

## **NORTH R O C ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS 2023-24**

These instructions should be read in conjunction with RFU Regulation 6.

### **1. Nominated League Contact**

1.1 All clubs shall appoint an official to be known as the Nominated League Contact. Such person will receive all information in connection with the administration of the leagues. A club is deemed to have agreed that it has received information sent to the Nominated League Contact, who shall be responsible for disseminating the same to the relevant members of the club.

### **2. Clubs wishing to join Leagues (RFU Reg 6.15-18)**

2.1 All clubs wishing to join the English Clubs Championship must apply in writing to the Secretary of the RFU North Regional Committee no later than 1st April to qualify for the next season. By this date, the club must have met all the entry criteria laid down in the English Clubs Championship Regulations and those applied from time to time by the Organising Committee. A list of fixtures played in the foregoing season, together with the results, and Constituent Body Approval, must accompany the application.

(Application Forms may be obtained from the Secretary of the RFU North Regional Committee, or the Secretary of the Constituent Body of which the Applicant Club is a member).

2.2 No application for entry to the Leagues will be accepted from a University Club (or any other Educational Establishment) unless the Club is able to demonstrate to the Organising Committee that it has:

- a) Completed a regular weekend fixture list on Saturdays for over one Season; and,
- b) It has enough Players in residence locally to the Club and can fulfil matches during vacation periods; and
- c) It has a separate Constitution to the University's (or other such Establishment's) Athletic Union.

### **3. Laws of the Game (RFU Reg 6.54 – 56)**

#### **Applicable Laws of the Game**

3.1 Subject to Regulation 6 or as otherwise varied by these regulations, all matches must be played in accordance with the World Rugby Laws of the Game save that at Women's Level 5 and below, the World Rugby Under 19 Law Variations will apply.

3.2 Clubs at level 7 and below may take part in the RFU Game on Principles.

#### **4. Unplayed or Abandoned Matches (RFU Reg 6.20-23)**

4.1 In the case of an Unplayed or Abandoned Match, the Match Official, or their representative, has primacy of decision as to whether a match should be played.

4.2 In the event of a game not being played, both clubs must contact the League Secretary, giving reasons for the non-playing of the game, the time and score when the match was abandoned and giving reason for the abandonment. The League Secretary shall then notify the Organising Committee without delay. Please do not complete the EMC.

4.3 Any club in default of these requirements will have sanctions applied in accordance with the schedule of fines and penalties currently approved by the Organising Committee.

4.4 The team responsible for the fixture not being fulfilled, will be deducted 5 points and their opponents who are not responsible for the fixture being unfulfilled, will be awarded 5 points. The game will not be rescheduled.

4.5 A Competition Match played pursuant to the authority of the Organising Committee, under RFU Regulation 6.51, or any unplayed match where a notional 0-0 win or loss is recorded or where a match is not played for any other reason, (for the purposes of this Administrative Instruction called 'an unplayed match'), may at the end of the Season give rise to a requirement that the Organising Committee should cause an adjustment of match points of one or more Clubs to properly determine promotion (league winners or runners up) or relegation in accordance with RFU Regulation 6, Appendix 2, Paras 3 and 4.

(i) an adjustment of match points will be made if either Club involved in the unplayed match is a contender for promotion (league winners or runners up) or relegation by virtue of an equal number of League points.

(ii) all match points in the corresponding fixtures of all other contending Clubs will be removed from the playing records (a corresponding fixture is defined as the scheduled fixture at the same venue as the unplayed match or in a League where Clubs play each other once only regardless of venue);

(iii) the adjustment referred to in para 6(i) above will not be made if it benefits the defaulting Club in the unplayed match to the detriment of another Club. Further where two or more Clubs have complete records their positions relative to each other will remain unchanged by adjustments caused by a defaulting Club in an unplayed match.

#### **5. Change of Strip & Grounds, Match Management, Permitted Personnel (RFU Reg 6.24-6.35)**

5.1 Colour of strip – In the event of a colour clash, it is the Away side who must change strip to avoid a colour clash. (RFU Reg 6.35)

5.2 Permitted Personnel – (RFU Reg 6.29 and 6.30).

All Clubs must take reasonable steps to prevent spectators from being in the playing enclosure. The only persons allowed in the playing enclosure between the touch line and the barrier are the touch judges, one Medical/Physio person per team, the Coach/Manager, the Replacements any two of whom may be water carriers and two ball boys. Coaches must not go onto the pitch during play without the permission of the Referee.

## **6. Kick Off Times (RFU Reg 6.44-47)**

6.1 Kick off times will be 2.15 pm (**2pm for matches played in Durham & Northumberland CB**) for the months of November, December, January and February and 3.00 pm for all other months. Variations in kick off times may be mutually agreed between the two clubs, but the League Secretary and the Match Referee must be advised.

## **7. Clubs unable to Fulfil Fixtures (RFU Reg 6.21 & Appendix 3)**

Where a home club wishes (or considers it may be appropriate) to postpone a match because of Pitch - **Weather Conditions**.

7.1 The home club must contact a RFU Referee as early as possible and in any event before 1700 on the day preceding the match to request a pitch inspection.

7.2 The Home club must also inform the Away club and the League Secretary that the match is in doubt due to the match being unplayable because of poor weather conditions (or the forecast of poor Weather Conditions) as soon as it is reasonably practicable.

7.3 A suitable accredited RFU Referee (not a person, whether a referee or not, who regularly acts as a club's Fourth Official or who is a member of the home club) must confirm the postponement after an inspection of the match pitch. Such a pitch inspection by an independent Referee must take place before the away club intend to travel to the fixture.

7.4 If the inspecting Referee decides the pitch is unplayable and/or likely to be unplayable before 1700 on the day preceding the match, the home club must immediately inform the RFU, the Organising Committee (or it's delegate) and the Match Officials as well as the Away club. If the Referee decides the pitch is unplayable after 1700 on the day preceding the match the home club must immediately notify the away club, the Committee and the Match Officials. Alternatively, if the inspecting Referee deems the pitch playable and/or likely to be playable the home club must act on that judgement and notify the Away club accordingly.

7.5 When a late decision (i.e. within 3 hours of kick off) as to the fitness of the pitch for playing a match is necessary:-

- (a) the decision shall be made by Captains of the relevant teams;
- (b) If both Captains agree that the Match should proceed, the Referee shall also determine if the Match should proceed and remains entitled, in their sole discretion, to decline to officiate that Match on the grounds of safety or any other substantial reason; and
- (c) If one or both of

the Captains do not agree that the Match should proceed, the Match will not be played and the provisions of regulation 6.23 shall apply.

Any match that is not played on the grounds that the pitch was unfit and for any other substantial reason, shall be notified by the home club to the league secretary (or relevant Regional Organising Committee in the case of cup competitions) within 48 hours of the decision not to play the match together with the view of the referee of the fitness of the pitch and the provisions of RFU Regulation 6 Appendix 3, shall apply.

7.6 Where the above procedure is not followed the home club shall be deducted 5 league points and the match will be rearranged.

7.7 Where a ground is pronounced unfit or is unavailable for play and the scheduled match is the first of the two games in the season between the clubs, the venue shall (where time allows) be reversed if the oppositions pitch is fit and available for play. The Home club shall be the Club upon whose pitch the game is played. In certain circumstances, where it is deemed necessary, the organising committee may rule that a game takes place at a 'neutral venue' to ensure that a fixture takes place on a specified date.

## **8. Games to be Played or Replayed (RFU Reg 6.52 & Appendix 3)**

8.1 Any match ordered to be played or replayed for whatsoever reason shall be played on the next available Saturday, unless the Organising Committee directs otherwise. The League Secretary shall determine the date and notify the clubs as soon as the requirement is known. Any appeal concerning this must be lodged within forty-eight hours of being notified of the date.

8.2 The Organising Committee may declare a specific weekend 'unavailable' where it falls close to a public holiday or where it is considered inappropriate to play for other reasons. Prior to the start of the season details will be published on the rfunorth.com website of those dates, which not, under any circumstances will League games be allowed to take place. One exception to this shall be if a specific unavailable weekend (eg Easter Weekend) can be used to prevent the delay of the play off matches.

8.3 League matches may be played over the Christmas and New Year period and on Easter Saturday by agreement between the clubs. Any such agreement must be advised to the League Secretary. In certain extreme circumstances, these dates may also be designated by the Organising Committee as available dates for the playing of previously Un played or Abandoned matches.

**8.4 Clubs should note that the League season ends on 6th April 2024 and as such, if found necessary, Clubs will be expected to fulfil league matches during the month of April 2024, before the Papa Johns Community Cup Competition begins.**

8.5 A Break Weekend is defined as one where a League Match is not played.

## **9. Electronic Match Card (EMC) (RFU Reg.6.80 -6.86)**

- 9.1 The EMC shall be completed by the nominated EMC administrator.
- 9.2 The EMC must make it clear who are the designated Front Row (FR) Players, or including Replacement FR Players, by ticking the relevant box. Failure to do so may incur a Fine.
- 9.3 **Both Teams MUST submit their squads before the match kicks off. Failure to do this may incur a fine. It is recommended that both Home and Away officials and the referee, liaise before the EMC result is submitted.**
- 9.5 **The full time score, number of tries and the half time score must be entered in the relevant boxes.**
- 9.4 The deadline for submitting the EMC is 17.30 hours on the day of the match.
- 9.7 Where Uncontested scrums occur the relevant box on the EMC must be ticked, if appropriate.
- 9.8 Clubs are requested to enter on the comments box if any of their players have been sent off during the match.
- 9.9 If a game is postponed, abandoned or a walkover, the club should not complete the Match Card card but advise their league secretary/Snowdons with the reasons.
- 9.10 Any players who are affected by concussion during a match, should have the information recorded on the Match Card.
- 9.11 If a match is abandoned after 60 minutes or more has been played, the score will stand, and an EMC should be-completed with the reason in the notes section.

## **10. Reporting Match Results (RFU Reg 6.80-81)**

- 10.1 The home club shall notify the match result, and number of tries scored, using the Electronic Match Card no later than thirty minutes after completion of the game, and no later than 17:30 on the day of the match. Where the EMC cannot be used, the result and number of tries should be messaged to 07908683303 or ring Snowdons 01423 206575.
- 10.2 At level 9 and below, any Unregistered Player must have their date of birth entered on the EMC against their name.

## **11. Fines (RFU Reg 6 Appendix 4)**

- 11.1 Offending clubs will be notified by the League Secretary of any fines imposed.
- 11.2 Failure to pay fines within the 28 days allowed will result in the fine being increased and may result in the offending club having 5 Championship Points being deducted.

## **12. Appeals and Complaints (RFU Reg 6.96-102)**

12.1 Primary decisions are made by the League Secretary. If the club does not agree with the decision of the League Secretary or wishes to present mitigating circumstances, it may appeal to the Organising Committee. All appeals must be in writing and should be addressed to the Secretary of the RFU North Regional Competitions Committee and must be lodged within seven days (48 hours in the case of decision involving the next available weekend) of receiving notice of a decision.

A fee of £75 is required (£100 Oral Hearing if allowed by the RFUNCC), and no appeal or complaint will be heard if the cheque does not accompany the application. Cheques should be made payable to the RFU North Competitions Committee. The club concerned must also notify the League Secretary of their appeal. The appeal fee may be returned if the appeal is upheld.

### **13. Honouring Fixtures (RFU Reg 6 Appendix 3)**

**13.1 Where a club cannot fulfil a fixture in strict compliance with the Regulations, for instance, those governing front row players, the provisions set out in Regulations of Appendix 2 inclusive shall apply provided that the offending club advises the League Secretary before the scheduled start of the game and a game is played. The Organising Committee may at its absolute discretion order the game to be replayed if it deems it to be appropriate for any reason.**

**13.2 For the avoidance of doubt, lack of Players or insufficient Front Row Players with Effective Registration whether through injury, illness or because of work or other commitments shall not be deemed to be a justifiable reason for not playing or seeking a postponement of a League Match.**

**13.3 The following Walkover Protocol shall apply at Counties 1 (Formerly Level 7) and below:**

**(a) a team is required to fulfil a league match with the requisite number of eligible players as specific to that league in accordance with Regulation 6 and the Laws of the Game. In all matches a team must commence with a suitably trained and experienced front row and contested scrums.**

**(b) If a team has insufficient players to fulfil this requirement, they will be liable to a 5 point deduction for an unjustifiable failure to fulfil the fixture. However, they will be able to avoid the deduction of points if they offer to play, and duly honour a friendly with a minimum of 10 players. This option will be available to a team a maximum of three times during the season.**

**(c) The non-offending team MUST accept the offer to play a friendly in which event they will be awarded a 5 - point walkover. Should the non-offending team decline to play the friendly, or fail to honour the friendly once accepted, they will not be awarded any league points.**

**(d) Terms for the `friendly` match, which shall be played at the time and venue of the scheduled League match, should be as agreed between the two teams which shall not be**

unreasonably withheld. These may be broadly in line with `Game On` principles save that the result will not be recorded other than as a 5-point walkover to the non-offending team.

(e) In the event that the appointed referee withdraws from the friendly fixture then it will be the responsibility of the offending team to supply a referee who must be in addition to the minimum of 10 players.

(f) The offending team must inform the League Secretary and their opponents of their offer to play a friendly at the earliest opportunity and save for exceptional circumstances by no later than 20:00 on the Thursday prior to the match. The non-offending team prepared to play a friendly must respond by 12 noon Friday.

(g) An Electronic Match Card cannot be used to record matches under this arrangement. The details must be communicated in accordance with 10.1.

**13.4** If a higher team fixture does not take place for reasons beyond their control, or it does not have a fixture, there will be grounds of appeal to the League Secretary to review the lower team result if it is suspected that a lower team has fielded a significant number of players from the higher level team (to be determined in accordance with 13.5 below).

**13.5** After the Transfer Deadline (ie. Fixtures scheduled on or after the weekend of February 17<sup>th</sup>) a player who has been selected as a starting player or replacement in 50% or more league games in a higher team or has played in the final fixture of a team in a higher league in the current season must not play for a lower team in any league fixture unless:

- (a) they are only playing for the higher team to replace an injured higher team player.
- (b) They are returning from a period of injury, which needs to be more than 4 playing weekends.
- (c) the committee exceptionally agrees otherwise.

#### **14. Unregistered Players (RFU Reg 6 Appendix 3.2g)**

14.1 Three Unregistered Players may be selected as players or replacements without penalty at level 9 and below provided that they are eligible for registration. They must not be played again before effective registration is obtained.

#### **15. Warning of Possible Sanctions (RFU Reg 6 Appendix 4)**

15.1 The North Regional Organising Committee is allowed to sanction any Club that does not comply with or adhere to the RFU Regulations and the North Regional Administration Instructions/Rules. Although not an exhaustive list, the following are some of the sanctions the North Regional Organising Committee are able to impose on defaulting Clubs: - A Fine / deduction of points in the current or following season / ordering a game to be replayed / awarding the match to the non-offending side / determining the result of an abandoned match

‘removal of a result from the league table ‘awarding of points to a non-offending side / incorrect Match Card detail.

15.2 RFU Regulation 6 Appendix 4 give a more comprehensive list of the sanctions available to the North Regional Organising Committee to impose.

15.3 Enforcement of regulations now include: -

(i) Front Row Requirements – See RFU Reg 6.65 - 71

(ii) A club shall also be responsible for not exceeding the number of permitted interchanges “rolling subs “see RFU Reg 6.63 - 64.

## **16. League Structure - Promotion and Relegation (RFU Reg 6 Appendix 2)**

The England Rugby Men’s League Structure is shown at Appendix 1a – 1g.

The principles of Promotion at the conclusion of season 2023-24 is shown at Appendix 2a-g.

The principles of Relegation at the conclusion of season 2023-24 is shown at Appendix 2 4a-f.

### **16.1 Relegation from Counties 1 and below Leagues (Potential Cascade Effect)**

**A total of 8 clubs will normally be relegated from the Counties One Leagues at the end of each season in the North ROC area, in accordance with Regulation 6, Appendix 2 Paragraph 4.**

**Two factors determine where these relegations will fall:**

- (a) The number of clubs relegated from the Regional Leagues into each of the Counties one Leagues. Clubs are relegated into the Counties One League consistent with their CB affiliation.**
- (b) Which 6 Counties One leagues provide the Best Playing Record runners-up which will reduce the relegation from each of those leagues by a single club.**

**The potential relegation ranges from each Counties One League for season 2023-24 are as below:**

<b>Actual Relegation 2022-23</b>	<b>Counties One League</b>	<b>Potential Relegation 2023-24</b>	
		<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>adm Lancashire/Cheshire</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>Cumbria</b>	<b>No relegation – bottom league</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Yorkshire</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Durham/Northumberland</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>

**It is entirely possible that the exact number of clubs relegated from a Counties One league will not be known until the last day of the season.**



**The higher the maximum figure it is the less likely it is to happen, but it will nevertheless remain a possibility.**

**The impact of relegation from Counties One will continue down through the leagues in each respective leg.**

## **17. Additional Law Variations by North Regional Operating Committee**

**The following Additional Law Variations have been approved for Leagues by NROC.**

- 17.1 Cumbria - Level 7 Five replacements with one FR Replacement.**
- 17.2 Durham and Northumberland 3 – Level 9 and below. Clubs may select up to five replacements with One FR Replacement.**
- 17.3 Lancs/Cheshire 1 – Clubs may select up to three replacements with one FR replacement.**
- 17.4 Yorkshire Level 9 – Clubs may select up to five replacements with one FR replacement.
- 17.5 Yorkshire Level 10 - teams may contain players who are not registered with that club. They should however be made up of bona fide club members; although if this is not possible then players may be borrowed from other clubs to make up the numbers and encourage participation in the game. However, such teams may not knowingly play players holding Effective Registration with another club at level 8 and above.
  - 2. Notwithstanding this point, clubs at all levels are encouraged to continue to register their players.
  - 3. If a team at level 10 and below justifiably cannot field a front row then the match will proceed with uncontested scrums. No league points will be deducted providing the fixture is honoured. The result at the final whistle will stand.
  - 4. In the interests of encouraging participation in the game at Level 10 or below, the captains may agree prior to a match to more than 5 replacements being used by the teams in any match. At level 10 and below with surplus players are encouraged to lend the opposition surplus players to make up even numbers per side.
- 17.6 Should a club request the registration of a front row forward(s) after the Registration Date, owing to injury or unavailability, an application should be made to the Secretary of North ROC, no later than Tuesday 17:00 before the match on the following Saturday.

END

Please Note – Changes from last Season`s regulations are highlighted in **bold**.

31/08/2023