

Waikato Junior Competition structure 2023

WaiBOP Football is committed to providing all junior and youth participants with a positive and enjoyable football experience that will inspire life-long involvement in the game. In recent years changes have been made to align our junior football with the Sport NZ 'Balance is Better' philosophy, which is endorsed by NZ Football. Our goal is to offer the best possible junior framework that not only meets the needs of all junior players, but also enables clubs, coaches, and parents, to provide a more positive football experience, and at the appropriate challenge point.

In 2022 WaiBOP Football made the move towards a non-graded junior competition structure and at the end of 2022 engaged in clubs to provide feedback. Please find below the Waikato Junior competition structure for 2023.

Grade	Format
First Kicks - 5 th /6 th Mixed	Clusters in Hamilton, In-House for Rural clubs
Fun Football - 7 th Grade Mixed	Localised Clusters* where possible, In-House for Rural clubs <i>*Dependent on field availability/festival options for rural clubs</i>
Fun Football - 8 th Grade Mixed	2 x games against two different opposition (when possible) Played in local groups
Mini Football - 9 th Grade Mixed	2 local groups – each with 2 x tiers.
Mini Football -10 th Grade Mixed	2 local groups – each with 2 x tiers.
Mini Football -11 th Grade Mixed	2 local groups – each with 2 x tiers.
Mini Football - 12 th Grade Mixed	Tier 1 – Waikato wide Tier 2 - Two local groups. All 12 th grade to be played on Saturday. No 12 th Grade Regional league.
Youth Football 13 th /14 th Grade Mixed	WaiBOP wide FYL + Waikato Graded competition
GIRLS ONLY	
Fun Football - U8 Girls	Clusters in local groups – <i>dependent on field availability</i>
Mini Football – U10 Girls	2 local groups – each with 2 x tiers.
Mini Football – U12 Girls	Tier 1 – Waikato wide. Tier 2 - Two local groups.
Youth Football Girls Only 13-14 th Grade (9v9)	Kaimai division – Waikato wide with one Crossover festival day with Bay of Plenty Koru Division – Waikato wide Played on Saturdays, crossover festival day on Sunday 18 th June at Otumoetai AFC

Team formation

The table below shows recommendations for clubs to form teams based on the number of teams a club has in each age group. If clubs have more than one team in the same tier, they should look to form teams of equal ability, rather than have an 'A' team and a 'B' team.

Teams per Grade	2 teams	3 teams	4 teams	5 teams	6 teams
Recommended (Tier 1/Tier 2)	1/1 2/0 0/2	2/1 3/0 0/3	2/2 3/1	2/3 3/2	3/3 4/2

If you require any further clarification, please contact your local Federation Development Officer:
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