

U20's – 2026

Delegate and Administrator Information & Background



Preamble

2025 saw significant change made to the format of the U20 competitions within the Victorian Junior Basketball Leagues (VJBL).

Feedback on the previous U20 structure had been sought from associations via the Delegates Meeting in June 2024 but had also been informally received for many years prior. Issues and concerns relating to the previous U20 structure have been shared in previous VJBL communications, but to simplify:

- U20 players felt a lack of identity and purpose within their association and the competition pathway
- Lack of girl's participation numbers
- Behavioural technical fouls were significantly higher in U20 Men
- With growth of VJBL, less compatibilities are catered for, as such, U20 participants have to choose between playing and coaching/refereeing or administering
- The strong feeling of the associations at the Delegates meeting was that change was required. But how? All associations were offered to join a working group over 2-3 sessions; 13 associations joined that working group comprising of large and small associations, and metro and country representation.
- The key changes coming from the working group that were implemented for 2025:
- U20 Men and Women moved to a Sunday evening
- Two seasons. One shortened season for a VC competition. One for a VJL competition, with ability for players to do both
- Officials for VC would come from high-end Junior Panel and less experienced group from Big V for training and development

2025 season

Two different seasons were created for the 2025 season. One season for Victorian Championship (VC) division. One season for Development leagues (VJL1 and below). Teams and players could compete in both seasons.

All games were played in a 'hub' style format rather than home and away. This meant that if associations did not have venue availability they did not need to host, and venues did not have to open for just 1 or 2 games, their courts were full. The change also alleviated large travel for associations in both seasons

Teams must only have 2 permanent U18s players, they may use other U18s as fill ins only.

This shift has seen a growth of 47 teams across the boys' and girls' competition. See below the number of teams competing in Under 20s across the last 4 years.

	2022	2023	2024	2025	VC 2025	VJL 2025	Changes in 2025
Boys	50	60	60	92	32	60	+ 32 teams
Girls	13	15	18	33	15	18	+ 15 teams

VC season

- Purpose of VC: Give associations strongest players a place to compete in a shortened season for a State Championship, whilst also finding their place within Youth/Senior teams in the early part of that season.
- 7 rounds total
- Round 1 was the first Sunday after School holidays
- All games completed prior to Easter
- Finals were a knockout structure. Top 16, top 8, top 4, final 2.
- Double header round 2 and 3, due to a weekend off for the Big V Youth Qualification Day
- Referees appointed by Basketball Victoria

U20 Boys VC

- 4 geographical divisions
- 32 teams total, 8 in each region
- 4 venues were played at each weekend. Each region played at 1 venue each

U20 Girls VC

- 15 teams total, one large pool
- 2 venues were played at each weekend. Attempted to reduce travel and have teams play at a venue in between them.

VJL Season

- Purpose of VJL: Allowing current or fringe Youth/Senior players opportunity to get good game time. Allow potential future Youth/Senior players a platform to play in high level games. Support opportunities for players to continue to play in their chosen association program. Foster opportunities for players to also coach/referee/administer within VJBL.
- 9 rounds + 5 grading games + 3 weeks of finals.
- Teams that competed in the VC season could enter the VJL season in grading game 4.
- Associations were encouraged to enter as many VJL teams as they wished in this season.
- Pools of 9 or 10 in boys and girls
- Boys had divisions 1-6, girls had divisions 1-2.
- Top 4 teams in finals
- Referees appointed by hosting association

Upcoming 2026 season

The Under 20s 2026 season will be following the majority of the same structure as 2025, including Sunday nights. We expect to see some minor changes to the arrangement of pools/divisions due to team entry nominations.

Based on feedback from 2025, please see below changes to the 2026 structure

- Under 20s teams often had players playing in both Under 20s and Big V, when there was Big V game on a Sunday the players struggled to get to both games and felt the load was too heavy to compete in both. In 2026 Big V will begin on March 22nd, so there will only be a chance of a clash with VC finals for 8 teams instead of all teams. The VJBL administration will work with Big V administration to attempt to remove any teams Sunday clashes that may occur.
- In 2026 The VC competition includes 3 Saturday evening games, these are all prior to the Big V season commencing. Round 2 is being played the evening prior to the Youth Qualification Day, this will remove having a bye that weekend as it was in 2025 as there isn't room in the calendar with easter being earlier this year. Rounds 3 + 4 and Rounds 6 + 7 will be double header weekends. Based on feedback from the 2025 VC season, teams would prefer not to play 2 games on the same day. Majority of the teams/players will be playing Big V and this will replicate that.

- Team entries will be open to all VJBL affiliated associations. Nominations are available for both the VC season and the VJL seasons. We wish to keep the VC season as the best team and players in the U20s age group at each association. The VJL season is open for multiple teams from each association
- The VC season will remain with knockout finals, VJL season will see 4 rounds of finals (top 5) to match all other VJL U12-U18 finals
- The start of each game will be between 4:30-7:30pm

New addition: VC Reserve

- We've added a new competition to 2026, called VC reserve. This was due to the complicated crossover that happened this year when teams finished VC but also wanted to play in the VJL competition.
- All teams that played in the VC championship season will have the ability to play in the VC reserve season with the same team or slightly modified due to players committing to BigV or NBL1.
- If a team is not up to the standard of VC during the VC championship season, they may be moved to VJL Grading Phase 2 instead of the VC reserve competition.
- If a team is winning comfortably in VJL grading phase 1 they may be moved to the VC reserve competition.

See below calendar for the 2026 season

Dates	U20 - VC Champ	U20 - VC Res	U20 - VJL	Notes
Sunday, 1 February 2026	Round 1			
Saturday, 7 February 2026	Round 2			Youth Qual Sunday
Saturday, 14 February 2026	Round 3			Double header 1
Sunday, 15 February 2026	Round 4			
Sunday, 22 February 2026	Round 5			
Saturday, 28 February 2026	Round 6			Double header 2
Sunday, 1 March 2026	Round 7		P1 Grading Rd 1	
Sunday, 8 March 2026	Labour Day Weekend			
Sunday, 15 March 2026	VC Knockout Rd of 16		P1 Grading Rd 2	
Sunday, 22 March 2026	Knockout Rd of 8		P1 Grading Rd 3	Big V begins
Sunday, 29 March 2026	VC - Final Four		P2 Grading Rd 1	
Tuesday, 31 March 2026	Victorian Championship Final		-	
Sunday, 5 April 2026	Easter/School Holidays			
Sunday, 12 April 2026				
Sunday, 19 April 2026			P2 Grading Rd 2	
Sunday, 26 April 2026		Round 1	P2 Grading Rd 3	
Sunday, 3 May 2026		Round 2	VJL Round 1	
Sunday, 10 May 2026		Round 3	VJL Round 2	
Sunday, 17 May 2026		Round 4	VJL Round 3	
Sunday, 24 May 2026		Round 5	VJL Round 4	
Sunday, 31 May 2026		Round 6	VJL Round 5	
Sunday, 7 June 2026	King's Birthday Weekend			
Sunday, 14 June 2026		Round 7	VJL Round 6	
Sunday, 21 June 2026		Round 8	VJL Round 7	
Sunday, 28 June 2026	School Holidays			
Sunday, 5 July 2026				
Sunday, 12 July 2026			VJL Round 8	
Sunday, 19 July 2026		Round 9	VJL Round 9	
Sunday, 26 July 2026		Knockout Rd of 16	VJL Round 10	
Sunday, 2 August 2026		Knockout Rd of 8	VJL Round 11	
Sunday, 9 August 2026		VCR - Final Four	VJL Round 12	
Sunday, 16 August 2026		Grand Final	VJL Round 13	
Sunday, 23 August 2026			VJL Round 14	
Sunday, 30 August 2026			Finals Rd 1	
Sunday, 6 September 2026			Finals Rd 2	
Sunday, 13 September 2026			Grand Finals	