



## **CHANGES TO RFU 2008/2009 REGULATIONS**

**With effect from 30 January 2009**

### **Two RFU New Definitions**

#### **DEFINITIONS**

**Correct Number of Clubs** such number of Clubs in a league as the Committee may decide to implement the League Restructuring and/or rectify any special league sizes, which may have been created for the Season only

**League Restructuring** the outcome of a review of the League undertaken during the Season and approved by Council on 14 November 2008 for implementation in Season 2009/10

### **A New Regulation**

#### **GAME REGULATIONS**

2.4.1 The Committee shall have discretion during a Season to amend or vary Game Regulations 11-22 (inclusive) and the Appendices and/or to make further regulations for an RFU Competition

- (a) only in accordance with Game Regulations 2.4.2 and/or 2.4.3; or
- (b) solely to implement the League Restructuring either where there is an error in or omission from the said Regulations and/or Appendices.

### **A New Appendix 2**

#### **APPENDIX 2**

##### **LEAGUE COMPETITIONS (LEVELS 2 AND BELOW)**

###### **(A) Structure of League Competitions**

1. In the Season in the National Leagues:
  - (a) there shall be National League 1 (Level 2) comprising 16 Clubs and 2 (Level 3) comprising 14 Clubs;

- (b) Northern and Midland Divisions shall combine to provide one National League 3 North and the London & South East and South West Divisions shall combine to provide one National League 3 South each such league being Level 4 and each comprising 14 Clubs.

2. In the Season in the Divisions:

- (a) Each of the Divisions shall have a first league (Level 5) and leagues at levels 6 and 7 of 12 Clubs;
- (b) Subject to the Level Transfer Regulations, promotion from the North Division League 1 and the Midland Division League 1 shall be to the National League 3 North and from the London & South East Division League 1 and the South West Division League 1 shall be to the National League 3 South;
- (c) The Divisional League structure at and below Divisional League 1 (Level 5) in each Division shall be such as shall, with the approval of the Committee, be determined by the Divisional Organising Committee, save that each Division shall have two Leagues at Level 6 and 4 Leagues at level 7;
- (d) The Divisional Leagues at Levels 8 and below shall comprise such numbers of Clubs as have been approved by the Committee.

3. In the Season, the following principles shall be effective:

- (a) Not more than two lower Leagues may support a higher League;
- (b) Only Club 1st XV's may take part in the Competition subject to any variation made pursuant to paragraph 3(c) below;
- (c) At level 8 & below 1st XV, 2nd XV, 3rd XV teams etc., may, subject to paragraph 3(d) below, be permitted to play together in the leagues with the consent of the Clubs, Constituent Bodies and Divisional Organising Committees involved;
- (d) Teams from the same Club shall not be permitted to play together in the same league;
- (e) A Club may only play in a National League 3 North, 3 South or Divisional League according to its RFU Constituent Body allocation unless otherwise specifically agreed by the Committee or it has been required to transfer to another League pursuant to the Level Transfer Regulations;
- (f) In the event it becomes apparent to the Committee or an Organising Committee is advised on or after 15th June prior to any season that a Club for any reason whatsoever is withdrawing from or is unable to participate in the Competition or in its League then the League in question will for the ensuing season comprise the remaining participating Clubs.

**(B) Club Positions**

**Levels 5 and below**

1. Unless otherwise agreed by the RFU, the position of a Club at Levels 5 and below shall be established by awarding two League points for a win and one point for a draw. In the case of equality, positions shall be determined on the basis of match points scored. A Club with a larger difference between match points for and match points against shall be placed higher in a League than a Club with a smaller difference between match points for and match points against. Should two Clubs have the same number of Competition points and the same match points difference, the Club having scored more match points 'for' shall be placed higher in the League than the Club having the lesser number of match points 'for'. In the event of the match points 'for' still being unable to establish the position of two Clubs, and if the winning of the Competition or promotion or relegation is involved, the Club which has won the highest number of League Matches shall be placed higher. If this does not establish the position then the Club that has won the most matches, excluding its first League Match of the season, then its second League Match, until it can be established which is the higher placed Club.

#### **Levels 2-4**

2. At Levels 2-4, the position of a Club shall be established by awarding four League points for a win and two points for a draw. In addition, one bonus point will be awarded to a team:
  - (i) on each occasion it scores four or more tries in a League Match; and
  - (ii) on each occasion it loses a League Match by seven points or less.

If two or more Clubs have the same number of League points at the end of the Season, final league positions shall be determined firstly by the number of wins achieved and then on the basis of match points scored. A Club with a larger number of wins in the League shall be placed higher than a Club with the same number of League points but fewer wins. If Clubs have equal League points and an equal number of wins in the League then a Club with a larger difference between match points "for" and match points "against" shall be placed higher in the League than a Club with a smaller difference between match points "for" and match points "against". Should two Clubs have the same number of League points and an equal number of wins and the same match points difference, a Club having scored more match points "for" shall be placed higher in the League than a Club having the lesser number of match points "for". If this still does not establish the positions then the Clubs involved shall be ranked according to the number of matches won, excluding the first League match of the season. If necessary this process shall be extended to exclude the second match, third match and so on until the final positions are established.

#### **(C) Principles of Promotion and Relegation**

1. Following the League Restructuring in the Season 2009/10 there shall be:
  - (i) at Level 2 a league renamed The Championship comprising 12 clubs;

- (ii) at Level 3 a league renamed National League 1 comprising 16 clubs;
  - (iii) at Level 4 two leagues renamed National Leagues 2 North and South each comprising 16 clubs;
  - (iv) at Level 5 four leagues renamed National Leagues 3 South West, London & South East, Midlands and North each comprising 14 Clubs;
  - (v) at Level 6 eight leagues each comprising 14 clubs;
  - (vi) at Level 7 in the London & South East Division and Midlands Division eight leagues each comprising 12 clubs;
  - (vii) at Level 7 in the North Division four leagues each comprising 14 clubs;
  - (viii) at Level 7 in the South West Division two leagues each comprising 12 clubs and two leagues each comprising 14 clubs;
  - (ix) at Level 8 such number of leagues comprising such numbers of clubs as have been approved by the Committee.
2. To effect the League Restructuring in the Season 2009/10 at Levels 2-4 inclusive the principles of promotion and relegation for the end of the Season 2008/09 shall be as follows:
- (i) the top club in National League 1 shall be entitled to be promoted to play in the Guinness Premiership (Level 1) (and to which different regulations apply) in Season 2009/10 provided such club is able to fulfill the agreed minimum standards criteria for the Guinness Premiership;
  - (ii) subject to (C)2(vii) below, the bottom five (5) clubs in National League 1 will be relegated to play in the League at Level 3;
  - (iii) the top club in National League 2 (Level 3) shall be entitled to be promoted to play at Level 2 in the new 12 club competition known in the 2009/10 Season as the Championship (and to which different regulations apply) subject to such Club notifying the RFU by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2009 (or 96 hours from the end of its last League Match which ever is the earlier) of its intention to participate in the Championship;
  - (iv) subject to (C)2(vii) below, the bottom four (4) clubs in National League 2 (Level 3) will be relegated to play in one of the two leagues at Level 4 in Season 2009/10 according to their RFU Constituent Body allocation and the Level Transfer Regulations will apply;
  - (v) the top club in each of National League 3 North and National League 3 South (Level 4) will be promoted to play at Level 3 in Season 2009/10;
  - (vi) subject to (C)2(vii) below, the bottom two (2) clubs in each league at

Level 4 at the end of the 2008/09 Season will be relegated to play in the appropriate league at Level 5 according to their RFU Constituent Body allocation unless otherwise specifically agreed by the Committee or it has been required to transfer to another league at Level 5 pursuant to the Level Transfer Regulations;

- (vii) In the event of a reduction of the number of Clubs required to be relegated at Levels 2-4 due to League Restructuring, additional restructuring, the top Club at Level 3 not wishing to be promoted, a Club leaving the League, mergers or any other reason, then the Club(s) reprieved from relegation will be determined by the 'Best Playing Record' of all clubs that would normally have been relegated save that a second club cannot be reprieved from relegation from the same league at Level 4 until the other league at that level has had a team reprieved from relegation.
3. To effect the League Restructuring in the Season 2009/10 for all Clubs and at all Levels in the League **other** than those referred to in (C)2 above the principles of promotion and relegation for the end of the Season 2008/09 shall be as follows:
- (i) subject to (C)3 (iv) below in the case of Clubs at Level 8, where one league supports one league, the top two Clubs from the lower league at the end of the Season shall be promoted to the higher league (or Level);
  - (ii) where one league supports one league and the appropriate promotion pursuant to (C)3 (i) above having taken place the minimum number of Clubs ( which shall not exceed two) shall be relegated (subject to 3(viii) or 3 (ix) or 3 (x) below as is applicable to the league Level concerned) to ensure the Correct Number of Clubs in the higher League (or Level) and for Levels 4 – 7 the Level Transfer Regulations shall be applied;
  - (iii) Subject to (C)3 (iv) below in the case of Clubs at Level 8, where two leagues support one league, the top Club in each of the supporting leagues at the end of the Season shall be promoted to the higher league (or Level). Additionally the two second placed Clubs in each of the supporting leagues shall play off in accordance with the Play Off Regulations to decide which Club should win an additional (i.e.third) promotion place for the higher Level;
  - (iv) Only 1st XV teams may be promoted from Level 8. Consequently, when determining which Clubs will be promoted to Level 7 from Level 8, the positions of teams other than 1st XV's shall be disregarded;
  - (v) Where two Leagues support one League and the appropriate promotion pursuant to (C)3(iii) above has taken place the minimum number of Clubs (which shall not exceed three) (subject to (C)3(viii) or (C)3(ix) or (C)3(x) below as is applicable to the league Level concerned) shall be relegated to ensure the Correct Number of Clubs in the higher League (or Level) and for Levels 4 – 7 the Level Transfer Regulations

shall be applied;

- (vi) In the event that relegation has been minimised and an increase in the number of Clubs is required to be promoted from level 7 due to League Restructuring then the additional promotions will only be available to clubs within the Division of the Level 6 league which needs to be supplemented by promotion to provide the Correct Number of Clubs. The TWO 2<sup>nd</sup> placed clubs with the 'Best Playing Records' as within the Division will both gain automatic promotion. The TWO remaining 2<sup>nd</sup> placed clubs within the Division will play-off for the extra promotion place at the ground of the club with the 'Best Playing Record';
- (vii) In the event that relegation has been minimised and an increase in the number of Clubs required to be promoted from level 8 and below due to League Restructuring then the additional Club(s) will be determined at the discretion of the Divisional Organising Committee. For the avoidance of doubt this discretion shall include the interpretation of Appendix 2 (C) Principles of Promotion and Relegation, (D) Play-offs and (E) Level Transfer Regulations, in accordance with the underlying principles and intent (insofar as it can be ascertained) of the relevant regulations and the interests of the Clubs and Constituent Bodies involved;
- (viii) In the event of a reduction of the number of Clubs required to be relegated at Levels 5-6 due to League Restructuring, additional restructuring, a Club leaving the League, mergers or any other reason then the Club(s) reprieved from relegation will be determined by the 'Best Playing Record' of all clubs that would normally have been relegated from each level affected. Save that a second club cannot be reprieved from the same league until all other leagues at the same level have had a team reprieved from relegation;
- (ix) In the event of a reduction of the number of Clubs required to be relegated at level 7 caused by any reason referred to in (C)3(viii) above the principles of (C)3(viii) above shall apply but only as within each Division.
- (x) In leagues below level 7 after promotion has taken place in accordance with paragraphs (C)3(i) & (iii) above, the requisite number of Clubs shall be relegated on a geographical/ Divisional/Constituent Body basis from each League (including level 7) at the end of the Season so that in the following season there are in all such Leagues at Level 8 and below the Correct Number of Clubs or such other number of Clubs as the Committee may decide to rectify any special league sizes which may have been created for the Season only.

*Note: In leagues at level 8 and below it is impossible to determine how many Clubs are to be relegated from any particular League until the results of the play off matches are known and therefore into which leagues Clubs relegated will fall (on a geographical basis). Once the destination of relegated Clubs is known the knock on effect can be ascertained*

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (A) above and this paragraph (C) the Committee may in exceptional circumstances as it shall in its absolute discretion think fit, at any time:
- (i) disapply, suspend, amend and/or vary paragraph (A) above or this paragraph (C) as to relegation and/or as to the number of Clubs comprising any League or Leagues; and/or
  - (ii) save that the Club(s) in every league must be promoted to the next higher League (or Level) in accordance with this paragraph (C), transfer any Club from the League in which it would have been placed by virtue of the application of sub-paragraphs 3(i)-(xi) above and/or the Level Transfer Regulations to such other League (whether higher or lower) as the Committee shall think fit.

Any action taken or decision made by the Committee under the powers conferred on it by the foregoing provisions of this paragraph 4 shall, subject to the outcome of any appeal to the Appeals Panel or application made under Game Regulation 2.4.2, be final and binding.

**(D) Play-Offs**

(i) Purpose

The purpose of these Regulations shall be to determine which of the two Clubs shall in addition to the first placed club in each of the two Relevant Leagues is promoted to play in a higher League (or Level) in the following Season subject at level 7 only to the proviso as described in C(3)(vi) above.

(ii) Format

The two Clubs shall play one Play-Off Match against each other and the winner shall be promoted.

(iii) Determination of winners in the event of a draw

1. Game Regulation 16.4 shall not apply to Play-Off Matches.
2. In the event of a draw in a Play-Off Match, there will be two 10 minute periods of extra time, with a half time interval of 5 minutes.
3. If at the end of extra time the scores are still level, the winning Club shall be the Club that has scored the most tries. If this does not produce a result, the Club that has scored the most goals from tries will be the winner.
4. If it is still not possible to determine a winner the winning Club shall be the away side.

(iv) Venue

A Play-Off Match shall be held at the ground of the Club with the Best Playing Record.

(v) Dates of Matches

Game Regulation 16.1.1 shall not apply to Play-Off Matches; instead the date of a Play-Off Match will be specified by the RFU or its delegate.

(vi) Ticket Allocation

Complimentary tickets shall be available solely for playing squads (limited to 26), the Match Officials, medical staff, and those members of the home Club who are required to be at the match to fulfill a specific role on the day of the Match (e.g. ball boys, bar staff, gate attendants).

(vii) Gate Receipts

The home Club and the away Club shall share (as to 40% for the visiting team and as to 60% for the home team) the gross gate (excluding VAT), which shall include car park and programme receipts.

Note: A Divisional Organising Committee may waive the requirements of Regulations D (vii) either wholly or in part upon being requested to do so by a participating Club where it can demonstrate to the Committee that:

- (i) The club is prohibited from “taking a gate” or;
- (ii) It is impractical for it to do so or;
- (iii) The club has no history of “taking a gate”

It is unlikely that this power will be exercised when the home club normally raises revenue by taking a gate including car parking and/or selling match programmes.

(viii) Accounts

In respect of a Play-Off Match, the home Club will be responsible for preparing and having available for scrutiny by the relevant Organising Committee (or its appointed nominee) proper records showing the number of persons admitted to the Play-Off Match, the price(s) charged, details of car parking receipts and programmes sold in a form that enables the Organising Committee to satisfy itself as to the gross gate referred to in Game Regulation 15.3.1 above.

**(E) Level Transfer Regulations**

(i) Description

These Regulations shall be called the Level Transfer Regulations and will only be applicable to Levels 4 to 7 (inclusive but excluding Clubs relegated from Level 7 to Level 8).

(ii) Procedure for Transferring Clubs

1. After promotion and relegation into and between Levels 4 – 7 has been effected pursuant to Appendix 1 and the Play-Off Regulations, Clubs shall in the first instance be placed in the League consistent with their Divisional and Constituent Body affiliation subject only to the proviso that all Clubs eligible to compete at Levels 6 & 7 in Season 2009-10 shall be placed in the same Division as they competed in during Season 2008-09 at any level:
2. In the event that promotion and relegation pursuant to paragraph 1 above does not produce the Correct Number of Clubs for following Season in two or more leagues, a Club or Clubs shall (subject to the exception in this Appendix be Level Transferred to restore the Correct Number of Clubs. Club(s) will be selected for Level Transfer in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4 below.

Note: Clubs that opted for 'level transfer' to another Division or Constituent Body for league purposes under earlier protocols will continue to be considered affiliated to their adopted Constituent Body in this first instance and for the purpose of paragraph 2 only.

3. Subject to paragraph 5 below, all Clubs in a League included in the process to produce the Correct Number of Clubs shall be liable to be transferred in accordance with the procedure set out in paragraph 4.

*Note: This regulation applies whether a Club has remained in the League following the Season or has been promoted or relegated into it pursuant to paragraph 3 above.*

4. The following procedure will be utilised in deciding which Club(s) is (are) Level Transferred:

- (i) The Organising Committee(s) will determine the number of moves required to satisfy the overall imbalance which causes the least inconvenience to all Clubs affected. Thereafter it will identify all the Clubs that could reasonably make the required move(s) who will initially be invited to make the Level Transfer(s) voluntarily.

- (ii) In the event that too many of the identified Club(s) or insufficient of them decline to make the Level Transfer voluntarily to ensure that each League has the Correct Number of Clubs selection of Clubs for Level Transfer will take place in the following order and repeated (including the Club(s) previously selected) until each League has the Correct Number of Clubs:

- (a) Club(s) that competed in the League to be augmented in the Season and which volunteer(s) to remain there for another season;
- (b) Club(s) that volunteer(s) to take a Level Transfer;
- (c) Subject to paragraph 4(ii)(d) below Club(s) excluding those referred to in paragraph 5 below with the Lowest Total Mileage between it (them) and all the Clubs that remain in the League to be augmented.
- (d) Where two Clubs have an identical Lowest Total Mileage and (subject

to paragraph 6 below above) a choice between those Clubs has to be made if one of the Clubs competed at a higher league level in season 2006-07 then that Club shall be asked if it wishes to take a Level Transfer and if not the other Club shall be subjected to the Level Transfer. If both clubs competed at the same level in season 2006-07 then the Club with the best playing record as the same is defined in the Play-Off Regulations shall be asked if it wishes to take a Level Transfer and if not the other Club shall be subjected to the Level Transfer.

Note: In the event that the request for Clubs to volunteer produces more than the required number of Clubs to ensure that there is the Correct Number of Clubs in each League Regulation 3.4.2(c) will be invoked but including only those Clubs that have volunteered for the Level Transfer.

5. Following a period away a Club returning to a League consistent with its Constituent Body or Divisional affiliation other than on promotion or relegation and at the conclusion of the procedure described in paragraphs 1-4 above is entitled to remain in that League for two seasons provided it is not promoted or relegated at the end of the first season unless it volunteers for a Level Transfer.
6. Where in exceptional circumstances the strict application of paragraphs 4(ii)(c) and 5 above creates a significant disadvantage to a Club (or Clubs) whether such Club or Clubs is (are) the Club(s) to be transferred pursuant to paragraphs 4(ii)(c) above or other Club(s) affected by the proposed transfer in terms of travelling time, cost or because of local geography considerable other inconvenience AND the Organising Committee can effect a Level Transfer which removes or reduces that significant disadvantage for the benefit of the game of Rugby Union Football overall in the locality the Organising Committee may in its absolute discretion take such factors (in addition to or instead of Lowest Total Mileage) into account when deciding which Club(s) are to be Level Transferred.

**(F) Miscellaneous**

1. At level 2, the away Club shall be entitled to the following ticket allocation:
  - (i) 20% by prior application to the home Club, such application to be made not less than fourteen days before the date of the match; and
  - (ii) 12 complimentary tickets in the centre portion of the main stand and four complimentary car park passes not less than one week prior to the date of the scheduled league fixture between the two teams. These complimentary tickets shall be for seats in the centre portion of the stand as near as possible to the halfway line unless agreed otherwise between the two clubs;