



## **Aussie Rules Explained....maybe?**

### **General Stuff**

Australian Rules is played with 22 Players per team ...this would be ideal for us: 18 players on the field at one time ...4 reserves (or more) on the bench

Objective of the game: score more points (tally of goals & behinds) than the opposition...simple

### **Scoring:**

Goal (six points) - can only be scored by kicking the ball through the big posts (goal : posts)

Behind (one point) – can be scored by the ball passing through the smaller posts (point posts) or being knocked through any of the goal/point posts by the defending team or touched by the defending or attacking team (anywhere above the knee) before it goes through the goal posts

### **Field Positions**

6 Forwards – start the game up forward in two lines of 3, one line of 3 players close to goal (forward line) & one line of 3 players between the forward line and centre of the field (half-forward line); a forward's objectives are to kick and create goals, forwards should try to stay in front of their opposing backman, keep the ball in the forward line, put pressure on opposition backman trying to clear the ball downfield

3 Center Line Players – 1 center man (iceman) & 2 wingman (maverick and goose); center man starts in the middle & wingman start off to the opposite sides of the center; a center line player's objectives are to provide a link between backlines and forward lines, create space and width by running the boundary lines, man up on opposition center line players, play offensive and defensive

6 Backs – start the game down back in two lines of 3, one line of 3 players close to the opposition's goal (back line) & one line of 3 players between the back line and center of the field (half-back line); backs line up on the opposition forwards; a backman's objectives are to man up on opposition forwards, staying as close as possible to the forwards to prevent them getting the ball and kicking goals, try to get the ball out of the backline and downfield to the advantage of their midfielders [aka center line & followers] ...and generally be a pain in the ass!

3 Followers – 1 ruckman (tall guy) and 2 rovers (fit people); a follower's objectives are to win the ball out of the center (at center bounces) and from stoppages (ball ups & throw-ins around the field), follow the ball forward or back all over the field, prevent opposing followers from getting the ball



## **Start of Play**

Play is started by the umpire bouncing the ball or throwing the ball (ball up) straight up in the air (similar to Basketball tip off). Note: on the field should be marked an even square (about 100ft x 100ft??) around the center ball up area...at the ball up there only 4 players from each team are allowed inside the centre square = 3 followers and 1 centre line player...once the umpire bounces or throws the ball up, other players can move into the square.

The ruckmen, and only the ruckmen, will compete during the ball up to knock (palm or punch) the ball to the advantage of their team mates.

## **Stops and starts of play while playing ...**

If a goal is scored, play begins exactly like the start of the game.

If a point is scored, play is restarted by a backman kicking the ball into play from the goal-square just in front of the goal posts...it must be a kick (can short-kick to himself).

If the ball goes outside the boundary, it is tossed back into the field of play by the umpire ....generally the ruckman will compete for this ball again or, if they are not around, a tall person in the vicinity.

If the ball is kicked out on the full, the opposing team will be awarded a kick to bring the ball back into play.

If the ball is held up by two opposing players, like in basketball, the umpire will call a ball up and restart play where the stoppage occurred, generally the ruckman (or other tall person) will compete for this ball (unlike basketball, it doesn't need to be the two players who caused the stoppage).

## **If you have the ball ...**

You have three options:

- a. kick the ball to a player on your team or for goal
- b. handball to a player on your team
- c. run with the ball (but see restrictions below)

If you mark (catch) the ball from a kick that travels further than fifteen meters, umpire will call a mark, the play will stop, you go back from the spot where you marked the ball (your opposing player should stand at the mark) and kick/handball the ball without fear of being tackled. ....alternatively if you are clear in open field you can continue running and this will be considered play on (however, you do have to make your intentions clear, for example if you decide to continue running only to realize you're about to be tackled and you stop in order to go back and claim your mark, this will be deemed play on).



If you run further than 10 paces with the ball (it) you must dispose of it (with a kick or handball), bounce it on the ground or touch it on the ground.

if you're tackled, kick/handball as best you can...if you take too long or you previously had time to dispose of the ball (referred to as 'prior opportunity') you will be penalized with a free kick to the opposition tackler.

### **If your team has the ball you should...**

Block (shepherd) a would-be tackler from the ball carrier (your team-mate), using correct shepherding technique with arms out or bumping with hip & shoulder (with contact below the opponent's shoulder & above the knee), within 5 meters of the ball carrier.

Get into space, clear of the opposition and call loudly for the ball

Let the ball carrier know they are clear (by yelling "you're clear") or to hurry up and get rid of the ball cause they're about to get crunched (by yelling "you're hot") ... it's the same in marking situations, let your team-mates know how much time and space they have to take the mark and perhaps play on.

### **If your team does not have the ball, try to get it by ...**

Tackling the opposition player with the ball (below the shoulder & above the knee) ...if the ball carrier incorrectly disposes of the ball or doesn't dispose of the ball, the tackler should be awarded a free kick (for 'holding the ball' or 'dropping the ball').

Putting pressure on the person with the ball, so they make a hurried and poor disposal.

Smother the ball (preferably with your hands) off the foot/hand as the opposition player kicks/handballs it.

If the ball is being kicked to a marking contest and you are caught behind an opposition player, try to 'spoil' by punching the ball and only the ball .....sorry this isn't the good old days when spoiling meant punching the back of the head...don't grab onto the other person either (just like you cannot hold on to the jersey of the receiver in American football) or you will concede a free kick (but the umpire doesn't throw a yellow flag!), often costing your team a goal if you are a defender. This does not mean that you cannot make contact in the contest (like we said, this is not basketball) ... you can, but to be deemed legal contact in the marking (or any other) contest, it cannot be:

- too high ('over the shoulder')
- too low ('tripping')
- from behind ('push in the back') or
- too late (could cost your team a 50m penalty if you make contact with the opposition player after they have taken a mark).



### **If the ball is on the ground ...**

You can pick it up, knock it forward by foot or hand (preferably closed hand, though you can hit or slap the ball with an open hand, but not scoop it out as this may be penalized for 'throwing the ball') .

...but note, that you should not attempt to kick the ball off the ground if an opposition player is attempting to lay their hands on it (free kick for 'kicking in danger').

If you dive on the ball (or drag it in during a ground-level contest), you must dispose of it quickly (by handballing or knocking forward) before being tackled .... if you take too long a free kick will be awarded against you ('holding the ball').

### **Don'ts...most likely be penalized with electric shock ☹**

Hold on to opposition without the ball.

Get into an opposition player's back...try to bump/tackle from the side (always below shoulder not head). If you happen to be tackling someone from behind try to roll them sideways.

Push someone in the back in a marking contest.

Make contact with the head and back area ....or really do anything that is dangerous or could cause serious injury.

### **Do...most likely be rewarded with the admiration of those around you ☺**

**Focus on getting the ball first** and secondly on the opposition if they get the ball ....the person who goes after the ball will generally be the one awarded free kicks!

### **HAVE FUN!!**

If you are still not sure .... YouTube 'Gary Ablett Snr' (commonly referred to as 'God' by Cats fans Down Under) and see how (arguably) the greatest player ever to play played the game...prepare to be converted!

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[www.usfooty.com](http://www.usfooty.com)

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