

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS 2012 -13**

### **1. Womens Competitive Structure**

**The competition structure aims to incorporate all Women and Girls teams and players wishing to participate in rugby and takes into account the different levels of team ability and strengths from the very new teams / players and their progression upwards, through to more experienced teams at the top level.**

#### **1.1 For Girls rugby please see Age Grade Regulation 15**

1.1.2. Club Sides may not participate in Higher/ Further Education Competitions; Higher/ Further Education sides may participate in Club Competitions if they are affiliated and accepted as full member clubs by the RFU.

### **1.2. Mixed Rugby**

The playing of rugby football between male and female teams or by teams containing male and female players is prohibited if one or more of the players are over the age of 12 years at midnight on 31<sup>st</sup> August of the season concerned as per the RFU Age Grade regulations

Exception: Excluding all forms of non-contact or tag/ touch rugby.

## **2. General Rules**

### **2.1. Competition Entry and Participation Conditions:**

To participate in the Womens Competitions the rules must be adhered to. Failure to comply with these rules and regulations may result in disciplinary action being taken by the RFU, which may include clubs having points deducted, having to play all competition fixtures away from home or eventual expulsion from the league and/ or cup and monetary fines.

2.1.1. All games will be played according to IRB laws unless otherwise specified in the regulations of the Womens league and event criteria.

2.1.2. Each club is responsible for the conduct of its players, volunteers and supporters, both home and away. This rule will be enforced in accordance with the RFU Equity Policy and Code of Conduct.

2.1.3. All teams are expected to provide their own first aid kit. Water spray bottles and sterile wipes for the treatment of blood injuries are also to be provided by each side for their own team. Current RFU & IRB guidelines for treatment of blood injuries are to be adhered to. The home side should ensure that there is access to a telephone for emergencies.

2.1.4. The home team is expected to provide women only changing and washing facilities for the opposition, as well as appropriate facilities for the referee.

2.1.5 It is strongly recommended to wear a pre-formed gum shield for all players.

## **2.2. Eligibility of Teams to enter Womens Competitions**

- 2.2.1. All Club, Student and Youth sides must be affiliated members of the RFU and insured with the RFU Insurers.
- 2.2.1.1. Clubs will not be entered into a league until the RFU are in receipt of the completed entry to league form at the end of May.
- 2.2.1.2. Leagues and fixtures will be completed by 1<sup>st</sup> July.
- 2.2.2. Number of club sides able to compete in the respective League Competitions:
  - 2.2.2.1. Only one team per club can participate in each league.
  - 2.2.2.2. If a first team is relegated and the 2<sup>nd</sup> team is in the league below they will also be relegated. Likewise with a 3<sup>rd</sup> team.

## **2.3. Eligibility of Individual Players**

- 2.3.1. All Senior and Student players participating in the Womens Competition Structure (and player development pathway) must be both:
  - i) Individually registered with the RFU on rugby first by the specified date. Registration forms can be found on the website
  - ii) A member of an affiliated club or student team.
- 2.3.1.1 All Youth players must be members of an affiliated Club or School side and be registered through the RFU registration scheme.

**N.B. IRB Regulation 4 prohibits players being registered with more than one union simultaneously. Exceptions for students and members of armed services only, can be made under IRB Regulation 4.5.8. (See [www.irb.com](http://www.irb.com) for further information and procedure).**

- 2.3.2. New Senior Players must register with the RFU on Rugby First before they are eligible for league and/ or cup matches. Registration is effective 7 days after input on rugby first, please see individual ruling for your clubs league on registering players in an emergency
- 2.3.2.1 Urgent registration can be given verbally or by registration form to the RFU Competitions Executive by no later than 6pm on the Saturday before the match for which permission to play is sought by telephoning 07779 231 970 and leaving a message stating your club, players name and date of birth or emailing a registration form. A club then has 5 days to send in the registration form or input the data on rugby first. There will be a fee of £45 for an emergency registration.
- 2.3.3. Student players can register with both a student team and one club side.
- 2.3.4. If clubs play an ineligible player they will face an RFU Disciplinary ruling which could result in the club having league points deducted, players being suspended and a mandatory fine.
- 2.3.5. At the end of the season it is up to each individual club to go through their registered player lists and make any players who will no longer be playing at their

club inactive. All players must be confirmed as registered at their club 7 days prior to the first league game.

2.3.6 Any player joining from overseas must have a clearance/release form from their previous governing body and can only be registered on rugby first by the RFU.

## **2.4. Player Transfers**

2.4.1. Between the dates of the 1<sup>st</sup> September – May 31<sup>st</sup> any senior player wishing to deregister with one club and register with another club must observe the Womens player transfer procedure. A player may only transfer once in any season. Appeals should be addressed to the RFU Competitions Executive.

2.4.2. A player transfer form must be completed and signed by the Captain or Secretary of the current and new clubs.

2.4.3. A Captain/ Secretary of the current club may refuse to sign the transfer form if:-

- i) The transferring player is under suspension
- ii) The transferring player is in debt to the “Current” club.

2.4.4. A transferred player who has played no league games that season for their previous club is eligible to play league rugby immediately.

A transferred player who has played one or more league or cup games for their previous club that season, cannot play for the new club until the transfer form has been received by the Competitions Executive. The date the form is RECEIVED by the Competitions Executive is the DATE OF TRANSFER.

There is a waiting period of 7 days from receipt of transfer to completion of transfer; once these 7 days have passed a player is eligible to play for her new team. The new team will receive email confirmation of the date.

Once the league season has finished for your club a player is not allowed to transfer to another Club for Cup Competitions or playoffs.

2.4.5. A player may only represent one club in all Womens Cup Competitions.

**NB: Any unnecessary delay in completion of transfer paperwork should be reported to the RFU Competitions Executive.**

## **2.5. Movement of Players between teams inside a Club.**

2.5.1. Standard movement will be defined as follows:

- i) Improved players getting into higher teams.
- ii) Players being dropped in an agreement with the RFU Competitions Executive.
- iii) Injured players returning to the game in the lower teams.
- iv) Players replacing injured players in higher teams, solely for the duration of that injury.
- v) Any other movement which is interpreted as being within the ‘spirit of the game’, by the RFU Competitions Executive.

2.5.2. The following is not permitted:

A player who played in the last 1<sup>st</sup> team League or Cup match may not play in the 2<sup>nd</sup> team League or Cup fixture unless:

- i) They were replacing an injured regular first team player who is now fit.
- ii) They have been dropped in favour of a better player in agreement with the RFU Competitions Executive

All clubs must insure that they comply with the above, if any club is unsure please contact the RFU Competitions Executive for guidance.

- iii) A player cannot represent the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> XV on the same day or the same weekend.

2.5.3. Squad lists for all teams must be submitted in advance of any team Fixture, irrespective of whether both teams have fixtures. These lists must be presented to the RFU Competitions Executive by 12noon on the Saturday before the match is due to be played. Failure to do this will lead to a mandatory fine and could lead to points being deducted.

## **2.6. Replacements**

2.6.1. All replacements shall be made in accordance with current IRB laws, ([www.irb.com](http://www.irb.com)).

2.6.2. All replacements shall be named prior to kick off.

## **2.7. Substitutions**

Premiership, Championship and National Challenge Division 1 can substitute up to a maximum of 7 players. Substitutions may only be made when the ball is dead and with the permission of the referee.

2.7.1. If a player is substituted, that player must not return to play in that match, even to replace an injured player.

Exception 1: a substituted player may replace a player with a bleeding or open wound.

Exception 2: a substituted player may replace a front row player when injured, temporarily suspended or sent off.

2.7.2. National Challenge 2 & below. All matches can be played with reduced numbers and teams either match 15 or 12 a side.

Squad size 20 with a maximum of 10 interchanges roll on roll off substitutions.

**NB: - A player substituted due to injury may not rejoin the match under any circumstances.**

**2.8. Front row players must be suitably trained and experienced.**

- 2.8.1 The table below indicates the numbers of suitably trained and experienced players for the front row when nominating different numbers of players. Please look at the number of players you are allowed in your league to follow this table for example if maximum squad size is 22 you follow that number

No. of Players	Number of Suitably Trained and Experienced Players
15 or less	3 players who can play in the front row
16, 17 or 18	4 players who can play in the front row
19,20, 21 or 22	5 players who can play in the front row

Each player in the front row and any potential replacements must be suitably trained and experienced.

When 19, 20, 21 or 22 players are nominated in a team there must be five players who can play in the front row to ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required, and on the first occasion that a replacement prop forward is required, the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.

- 2.8.1.1 The replacement of a front row forward must come from suitably trained and experienced players who started the match or from the nominated replacements.

- 2.8.2 Premiership, Championship and National Challenge Division 1, and National Cup Competitions.

If on the third occasion a front row player requires to be replaced and her team cannot provide a replacement of another player capable of playing in the front row of the scrum, then uncontested scrums will be permitted.

- 2.8.3. Sin Bin

If a team has no suitable player available to fill the role of a front row forward who has been “sin binned”, the referee will order uncontested scrums for the period of the temporary suspension. Provided the team started the match with the minimum number of players capable of playing in the front row, this will not affect the match result.

- 2.9. Uncontested Scrums: Premiership, Championship and National Challenge Division 1**

In the event of a team being unable to field a suitably trained front row at the start of any fixtures so that uncontested scrums result, that team shall be deemed to have lost the match, but will not have a default awarded against them If they turn up to play the fixture.

A team unable to field a suitably trained front row should still make every effort to fulfil their fixture with uncontested scrums so avoiding default.

2.9.1. National Challenge 2 and below

In the event of a team being unable to field a suitably trained front row at the start of any fixtures so that uncontested scrums result, the result shall stand.

In the event of this taking place communication to this effect must be made with the opposition the week before the fixture is played and if you find you have a problem on the day of the game you must communicate with your opposition immediately. Every effort must be made within your club to train suitable front row replacements. Please refer to rule 3.2.21 on contacting your opposition.

If we find clubs are abusing the system and regularly playing uncontested scrums without making any effort to train up a front row their league status will be reviewed and they may find their league games awarded to the opposition.

**2.10. Defaulting Fixtures**

If a team default an away league fixture then the reverse fixture will automatically become an away fixture for the defaulting club.

2.10.1. Premiership and Championship North and South. For the 2012-13 season, Clubs that do not fulfil one of their fixtures will be automatically relegated at the end of the season.

2.10.2. Championship 2 and National Challenge 1 and below clubs that do not fulfil one of their fixtures will have their league status reviewed at the end of the season; Clubs that do not fulfil two of their fixtures will automatically be relegated at the end of the season.

**2.11. Referees**

The Home team is responsible for arranging the appointment of a qualified referee from their local Referees Society. Wherever possible the Referee should have no relationship with the club or players which may be seen as bias.

2.11.1. Premiership – Referees will be appointed by the RFU. It is the responsibility of the home team to liaise with their local RFU Referee Development Manager

2.11.2. National Challenge Division 2 and below, every attempt should be made to provide a Society Referee, otherwise a qualified referee must be used\* (qualified being defined by RFU referee department definition). The status and any relationship to the home club of the person, who will officiate at the match, must be declared to the opposition prior to kick off.

2.11.3. The referee may request players to remove jewellery which, in their opinion, is dangerous.

2.11.4. The referee may request that fingernails are cut or taped if they are, in their opinion, dangerous.

**2.12. Abandonment**

- 2.12.1. It is the responsibility of the home club to provide a suitable pitch for the match to be played on. If your Club's ground is prone to being waterlogged or frozen, every effort must be made to secure another ground within a reasonable distance of your club to try to ensure the fixture takes place on the designated day.
- 2.12.2. If a match is abandoned because of weather conditions when sixty minutes or more have been played for full IRB laws and 50 minutes have been played for IRB U19 Laws then the score at the moment of abandonment shall stand and be deemed to be the final score in the match. The referee's decision as to the necessity for abandonment and the number of minutes played and the time of abandonment shall be final.
- 2.12.3. If weather conditions prevent a match being played, or a match is abandoned because of such conditions with less than sixty or 50 minutes played, the match shall be replayed on a date to be agreed by both teams and the RFU Competitions Executive (see 2.13.2 below).
- 2.12.4. If the referee finds it necessary to abandon the match for any reason other than weather conditions, then irrespective of the number of minutes played the result of that match may be determined by the Competitions Executive or the match be ordered to be replayed.
- 2.12.5. If the match is abandoned as stated above both teams shall provide a completed match day form signed by the Referee and stating the exact time of the match abandonment, the number of minutes played, the score at the time of abandonment and the reason for abandonment.
- 2.12.6. If a match is abandoned the Result service must be telephoned, failure to do so will lead to a mandatory fine.

### **2.13. Re-arrangement of Fixtures**

- 2.13.1. All League Competitions

**Please read individual League Structure for each league as not all leagues are eligible to rearrange fixtures.**

A fixture may only be moved in circumstances, which in the opinion of the RFU Competitions Executive are considered extreme. Both clubs must be in agreement and must notify the Competitions Executive for approval, at least 5 days prior to the original fixture. If both teams are not in agreement the fixture is played on the set date or a walkover may be awarded.

- 2.13.2. If a match is to be rearranged a new date must be agreed within 2 weeks and communicated to the RFU Competitions Executive and the Results service.

If an agreement is not reached, the RFU Competitions Executive will allocate a date and venue.

- 2.13.3. It is the clubs responsibility to inform the Competitions Executive and the Result service of the new date, failure to do so will lead to a mandatory fine or loss of league points.

- 2.13.4. In the event of a League Match not being played the Competitions Executive at his/her absolute discretion, may award the competition points to either side, divide

the competition points equally between the sides, decide that no competition points shall be awarded or if he/she is in the view that a club has unjustifiably failed to fulfil its obligations deduct competition points from the club. In addition the Competitions Executive may order the match to be replayed on a date specified or order a match to be counted as a “double header” whereby the outcome of the match will count against both fixtures, this taking into account the promotion and relegation issue in the league concerned, (including the effect on other Clubs in the league not involved in the league match) the commitments of the club concerned and giving priority to arguments of the club who was not at fault in the event of a dispute on any re-arranged match date.

#### **2.14. Kick-Off Delay**

Any delay to the kick-off of a match may be reported by the non-offending club to the Competitions Executive. It is advisable to have confirmation by the referee of any delay. The Competitions Executive will then take appropriate action, when all the circumstances have been taken into consideration. It may lead to the fixture being awarded to the non-offending club.

If a delay in kick-off occurs, wherever possible every effort should be made by the two teams concerned to play the match on the day of the fixture.

#### **2.15. Match Day Forms & Results**

Score Reporting – The home side is required to telephone their results in immediately after the game has finished, and by no later than 6pm on the day of the match. All results for all leagues must be telephoned to the RFU Womens Result line on **0845 226 0411**.

Failure to comply will lead to the offending club having a monetary fine imposed. Persistent offenders will ultimately lead to league points being deducted or cup fixtures forfeited.

- 2.15.1. The match day forms are crucial to the workings of the league and cup competitions. All home teams are ultimately responsible for ensuring they return a match day form for all Womens Competition Matches
- 2.15.2. The Premiership and the Championship, The procedure will be given by the RFU Executive before the start of the 2012-13 season.
- 2.15.3. National Challenge 1 and below will be using the Womens Match report forms and these must be returned within 5 days of the fixture being played to the address indicated on the form.
- 2.15.4. Failure to comply will lead to the offending club having a monetary fine imposed. Persistent offenders will ultimately lead to league points being deducted or cup fixtures forfeited. Continued non-return of forms may lead to expulsion from the league. It also leads to the lateness of bonus points being awarded.
- 2.15.5. Each club is responsible for correctly completing a match result sheet in accordance with the Match Day Requirements.
- 2.15.6. Providing false information on players or replacements taking part in a match is a serious offence.

- 2.15.7. A club proved to be guilty of providing false information:
- 2.15.7.1 League Competition – the offending team shall receive a mandatory fine and be deducted no more than eight championship points on each occasion false information has been provided. This will be in addition to any points which may have been deducted if the players or replacements were ineligible.
- 2.15.7.2 Cup Competition – the offending team shall be disqualified immediately from the Competition and fined a minimum of £100.
- 2.15.7.3 The Competitions Executive is empowered to impose monetary fines for failure to comply with any of the above or Match Day Instructions and non-payment of fines by the due dates may lead to a deduction of two competition points for each such offence.

## **2.16. Discipline**

The Competitions Executive shall have the power to discipline any participating club or have the power of referral to the RFU Disciplinary Procedures for breach of any of the competition regulations by way of loss of match or competition points, transfer of points, review of the result, monetary fine or compensation award, and any such club may be liable to be placed at the bottom of the League concerned and such Clubs results deleted from such League Tables.

## **2.17. Mandatory Fines**

Failing to telephone result in by 6pm	£25
Failure to send in match day form within 5 days	£25
Failure to send in 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> XV squads	£20
Providing false information and the playing of unregistered players (and an RFU disciplinary hearing, which could lead to points being deducted).	£100 per player
Failing to fill in yellow and red card forms	£20

In the case of repeat offending the fines will be at the discretion of the Womens Competitions Review Group.

## **3. Senior Players: Club League Competitive Structure – Rules**

**The following rules must be adhered to by all Leagues, please read your selected league for your Rule and Regulation.**

Each team will play every team twice as a minimum: a home fixture and an away fixture.

The fixture dates will be pre-set by the RFU Competitions Executive.

Fixtures will be available by 1<sup>st</sup> July for the following season, provided relevant affiliation and insurance forms have been sent in.

All teams to use a Size 5 Ball.

**3.1. Premiership and the Championship will play Full IRB Laws, National Challenge 1 and below will play to IRB U19 Laws**

**3.2. Premiership and Championship North and South**

3.2.1. Premiership and Championship North and South may not borrow players from other clubs for League games under any circumstances.

3.2.2 Player Registration

All players must be registered on rugby first 7 days prior to the fixture being played, you are allowed to emergency register 2 players up until Midnight on Friday evening on rugby first, these will be classed as registered as long as they are pending on the registration system.

3.2.3. Matches can only be cancelled/ re-arranged for:

- i) Unforecast freak weather conditions or
- ii) 5 or more England players are away on International Duty (FULL ENGLAND or 7s SENIOR SQUAD ONLY)

3.2.4. Match day squad numbers are limited to a maximum of 22 players.

3.2.5. Match Duration 40 minutes each way.

3.2.6. For entry to the Premiership clubs will need to meet the set criteria below.

- i) All clubs must have a Development plan and a Yearly Action Plan
- ii) Clubs will have to demonstrate that they have a minimum of 32 registered players at the start of the season, for clubs that run 2 sides then a minimum of 50 registered players is required and 70 players if clubs run 3 sides.  
From the registered player list we expect the following:  
At least 28 of the players are ready to play premiership rugby.  
At least 7 of these players must be able to play in the front row.
- iii) Recent playing history will be considered
- iv) Clubs must commit to send at least one delegate to a yearly meeting with the Professional Rugby department.
- v) Club coaches must commit to attend Coach Development Days with the professional rugby department.
- vi) Clubs must meet their WRDO in August and March if they are in the premiership to review their development / action plans. Clubs in Championship 1 North and South will meet pre season and post Christmas.

- vii) Premiership clubs to commit to supporting the development of Girl's / Women's rugby in their local CB.
- viii) All clubs to support and commit to attend their local Women and Girl's Forum in conjunction with their local WRDO.
- ix) All clubs must actively support the CB and Divisional Programme
- x) Premiership clubs that have a second team must show that there is an open and supported pathway between the teams.
- xi) Clubs that have a junior set up to provide links and mentoring to the teams and provide transitional link for players leaving U18 rugby into senior rugby.
- xii) It is recommended that any Championship North or South club with aspirations to play in the premiership should have an action plan in place and be liaising with their local WRDO.

3.2.7 The winner of Championship North and South league will play each other in the Championship Cup. (North v South)

### **Championship 2 – North, Midlands, South East, South West**

3.2.8. Championship 2 teams may not borrow players from other clubs for League games under any circumstances.

3.2.9 Player Registration

All players must be registered on rugby first 7 days prior to the fixture being played, you are allowed to emergency register 2 players up until Midnight on Friday evening on rugby first, these will be classed as registered as long as they are pending on the registration system.

3.2.10. Match day squad numbers – maximum of 22 players.

3.2.11. Match Duration 40 minutes each way.

3.2.12. The winning teams from the North, Midlands, South East and South West will participate in a play off for promotion to Championship 1 North and South respectively. The North will play the Midlands for a place in Championship North; The South East will play the South West for a place in Championship South.

### **National Challenge 1 and below**

3.2.13. All leagues to play the IRB U19 laws and the Womens Senior Variations of the laws. In the event of a team not being able to field the correct number of suitably trained and experienced front row players, the uncontested scrummage law will apply as per competition regulations.

3.2.14. All matches will be 35 minutes each way.

3.2.15 **Player Registration**

All players must be registered on rugby first 7 days prior to the fixture being played, you are allowed to emergency register 4 players up until Midnight on Friday evening on rugby first, these will be classed as registered as long as they are pending on the registration system.

### **National Challenge 1**

- 3.2.16. Matches will be 15 a side.
- 3.2.17. Match day squad numbers will be a maximum of 22.
- 3.2.18. Scrum: No wheeling; no more than 1.5 m push in scrum.

### **National Challenge 2 & below**

- 3.2.19. All matches can be played with reduced numbers and teams either match 15 or 12 a side. 12 a side will comprise of 6 forwards and 6 backs (front row, second row, number 8). The lowest number of players a team can play with is 10.

Maximum of 20 players with 10 interchanges allowed using roll on roll off substitutes.

- 3.2.20. Match Duration 35 Minutes each way.
- 3.2.21. Teams are required to contact their opposition by no later than Thursday evening to confirm playing numbers for the scheduled fixtures to enable both teams to agree on the format of the match. This should also include whether the game is likely to be played with contested or uncontested scrums.

**Failure to match playing numbers will lead to an RFU Disciplinary hearing which will include a mandatory fine and points being awarded to the Opposition.**

### **3.3. Kick Off**

- 3.3.1 All matches shall start at the following times:

September, March and April	2.45pm
October and February	2.30pm
November, December and January	2.00pm

- 3.3.2. Kick-off time may be re-arranged by mutual agreement between two clubs. If the away team disagrees, they must contact the Competitions Executive 3 days in advance of the fixture. Failure to do so will be taken as an agreement to the new time.

### **3.4. League Points**

- 3.4.1. Premiership, Championship and National Challenge 1 are as follows –
  - 4 points for a win
  - 2 points for a draw
  - 0 points for a loss

3.4.2. A bonus points system will be used – One bonus point will be awarded to a team:

- i) on each occasion it scores five or more tries in a League game.
- ii) on each occasion it loses a league game by 15 points or less.

3.4.3. Final League Positions will be calculated as follows:

- i) The team scoring the highest number of points shall be placed first, and the other teams placed in descending order according to the points gained.
- ii) If two or more teams have equal points, they will be placed according to the match points difference.

Note: To calculate the match points difference where a defaulted fixture or uncontested scrums are involved, the points scored for and against and any Bonus points in any equivalent fixture for the other team(s) will not be used in the final calculations.

This is especially used with clubs who have promotion and relegation issues,

- iii) If two or more teams have equal match points difference, they shall be placed according to the greatest number of match points scored (*incorporating Note above as applicable*).
- iiii) If two or more teams have equal points they shall be placed according to the greatest number of tries scored.
- iv) If two or more teams have scored equal number of tries they shall be placed according to the greatest number of drop goals scores.
- v) If two or more teams are still equal they shall be placed according to the greatest number of conversions scored.
- vi) If two or more teams are still equal they shall be placed according to the number of penalties scored.
- vii) If two or more teams are still equal they will share the league title and promotion will be decided with a playoff game between the two teams.

3.4.4. National Challenge 2 and below are as follows-

- 3 points for a win
- 2 points for a draw
- 1 point for playing
- 0 for not playing

3.4.5 A bonus point system – 1 point will be awarded for playing 15 players or more.

3.4.6 A bonus point will not be awarded where teams have borrowed players to make 15.

**Please record all details on the Womens match report forms including if the match was played with uncontested scrums and if so which team requested it.**

3.4.7. **Borrowing of Players**

**No teams playing in Premiership or Championship can borrow players or lend players to other teams.**

The borrowing and lending of players is allowed at National Challenge 1 and below to assist with fulfilling fixtures. Therefore, if in order to put out a side a challenge team needs to borrow or lend players the following rules must be adhered to:

- (i) A maximum of two players can be borrowed from National Challenge 1 clubs and below.
- (ii) A borrowed player must be declared to the opposition prior to the start of the fixture, giving name and club details.
- (iii) Players from teams in Premiership or Championship may not be borrowed.
- (iv) A player can only be borrowed to help fulfil a fixture, for example to make up playing numbers or to cover a position specific. Players cannot be borrowed to enhance a teams playing ability at the expense of players within your own team or to gain a bonus point.

### **3.5. Player Loan Agreements**

Premiership and Championship teams can loan a player from Championship 2 or below for a maximum of 6 games per season.

This is for aspiring players to experience playing in the leagues above or to cover injury.

A loan agreement form must be filled in by both teams and signed by the player involved and passed by the RFU Competitions Executive.

If a Player from a Premiership/Championship team is returning from long term injury or requires pitch time they can apply for dispensation from the RFU Competitions Executive to be loaned to a team playing below their current league status

Please apply in writing to the Competitions Executive stating the full reasons why.

No player is to play for another team without official confirmation confirming their eligibility to play.

Any club found fielding an ineligible player will face disciplinary action. This could lead to a club fine and loss of league points.

### **3.6. Promotion and Regulation**

3.6.1. A system of promotion and relegation will operate between the divisions.

3.6.2 Premiership

The team finishing bottom of the league will be asked to play in a play off if the team that wins the Championship Cup meets the criteria to play in Premiership and wishes to participate in a playoff.

3.6.3. Championship North and South

If a 1<sup>st</sup> XV wins the Championship Cup they may be given the opportunity to play off with the bottom placed team in the Premiership if the club meets the criteria to play in this league.

There will be a minimum of 1 team relegated and a maximum of two sides relegated at the end of the season from each league.

3.6.4. Championship 2 – North, Midlands, South East, South West

The winning teams from the North, Midlands, South East and South West will participate in a play off for promotion to Championship 1 North and South respectively. The North will play the Midlands for a place in Championship North; The South East will play the South West for a place in Championship South.

Relegation – There will be a minimum of 1 side and a maximum of two sides relegated from each league at the end of the season.

3.6.5. National Challenge 1 & below

Promotion – There will be a minimum of 1 side promoted from each league.

Relegation – There will be a minimum of 1 side and a maximum of two sides relegated from each league at the end of the season.

**4. National Events and Cup Competitions**

**INDIVIDUAL RULES AND REGULATIONS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR EACH COMPETITION**

**4.1. Womens Cup Competitions**

For the coming season the RFU will endeavour to run –  
National Challenge 1 and below Cup  
North v South Championship Cup

**4.1.1. Womens Cup Competitions take priority over all other fixtures.**

4.1.2. Clubs who enter more than one team into any Womens Cup Competition will be required to register their individual squads with the RFU Competition Executive prior to the first round of the tournament.

4.1.3. Movement between squads may be allowed after consultation and agreement from the Competitions Executive.

4.1.4. Players can only play for one Club during any Womens Cup Competition. This includes any players who may have turned 18 in the season who must decide if they are to play in the U18 Competition or the Senior Competition. They are not eligible to play in both.

4.1.5. Championship Cup

The teams placed top of the Championship North and South leagues shall play off for the Championship Cup.

**4.2. Events**

For the coming season the RFU will run –

National 7's Competition for, U18s and U15s.  
CB Programme for Seniors, U18s and U15s.  
Divisional Programme for Seniors, U18s and U15s  
U13 Girls Festivals

4.2.1. **National Sevens**

These are played to IRB Seven's Laws.

4.2.2. **Constituent Body (CB Rugby) Programme**

For the 2012-13 season each  
Senior, U18 and U15 CB teams that have entered the programme will play at least two matches and a Divisional Festival.

For Rules and Regulations please see Womens Competition CB Programme on the website.

4.2.3 **Divisional Rugby**

Will be played between 4 divisions made up of the 28 Constituent Bodies that have been invited to take part in the CB Championship.

For Rules and Regulations please see Womens Competition Divisional Programme on the website.

5. **Womens Senior Variation of the Laws of the Game**

The Variations to the laws of the game for National Challenge Leagues (Division 1 & below) are as follows; (IRB U19)

**LAW 3: NUMBER OF PLAYERS – THE TEAM**

**3.5** (c) If a team nominates 22 players, it **must** have at least six players who can play in the front row in order that there is replacement cover for the loose head prop, hooker and tight head prop.

If a team nominates more than 22 players it **must** have at least six players who can play in the front row in order that there is replacement cover for the loose head prop, hooker and tight head prop. There must also be three players who can play in lock position.

**3.12** A player who has been substituted may replace an injured player.

**LAW 5: TIME**

**5.1** Each half of an Under 19 match lasts 35 minutes playing time. Play in a match lasts no longer than 70 minutes. After a total of 70 minutes playing time, the referee must not allow extra time to be played in the case of a drawn match in a knock-out competition.

**LAW 20: SCRUM**

**20.1 (f)** In an 8 person scrum the formation must be 3-4-1, with the single player (normally the Number 8) shoving on the 2 locks. The locks must pack with their heads on either side of the hooker.

**Exception:** A team must have fewer than eight players in its scrum when **either** the team cannot field a complete team, or a player is sent off for Foul Play, **or** a player leaves the field because of injury.

Even allowing for this exception, each team must always have at least five players in a scrum.

If a team is incomplete, the scrum formation must be as follows:

If a team is without one player, then both teams must use a 3-4 formation (i.e. no No.8).

If a team is without two players, then both teams must use a 3-2-1 formation (i.e. no flankers).

If a team is without three players, then both teams must use a 3-2 formation (i.e. only front rows and locks).

When a normal scrum takes place, the players in the three front row positions and the two lock positions must have been suitably trained for these positions.

If a team cannot field such suitably trained players because:  
either they are not available, **or** a player in one of those five positions is injured **or** has been sent off for Foul Play and no suitably trained replacement is available, then the referee must order uncontested scrums.

In an uncontested scrum, the teams do not compete for the ball. The team putting in the ball must win it. Neither team is allowed to push the other team away from the mark.

**20.9 (j) Maximum 1.5 metres push.** A team in a scrum must not push the scrum more than 1.5 metres towards their opponents' goal line.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

**20.9 (k) Ball must be released from scrum.** A player must not intentionally keep the ball in the scrum once the player's team has heeled the ball and controls it at the base of the scrum.

**Penalty:** Free Kick

**20.11 (a) No wheeling.** A team must not intentionally wheel a scrum.

**Penalty:** Penalty Kick

If a wheel reaches 45 degrees, the referee must stop play. If the wheel is unintentional, the referee orders another scrum at the place where the scrum is stopped.

## **6. Match Day - Responsibilities**

- 6.1. Home team is responsible for the conduct of PLAYERS, VOLUNTEERS, COACHES and SPECTATORS. This includes keeping spectators off the pitch, ensuring no pushchairs; wheelchairs etc. are within 10 feet of the pitch.

6.2. The home team is expected to provide after match food for their opposition and Referee.

6.3. It is the responsibility of each competing team to provide their own drinking water.

#### **6.4. Match Day Forms**

One Match day form must be completed by both captains (or their delegates). Please ensure that both team names and the scores are entered in the appropriate boxes top of the sheet.

6.4.1 The listings of both playing sides on the match result sheet are to be handed to the referee prior to kick off. The referee, after the game, completes the final score and signs. The team captains then add the scorer/s and substitution details and signatures.

6.4.2. The Home team is responsible to ensure the match day form and red and yellow card form are completed and returned to the Competitions Executive within 5 days of the fixture being played. If a team is uncooperative, the form must be completed as far as possible. The uncooperative team may be penalised.

Please refer to 2.15.2 and 2.15.3

6.4.3 If the referee's signature is not obtained, the society and referees name must be completed. If the referee is not a society referee, their connection to the club must be stated.

6.4.4. If a player is sent off, this information must be written on the red card form, and where possible, the referee report attached. Likewise if a player is yellow carded the form must be filled in. The referee must then send his full red card report to the designated disciplinary panel.

6.4.5. Any club who fails to send a Red and Yellow card form will find themselves liable to a mandatory RFU fine and repeat offending can lead to a deduction in league points or removal from the Womens competitions.

6.4.6. Any player who receives a red card will be expected to attend an RFU disciplinary hearing in accordance with RFU disciplinary procedures.

Any club that receives a number of red and yellow cards throughout the season will be expected to attend an RFU disciplinary hearing in accordance with RFU disciplinary procedures.

6.4.7. Where players have been borrowed (as applicable), this must be indicated on the form, together with the club (and team if applicable) with whom they are registered.

6.4.8. Delayed kick-off information and reasons must be written on the back of the match form.

6.4.9. Forms are readily available from the Competitions Executive, the RFU Competitions department at Twickenham and the RFU website. Not having a form is not an acceptable excuse for non-completion. In emergency an A4 Sheet of paper detailing the requirements is acceptable.

6.4.10. **FRIENDLY MATCHES** – A friendly match report must be filled in for all matches played throughout the season, by any league/ friendly side.

## **7. Complaints and Appeals**

### **7.1. Complaints**

7.1.1. Any complaint should be referred, in writing, to the Competitions Executive within 7 days of the occurrence giving rise to the complaint. This means that you must continue to play.

7.1.2. The RFU Competitions Executive on receipt of the written complaint shall require the other party to the complaint, if applicable, to answer the complaint within 14 days. The Competitions Executive on receipt of the written complaint shall give a response within 28 days.

7.1.3. The Competitions Executive may choose to refer the complaint to an RFU Disciplinary or the Womens Competitions committee

7.1.4. The club and /or appellant may be required to pay the costs of the complaint when a personal hearing is requested and granted.

### **7.2. Appeals**

7.2.1. Any party aggrieved at the outcome of the complaint may appeal to the Appeals Committee.

7.2.2. Appeals must be addressed, in writing, to the Chairman of the Womens Board within 7 days of the decision made. Clubs have a responsibility to clearly state that they wish to appeal against the decision made.

7.2.3. The Chairman of the Womens Board of the RFU shall refer the objections to the Board where members will be appointed to act as an Appeals Committee. The Competitions Review Group / Competition Executive who has given the original ruling shall not be entitled to take any part in the review of the ruling, but they shall be called upon to explain their reasoning behind the decision.

7.2.4. The club and/ or appellant may be required to pay the costs of the appeal when a personal hearing is requested and granted.

7.2.5. Any party to an appeal shall provide such information or evidence and within such time as the Appeals Committee shall require.

7.2.6. Upon a party to an appeal failing to provide such information within the time required, the Appeals Committee shall be entitled to refuse to hear that party when considering an appeal.

7.2.7. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final and binding.

## **8. RFU Overseas Playing Permission Procedure and Outgoing Tours & Matches**

Please refer to [www.rfu.com](http://www.rfu.com)

## WOMENS LEAGUE AND CUP MATCH REPORTING & CONTACTS

### National League & Cup Results

The home team's captain or nominee is required to telephone all match results to the Results Line on tel: **0845 226 0411** immediately after the match and before 6.00pm at the latest. When making the call please state: Division or Cup round, Home team and points, Away team and points.

All Leagues & Cup Result Forms to: RFU Competitions Executive  
(exc Students / BUSA) RFU Competitions Department  
Rugby House  
Twickenham Stadium  
200 Whitton Road  
Twickenham, TW2 7BA

Queries to: Keeley Fathers tel: 07779 231970  
Email [Keeleyfathers@rfu.com](mailto:Keeleyfathers@rfu.com)

### Cancellation / Non playing of match

You must report a defaulted fixture or match postponement due to weather conditions etc immediately to both the:

Match Results Line 0845 226 0411 and  
Competitions Executive 07779 231970 / [Keeleyfathers@rfu.com](mailto:Keeleyfathers@rfu.com)

If you leave a message please state your name, club, contact number and full reasons for the cancellation. **Failure to comply may result in penalties.**