

Introduction to Grade 13 - Information for Parents

Key points

- Grade 13 football means moving from the Junior grades (U9-U12) to Youth football (grades U13-U19).
- Youth grades feature 11-a-side teams, use full size fields and full size goals (other than for U13 girls divisions, refer summary table in appendix). There is no 'retreating line'.
- In the Youth grades teams are structured into divisions, results are recorded and league tables are maintained over the course of the season. In the early years (U13 and U14) the focus remains on participation and equal involvement but, depending on the grade, the emphasis on performance will increase at U15 and U17 with an eye towards players developing through to U23 and First team.
- Matches are played on either Saturday afternoons or Sunday mornings depending on the division teams are playing in.
- As is the case for Juniors football each team will need a manager and parent assistance is required for field set up/pack down for home games and refereeing. Teams also need to provide a referee for at least one half and an assistant referee.

About Grade 13

Playing in Grade 13 involves a progression to a more competition-based format where teams are allocated into divisions and play each other on a home and away basis over the course of the season. Match results are recorded (3 points for a win and one for a draw), league tables are maintained and both are available online via the NRF website. The fluid graded system used in Junior grades to match up teams at a similar challenge point is not used in Youth grades.

Summary of Grade 13 Competitions

U13 Grade	Type	# Divisions in Grade	Timing of Matches	# NSU teams entered 2024
U13 Championship	Mixed	One	Sunday morning	One
U13 Conference	Mixed	One	Sunday morning	One
U13 Auckland	Mixed	Eight	Saturday afternoon	One
U13 Girls	Girls	Two	Saturday afternoon	One

Sunday Mixed Competitions

- The Sunday morning mixed competitions are structured into three streamed divisions and these are typically the most competitive divisions in the Youth grades (NB the same competition structure applies across U13-U19 grades).
- Clubs are not permitted to enter more than one team per division therefore squads are selected on an 'A' and 'B' basis rather than having teams of relatively equal skill levels as has been the case in the Junior grades.
- NSU will enter teams into the Sunday divisions based on assessment of squad capability. NRF monitors initial matches and may regrade teams based on results.
- Kick off times for matches are typically between 9.00-11.00am Sunday morning. No regional grouping is applied to clubs in the Sunday leagues, so travel is required to clubs across Auckland. This can include a Northland team (based in Whangarei) and Waiheke

Saturday Mixed Competitions

- Given the larger number of teams in the mixed Saturday competition a grading system is used to match teams at a similar challenge point. Typically the first five rounds of each season are grading rounds, after which teams will be allocated into divisions.
- Clubs may be grouped into divisions on a regional basis in order to avoid the need for excessive travel across the city. For NSU this would typically mean playing clubs based on the North Shore and in West Auckland.
- Kick off times for matches are typically 12.00 noon or 1.00pm Saturday afternoons.

Girls Competitions

- The pool of girls only teams is generally smaller, so divisions are allocated.
- Kick off times for matches are typically 12.00 noon or 1.00pm Saturday afternoons.
- Games are still 9aside

Trials and Selection of Teams

- Squads for the Sunday leagues will be selected by NSU's Football Development Manager, Assistant Football Development Manager and team coaches.
- Trials/identification sessions will be conducted in February/March 2024. Please see the following link for these dates: <https://nsu.org.nz/youth-13-19/term-1-youth-pre-season-football-programmes>
- The club endeavours to confirm squads and confirm team entries to NRF by mid-March.
- As is always the case, exact squad sizes are determined by the size of the overall player pool, with the ideal being enough players to cover for the inevitable absences due to illness/injury, whilst maximising game time for all.
- In the 2024 season NSU had a total of 41 players in the U12 mixed grade across three mixed 9-a-side teams. Assuming there is not a significant change to player numbers this would equate to three squads in U13 11-a-side mixed competitions next season, ideally we would like a few more players to register to enable this. Please note Girls at U13 play 9aside games.
- Please note that it is important to attend trials and register on time if your child wants to be eligible for the Sunday league squads.
- NSU tries hard to cater for all players. Allocation of teams takes place after registrations have closed. In the Junior grades parents have had the ability to request which other players their child wants to be allocated into a team with, as part of the registration process. Sunday football in the Youth grades is purely merit based and players are placed into merit teams not friend groups. We want all players to have a positive and enjoyable football experience and at this level being at the correct challenge point is more important than existing friend groups. In our experience players over (or under) challenged, soon lose interest.

Relationship between Club football and School football

- Inter-school football begins in year 9 meaning that those of grade 12 players that are in school year 8 in 2024 will be able to play for their school next year. Inter-school football is typically played on Saturday mornings. Junior games (School Year 9 & 10 at Takapuna Grammar School, tend to kick off at 9am. Trainings will be Friday mornings for TGS at 7am - School Information can be found here:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAGOWgO-W-0/e9DP34L_jhk6Fq8UAOFC_Q/view?utm_content=DAGOWgO-W-0&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor

- NSU endeavours to accommodate players wanting to play for both school and club. The timing of matches will usually not clash and we seek to coordinate the timing of school/club trainings with Takapuna Grammar – the school that many of our players attend.

General Season Information

- There are typically 18 games per season, over the course of school terms two and three. Please note that Youth competitions typically **DO** play matches on public holiday weekends such as Kings Birthday, whereas the Junior grades do not. Youth grades also play on **FIRST** and **LAST** weekends of the school holidays between terms two and three – please be aware of this commitment if signing up to Sunday football.
- The Northern Region Football website will continue to be a key source of information and it pays to familiarise yourselves with it (www.northernregionfootball.org.nz).

Playing Kit

- Teams in Sunday leagues are required to have numbered shirts therefore their team shirts are supplied by the club.
- Saturday teams are not required to have numbered shirts however playing shirts for all Youth grades are provided by the club.
- All players are still required to purchase their own shorts and socks.

Training

- Bayswater Park is used for all Youth grade training, with the proviso that training in school term one may have to be held at alternative locations if the council has not yet granted NSU access to the park (which can occur if they are undertaking turf remediation work).
- Grade 13 training is usually held on a [Monday] afternoon, with a second session on [Wednesday] afternoon for those that want to train twice a week (timings to be confirmed).

Parent Involvement Requirements

In a nutshell there is not a great deal of difference to the Junior grades, with the addition of requirement to take nets and flags to alternative grounds if needed:

- Each team will need a parent to take on the role of Manager whose main role is to coordinate communications.
- For home games at Bayswater Park each team is required to set up the pitch they are playing on. You will require goals, nets, and corner flags.
- On Saturdays there will typically be senior games played following the Youth matches so packing up is not required.
- On Sunday mornings teams will usually need to both set up and pack up after their match.
- If home matches are scheduled at the alternative locations of Fort Takapuna or Onepoto Domain it is the responsibility of the NSU team to take nets and flags to these grounds and return them to the club after the match.

- Each team should provide a referee for one of the halves. NSU usually arranges a pre-season referee training / info session.
- Youth football needs parent refs - no ref / no game - so please volunteer to help out, the more volunteers the less often each person has to do it.

General

- The club will run workshops prior to the start of the season to cover the material outlined in this intro guide and to ensure parents are prepared for the new format.

Summary of Grade 12 versus Grade 13 (Saturday and Sunday leagues)

	Grade 12	Grade 13		
		U13 Girls	U13 Mixed - Saturday Leagues	U13 Mixed - Sunday Leagues
Match Format				
Field Size	Half/Three quarter	Half/Three quarter	Full	Full
Goal Size	Half	Half	Full	Full
Ball Size	Four	Four	Four	Four
Duration	2 x 27-minute halves	2 x 27-minute halves	2 x 30-minute halves	2 x 30-minute halves
Kick off times	9.00am-12.00pm (Saturday only)	11.00-12.00pm <u>Saturday</u>	12.00-1.00pm <u>Saturday</u>	9.00-11.00am <u>Sunday</u>
Location of NSU home games	Bayswater Park / Stanley Bay / BIS	Bayswater Park / Stanley Bay / BIS	Bayswater Park / Fort Takapuna / Onepoto Domain	Bayswater Park / Fort Takapuna / Onepoto Domain
Team				
Playing team size	9	9	11	11
Maximum squad size	No limit	No limit	16 (five subs allowed)	16 (five subs allowed)
Substitution rules	Rolling	Rolling	Rolling	Rolling
Competition Structure				
Competition Pool	Clubs grouped in North Harbour region	Clubs across all of Auckland	Clubs across all of Auckland with potential North Harbour/ West Auckland bias	Clubs across all of Auckland
Structured into divisions?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Grading method	Fluid grading	Grading rounds at start of season	Grading rounds at start of season	No Grading
League tables maintained	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Other Details				
Training	1 x team training per week @ Bayswater Park, additional training available.	1 x team training per week @ Bayswater Park, additional training available.	1 x team training per week @ Bayswater Park, additional training available.	2 x team trainings per week @ Bayswater Park
Registration Fees	Fees flat across grade			Higher fees given additional training
Playing Kit	Players required to purchase shirts, shorts and socks	<u>Club provides shirts.</u> - Players required to purchase shorts and socks.	<u>Club provides shirts.</u> - Players required to purchase shorts and socks.	<u>Club provides shirts.</u> - Players required to purchase shorts and socks.
Numbered shirts required?	No	No	No	Yes
Game Day Coach	Parent volunteer usually required	Parent volunteer usually required	Parent volunteer usually required	Provided by Club
Team Manager	Parent volunteer required	Parent volunteer required	Parent volunteer required	Parent volunteer required
Referee appointed by NRF	No	No	No	Sometimes

