2, except 10.2.a Championship Points will be replaced by Game Ratio, which is calculated as follows:

- a. $(\text{Wins} + (1/2 \times \text{Draws}) - (1/2 \times \text{Forfeits})) / \text{Games Played}$.
- b. Game Ratio will also be applied in rule 10.2.b in cases where tied teams have played an unequal number of games against each other.

11. Officials

- 11.1. Every nominating team shall provide a competent scorer or timekeeper (including a 24 second clock operator where required) as a bench official during a match in which the team participates. Team A's scorer will be required to use the online scoring system (iPad) and provide the 24 second clock operator, if required, and the timekeeper position will be filled by Team B. Penalties will apply to the team, as per 6.3 if the absence of a team scorer or timekeeper delays the game from the scheduled starting time.
- 11.2. Each nominating Association is to provide referees for the championship who are to be included in the "pool" for rostering. The number of referees to be nominated by an Association at any one Championship will be 1 referee per team nominated. Referee Coaches are not considered as part of "the pool of referees" therefore they are not counted towards the number of referees required.
- 11.3. An additional fee of \$250 is to be added to the nomination fee if the Association does not supply the required number of country referees to cover their quota as listed below.
- 11.4. A refund of \$50 will be applied to each nominating Association for each country referee and referee coach nominated. For a referee or referee coach to be considered "nominated" they must referee/ referee coach a minimum of 5 games for the tournament. Multiple referees (not referee coaches) can share the required number of games for 1 referee/ team; however, the minimum number of referees must still be met and only 1 refund of \$50 will be applied for any shared referees covering 1 referee/ team.

SAC shall have final decision in regard to whether the referee is a bona-fide country referee by considering:

- a) Referee's place of birth;
- b) Referee's place of residence;

- c) Whether the referee officiates or has officiated regularly for an SACBCI affiliated Association prior to the date of the Championship

If a team is withdrawn from the tournament prior to the fixture being released the number of referees required from that Association will be based on the number of teams competing. If a team is withdrawn from the Championships after the fixture has been released the number of referees required from that Association will be based on the number of teams that were originally nominated.

The value of fines/refunds will be determined by the number of referees required according to the schedule above.

12. Match rules

- 12.1. All matches shall be under the control and management of SACBCI. Timing rules will be confirmed and distributed to all nominated teams prior to the tournament and displayed on score tables.
- 12.2. All matches will use the Basketball Connect and Online scoring system. If the Basketball Connect system is unable to accommodate a game, SACBCI will complete the game through the traditional pen and paper. After the match is completed, the referees will sign the game off as completed. Only referees are to complete this process.

Note: SACBCI reserves the right to alter timing rules during the course of the Championships for any just reason.

- 12.3. No substitutions (except for a player with five (5) fouls) will be allowed in the last minute (1) of the first three (3) quarters.
- 12.4. $\frac{1}{4}$ & $\frac{3}{4}$ Time Breaks will be one (1) minute. Half Time Break will be two (2) minutes.
- 12.5. In the case of a draw in U16 and U18 Division one (1) (juniors) or Div 1 (seniors) five (5) minutes extra time will be played to achieve a result, championship conditions will apply as per FIBA rules.
- 12.6. For all other games, in the case of a draw an extra three (3) minutes will be played to achieve a result. During extra time the clock shall stop for time outs. Championship conditions will apply in the last 2 minutes (as per FIBA rules)
- 12.7. The game clock will not stop during game play if the deficit is 30 points or more in any game, if the deficit becomes below 30 points the clock will revert to original timing. Clock will still stop for timeouts.

13. Under 12 & Under 14 Competitions only

- 13.1. **Zones**
Definition of a zone
Any defence played in the half court which does not incorporate normal man-to-man defensive principles shall be considered a zone. For this purpose, trapping defences which rotate back to man-to-man principles are acceptable.

Zone defence is not permitted in any Under 10, 12 and 14 Competitions. For the definition of a zone defence, see the definitions section of these Rules of Operation.

13.2 **Mercy Rule**

U12 & U14 Division 2, 3, 4, & 5 only

If at any point a team is leading by a margin of 20 points the leading team must return to their backcourt behind the 3 point line until the offensive team has moved the ball into their front court, then man to man defence must be played.

If the deficit gets below 20 points at any point in the game the mercy rule does not apply and the team leading can go back to full court defence unless they start to lead by 20 points + again.

14. MVP – Seniors, Under 14 Girls & Under 16 Girls

- 14.1. Points for awards will be made by either the court officials or others as designated by SACBCI. Points will be awarded in any matches designated by the CCSC.

15. General

- 15.1. Players and persons involved in the Country Championship do so at their own risk.
- 15.2. It is the responsibility of each team competing to check for any late program changes and other important messages throughout the Championships.
- 15.3. The 3.7 metre free throw line will be used for all U12 competitions.
- 15.4. **The 3 point line will operate in all U12 competitions.**
- 15.5. Coaches
The Coach may communicate in a courteous manner with the grey or striped shirt officials during the game to obtain information only when the ball is dead.
Coaches are not to engage in questioning or speaking to any green shirt referees at any point.
- 15.6. SACBCI has the right to refuse entry to or eject from any stadium any person for any just cause. The Championships will be conducted under the codes of conduct which can be found on the SA Country website or in the courtside folders.
- 15.7. Associations will be held responsible for the behaviour of their players and supporters in the stadium and their surrounds during the weekend.
- 15.7.1. Any player or official affected by alcohol or drugs will be excluded from competition and can be ejected or refused entry to the stadium.
- 15.8. Referees, Referee Supervisors, Venue Supervisors and SA Country Basketball staff may report players, coaches, team officials or spectators.
- 15.8.1. Such reports are to be made in writing to the Venue Supervisor, who in consultation with the SA Country Basketball Executive Officer will determine if the matter be referred to the Country Championships Tribunal or the matter be dismissed.

- 15.8.2. If the matter is referred to the Country Championships Tribunal, the reported person may still play the remainder of the Country Championships, and the Tribunal take place after the Championships are over.
- 15.8.3. The Championships Tribunal acts in accordance with the SA Country Basketball Tribunal By-Laws (Rules of Operation).
- 15.9. Balls for matches shall be chosen by the referees from the warm-up balls supplied by the competing teams using the size guide below.
- 15.9.1. Senior Men will use a Size 7 ball for all matches.
- 15.9.2. Senior Women will use a Size 6 ball for all matches.
- 15.9.3. Juniors
- All U12 competitions – Size 5 Ball
 - All U14 competitions – Size 6 Ball
 - U16 & U18 Boys – Size 7 Ball
 - U16 & U18 Girls – Size 6 Ball
- 15.9.4. If SACBCI has arranged a sponsorship that includes the supply of balls to the tournament, these balls are to be used. Team supplied balls can be used but must comply with any sponsorship agreements (brand of basketball)
- 15.10. SACBCI reserves the right to rule on any matter or make adjustments to these by-laws during competition if required and its decision in any matter shall be final.
- 15.11. Any special requests by teams competing will only be considered if submitted in writing by the Secretary/Administrator of the Association nominating the team 48 hours prior to the start of competition.
- 15.12. As facilities in some stadiums may be limited each team is required to supply their own first-aid requirements.
- 15.13. Forfeit fines, payable by the Association nominating the team, will apply for the Championships. The amount of the fine will be determined by CCSC and based on the recovery of expenses and inconvenience to the other team. Games for teams withdrawing after the draw has been completed will constitute a forfeit and fines will apply.
- 15.14. Teams who withdraw after their nomination has been accepted and after the closing date for nominations will forfeit their nomination fees.
- 15.15. Game related protests – Any protest must be lodged in writing with SACBCI within 30 minutes of the game ending, with a \$50.00 lodgement fee, which will be forfeited if the protest is dismissed and returned if the protest is upheld.
- 15.16. All decisions of SACBCI will be final.

- 15.17. Where Sports trainers are available, the decision of the trainer will be upheld. If this is not upheld the player will be deemed as an ineligible player and penalty will be as per 7.5. e.g. Trainer recommends that the player is not to continue in the game and is to seek further medical advice prior to recommencing in the Championships, must have a clearance from a Medical Practitioner.
- 15.18. Concussion Policy rules. Basketball Australia Concussion Policy applies as the official Concussion Protocol for the Championships.

Appendix 1

Example 1

A vs B	100 – 55	B vs C	100 – 95
A vs C	90 – 85	B vs D	80 – 75
A vs D	75 – 80	C vs D	60 – 55

Team	Games Played	Wins	Losses	Championship Points	Score For	Score Against	Score Differential
A	3	2	1	7	265	220	+ 45
B	3	2	1	7	235	270	- 35
C	3	1	2	5	240	245	+ 5
D	3	1	2	5	210	215	- 5

Applying rule 11.2.b.1) the following teams won the tiebreakers:

Team A wins the tiebreaker with Team B, and Team C wins the tiebreaker with Team D as they won the head-to-head games and therefore gained more Championship Points in those games.

Example 2

A vs B	100 – 55	B vs C	100 – 85
A vs C	90 – 85	B vs D	75 – 80
A vs D	120 – 75	C vs D	65 – 55

Team	Games Played	Wins	Losses	Championship Points	Score For	Score Against	Score Differential
A	3	3	0	9	310	215	+ 95
B	3	1	2	5	230	265	- 35
C	3	1	2	5	235	245	- 10
D	3	1	2	5	210	260	- 50

Team A finish first, and there is a three-way tie between Teams B, C and D. Therefore, rule 11.2.b.1) shall apply as follows:

Team	Games Played	Wins	Losses	Championship Points	Score For	Scores Against	Score Differential
B	2	1	1	4	175	165	+ 10
C	2	1	1	4	150	155	- 5
D	2	1	1	4	135	140	- 5

- 1) The teams are all tied by their Championship Points in the head-to-head games.
- 2) Team B wins the tiebreaker with the highest Score Differential in the games between the tied teams and finishes second. C and D are still tied, so rule 6.7.b)i) can be applied to the two-way tie.
- 3) C beat D in their head-to-head game, gaining more Championship Points, and therefore, C finishes 3rd, and D finishes 4th.

Appendix 2

Definition – Zone Defence

Any defence played in the half court which does not incorporate normal man to man defensive principles shall be considered to be a zone. For this purpose, trapping defences which rotate back to man to man defensive principles are acceptable.

Violations of Man to Man Defence

The use of man to man defence is integral to the championships and accordingly, specific observers will observe games for the purpose of determining any team that is not executing acceptable man to man defensive principles.

Violations of the “no zone” rule will generally fall within one of the following categories:

1. One or more players were not in an acceptable man to man defensive position in relation to the player they are guarding and the player with the ball.
2. A cutter moved all the way through the key and was not defended using acceptable man to man defensive techniques (for example, “bumping” the cutter, following the cutter or switching);
3. Following a trapping or help and recover situation the team made no attempt to re-establish man to man defensive positioning.
4. The team zone pressed and did not assume man to man defensive positioning once the ball had been advanced into the quarter court.

Penalties for use of Zone Defence

An official observer (“zone buster”) is appointed to each venue at the championship and will be either an SA Country Volunteer, Supervisor or Referee Supervisor or authorised person appointed by SA Country.

Speak to the coach.

During the game, the “zone buster” may speak to the coach if they are concerned that the team (or any player) is not playing to acceptable man to man defensive principles. It is preferable that the zone buster speak to the coach prior to any penalty being imposed, however the deliberate and premeditated use of a zone defence at a critical time in a game may be penalized immediately.

Technical Foul

If the “zone buster” believes a violation has occurred (ie a team or player is not playing acceptable man to man defensive principles) they will ask the Scoretable Chairperson to request at the next dead ball, the referees to charge a Technical Foul – Personal Unsportsmanlike on the head coach of the offending team.

Importantly, the referee does not have to determine whether or not a violation occurred. That decision rests solely with the “zone buster”.

Second Technical Foul – disqualification of head coach

If the same team incurs a second violation, a technical foul is called and the head coach will be disqualified from the game.

Third Technical Foul – disqualification of assistant coach

If the same team incurs a third violation a technical foul is called and the assistant coach will be disqualified from the game.

Violations throughout the Championship

If a team has been penalized for playing “zone defence” in two or more games during the Championship, the Championship Technical Committee may take further disciplinary action including, but not limited to, disqualification and loss of points.

Benefit of the doubt with Defensive team

This rule has been introduced for the development of individual and team skills. It has not been introduced to penalize:

- Lazy defence;
- Poor coaching;
- Tired players;
- Poorly executed man to man defence.

Accordingly, if there is any doubt as to whether or not a team is playing acceptable man to man defensive principles, the benefit of the doubt will be given to the defensive team.