

NATIONAL COMPETITION RULES 2017-2018

1 DEFINITIONS

‘Board’	means the Scottish Rugby Board.
‘Championship Committee’	means the Scottish Rugby Championship Committee.
‘Championship Secretary’	means the person who deals with the day-to-day running of the National Competitions.
‘Competitions Committee’	means a committee elected or appointed to assist in the organisation of an individual National Competition.
‘Competition Secretary’	means the person appointed by Scottish Rugby to act as Secretary to a Competitions Committee.
‘Cup’	means the Scottish Cup, National League Cup, Shield or Bowl competition as the context may require.
‘Match’	means a match played or to be played in a National Competition.
‘Minimum Operating Standards’	means the minimum standards and requirements issued by Scottish Rugby from time to time.
‘National Competitions’	means the league and knock-out competitions designated as such by the Board from time to time and listed in Appendix 2.
‘Player’	means any person who is named by a Team to participate in a Match.
‘Primary Club’	means the club which currently holds the Player’s registration and is responsible for maintaining all aspects of the Player’s registration details.
‘Regulations’	means any supplementary regulations provided or approved by the Board in respect of individual National Competitions, or generally.
‘Rules’	means the National Competition Rules approved by the Board from time to time.
‘Scottish Rugby’	means Scottish Rugby Union plc.
‘Secondary Club’	means the one additional club for which a Player is formally registered to play.
‘Team’	means any club, school, team or other body (as the context may require) which participates in a National Competition.
‘World Rugby’	means the game’s world governing body.

2 ORGANISATION AND APPLICATION

The National Competition Rules

- 2.1 The National Competitions shall be governed by the Rules.
- 2.2 The Rules and changes to them shall be subject to approval by the Board.
- 2.3 The Board may provide supplementary Regulations in respect of individual National Competitions (see Appendix 1). The Board reserves the right to amend the Rules and Regulations from time to time.
- 2.4 The Board shall have the power to rectify any error or omission in the Rules and the Regulations in such manner as it deems fit.
- 2.5 In the Rules and Regulations, unless specified or the context otherwise requires, words importing any gender shall include all other genders, and importing singular shall, where appropriate, include plural.
- 2.6 Should any provision of the Rules or Regulations be held by any court or other competent authority to be illegal, void or unenforceable (in whole or in part) the remainder of the Rules and/or Regulations shall continue to be enforceable.

Championship Committee

- 2.7 The Board shall be assisted in the organisation of the National Competitions by a Championship Committee. Membership of the Championship Committee shall comprise:
- 2.7.1 the Championship Convenor (the “Convenor”) who shall be appointed by the Board;
 - 2.7.2 the Reserve League Committee Convenor (appointed by the Board);
 - 2.7.3 one representative elected in accordance with the *Championship Committee Election Rules* from each of the following club groups: the Premiership; National League 1; National League 2 and 3; the Caledonia Regional League; the East Regional League; the West Regional League; and the Women’s Championship;
 - 2.7.4 a referees’ representative; and
 - 2.7.5 a schools and youth rugby representative.
- 2.8 The Championship Committee shall have the authority to delegate any of its powers, duties or obligations under these Rules to any person, Competitions Committee, sub-committee or other body provided that it retains the ability to resume the exercise of those powers at any point. Delegation of powers, duties or obligations shall not prevent the Championship Committee from exercising those powers or undertaking those duties or obligations should the Championship Committee consider it necessary or appropriate to do so. References in the Rules and Regulations to a Competitions Committee shall be deemed to include the Championship Committee where the Championship Committee has itself elected to exercise that power.
- 2.9 Where by reason of the routine nature of the matter, or such urgency that a meeting of the Championship Committee cannot reasonably be arranged, and subject to any direction given by the Championship Committee, the Convenor may exercise any of the powers, discretions and/or authorities given to the Championship Committee under the Rules and Regulations.
- 2.10 The Championship Committee and the Convenor shall be assisted by a Championship Secretary appointed by Scottish Rugby.

Compliance

- 2.11 By agreeing to participate in a National Competition the participating Team agrees to be bound by both the letter and the spirit of the Rules and Regulations, and such other Scottish Rugby Rules, Regulations, Policies or Procedures as may affect participation in competitions.
- 2.12 The participating Teams shall ensure compliance by all of their Players and officials with applicable Rules and Regulations.
- 2.13 Participating Teams shall comply with the Minimum Operating Standards issued from time to time by Scottish Rugby unless a dispensation has been given to them by Scottish Rugby. Scottish Rugby shall have the power to suspend the participation rights of any Team which fails to meet or to maintain these Standards.
- 2.14 Except where a Scottish Rugby Bye-Law, Policy, Rule or Regulation provides to the contrary, World Rugby’s *Laws of the Game of Rugby Football* (the “Laws”) and the *World Rugby Regulations Relating to the Game* shall apply.

3 FIXTURES

Date and Kick-Off Time

- 3.1 The date, time and the identity of the home and away Teams in any Match shall be as determined and notified by the relevant Competition Secretary.
- 3.2 Matches shall be played on the date and at the time notified. By exception, and where both Teams agree, the home Team may make written application to the Competition Secretary for a Match to be played on an alternative date or at an alternative time. Evidence as to the consent of both Teams shall be required.

- 3.3 The Championship Committee and the relevant Competitions Committee reserve the absolute right to reschedule any Match, including at short notice. In the event of a postponed or abandoned Match requiring to be rescheduled, other Matches may require to be rescheduled or further rescheduled in order to accommodate that Match.
- 3.4 Matches shall normally be played at the home Team's regular venue. The home Team must advise the relevant Competition Secretary, the visiting Team and the referee promptly if a Match is to be played at a different venue.
- 3.5 Copyright, database and all other rights in the fixtures shall be the property of Scottish Rugby.

Postponed Matches

- 3.6 If a Match is likely to be postponed the home Team should seek to play at an alternative venue or, if the home team is in the first half of its league season, may seek the opposition Team's consent for the fixture to be reversed.
- 3.7 If a second or subsequent postponement is likely, the Match must be played, at the original venue or at an alternative venue (including the opposition's pitch if it is playable and available), failing which the Competitions Committee may direct where and when the Match should be played (including midweek where necessary).

Abandoned Matches

- 3.8 Where a Match is abandoned before 20 minutes of the second half have elapsed it shall be replayed at a date and time notified by the Competition Secretary. This shall normally be the first available fixture date free of National Competition fixtures but may also be midweek where necessary.
- 3.9 If a Match is abandoned after at least 20 minutes of the second half have elapsed the Match shall be deemed to have been completed and the score at the time of the abandonment shall stand as the Match result.
- 3.10 The right is reserved for the relevant Competitions Committee to investigate the causes of any abandonment and to take such action as it deems appropriate.
- 3.11 For the avoidance of doubt the procedures regarding any red or yellow cards, citing or misconduct complaints during an abandoned Match shall be the same as if the Match had been completed.

Non-Fulfilment of Fixtures

- 3.12 No Team may, without just cause, fail to fulfil its fixture obligations. The relevant Competitions Committee shall be the sole judge as to whether just cause exists.
- 3.13 If a Team fails to fulfil a fixture on the date notified, the relevant Competitions Committee may:
 - 3.13.1 apply sanctions to either or both Teams, including a formal reprimand and warning as to future conduct and/or deduction of up to five league points and/or disqualification from the relevant competition and/or a financial penalty of up to the full amount of any participation money which the Team may be entitled to; and
 - 3.13.2 award the Competition Points to either Team, divide them between the Teams as it sees fit or decide that no Competition Points should be awarded and order that the Match be replayed.
- 3.14 In the event of a Team not fulfilling a fixture and the opposition Team incurring unnecessary expense, the relevant Competitions Committee may award a financial penalty of up to £1,800 per Match towards the reimbursement of the non-offending Team's actual costs. Proof of actual costs will be required.
- 3.15 Any Team which fails to fulfil three or more National Competition fixtures shall have its case considered by the relevant Competitions Committee, which shall have the power to relegate and/or disqualify the Team.
- 3.16 If a Team fails to fulfil three or more National Competition fixtures in consecutive seasons the Championship Committee may suspend the Team from participation in National Competitions for such period as the Championship Committee deems appropriate.

4 THE PLAYERS

Eligibility

- 4.1 Players participating in National Competitions (other than as *Emergency Player Loan Scheme* Players or as allowed within the Regulations of an individual competition) must be properly registered as an active Player with the Team that they are representing.
- 4.2 Other than as set out within the Rules/Regulations or with the written permission of the relevant Competition Committee, a Player may not play in Matches for more than two clubs in any season.
- 4.3 A Player may not participate in a Match in an adult competition until the Player has attained the age of 18 years unless the Player has received written dispensation to do so from Scottish Rugby.
- 4.4 It shall be a specific offence:
 - 4.4.1 to register or attempt to register a Player without the Player's consent;
 - 4.4.2 to play a Player in a Match who is not eligible to participate;
 - 4.4.3 for a Player to participate in a Match for a Team to which the Player is not registered or for which the Player is not otherwise eligible to participate for; or
 - 4.4.4 to mislead the Championship Committee, Competitions Committee or Scottish Rugby in any matter relating to registration or eligibility.
- 4.5 If an ineligible Player participates in a Match, the relevant Competitions Committee shall have the right to impose a penalty on the Player's Team or, as appropriate, on the Team for which the Player participated. The Player shall also be liable to such additional penalty or suspension as the relevant Competitions Committee considers appropriate.

Registration and De-Registration

- 4.6 All Players participating in National Competitions must be registered on the Scottish Rugby player registration system.
- 4.7 A Player is registered when, subject to these Rules, the Player has been allocated a unique reference number and the Player appears on the system under the club's / body's list of active registered Players. Scottish Rugby reserves the right to refuse, suspend or request further information in respect of any application.
- 4.8 Incoming Players requiring International Clearance shall not be eligible for registration (and hence not eligible to participate) until Scottish Rugby has provided written confirmation of the completion of the Clearance process.
- 4.9 A Player wishing to transfer Team must notify his current Team of his desire to transfer. The Player's new Team shall apply in the prescribed manner to transfer the Player's registration. The Player shall not be eligible to play for his new Team until his name appears on that body's list of active registered Players.
- 4.10 Teams shall ensure that their list of registered Players is at all times accurate and up to date, including in relation to whether each Player remains active. Teams shall deactivate a Player's registration on receipt of a request from the Player. Teams wishing to deactivate a Player's registration shall inform the Player in writing.
- 4.11 Where a Player receives International Clearance to play outwith Scotland the Player's registration must be deactivated by his Team promptly.
- 4.12 Where a Player requires a work permit, visa or other consent to play in Scotland, the Player's registration must be deactivated at the end of that consent.
- 4.13 A Player's registration may be suspended or cancelled (including with retrospective effect), where the Player or his Team has breached the *Regulations Relating to the Game* or any of Scottish Rugby's Bye-Laws, Policies, Rules or Regulations.
- 4.14 A Player's registration status on any particular date shall be determined by the listing of active registered

Players on that date.

Dual Registration

- 4.15 A Player may be registered to only one Primary Club and one Secondary Club. A Player's Primary Club shall ordinarily be the club with which the Player trains and plays most frequently. The Player may ask his Primary Club to also register him with a Secondary Club.
- 4.16 The Player's Primary and Secondary Clubs must be in different league divisions. Should a Player's Primary or Secondary Club be promoted / relegated into the same division as his other dual registered club, the Player must be deregistered from his Secondary Club.
- 4.17 A dual-registered player may not play for the first XV of his lower-placed club in any of its last three league Matches, or in the quarter-final (or later round) of the Cup, unless at least 50% of his previous first XV Matches that season have been for the lower-placed side.
- 4.18 A Player cannot be registered with a Secondary Club if that club has three or fewer league Matches to play or if it has qualified for the quarter-final (or later round) of the Cup.
- 4.19 No more than five dual registered Players may be included in the Match squad of their lower placed Team where it is also the Player's Secondary Club.

Transfer Deadline

- 4.20 Scottish Rugby shall set a Transfer Deadline date each season.
- 4.21 Any Player receiving International Clearance to play in Scotland, being Dual Registered or being transferred between clubs after the Transfer Deadline may not participate for his new Team in a National Competition for the remainder of that season unless either:
 - 4.21.1 the relevant competition Regulations permit; or
 - 4.21.2 the Player attains the age of 18 years after the Transfer Deadline; or
 - 4.21.3 the Player receives written permission from the relevant Competitions Committee to do so.

Scottish Rugby Contracted Players

- 4.22 Players contracted to Edinburgh Rugby or Glasgow Warriors may only play in Matches in accordance with any protocol issued by Scottish Rugby and with the written agreement of Scottish Rugby.
- 4.23 Players contracted to Edinburgh Rugby and Glasgow Warriors shall be registered by Scottish Rugby to the club to which they are assigned under the terms of any such protocol.
- 4.24 No player contracted to Edinburgh Rugby or Glasgow Warriors may play in a Match against a Team which is not entitled to field a contracted player.

Emergency Player Loan Scheme

- 4.25 A Team which would otherwise be unable to fulfil a Match due to a short-term lack of suitably experienced front-row forwards, may take on loan up to two front-row Players from other Teams. Emergency Loan Players shall not become registered to their loan club for these purposes.
- 4.26 No Player may play on loan in a Match for:
 - 4.26.1 a Team in the same division as the Player's Primary Club; or
 - 4.26.2 a Team in a lower division in its final three National Competition Matches or from the quarter-finals of the relevant Cup competition.
- 4.27 Without the prior approval of the relevant Competitions Committee:
 - 4.27.1 no Player may play on loan with the same Team in more than three Matches per season or for more than two Teams in any season; and
 - 4.27.2 no Player who has participated for his Primary Club in more than eight Matches (excluding in the Reserve League), or who has played for Edinburgh Rugby or Glasgow Warriors in a competition Match that season, may play on loan with a Team in a lower division.

5 THE TEAMS

Team Colours

- 5.1 Teams must ensure that they avoid a clash of Team colours (jersey and/or socks). The Match referee shall be the sole judge as to whether colours clash. Where necessary it shall be the responsibility of the home Team to change.
- 5.2 Teams proposing to play other than in their normal colours (as set out in the Scottish Rugby Record) must advise the opposition and the Match referee not less than 72 hours before kick-off.

Team Sheets

- 5.3 Teams must deliver a fully completed team sheet to the referee and to the opposition manager/coach not later than 30 minutes before kick-off. Changes to the team sheet may be made up to kick-off.
- 5.4 The team sheet must specify the jersey number, full name and registration number of each Player. Players capable of playing at prop or hooker must be highlighted as such. The team sheet must separately identify any Player playing for their Secondary Club and any Emergency Player Loan Scheme Players.
- 5.5 Team sheets must be submitted to Scottish Rugby within 48 hours of kick-off.
- 5.6 For the avoidance of doubt it shall be a specific offence to:
 - 5.6.1 fail to timeously deliver a team sheet to the other Team and referee; or
 - 5.6.2 fail to submit a team sheet to Scottish Rugby fully, accurately or timeously. A Team may forfeit £20 of participation money in respect of each such default. In the event of five or more failures the relevant Competition Secretary shall consider raising a Complaint (as defined in Rule 11) against the Team.

Replacements / Substitutes

- 5.7 The maximum number of replacements shall be seven. This number may be further restricted within the Regulations of individual competitions. The requirements of Law 3.5 in respect of the number of front row players within any Match squad must be observed. Unless stated otherwise within the Regulations there is no requirement for there to be parity as to the number of replacements available to each Team.
- 5.8 The maximum number of rolling substitutions a Team may use in any Match shall be 12. The 15-minute limit on temporary Blood Replacements in Law 3 does not apply to rolling substitutions.
- 5.9 No Player may be included in squads for Matches which are being played either concurrently or are overlapping.

Late Arrival

- 5.10 Where some or all of its Players have been unavoidably delayed, a Team may request the referee to delay the kick-off to enable it to achieve a full side. No Match may be delayed such that the Match would not be completed in good time. The referee shall be the sole judge in this regard.

6 THE GROUND

The Pitch

- 6.1 The home Team shall provide a suitable pitch complying with Law 1. Technical areas must be marked out for both Teams.
- 6.2 Padding around the goalposts, conforming to Law 1.4(d), must be provided.
- 6.3 If the home Team fails to meet the requirements of Rule 6.1 or 6.2 the referee may order that the Match be postponed.

Fitness of Ground or Conditions for Play

- 6.4 If, prior to the day of the Match, there is doubt as to the potential fitness of the ground the following arrangements must be made:
- 6.4.1 Advance warning, being at least 24 hours where reasonably practicable, must be provided to the visiting Team and the referee. The visiting Team and referee must be advised as to any potential contingency arrangements.
 - 6.4.2 The visiting Team shall provide details of a point of contact in relation to the potential postponement and shall also advise as to their intended time of departure.
 - 6.4.3 The home Team shall arrange for an independent assessment of the pitch. The assessment should, where reasonably practicable, be made by the Match referee, failing which by another independent person (such as a local referee, referee coach/assessor, Scottish Rugby official or an official from another club).
 - 6.4.4 The assessment shall be undertaken not less than 30 minutes prior to the visiting Team's intended departure time. The result of the inspection shall be communicated to the visiting Team and the referee.
 - 6.4.5 Should the home Team fail to arrange for an independent assessment the visiting Team may do so. Where said assessment indicates the ground to be playable and the home Team has postponed the fixture, the relevant Competitions Committee may investigate as to whether an offence has been committed.
- 6.5 Where prior to kick-off there is doubt as to the fitness of the ground or the conditions for play, the referee and the Team captains shall inspect the pitch. If any one of these three persons deems the pitch or conditions to be unplayable then the Match shall be postponed. This decision shall lie solely with the Team captains and the referee. The captains shall notify their own Team of the decision.
- 6.6 Within 48 hours of the decision not to play a Match the home Team shall advise the relevant Competition Secretary as to the reason why that Match was not fulfilled. The Competition Secretary may seek further information in order to decide whether a Complaint should be raised against either or both Teams.
- 6.7 Where a Team does not own or have rights over its ground, and the ground is declared unplayable by the holder of said rights, written evidence of such decision must be obtained and be made available to the Competition Secretary on request.

7 THE MATCH

Match Ball

- 7.1 The home Team shall provide at least three match balls compliant with the Laws.

Half-Time Interval

- 7.2 The half-time interval shall normally be five minutes. The length of the interval may be altered by agreement between the Teams provided that this is notified to the referee prior to kick-off but shall not be more than 15 minutes.
- 7.3 The Teams may retire to covered accommodation at half-time.

Competition Points

- 7.4 In league competitions four points shall be awarded for a win and two points shall be awarded for a draw ("**Match Points**"). In addition, one bonus point shall be awarded to a Team scoring four or more tries and one bonus point shall be awarded to a losing Team which finishes within seven points or fewer of the winning Team ("**Bonus Points**").

Notification of Results

- 7.5 The referee shall be responsible for notifying the Match result to the Championship Secretary in accordance with the procedures set out by Scottish Rugby.

8 METHOD FOR DECIDING ON LEAGUE PLACINGS AND IN TIED KNOCK-OUT MATCHES

Tied League Placings

- 8.1 In the event of two or more Teams in a division being equal on Competition Points, placings shall be determined based on their respective points differences (being points scored for less points against).
- 8.2 Should points difference fail to separate the Teams then the aggregate score over the league fixtures between the Teams shall be used to decide between them.
- 8.3 If neither of the above can determine which Team should be placed the higher and an issue of promotion, relegation or a division title depends on the respective rankings, a play-off Match shall be arranged by the Competition Secretary at a neutral venue.

Play-Off and Knock-Out Matches : Extra Time

- 8.4 If the scores at full-time in a play-off or knock-out Match are equal, extra time shall be played comprising 10 minutes each way with a one-minute interval. A coin shall be tossed by the referee to determine the direction of play. If the scores are still equal after extra time the following criteria (in the order given and including occurrences in extra time) shall be used to decide the winner:
 - 8.4.1 the Team scoring more tries;
 - 8.4.2 the Team scoring more conversions;
 - 8.4.3 the Team scoring more drop goals;
 - 8.4.4 the Team receiving fewer red cards; and
 - 8.4.5 the Team receiving fewer yellow cards.
- 8.5 If the event that none of the above is able to separate the Teams:
 - 8.5.1 *Match Played at a Neutral Venue*: further periods of extra time shall be played during which the Team which scores first shall be the winner;
 - 8.5.2 *Match Played at the Home Venue of one of the Teams*: the away Team shall be the winner.

9 CLUBS DISQUALIFIED, SUSPENDED OR WITHDRAWING

- 9.1 If a Team is disqualified, suspended or voluntarily withdraws from a league after the start of the season, the results of all Matches played by that Team shall be deleted and the positions in the division shall be established from the Matches played between the remaining Teams.
- 9.2 If the deletion of a Team's results and the subsequent revised positions in the division have a direct effect on the promotion or relegation of a Team which has already completed its full programme of fixtures, the relevant Competitions Committee may make such arrangements as it deems appropriate to best resolve promotion and relegation.
- 9.3 In the event of the number of Teams in any division for future seasons falling short, or of any revision of the National Competition structure, the relevant Competitions Committee may adjust promotion and relegation to restore the number of Teams in each division to the appropriate level. Normally, any vacancy arising shall be filled by an additional Team being promoted before one fewer is relegated. In the event of an additional Team requiring to be promoted from a regional based competition, the additional Team shall normally be promoted from the withdrawing Team's Region.

10 PROMOTION AND RELEGATION IN LEAGUE COMPETITIONS

- 10.1 The basis on which Teams are to be promoted/relegated shall be as set out in Regulations associated with the individual National Competition.
- 10.2 The final placings in each division, the Teams to be promoted/relegated between divisions and the composition of those divisions for the succeeding season shall be in accordance with the lists issued by the relevant Competition Secretary.
- 10.3 The determination of the relevant Competition Committee or Championship Committee in respect of

relegation and promotion matters shall be final and binding on all participating Teams.

11 COMPLAINTS

- 11.1 A complaint into an alleged breach of the Rules or Regulations (a “Complaint”) may be raised by:
 - 11.1.1 the Championship Secretary (in relation to any National Competition);
 - 11.1.2 a Competition Secretary (but only in relation to matters affecting that competition); or
 - 11.1.3 a Team (but only in relation to a matter which affects it directly and which causes it to suffer significant disadvantage in a National Competition, or some other form of material prejudice).
- 11.2 All Complaints must:
 - 11.2.1 state (a) the nature of the Complaint, including the Rule/Regulation alleged to have been breached, and (b) the nature and the extent of the disadvantage/prejudice allegedly suffered; and
 - 11.2.2 be signed on behalf of the complainant (in the case of a club this shall be by either the club President or Secretary).
- 11.3 Complaints submitted on behalf of participating Teams must be submitted to the relevant Competitions Committee or, as the case may be, the Championship Committee within 14 days of the alleged infringement occurring (for the avoidance of doubt the 14-day period shall run from the actual event, not from the date of the complainant becoming aware of it).
- 11.4 The subject of the Complaint shall be sent a copy of it as soon as practical following receipt.

Complaint Process

- 11.5 Complaints shall be heard by the relevant Competitions Committee, or a sub-committee thereof comprising not less than three members (the “**Complaint Committee**”). Where the Complaint is heard by a sub-committee, the committee shall elect one of its members as Chair. Any member with an actual or potential conflict of interest shall be required to excuse themselves.
- 11.6 The Complaint Committee may:
 - 11.6.1 Regulate its own procedure and determine any matter arising in relation to the Complaint. Meetings of the committee may take place either in whole or in part in one place, by letter, telephone, e-mail, video-conference, on-line forum, webcast or by any combination of convenient means. Complaints shall normally be heard based on the papers but may be by way of hearing where the committee or one of the parties so requests;
 - 11.6.2 Determine the timescale for the proceedings. For the avoidance of doubt the committee shall be entitled to expedite the process where it considers that this is required for the benefit of the competition. The committee may also set aside the requirement for Complaints to be brought within 14 days where it believes that it is in the best interests of the game to do so;
 - 11.6.3 Call upon, receive and consider such evidence as it thinks appropriate; and
 - 11.6.4 Request the attendance at any hearing into a Complaint of any club, Team or person under the jurisdiction of Scottish Rugby. Where a club, Team or person requested to attend refuses or fails to do so the committee may adjourn the hearing, proceed in their absence or refuse to allow their evidence to be given in any other form. Any club, Team or person refusing to attend without reasonable cause, failing to co-operate with the committee or seeking to mislead at any point in the Complaint process may be subject to Misconduct proceedings under Scottish Rugby’s *Disciplinary Rules*.
- 11.7 The subject of the Complaint shall have the right:
 - 11.7.1 to be represented at any hearing by up to two people, in the case of a club one of whom must be a club member. The name and capacity of those attending shall be advised to the Complaints Committee in advance of the hearing;

- 11.7.2 to submit evidence, call witnesses and make representations at any hearing; and
- 11.7.3 to be notified in writing of the outcome of the hearing as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- 11.8 The onus of proof shall be on the complainant to establish the breach of the Rule or Regulation alleged. The standard of proof shall be on the balance of probabilities.
- 11.9 A written statement giving reasons for the decision of the Complaints Committee shall be provided if so requested by the parties and upon the lodging of a note of appeal.

Sanctions

- 11.10 Where a Complaint has been upheld, the committee shall be entitled in its absolute discretion to impose any or all of the following sanctions or penalties (including on a suspended basis):
 - 11.10.1 a caution, a warning as to future conduct or a reprimand;
 - 11.10.2 a fine or award of costs;
 - 11.10.3 require any Match complained of to be replayed on such terms as are deemed appropriate;
 - 11.10.4 the deduction of up to five Competition Points in respect of each offence;
 - 11.10.5 forfeiture of and/or the granting to another Team of the Competition Points for a Match (including Bonus Points) or the awarding of the result in the Match complained of;
 - 11.10.6 the suspension or expulsion of a club, Team, Player or person from participation in any National Competition for such period as may be deemed appropriate;
 - 11.10.7 such other penalty or sanction as may be deemed appropriate.

Acts of Misconduct

- 11.11 For the avoidance of doubt a Competitions or Complaints Committee shall be entitled to refer any act of potential Misconduct (as defined in the Disciplinary Rules) to the Discipline Committee for further consideration.

12 APPEAL PROCEDURE

The Appeals Committee

- 12.1 The Board shall establish an independent *National Competition Appeals Panel* (the "**Appeals Panel**") to hear and determine appeals against decisions of the Championship Committee and Competitions Committees, including decisions delegated to the Championship Convenor, Championship Secretary and/or other bodies or individuals appointed to assist with the organisation of specific competitions.
- 12.2 The Board shall appoint the members of the Appeals Panel and, from those members, a Chairman of the Appeals Panel. The members of the Appeals Panel shall comprise legally-qualified persons together with current and former administrators/players and such others as are considered by the Board to have skills and experience relevant to the work of the Appeals Panel.
- 12.3 The Chairman of the Appeals Panel shall from time to time select not less than three members of the Appeals Panel to sit as an Appeals Committee and shall select one of those members (who shall ordinarily be legally qualified solicitor or advocate of at least five years' standing) to act as Chairman of the Appeals Committee. The Secretary to the Appeals Committee shall be the Scottish Rugby Discipline Manager or his nominee.
- 12.4 All decisions of the Appeals Committee shall be made by majority. No member of the Appeals Committee may abstain. The Chairman of the Appeals Committee shall have both a deliberative and, where the Appeals Committee consists of an even number of members, a casting vote.

Grounds for Appeal

- 12.5 The grounds for appeal shall be limited to the following:
 - 12.5.1 the original decision was unduly harsh or oppressive;
 - 12.5.2 the body or person making the decision misdirected itself in relation to the Laws of the Game and/or the relevant competition Rules and Regulations;

- 12.5.3 the body or person making the decision, in the exercise of its discretion, took account of factors it should not have or failed to take account of factors it should have;
 - 12.5.4 there has been a breach of natural justice; or
 - 12.5.5 no other reasonable body or person appointed to that role would have reached that decision.
- 12.6 For the avoidance of doubt:
- 12.6.1 no club, Team or person may appeal in respect of any sanction imposed on, or other decision made concerning, another club, Team or person; and
 - 12.6.2 no Appeal may be brought against an operational decision made in the running of a National Competition, notwithstanding that the effect of such decision could impact financially or otherwise on the club, body or individual.

Timing and Form of Appeal

- 12.7 Notes of appeal must be in writing, be signed by the appellant and must be lodged with the Appeals Committee Secretary within seven days of the decision appealed against being made. The note of appeal must contain the following:
- 12.7.1 the name of the party making the appeal and the office held /capacity of the person signing it;
 - 12.7.2 the decision appealed against, including details of the party which made the original decision, the date of the decision and any sanction imposed;
 - 12.7.3 the full grounds of appeal; and
 - 12.7.4 any documentation upon which the appellant intends to rely in relation to the appeal.
- 12.8 Other than on cause shown and with the approval of the Appeals Committee, it shall not be permissible to introduce evidence which was available, or could reasonably have been available, at the time the decision appealed against was made but which was not brought to the attention of the original Complaint Committee.

Appeal Process

- 12.9 The Appeals Committee shall, subject to the requirements of natural justice, have the power to:
- 12.9.1 Regulate its own procedure and determine any matter arising in relation to the Appeal. Meetings of the Appeals Committee may take place either in whole or in part in one place, by letter, telephone, e-mail, video-conference, webcast or by a combination of convenient means;
 - 12.9.2 Determine the timescale for the appeal. The timescale shall be advised to the appellant, who may request a postponement of any hearing on cause shown. For the avoidance of doubt the Appeals Committee shall be entitled to expedite the process where it considers that this is required for the benefit of the competition or in the best interests of the game to do so;
 - 12.9.3 Call upon, receive and consider such evidence as it thinks appropriate; and
 - 12.9.4 Request the attendance at any hearing of any club, Team or person under the jurisdiction of Scottish Rugby. Where a club, Team or person requested to attend refuses or fails to do so the committee may adjourn the hearing, proceed in their absence or refuse to allow their evidence to be given in any other form. Any club, Team or person refusing to attend without reasonable cause, failing to co-operate with the Appeals Committee or seeking to mislead at any point in the Complaint process, may be subject to Misconduct proceedings under Scottish Rugby's *Disciplinary Rules*.
- 12.10 The appellant shall have the right to be represented at any hearing by up to two people, in the case of a club one of whom must be a club member. The name and capacity of those attending shall be advised to the Appeals Committee in advance of the meeting.
- 12.11 Where evidence is given before the Appeals Committee, there shall be no cross-examination of witnesses except through the Chairman and to the extent that the Appeals Committee in its discretion permits. The deliberations of the Appeals Committee shall be in private.

12.12 No appeal shall be decided upon grounds not contained within the note of appeal lodged by the appellants. The Appeals Committee may, on cause shown, allow further grounds of appeal to be stated providing that the party who made the original decision is given an opportunity, within a reasonable time, to answer the same.

Appeal Decision

12.13 Having heard such evidence it deems appropriate and any submission made by or on behalf of the appellant, the Appeals Committee may decide to:

12.13.1 affirm the original decision; or

12.13.2 uphold the appeal by setting aside the decision appealed against and quashing any sanction imposed under it; or

12.13.3 uphold the appeal in part by setting aside part only of the decision appealed against and/or modifying any sanction imposed; or

12.13.4 refuse the appeal and increase the sanction imposed on the appellant or substitute an alternative sanction; or

12.13.5 take any step which in the exercise of its discretion the Appeals Committee considers it would be appropriate to take in order to deal justly with the appeal.

12.14 The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be advised to the appellant as soon as reasonably practicable after the conclusion of the hearing. Where it considers it appropriate, the Appeals Committee may deliver an oral decision at the conclusion of the hearing. A written statement giving reasons for a decision of the Appeals Committee shall be provided in due course if so requested by the appellant. Scottish Rugby reserves the right to make public the outcome of any appeal and the identity of any club, Team or individuals concerned.

12.15 The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be notified to all parties in writing and shall be final and binding on all concerned.

Acts of Misconduct

12.16 For the avoidance of doubt the Appeals Committee shall be entitled to refer any act of potential Misconduct under Scottish Rugby's Disciplinary Rules to the Discipline Committee for further consideration.

13 NOTICES

13.1 Any notice served pursuant to the Rules and Regulations shall be in writing and shall be delivered by email or first-class post. All notices shall be deemed, until the contrary is proved, to have been received on the date of sending if sent by email or within 48 hours if sent by first-class post.

14 OMISSIONS, INTERPRETATION AND EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

14.1 A Competitions Committee may, on cause shown, relieve a club, Team or person from the consequences of a failure to comply with the Rules and Regulations which is shown to be a mistake, oversight or other excusable cause on such conditions as the Committee so determines.

14.2 With the prior approval of the Board, the Championship Committee (or relevant Competition Committee) shall have the discretion to:

14.2.1 decide on matters not provided for in the Rules and Regulations and to take appropriate action thereon;

14.2.2 interpret the meaning of the Rules and Regulations in accordance with the underlying principles and intent (insofar as it can be ascertained) of the relevant Rule / Regulation and the interests of the game;

14.2.3 determine any inconsistency between the Rules and Regulations and to rectify any administrative error.

14.3 The Championship Committee or relevant Competitions Committee's decision(s) in respect of those matters referred to in Rule 14.2 shall be final and binding save for any right to appeal as may be allowed under these Rules.

APPENDIX 1 : NATIONAL COMPETITION REGULATIONS

The competitions listed in Appendix 2 shall be governed by the *National Competition Rules* (the “Rules”). Matches within these competitions shall be played in accordance with the Rules other than where a specific *National Competition Regulation* provides to the contrary.

The National Competition Regulations applicable for season 2017/18 shall be as follows:

1. PREMIERSHIP AND NATIONAL LEAGUE REGULATIONS

1 ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

- 1.1 The Premiership and National Leagues shall be administered by the Championship Committee.

2 COMPOSITION OF THE PREMIERSHIP AND NATIONAL LEAGUES

- 2.1 The Premiership and the National Leagues shall comprise:
 - 2.1.1 a Premiership, to be contested by 10 Teams in one division; and
 - 2.1.2 the National Leagues, to be contested by 36 Teams in three divisions of 12.
- 2.2 The Premiership shall be played in two stages.
 - 2.2.1 *Stage 1*: the Teams shall play each other on a home-and-away basis.
 - 2.2.2 *Stage 2*: the Teams finishing in places one to four at the end of Stage 1 shall contest a knock-out competition to decide the Premiership winners. The Teams ranked one and two shall play at home against the Teams ranked four and three respectively. The winners shall contest the Premiership Final, with the finalist placed higher at end of Stage 1 being the home Team. If the scores are level at full-time in any Stage 2 Match the *Knock-Out Match Extra Time Rules* (Rule 8.4) shall apply.
- 2.3 In each National League division the Teams shall play each other on a home-and-away basis.
- 2.4 The structure of the Premiership and the National Leagues, including the number of Teams in each division, shall not be changed without a full playing season’s notice being given by Scottish Rugby. Such notice must be accompanied by details as to how the new structure will be effected through revised promotion and relegation.

3 CHAMPIONS, PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

- 3.1 The Team winning the Premiership Final shall be the Scottish Champions.
- 3.2 The Team finishing tenth in Premiership Stage 1 shall be relegated to National 1.
- 3.3 The Team finishing first in National 1 shall be promoted to the Premiership.
- 3.4 The Team finishing ninth in Premiership Stage 1 and the Team finishing second in National 1 shall meet in a Premiership Play-Off Match. This Match shall be held at a neutral venue on a date and at a time to be arranged by the Championship Secretary. The winner of the play-off shall play in the following season’s Premiership and the loser shall play in National 1. If the scores are level at full-time in the play-off, the *Knock-Out Match Extra Time Rules* (Rule 8.4) shall apply.
- 3.5 The Teams finishing in first and second places in each of National 2 and 3 shall be promoted to the respective Divisions 1 and 2.
- 3.6 The Teams finishing in eleventh and twelfth places in each of National 1 and 2 shall be relegated to the respective Divisions 2 and 3.
- 3.7 The Teams finishing in tenth to twelfth places of National 3 shall be relegated to the appropriate Regional League 1.
- 3.8 The Team finishing in first place in each of the Regional Leagues shall be promoted to National 3.

4 PLAYERS

Number of Starting Players

4.1 Both Teams must start the Match with 15 Players, including a suitably experienced front-row. Any Match not complying with this requirement shall be declared unfulfilled and may be investigated as a Non-Fulfilled Fixture.

Number of Replacements

4.2 The number of permitted replacements / substitutes shall be as follows:

Premiership Stage 1 and National Division 1: Four or five.

National Divisions 2 and 3: Two, three or four.

Premiership Stage 2 and the Premiership Play-Off Match: Five, six or seven.

4.3 The number of replacements able to play in the front row must be in accordance with the Laws.

5 REFEREES, ASSISTANT REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES

5.1 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a referee for each Match in the Premiership and the National Leagues.

5.2 Scottish Rugby shall appoint assistant referees for all Matches in the Premiership and National 1. In National 2 and 3 each Team must provide a touch judge.

5.3 Responsibility for confirmation of the referee and, where appropriate, the assistant referees shall lie with the home Team.

2. REGIONAL LEAGUE REGULATIONS

1 ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1 The Regional Leagues shall be administered by the Caledonia, East and West *Regional Competitions Committees* under the delegated authority of the Championship Committee.

1.2 The membership of each Regional Competitions Committee shall comprise:

1.2.1 the Regional Representative serving on the Championship Committee (elected in accordance with the *Championship Election Rules*).

1.2.2 four club representatives elected in accordance with the *Regional League Election Rules*. Other than with prior consent of the Board, it shall be a requirement that two club representatives shall come from each of the Council Areas within the Region;

1.2.3 the Regional Representatives on the Scottish Rugby Council (in a non-voting capacity); and

1.2.4 such other individuals as may be co-opted to the Committee (in a non-voting capacity).

1.3 The members of each Regional Competitions Committee shall elect a Chairman from amongst the Committee's membership.

2 COMPOSITION OF THE REGIONAL LEAGUES

2.1 The Regional Leagues shall comprise:

2.1.1 the *Caledonia Regional League*, which shall be contested by clubs in the Region in a league format to be decided by the Caledonia Regional Competitions Committee;

2.1.2 the *East Regional League*, which shall be contested by clubs in the Region in a league format to be decided by the East Regional Competitions Committee; and

2.1.3 the *West Regional League*, which shall be contested by clubs in the Region in a league format to be decided by the West Regional Competitions Committee.

- 2.2 Each Regional Division 1 shall normally comprise 10 Teams playing each other on a home-and-away basis.
- 2.3 The format and competition structure of each lower division, though normally comprising a maximum of 10 Teams, shall be defined by the appropriate Regional Competitions Committee.
- 2.4 A club's second and lower XVs may play in the Caledonia Regional League's second and lower divisions, but cannot be promoted to the first division.

3 CHAMPIONS, PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

- 3.1 The Team finishing in first place in each of the Regional Leagues shall be promoted to National 3.
- 3.2 Teams relegated from National 3 shall be accommodated in the relevant Region's Division 1.
- 3.3 Subject to Regional League Regulation 2.4, the first-placed Club in each Regional Division 2 shall be promoted to the relevant Division 1.
- 3.4 Before the start of each season the promotion and relegation between each Regional League's second and lower divisions shall be notified by the relevant Competition Secretary.
- 3.5 Each Regional Competitions Committee reserves the right to amend the format of promotion/relegation to accommodate any imbalance in the number of Teams being relegated from National 3, in the event of a second XV winning Caledonia Regional 2 or for other operational reasons.

4 THE PLAYERS

Player Registration

- 4.1 Players participating for a Team in Caledonia Division 2 and lower Divisions do not require to be registered to that Team, provided always that they are registered with a club on Scottish Rugby's registration system. Playing as a loan Player shall not mean that the Player becomes registered to that club. The player registration Rules shall apply in all of the other Regional Leagues / Divisions.

Transfer Deadline

- 4.2 The Transfer Deadline shall not apply below Regional Division 1.

Number of Starting Players

- 4.3 In each Regional Division 1 and in Division 2 of the East and West Leagues, each Team must start the Match with 15 Players, including a suitably experienced front row.
- 4.4 In all other Regional League Divisions:
 - 4.4.1 a Team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 12 Players), subject to it fielding at least five Players in the scrum at all times;
 - 4.4.2 a Match may start with uncontested scrums, subject to there being at least five Players in the scrum at all times and the Team requesting uncontested scrums not being allowed to include any replacements in its Match squad. A Team requiring to start a Match with uncontested scrums must advise the opposition and the referee as soon as possible and, other than in exceptional circumstances, no later than 30 minutes before kick-off. The Team requesting uncontested scrums must also advise the relevant Competition Secretary no later than 48 hours after kick-off.
- 4.5 Matches not complying with the above requirements shall be declared unfulfilled and may be investigated as a Non-Fulfilled Fixture.

Number of Replacements

- 4.6 The number of permitted replacements / substitutes shall be as follows:

Regional Division 1: Up to four.

All other Regional Divisions: Up to seven.

- 4.7 The number of replacements able to play in the front row must be in accordance with the Laws.

5 THE MATCH : LAW VARIATIONS

- 5.1 At the discretion of the relevant Competitions Committee the U19 Scrummage Law Variations shall apply below Regional Division 2.

6 REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES

- 6.1 The referee shall be appointed by the home Team's local referee society. Responsibility for confirmation of the referee shall lie with the home Team. Each Team must provide a touch judge.

3. RESERVE LEAGUE REGULATIONS

1 ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

- 1.1 The Reserve Leagues shall be administered by the *Reserve League Committee* under the delegated authority of the Championship Committee.
- 1.2 The membership of the Reserve League Committee shall comprise:
- 1.2.1 the Reserve League Committee Convenor (appointed by the Board); and
 - 1.2.2 one representative elected from the clubs participating in each of National Reserve Division 1, National Reserve Division 2, the East Regional Reserve Leagues and the West Regional Reserve Leagues.
 - 1.2.3 such other individuals as may be co-opted to the Committee (in a non-voting capacity).
- 1.3 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a Competition Secretary to assist in the administration of the League.
- 1.4 Where, by reason of the routine nature of the matter and/or such urgency that a Committee meeting cannot with reasonable practicality be arranged, the Reserve League Convenor may exercise any of the powers, discretions and/or authorities given in terms of these Regulations.

2 COMPOSITION OF THE RESERVE LEAGUE

- 2.1 The Reserve League shall comprise:
- 2.1.1 *National Reserve Division 1*, to be contested by 10 Teams in one division;
 - 2.1.2 *National Reserve Division 2*, to be contested by 10 Teams in one division;
 - 2.1.3 *East and West Regional Reserve Leagues*, to be contested by such Teams as may be admitted to the League on a season-by-season basis and shall each comprise of at least two Divisions; and
 - 2.1.4 such other friendly fixtures as may be arranged from time-to-time in respect of those Teams which are less able to commit to a programme of regular league Matches.
- 2.2 In each Reserve Division the Teams shall play each other on a home-and-away basis.

3 PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

- 3.1 Between National Reserve Divisions 1 and 2 promotion and relegation shall be on the basis of two up, two down.
- 3.2 The Teams finishing ninth and tenth in National Reserve 2 shall be relegated to the relevant Regional Reserve Division 1. In the event that a Caledonia Team is relegated from National Reserve 2 that Team shall be placed in either a Caledonia Regional League division or an appropriate Regional Reserve League's first division. Where the Team is to be placed shall be the discretion of the Competitions Committee.
- 3.3 The Teams finishing first in each of the East and West Regional Reserve first divisions shall be promoted to National Reserve 2. Should a reserve Team finish first in either Caledonia Regional North 2 or Caledonia Regional Midlands 2 it may apply to the Reserve League Committee to join National Reserve 2. Any decision to admit such a Team, and any consequential restructuring of the division, shall be solely at

the discretion of the Reserve League Committee.

- 3.4 Before the start of each season the basis of promotion to the Regional Reserve first divisions and the basis of promotion/relegation between lower Regional Reserve divisions shall be notified by the Competition Secretary.
- 3.5 A club's 3rd XV and other lower designated Teams cannot play in the same or higher division than that club's 2nd XV or other higher designated Teams.
- 3.6 A club may apply to the Reserve League Committee for the inclusion of a reserve Team in the Regional Reserve Leagues. In making such application, the club shall require to satisfy the Committee that the Team will be able to fulfil a full programme of fixtures in the forthcoming season.

4 NON-FULFILMENT OF FIXTURES

- 4.1 If a Team fails to fulfil a Match:
 - 4.1.1 the Team's opponents shall be credited with a 28-0 win and awarded five Competition Points;
 - 4.1.2 the Team responsible for the cancellation shall receive no points (unless a friendly match is played, in which case one Match Point shall be credited to it); and
 - 4.1.3 the Competition Secretary shall consider whether a Complaint should be raised in respect of the non-fulfilment.
- 4.2 If a Match is called-off on the match-day itself, one Match Point shall be deducted from the Team responsible for the cancellation. If the home Team is responsible for such cancellation it shall be liable to reimburse the visiting Team for any unavoidable travelling expenses incurred up to a maximum of £750. For the avoidance of doubt the Competition Secretary shall remain entitled to consider whether a Complaint should be raised in respect of the non-fulfilment.

5 THE PLAYERS

Player Registration

- 5.1 All Players participating in National Reserve 1 shall require to be registered with the club for which they are competing.
- 5.2 Below National Reserve 1 a Player may play for a Team to which the Player is not registered, provided always that the Player is registered with a club on Scottish Rugby's registration system. Playing as a loan Player shall not mean that the Player becomes registered to that club.

Transfer Deadline

- 5.3 The Transfer Deadline shall not apply in the Reserve Leagues.

Ineligible First XV Players

- 5.4 A Player starting a first-team Match shall be ineligible to play in National Reserve 1 Matches that season unless:
 - 5.4.1 less than 50% of the Player's appearances that season have been in the starting XV of the first team; or
 - 5.4.2 the Player's club's first and second teams have concurrent Matches.

Dual Registered Players

- 5.5 Without permission from the Reserve League Committee, a dual-registered Player may not play for his Secondary Club in National Reserve 1 in its last three Reserve League Matches unless at least 50% of the Player's previous Reserve League Match appearances in that season have been for that club.
- 5.6 The Dual Registration Rules shall not apply below National Reserve 1.

Number of Starting Players

- 5.7 In National Reserve 1 both Teams must start the Match with 15 Players, including a suitably experienced

front row.

5.8 In all other Reserve League divisions:

5.8.1 a Team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 12 Players), subject to it fielding at least five Players in the scrum at all times.

5.8.2 A Match may start with uncontested scrums, subject to there being at least five Players in the scrum at all times and the Team requesting uncontested scrums not being allowed to include any replacements in its Match squad. A Team requiring to start a Match with uncontested scrums must advise the opposition and the referee as soon as possible and, other than in exceptional circumstances, no later than 30 minutes before kick-off. The Team requesting uncontested scrums must also advise the Competition Secretary no later than 48 hours after kick-off.

5.9 Matches not complying with these requirements shall be declared unfulfilled and may be investigated as a Non-Fulfilled Fixture.

Number of Replacements

5.10 The maximum number of Replacements shall be seven. The number of replacements able to play in the front row must be in accordance with the Laws.

6 THE TEAMS

Team Sheets

6.1 Whilst the Teams shall be required to exchange team sheets (and provide a copy of the team sheet to the referee), the Rules regarding the automatic submission of team sheets to Scottish Rugby shall not apply below Regional Reserve 1.

7 THE MATCH : LAW VARIATIONS

7.1 The U19 Scrummage Law Variations shall apply below Regional Reserve 1.

8 REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES

8.1 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a referee for each Match in the National Reserve 1.

8.2 The referee for all other Reserve League Matches shall be appointed by the home Team's local referee society, failing which by the home Team. For the avoidance of doubt a Match must not be postponed if the only available official is an appropriately qualified referee from either of the participating clubs.

8.3 Each Team must provide a touch judge.

8.4 Responsibility for confirmation of the referee shall lie with the home Team.

4. WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP REGULATIONS

1 ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1 The Women's Championship shall be administered by the Championship Committee.

2 COMPOSITION AND FORMAT

Composition of the Championship

2.1 The Women's Championship shall comprise:

2.1.1 a Premier League, to be contested by 8 Teams in one division;

2.1.2 The Women's National Leagues, to be contested by 16 Teams in two divisions of eight;

2.1.3 a North League, to be contested by Teams admitted to the League from amongst the clubs within Scottish Rugby's North Area; and

2.1.4 a National Development League (the “NDL”), for those teams which have not yet demonstrated their capability to participate in the full league structure.

2.2 Teams seeking admission to the Women’s Championship or admission to the National Leagues from the North League or NDL must apply in writing to the Championship Secretary. Admission shall be subject to such conditions as the Championship Committee may require. Successful applicants may be placed in an appropriate League or Division at the Championship Committee’s sole discretion.

2.3 A club may not have more than one Team in any division.

Format of Competition

2.4 The Premier Division shall be played in two stages.

2.4.1 *Stage 1:* the Teams shall play each other on a home-or-away basis.

2.4.2 *Stage 2:* at the end of Stage 1:

(a) the Teams in places one to four shall play each other on a home-and-away basis. Final placings one to four in the division shall be based on the aggregate performances of these four Teams over Stages 1 and 2;

(b) the Teams in places five to eight shall play each other on a home-and-away basis. Final placings five to eight in the division shall be based on the aggregate performances of these four Teams over Stages 1 and 2.

2.5 In each National League division the Teams shall play each other on a home-and-away basis.

2.6 The competition format in the NDL and North League shall be as notified by the Championship Secretary prior to the start of the season.

3 METHOD FOR DECIDING ON LEAGUE PLACINGS

3.1 In the event of two or more Teams being tied as to the number of Match Points:

3.1.1 **Premiership:** The criteria for distinguishing between the Teams shall be the aggregate Match Points achieved by the Teams in the head-to-head Matches between them, failing which the aggregate points difference in these head-to-head Matches. Should this fail to separate the Teams Rule 8.3 shall apply.

3.1.2 **Other Divisions:** The Rules for separating positions shall apply other than the number of defaulted matches shall be taken into account as an additional criteria (after consideration of the aggregate scores between the Teams). The Team with the fewest defaulted matches shall be placed higher.

4 CHAMPIONS, PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

4.1 The Team winning the Premier Division shall be the Scottish Champions.

4.2 The Team finishing eighth in the Premier Division shall be relegated to National 1 and the Team finishing first in National 1 shall be promoted to the Premier Division.

4.3 The Team finishing seventh in the Premier Division and the Team finishing second in National 1 shall meet in a play-off Match. This Match shall be held at a neutral venue on a date and at a time to be arranged by the Championship Secretary. The winner of the play-off shall play in the following season’s Premier Division and the loser shall play in National 1. If the scores are level at full-time in the play-off, the *Knock-Out Match Extra Time* Rules (Rule 8.4) shall apply.

4.4 The Team finishing eighth in National 1 shall be relegated to National 2 and the Team finishing first in National 2 shall be promoted to National 1.

4.5 There shall be no relegation from National 2.

5 NON-FULFILMENT OF FIXTURES

- 5.1 If a Team fails to fulfil a Match:
- 5.1.1 the Team's opponents shall be credited with a 28-0 win and awarded five Competition Points;
 - 5.1.2 the Team responsible for the cancellation shall receive no points (unless a friendly match is played, in which case one Match Point shall be credited to it); and
 - 5.1.3 the Championship Secretary shall consider whether a Complaint should be raised in respect of the non-fulfilment.

6 THE PLAYERS

Player Registration

- 6.1 All Players participating in the Premier and National Divisions shall require to be registered with the Team for which they are competing.
- 6.2 In the North League and the NDL a Player may play for a Team to which she is not registered, provided always that she is registered with a club on Scottish Rugby's registration system. Playing as a loan Player shall not mean that the Player becomes registered to that Team.

Transfer Deadline

- 6.3 The Transfer Deadline shall not apply other than in the Premier League.

Dual Registered Players

- 6.4 A Player who has been selected for Scotland Women (or the Senior National Team of another Union) in the current season shall be ineligible to be Dual Registered unless she receives dispensation from the Championship Committee.
- 6.5 Dual Registered Players may not play for their lower placed Team if they have played more than 40 minutes for their Premier Team in the same weekend.
- 6.6 The number of Dual Registered Players permitted to participate for their lower-placed Team in a Match squad shall be:
- National 1* : Up to three;
- National 2* : Squad of at least 15 Players – up to five; Squad of less than 15 Players – up to three.

Number of Starting Players

- 6.7 In the *Premier Division* both Teams must start the Match with 15 Players, including a suitably experienced front row.
- 6.8 In *National 1* :
- 6.8.1 a Team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 12 Players), providing that this includes a suitably experienced front row and subject to it fielding at least five players in the scrum at all times; and
 - 6.8.2 if a Team is reduced (through injury or the dismissal of Players) to less than 12 Players then the Match shall be abandoned at that point.
- 6.9 In *National Division 2* and the *North League* :
- 6.9.1 A Team may start a Match with less than 15 Players (but not less than 10 Players), subject to it fielding at least five Players in the scrum at all times. If a Team starts the Match with less than 15 Players both Teams must start with an equal number of Players ("**Player Matching**").
 - 6.9.2 A Match may start with uncontested scrums, subject to there being at least five Players in the scrum at all times and the Team requesting uncontested scrums not being allowed to include any replacements in its Match squad. A Team requiring to start a Match with uncontested scrums must advise the opposition and the referee as soon as possible and, other than in exceptional circumstances, no later than 30 minutes before kick-off. The Team requesting uncontested

scrums must also advise the Championship Secretary no later than 48 hours after kick-off.

6.9.3 If a Team is reduced (through injury or the dismissal of Players) to less than 10 Players then the Match shall be abandoned at that point.

6.10 In the *NDL* a Team may start a Match with as few as seven Players and Player Matching shall apply. The Laws applicable to the number of Players available (XVs, Tens or Sevens) shall apply. Matches may start with uncontested scrums.

6.11 Any Match not complying with the above requirements shall be declared unfulfilled and may be investigated as a Non-Fulfilled Fixture.

Number of Replacements

6.12 The number of permitted replacements / substitutes shall be as follows:

Premier, National and North League – Up to five;

NDL – Up to seven.

6.13 The number of replacements able to play in the front row must be in accordance with the Laws.

Dispensation for International Players

6.14 Where five or more Players from a club are selected for the Scotland Senior National Representative Teams on a National Competition date, that Team may apply for either:

6.14.1 the Match to be rearranged to the next available stand-by date; or

6.14.2 permission to play the Match using Player Matching (down to a minimum of 12-a-side).

7 THE TEAMS

Team Sheets

7.1 Whilst the Teams shall be required to exchange team sheets (and provide a copy of the team sheet to the referee), the Rules regarding the automatic submission of team sheets to Scottish Rugby shall not apply to the North League and *NDL*.

8 UNDER 19 SCRUMMAGE LAW VARIATIONS

8.1 The U19 Scrummage Law Variations shall apply to all Matches in National 2, North League and the *NDL*.

9 REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES

9.1 The referee shall be appointed by the home Team's local referee society. Responsibility for confirmation of the referee shall lie with the home Team. Each Team must provide a touch judge.

5. CUP, SHIELD AND BOWL REGULATIONS

1 ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1 The competitions shall be called "*The Scottish Rugby Union Cup Competitions*" (the "**Cups**") and shall comprise competitions for a Scottish Cup, a National League Cup, a Shield and a Bowl or replacements or successors to them.

1.2 The Cups shall be administered by the Championship Committee other than in the regional stages of the Shield and Bowl, which shall be delegated to the appropriate Regional Competitions Committee.

2 DATES, PARTICIPANTS AND FORMAT

Fixture Dates

2.1 All Cup Matches shall be played on the dates and at the time advised by the relevant Competitions Secretary.

Format of the Scottish Cup

- 2.2 The Scottish Cup shall be contested on a knock-out basis by those Teams competing in the Premiership and the top six National 1 Teams from the previous season (which, for the avoidance of doubt, shall include the Team(s) relegated from the Premiership). The competition format shall be:
- 2.2.1 the first round shall be comprise eight fixtures drawn at random;
 - 2.2.2 the quarter-finals, the semi-finals and the final shall be each be contested by the Teams winning in the previous round.

Format of the National League Cup

- 2.3 The National League Cup shall be contested on a knock-out basis by the Teams competing in the National Leagues other than those competing in the National Cup. The competition format shall be:
- 2.3.1 the first round shall be contested by 28 Teams, with 2 Teams drawn at random receiving a bye to the second round;
 - 2.3.2 the second round shall be contested by the 14 first round winners and by the 2 Teams receiving a bye from the first round;
 - 2.3.3 the quarter-finals, the semi-finals and the final shall be each be contested by the Teams winning in the previous round.

Format of the Shield and Bowl

- 2.4 The Shield shall be contested by those Teams competing in the first and second divisions of the Regional Leagues which choose to enter. The relevant Regional Competitions Committee may make necessary adjustments to this Regulation where a Regional League's second division is contested in two or more parallel sections.
- 2.5 The Bowl shall be contested by the remaining Regional League Teams which choose to enter together with any other member club admitted to the competition by the relevant Competitions Committee.
- 2.6 The Shield and Bowl competitions shall each have two stages (the first being regional and the second on a national basis).
- 2.6.1 *Regional Shield*: Local competitions for the Shield shall be organised in each of the following four regions/areas: West, Edinburgh, Caledonia and the Borders.
 - 2.6.2 *Regional Bowl*: Local competitions for the Bowl shall be organised in each of the following four regions/areas: West, East (Edinburgh and the Borders), Midlands and North.
 - 2.6.3 *National Shield and National Bowl*: The four regional winners in each competition shall contest the respective national Semi-Finals.
- 2.7 The detailed competition format for the Shield and Bowl shall be as published by the Championship Secretary prior to the start of the relevant season.

3 VENUES AND GATE RECEIPTS

- 3.1 Each Match, except for the national finals, shall be played at the home ground of the Team drawn first.
- 3.2 The venues for the national finals shall be determined by the Board. The home Team in a final shall be determined by the order of the semi-final draw, with the finalist drawn first being the home Team.
- 3.3 For all Matches, except the national finals, the gate receipts (net of any VAT payable by the home club) shall be shared by the two Teams on an equal basis, and the visiting Team's share of the receipts shall be provided to it at the end of the Match. No Team shall be entitled to deduct any Match advertising or travel expenses before the division of the gate receipts.
- 3.4 Any privilege of free admission (including by season ticket or club membership) shall not apply and all spectators shall be charged the same level of entrance fee (where an entrance fee is charged) for equivalent accommodation.

4 THE MATCH

Match Points and Placings

- 4.1 Where Matches are played in a league format Match Points and Bonus Points shall be awarded in accordance with the National Competition Rules.
- 4.2 If two or more Teams in a league format are equal on Competition Points, placings shall be determined based on the Teams' respective points difference (being points scored for less points against), failing which by the aggregate score over the fixtures between the Teams. If this fails to separate them then the following criteria (in the order given and based on all fixtures played by them in the league) shall be used to decide the first placed team:
 - 4.2.1 most tries scored;
 - 4.2.2 most conversions;
 - 4.2.3 most drop goals;
 - 4.2.4 fewest red cards; and
 - 4.2.5 fewest yellow cards.
 - 4.2.6 In the event that none of the above is able to separate the teams a coin shall be tossed.
- 4.3 Where Matches are played on a knock-out basis extra time shall be played and the winner determined in accordance with *the Knock-Out Match Extra Time Rules* (Rule 8.4).

Postponed and Abandoned Matches

- 4.4 Where a Cup Match is postponed or abandoned before 20 minutes of the second half have elapsed it shall be played as directed by the Competition Secretary. Rescheduled Matches in the Cup shall normally take priority over rescheduled League matches. A Team failing to observe a direction for the playing of a fixture shall be liable to disqualification and/or other sanction.
- 4.5 Other than with the consent of the relevant Competitions Committee, a Cup fixture may only be rescheduled once. In the event that a rescheduled fixture cannot be played, and/or where the requirements of the tournament necessitate, the Championship Committee may resolve that the winner of any Match or league stage shall be determined by the toss of a coin.

Non-Fulfilment of Fixtures

- 4.6 A Team failing to fulfil a knock-out Match shall be liable to disqualification and/or other sanction.
- 4.7 A Team failing to fulfil a league-format Match in the Cup shall be liable sanction in accordance with the National Competition Rules for non-fulfilment.

5 THE PLAYERS

Number of Starting Players

- 5.1 **Scottish Cup and National League Cup:** Both Teams must start the Match with 15 Players, including a suitably experienced front-row.
- 5.2 **Shield:** Both Teams must start a Match with 15 Players, including a suitably experienced front-row.
- 5.3 **Bowl:** In the Bowl competition:
 - 5.3.1 a Team may start a Match with less than 15 Players (but not less than 12 Players), subject to it fielding at least five Players in the scrum at all times.
 - 5.3.2 a Match may start with uncontested scrums, subject to there being at least five Players in the scrum at all times and the Team requesting uncontested scrums not being allowed to include any replacements in its Match squad. A Team requiring to start a Match with uncontested scrums must advise the opposition and the referee as soon as possible and, other than in exceptional circumstances, no later than 30 minutes before kick-off. The Team requesting uncontested scrums must also advise the appropriate Competitions Committee no later than 48 hours after

kick-off.

- 5.4 Any Match not complying with the above requirements shall be declared unfulfilled and may be investigated as a Non-Fulfilled Fixture

Number of Replacements

- 5.5 The number of permitted replacements / substitutes shall be as follows:
- 5.5.1 **Scottish Cup and National League Cup:** Quarter-finals, semi-finals and final – up to seven; earlier rounds – four or five.
 - 5.5.2 **Shield:** Semi-finals and final – up to seven; earlier rounds - up to four.
 - 5.5.3 **Bowl:** Up to seven.
- 5.6 There shall be no requirement for parity between the two teams as to the number of replacements except in the national finals.
- 5.7 The number of replacements able to play in the front row must be in accordance with the Laws.

Transfer Deadline

- 5.8 The Transfer Deadline does not apply in respect of Teams participating in a Regional League's second or lower division. However, any Player benefiting from this exemption cannot participate in a national semi-final or final of the Shield or Bowl without the prior written consent of the Championship Committee. It shall at the Championship Committee's discretion to decide whether sufficient reason has been provided to grant such a dispensation.

6 LAW VARIATIONS

U19 Scrummage Variations

- 6.1 The Board shall determine in advance of each season whether these variations shall apply in respect of any other Bowl Matches.

7 REFEREES, ASSISTANT REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES

- 7.1 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a referee and assistant referees for each of the finals Matches in the Cup.
- 7.2 In respect of earlier rounds:
- 7.2.1 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a referee and, where available, assistant referees for all Scottish Cup and National League Cup Matches. Where assistant referees are not appointed each Team shall provide a touch judge.
 - 7.2.2 The home Team's local referee society shall appoint a referee for each Shield and Bowl Match. Other than for the national semi-finals, where assistant referees shall be appointed by the home Club's local society, each Team shall provide a touch judge.
- 7.3 Responsibility for confirmation of the referee and, where appropriate, the assistant referees shall lie with the home Team.

6. WOMEN'S CUP COMPETITIONS REGULATIONS

1 ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

- 1.1 The competitions shall be called "*The Scottish Rugby Union Women's Cup Competitions*" (the "**Women's Cups**") and shall comprise the Sarah Beaney Cup, the National Bowl and the National Plate or replacements or successors to them.
- 1.2 The Women's Cups shall be administered by the Championship Committee.
- 1.3 The structure and dates for the competitions shall be defined by Scottish Rugby each season.

2 DATES, PARTICIPANTS AND FORMAT

Fixture Dates

- 2.1 The Matches shall be played on the dates and at the time advised by the Championship Secretary. Where both Teams agree, application may be made to play on an earlier date.

Format of Competitions

- 2.2 The *Sarah Beaney Cup* shall be played as follows:
- 2.2.1 the preliminary rounds and the first round shall be contested by those Teams in National 1 and 2, together with such other Teams and composite sides as may be admitted to the competition, to establish four Teams to progress to the second round.
 - 2.2.2 the second round shall comprise the four Teams progressing from the first round together with the Premier Teams ranked five to eight from the preceding season.
 - 2.2.3 the quarter-finals shall be contested by the four second round winners and the four remaining Premier Teams. The Premier Teams ranked one and two from the preceding season shall be seeded in opposite halves of the draw.
 - 2.2.4 the semi-finals and finals shall be contested by the winners from the previous round.
- 2.3 The *Bowl* shall be contested by the Teams losing in the Preliminary Round and Round 1 of the Sarah Beaney Cup and shall be played in the following format:
- 2.3.1 a preliminary round shall be contested to establish eight qualifiers to progress to the quarter-finals;
 - 2.3.2 the quarter-finals shall be contested by those Teams progressing from the preliminary round; and
 - 2.3.3 the semi-finals and final shall be contested by the winners from the previous round.
- 2.4 In the *Plate* competition the semi-finals shall be contested by the Teams losing in Round 2 of the Sarah Beaney Cup. The final shall be contested by the winners of the semi-finals.

3 THE MATCH

Venue

- 3.1 Each Match, except for the finals, shall be played at the home ground of the Team drawn first.
- 3.2 The venues for the finals shall be determined by the Board. The home team in a final shall be determined by the order of the semi-final draw, with the finalist drawn first being the home team.

Postponed and Abandoned Matches

- 3.3 Where a Match is postponed or abandoned it shall be played as directed by the Championship Secretary (including midweek where necessary). Rescheduled Matches in the Cup shall normally take priority over rescheduled league matches. A Team failing to observe a direction for the playing of a fixture shall be liable to disqualification and/or other sanction.
- 3.4 Other than with the consent of the Championship Committee a Women's Cup fixture may only be rescheduled twice. In the event that the rescheduled fixture cannot be played and/or where the requirements of the tournament necessitate, the Championship Committee may resolve that the winner of any Match shall be determined by the toss of a coin.

Non-Fulfilment of Fixtures

- 3.5 A Team failing to fulfil a Match shall be liable to disqualification and/or other sanction.

Drawn Matches

- 3.6 Where the Teams are level at full time, extra-time shall be played and the winner determined in accordance with the *Knock-Out Match Extra Time Rules* (Rule 8.4).

4 THE PLAYERS

Eligibility

- 4.1 A Player registered for a Team not participating in the Women's Cup Competitions may play for another Team (or for a composite Team) without the need to be Dual Registered. Any Team borrowing such a Player must declare the Player to the Championship Secretary prior to its first cup Match.
- 4.2 A Player who has been selected for either of Scotland's Senior National Representative Teams (or another nation's equivalent) in either the current or previous season may only play for the Team with whom she is registered.
- 4.3 A Player cannot transfer to a club which has played at least one match in the competition. A Player shall become cup-tied to the first Team she participates for in the Women's Cup Competitions.

Number of Starting Players

- 4.4 In the Women's Cup competitions:
 - 4.4.1 a Team may start a Match with less than 15 Players (but not less than 12 Players), subject to it fielding at least five Players in the scrum at all times. If a Team starts the Match with less than 15 Players, other than in respect of a Match between two Premier Teams, both Teams must start with an equal number of Players ("Player Matching").
 - 4.4.2 If a Team is reduced (through injury or the dismissal of Players) to less than 12 Players then the Match shall be Abandoned at that point.
 - 4.4.3 A Match involving at least one National 2, North League, NDL or composite Team may start with uncontested scrums, subject to there being at least five Players in the scrum at all times and the Team requesting uncontested scrums not being allowed to include any replacements in its Match squad. A Team requiring to start a Match with uncontested scrums must advise the opposition and the referee as soon as possible and, other than in exceptional circumstances, no later than 30 minutes before kick-off. The Team requesting uncontested scrums must also advise the Championship Secretary no later than 48 hours after kick-off.
- 4.5 Any Match not complying with the above requirements shall be declared unfulfilled and may be investigated as a Non-Fulfilled Fixture.

Number of Replacements

- 4.6 The maximum permitted number of replacements shall be seven. The number of replacements able to play in the front row must be in accordance with the Laws.

5 UNDER 19 SCRUMMAGE LAW VARIATIONS

- 5.1 Matches solely involving Teams from the Premier League and National 1 shall be played in accordance with the Laws.
- 5.2 All other Matches shall be played in accordance with the U19 Scrummage Law Variations.

6 REFEREES, ASSISTANT REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES

- 6.1 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a referee and assistant referees for the competition finals.
- 6.2 In respect of earlier rounds the referee shall be appointed by the home Team's local referee society. Responsibility for confirmation of the referee shall lie with the home Team. Both Teams must provide a touch judge.

APPENDIX 2 : DESIGNATED ADULT COMPETITIONS AND KEY DATES

1 Designated Competitions

The National Competition Rules shall apply in respect of the following competitions and such other competitions as may be designated by the Board from time to time:

Adult Men

Premiership and National Leagues

Caledonia, East and West Regional Leagues

National and Regional Reserve Leagues

Scottish Rugby Union Cup competitions (Scottish Cup, National League Cup, Shield and Bowl)

Adult Women

Women's Premier, National, North and National Development Leagues

Women's Cup Competitions (*Sarah Beaney Cup, National Plate and National Bowl*)

2 Dates for 2017 and 2018

Close Time begins	22 May 2017
Close Time ends	4 August 2017
Transfer Deadline	26 November 2017
Close Time begins	21 May 2018
Close Time ends	3 August 2018