

FOOTBALL CANADA

LTAD COMPETITION REVIEW

MANDATE IMPLEMENTATION



Last Updated: March 2023
Version 1.3



IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGY MANDATES:

STRATEGY	MANDATED	UPDATES	NOTES
1.A – Age categories and two-year age gap	2018	Re-did wording in 2022	
2.A: Ban of two tackle seasons concurrently (at the same time)	2017		
2.B: Schedule regulations	2017		
2.C: Out-of-season tackle football games	TBD* under review	Changed to a recommendation and will be reviewed by LTAD Committee	
2.D: Tackle football weeks in a year	TBD* under review	Changed to a recommendation and will be reviewed by LTAD Committee	
2.E: Gradual progression to 12-a-side football	2023	Mandate but will be reviewed by LTAD Committee	
2.F: Roster Size	2023	Changed 12-a-side minimum to start season based on LTAD Committee recommendation	
3.A: Coaches resources	2019		FC Mobile App
4.A: Safe Contact Week	2018		
4.B: Practice Calendar	2022		See Appendix B
5.A: Non-contact programming	n/a		
5.B: Football Canada non-Contact league	n/a		
6.A: Opportunity to play for everyone	2020		
7.A: Female Football development	n/a	Creation of Football Canada Women's Development Committee	
8.A: Regional and Provincial Championship	n/a	Change in 2023 of U16 Flag to National Championship from Regional Championship	See Appendix C



OVERVIEW OF UPDATES

Football Canada's Long-Term Athlete Development Competition review began in 2013 and implementation of the LTAD Competition Review mandates began in 2017.

It was determined by Football Canada and its members as well as the Football Canada's LTAD committee that after a full year of play following the pandemic that some of the mandates needed further review and data before implementation. **The recommendations in this document can become mandates if determined by the PSO that their organization is ready to mandate.**

The delay of the listed recommendations is currently required as Football Canada continues to work with the Provincial Sport Organizations (PSOs) and the LTAD Committee to ensure the development and safety of our participants.

*****Recommendations/Mandates under review will be reviewed in 2023 and put forward for mandate approval at the next Members' Meeting.***

For Mandate 1.A: Age Categories, changes were made to the wording to better clarify the reasoning behind the mandate and ease of compliance.

For Mandate 2.A: Ban of two tackle seasons concurrently (at the same time), no changes were made to this mandate.

For Mandate 2.B: Schedule regulations, no changes were made to the tackle football mandate in that when developing a schedule, a team's games may only be played a minimum of four calendar days apart. The LTAD Committee is looking at recommendations/mandates for non-contact football.

****For Recommendation and Under Review** 2.C: Out-of-season tackle football games, the LTAD Committee has decided to heavily recommend this mandate but will be reviewing the mandate to determine a tracking and sanctioning system to help athletes and parents/guardians easily identify which programs are sanctioned (and adhering to the mandates) and those that are not.

****For Recommendation and Under Review** 2.D: Tackle football weeks in a year, the LTAD Committee is also heavily recommending this mandate but will be



reviewing the mandate with the most recent concussion and injury data available. A week of contact is defined as “where athletes wear full pads with an opportunity for contact at least once during the week”.

For Mandate 2.E: 2.E: Gradual progression to 12-a-side football, this mandate is to be enforced starting in 2023.

For Mandate 2.F: Roster Size, one change was made to the 12-a-side ‘Minimum to Start Season’, dropping from 30 to 28 to be like other recommendations to roster size. The ‘Minimum to Start Season’ total must be met one week (seven days) prior to the team’s first game. Changes were made to recommendations for recommended to play game and maximum to begin thinking of other alternative options.

For Mandate 3.A: Coaches Resources, the Football Canada Mobile app was created, and a free premium membership is offered to our members each year. Drills, skills, playbooks, and Safe Contact week plans can be found on the FC Mobile app.

For Mandate 4.A: Safe Contact Week, a mandatory Safe Contact week has been mandated at the beginning of each training camp since 2018.

For Mandate 5.A: Non-contact programming, modifications have been made to ensure that non-contact programming is age appropriate, and the Football Canada Non-Contact Committee is looking into revisions to the travel restrictions that currently exists according to our mandates. This will be further addressed in LTAD 2.0.

For Mandate 5.B: Football Canada non-Contact league, the Canadian Flag Football League was created in 2019.

For Mandate 6.A: Opportunity to play for everyone, work is continually being done by all the Football Canada committees to continue to ensure that no one is being denied the opportunity to play football at any level. The Football Canada Diversity and Inclusion committee was created to address inequities that certain populations are facing when it comes to participation.

For Mandate 7.A: Female Football development, at the NSO level there was the creation of Football Canada Women’s Development Committee. The inaugural U18 Women’s Championship took place in 2022 and the growth of female football



continues to occur across the country. LTAD 2.0 will continue to investigate ways to increase participation for women and girls.

For Mandate 8.A: Regional and Provincial Championship, there have been Provincial, Regional, and National championships occurring across the country. There is a change in 2023 of U16 Flag to National Championship from Regional Championship. The review of travel restrictions (see Mandate 5.A) will be evaluated for LTAD 2.0.



LTAD 2.0 – UPCOMING CHANGES

Football Canada is working with various groups to review the current structure laid out in the LTAD and provide recommendations and mandates that specifically look at areas not covered in LTAD 1.0. This includes:

- Non-Contact Football
- Women and Girls
- Coaching Requirements
- Safe Sport & Risk Management
- Inclusion and Accessibility
- Late-Entry
- Game Modifications
- Updates based on new research and data (ie. Equipment, concussions)

In LTAD 2.0, Football Canada is hoping to provide mandates and recommendations that cover some of the unique considerations that should be considered to create an inclusive and safe environment for all to participate in the sport of Football.



COMPETITION REVIEW STRATEGIES

STRATEGY 1.A: AGE CATEGORIES AND TWO-YEAR AGE GAP

STRATEGY 2.A: BAN OF TWO TACKLE SEASONS CONCURRENTLY (AT THE SAME TIME)

STRATEGY 2.B: SCHEDULE REGULATIONS

STRATEGY 2.C: OUT-OF-SEASON TACKLE FOOTBALL GAMES

STRATEGY 2.D: TACKLE FOOTBALL WEEKS IN A YEAR

STRATEGY 2.E: GRADUAL PROGRESSION TO 12-A-SIDE FOOTBALL

STRATEGY 2.F: ROSTER SIZE

STRATEGY 3.A: COACHES RESOURCES

STRATEGY 4.A: SAFE CONTACT WEEK

STRATEGY 4.B: PRACTICE CALENDAR

STRATEGY 5.A: NON-CONTACT PROGRAMMING

STRATEGY 5.B: FOOTBALL CANADA NON-CONTACT LEAGUE

STRATEGY 6.A: OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY FOR EVERYONE

STRATEGY 7.A: FEMALE FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY 8.A: REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIP



STRATEGY 1.A: AGE CATEGORIES AND TWO-YEAR AGE GAP

Mandate: Standardized two-year age categories and designations.

Changes to wording for 2023: The priority regarding this mandate would be to ensure all football played below the Grade 10 level would be portioned off in two-year groupings. PSO's would be free to determine what those age brackets are based on the situations present in their provinces with the goal of allowing players across their Province to compete in the same groupings. It is encouraged for all PSO's to work towards matching up with the Football Canada recommendations for the two-year gaps. At the high school level, a three-year gap recognizing the right of all students to access the program at their school is the next stage. Where numbers warrant a "junior varsity" or secondary team for entry level players in high school is encouraged.

Recommendation:

Standardized two-year age categories and designations for all community-based football U16 and below. For football played either at high school, or in the community for high school aged players, a three-year age category would be allowed which would then flow into participation at the Junior level (which would be a four-year gap) and USports (which could be up to a seven-year gap).

The three-age category is permitted for grade 10 aged athletes and higher.

Exceptions can be made:

- 1) If a player had no participation pathway, he/she can be moved to a different age category pending approval of the PSO.
- 2) If the current age category does not fit the developmental age of the player, he/she can be moved up **(only up)** an age category pending the approval of the PSO.
- 3) In communities where four grades are included in high schools it would be the expectation that two teams are offered within the four-year gap unless numbers do not allow for that in smaller schools. In those situations, four-year age gap participation on high school teams would be allowed under the coaches and administrators discretion. In all cases options should be considered for adapted opportunities like 6-a-side or 9-a-side to reduce large age gaps.



STRATEGY 2.A: BAN OF TWO TACKLE SEASONS CONCURRENTLY (AT THE SAME TIME)

Mandate: Ban of two tackle seasons concurrently (at the same time)

Exceptions:

1. Tournaments and jamborees from the national and provincial high-performance programs
2. Supplementing participation through non-contact streams

STRATEGY 2.B: SCHEDULE REGULATIONS

Mandate: When developing a schedule **for tackle football**, a team's games may only be played a minimum of four calendar days apart.

Make-up or rescheduled games (due to weather or unforeseen circumstance) may be scheduled with a minimum of two full calendar days in between. For example, if a team already plays on Monday, a make-up game could take place as early as Thursday.

Recommendation: When developing a schedule, a team's games should be played with six or more full calendar days between competitions.

STRATEGY 2.C: OUT-OF-SEASON TACKLE FOOTBALL GAMES

Recommendation and under review: Only five out-of-season tackle football games can be participated in each year, and they must be approved by the provincial governing bodies.

Exception:

1. Tournaments and jamborees from the national and provincial high-performance programs



STRATEGY 2.D: TACKLE FOOTBALL WEEKS IN A YEAR

Recommendation and under review: Specific number of weeks allowed each year for tackle football at each age category

CATEGORY	WEEKS PER YEAR
U8	No contact football
U10	10 + 1 Safe Contact Week
U12	12 + 1 Safe Contact Week
U14	15 + 1 Safe Contact Week
U16	16 + 1 Safe Contact Week
U18	16 + 1 Safe Contact Week

STRATEGY 2.E: GRADUAL PROGRESSION TO 12-A-SIDE FOOTBALL

Mandate: Gradual progression to 12-a-side football (see chart below)

CATEGORY	MALE
U8	Non-contact
U10	Non-contact or 6-a-side
U12	Non-contact, 6-a-side, 9-a-side
U14	Non-contact, 6-a-side, 9-a-side, 12-a-side
U16	Non-contact, 6-a-side, 9-a-side, 12-a-side
U18	Non-contact, 6-a-side, 9-a-side, 12-a-side
Elite 18+	Non-contact, 6-a-side, 9-a-side, 12-a-side

CATEGORY	FEMALE
U8	Non-contact
U10	Non-contact or 6-a-side
U12	Non-contact, 6-a-side, 9-a-side
U14	Non-contact, 6-a-side, 9-a-side, 12-a-side
U16	Non-contact, 6-a-side, 9-a-side, 12-a-side
U18	Non-contact, 6-a-side, 9-a-side, 12-a-side
Elite 18+	Non-contact, 6-a-side, 9-a-side, 12-a-side

Note: Male and female athletes may participate together up to U14 but it is recommended that if numbers allow, female participants should be provided their own participation programs.



STRATEGY 2.F: ROSTER SIZE

Mandate: Each team must have a minimum number of players on their roster to start a season and to play a game

Recommendation: Each team must have a maximum number of players on their roster, after which they have to start thinking of other options.

	MANDATED		RECOMMENDED	
	Minimum to start season	Minimum to play game	Recommended to play a game	Maximum to begin thinking of other alternative options
Touch 5's	7	4	7	10**
Touch 7's	9	7	9	14**
Flag 5's	7	4***	7	10**
Flag 7's	9	7	9	14**
6-a-side	9	8	12**	18**
9-a-side	17	13	18**	27**
12-a-side	28*	24	28	45

*This was changed based on a recommendation by the LTAD committee in 2022

** This was changed based on a recommendation by the LTAD committee in 2023

***as indicated in Football Canada's Non-Contact Rulebook

STRATEGY 3.A: COACHES RESOURCES

Mandate:

- Football Canada to develop coach training plans for each age group up to U14
- Educate coaches on rule modifications

Recommendation:

- Coaches submit yearly training plans to their respective league at the U16 and U18 levels



STRATEGY 4.A: SAFE CONTACT WEEK

Mandate: Introduce a mandatory Safe Contact week at the beginning of each training camp

Exception:

In rare cases where weather/scheduling/field availability cannot accommodate a Safe Contact week, teams must incorporate three hours of Safe Contact training (helmets only) within the first 14 days of their season. This training makes up for what would have taken place during Safe Contact week.

STRATEGY 4.B: PRACTICE CALENDAR

Mandate: Implement a practice calendar for each level

*See Appendix B from Competition Review

STRATEGY 5.A: NON-CONTACT PROGRAMMING

Recommendation: Work with partners including CFL, CJFL, and USPORT to expand non-contact programming

STRATEGY 5.B: FOOTBALL CANADA NON-CONTACT LEAGUE

Recommendation: Create and establish a national non-contact league run by Football Canada including the PSO's as a conferences

STRATEGY 6.A: OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY FOR EVERYONE

Mandate: Cannot prevent a player from an opportunity to play based on his/her skill level at the U14 level or below

Recommendation: Cannot prevent a player from an opportunity to play based on his/her skill level at the U16 level or below



STRATEGY 7.A: FEMALE FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT

Recommendation: Committee of female representatives to further investigate the lack of female programming, keeping boys' and girls' leagues separate, and having a female only option in the Player Development Program

STRATEGY 8.A: REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Recommendation: Create both regional (U16 & U18) and provincial (U14 & U16) championships

- See Appendix C from Competition Review

APPENDIX C:

MALE TACKLE FOOTBALL		
	Current (From 2017)	Proposed
U14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Championship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial championships only
U16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial championships (sometimes provided) • Regional championships (sometimes provided) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial championships • Regional championships
U18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Championship (Canada Cup) • International competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ International Bowl ○ IFAF U19 (Junior World Championships) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Championships • National Championships (Canada Cup) • International competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ International Bowl ○ IFAF U19 (Junior World Championships)
18+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vanier Cup (USPORT) • Canadian Bowl (CJFL) • International competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ International Bowl ○ U19 (Junior) World Championships ○ Senior World Championships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vanier Cup (USPORT) • Canadian Bowl (CJFL) • International competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ International Bowl ○ U20 (Junior) World Championships ○ Senior World Championships



FEMALE TACKLE FOOTBALL		
	Current (From 2017)	Proposed
U14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Championship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial championships
U16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Championship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional championships
U18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football Canada Women challenge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Football Canada Women challenge
18+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women World Championships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women World Championships

NON-CONTACT FOOTBALL (MALE AND FEMALE)		
	Current (From 2017)	Proposed
U14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Championship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial championships
U16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Championship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provincial championships Regional championships Flag Nationals
U18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flag Nationals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> U16 category U18 category 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Championships Flag Nationals
18+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flag World Championships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International competitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flag World Championships Football Canada non-contact league (PSO act as divisions)