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## MEDIA RELEASE

### Central Murray confirms Top 8 Finals series for 2026 & 2027

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Following the confirmation of Hay, Moulamein, Murrabit, Ultima & Wandella joining the Central Murray Football Netball League in 2026, the Central Rivers Board on Wednesday night confirmed that the League will adopt a Top 8 Finals Series structure for the 2026 and 2027 seasons.

This decision marks an exciting step forward for our growing league and reflects our commitment to providing opportunities, supporting club development, and creating an even more engaging competition for players, volunteers, families, and supporters.

The finer logistics and operational details of the new finals' series will be worked through in consultation with clubs in early 2026. The League will also draw on the experience of other competitions currently operating a Top 8 system, including the Central Highlands FNL, to gather insights, feedback, and innovative approaches to ensure the series is fair, competitive, and engaging. This process will involve thinking outside the box to create the best possible outcome for players, clubs, and supporters.

The 2026 Finals Series will take place across four weeks, with the Grand Final locked in for Saturday, 19 September.

#### Top 8 Benefits:

With the League growing to 16 teams, moving from a Top 5 to a Top 8 brings several exciting benefits:

- **More Clubs, more opportunity:**  
A Top 8 gives more teams the chance to experience finals football and netball, helping players grow, building club pride, and keeping more communities involved right up to September.
- **Stronger competitions across the Season:**  
More teams remain in the hunt for finals for longer, creating closer matches, higher intensity, and a more engaging season for supporters.
- **Community energy & excitement:**  
Finals bring people together. More clubs taking part means more crowds, more atmosphere, and more local communities sharing in the excitement.
- **Growth for Clubs on & off the field:**  
Finals exposure helps strengthen clubs, support player pathways, volunteer engagement, and club sustainability.
- **Increased fan engagement:**  
A broader finals series boosts community interest, crowds, and digital engagement in the lead up to September.
- **Commercial Benefits:**  
A longer, more inclusive finals series creates increased sponsorship value, match day revenue opportunities, and greater visibility for club and league partners.

This is an important milestone in the next chapter of the Central Murray Football Netball League, and we look forward to working hand in hand with our clubs to bring this expanded finals series to life.

Further details will be announced following club consultation in the new year.

*\*ENDS\**