

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS 2005/06**

### **1 General RFUW Competitive Structure**

1.1 The RFUW Competitive Structure is divided into Club (Senior), Student and Youth (*Under 14 and Under 17 years of age*) Competitions.

1.1.1 The Senior Club Structure comprises of a League and a Cup Competition.

1.1.2 The Youth Structure consists of an U17 National Cup Competition.

1.1.3 Club Sides may not participate in Student Competitions; Student Sides may participate in Club Competitions (e.g. national cup, national 7's) if they are affiliated and accepted as full member clubs.

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

### **1.2 Omissions and Interpretations and Further Regulations**

1.2.1 The RFUW Board of Directors shall have the absolute and unfettered discretion to decide on any matters not provided for in and on the interpretation of these Regulations and/or make further or alternative regulations for the Competitive Structure and individual competitions where there is a requirement. The RFUW Board of Director's decision shall therefore be final and binding.

### **1.3 Mixed Rugby**

The playing of rugby football between male and female teams or by teams containing male and female players is prohibited if one or more of the players are over the age of 12 years at midnight 31<sup>st</sup> August/1<sup>st</sup> September of the season concerned as per RFU Continuum.

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

## 2 General Rules

### 2.1 Competition Entry and Participation Conditions

To participate in the League and Cup Competitions certain rules, as laid down in this section, must be adhered to. Failure to comply with these regulations may result in disciplinary action being taken by the RFUW, which may include clubs having points deducted, having to play all competition fixtures away from home or eventual expulsion from the league and/or cup.

2.1.1 All games will be played according to IRB laws unless otherwise specified in each RFUW League Criteria.

2.1.2 Each club is responsible for the conduct of its supporters, both home and away. Therefore the club must ensure that they refrain from excessive abusive language and/or incitement to violence at all times. This rule will be enforced in accordance with the RFU/W Equity Policy.

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

2.1.4 The home team is expected to provide women only changing and washing facilities for the opposition, along with appropriate facilities for the Referee.

### 2.2 Eligibility of Teams to enter RFUW Competitions

2.2.1 All Club, Student and Youth Sides must be fully affiliated members of the RFUW and comprehensively insured with RFUW Insurers.

2.2.1.1 Clubs will not be entered into a league until receipt of the completed intention to affiliate form at the end of May. On return of the affiliation forms and fee clubs must be able to nominate squad players, which they intend to register for the forthcoming season.

2.2.1.2 Leagues and fixtures will be complete by 1<sup>st</sup> July. Teams will *not* be entered into a league following this date and will be playing friendly fixtures only for the current season.

2.2.1.3 Only Club sides that are fully paid up members of the RFUW and insured with the RFUW Insurer can participate in the Club league and Cup Competitions. Clubs must be able to prove that to the RFUW that they are comprehensively insured before the start of the season.

2.2.1.4 Only Student sides that are fully paid up members of the RFUW and insured with RFUW Insurers can participate in the Student Tournaments. No Student side may play in the Club League

and Cup Competitions unless they apply to the RFUW for full club status.

2.2.2 Number of club sides able to compete in the respective League Competitions:

2.2.2.1 Only one club team can participate in Premier Division 1 & 2, there will be no club 3<sup>rd</sup> XV etc or lower in the Premier Division. A club 2<sup>nd</sup> XV may only participate in Premier Division 2 if the club 1<sup>st</sup> XV is in Premier Division 1. A club 3<sup>rd</sup> XV may only participate in National Challenge Division 1 if their 1<sup>st</sup> XV and 2<sup>nd</sup> XV are in Premier Divisions 1 & 2 respectively.

This will be reflected in National Challenge Division 2 and below.

2.3 Eligibility of Individual Players – Club and Student

2.3.1 All players participating in the RFUW Competition Structure (and player development pathway) must be both:

- a) individually registered with the RFUW by the specified date and have paid the requisite player registration fee.
- b) a member of an affiliated club or student team.

2.3.2 New Players must register with the RFUW before they are eligible for league and/or cup matches. Registration is effective on the receipt of the form by the RFUW HQ at Twickenham

2.3.2.1 Urgent registration can be given verbally to the RFUW Competitions Director by no later than 12 noon on the Saturday before the match for which permission to play is sought. However written confirmation and registration form must be received within 7 days.

2.3.3 Student players can register with both a student team and one club side.

2.3.4 If clubs play an ineligible player they will face an RFUW Disciplinary Ruling which could result in the club having league points deducted if league fixtures are involved or defaulting the next cup fixture if cup fixtures are involved.

2.4 Player Transfers

A player may only move once between clubs during the season, this involves both new and current club completing a Transfer Form. Following such a move the rules as outlined below must be adhered to.

2.4.1 A transfer is deemed to take place if a player has registered with one club for that season and wishes to play for another club.

2.4.2 A player cannot play for the new club until the RFUW Competitions Director has received the completed transfer. The date the form is received is the date of transfer. The form must be signed by

the Captain of the "old" club and the Captain of the "new" club. If the transferring player is the Captain of the "old" club then the Secretary of the "old" club must sign the form.

2.4.2.1 The Captain/Secretary of the "old" club can only refuse to sign the form if the player is under suspension or is in debt to the "old" club. The Captain/Secretary of the "old" club must sign the form within 5 days of the request for signature, deliberate delay in signing the form (unless for the reasons as stated above) could lead to the club having disciplinary action taken against it by the RFUW.

2.4.2.2. If any transferring player comes across Rule 2.4.2.1 please contact the RFUW's Competitions Director immediately.

2.4.3 If the transferred player has played no league games that season for their previous club, they are eligible to play league rugby immediately.

2.4.4 If the transferred player has played one or more league or cup games for their previous club that season, they must miss the next league or cup match after the date of transfer.

2.4.5 A player may only represent one club in all the RFUW Cup Competitions

2.4.6 These rules do not apply if a player transfers between clubs 'out of season', i.e. between June 1<sup>st</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup> of the given year.

2.4.7 A player wishing to transfer more than once in a playing season can request an individual hearing from the RFUW Competitions Director.

## 2.5 Movement of Players Between Teams Inside One Club.

For clubs running two or more teams in the RFUW Competitions there will be a standard movement of players allowed between the teams of the club.

All clubs with two or more teams playing in the RFUW League Structure must present their squad lists to the RFUW Competition Director by 9pm on the Friday before the match is due to be played on the Sunday. Failure to do this will lead to a RFUW mandatory fine and could result in league points being deducted.

2.5.1 Standard movement will be defined as follows:

- (a) Improved players getting into higher teams
- (b) Players being dropped in an agreement with the RFUW Competitions Director.
- (c) Injured players returning to the game in the lower teams
- (d) Players replacing injured players in higher teams, solely for the duration of that injury
- (e) Any other movement which is interpreted as being within the 'spirit of the game', by the RFUW Competition Committee

Rotation may be seen as not to be within the spirit of the game and therefore a club maybe in breach of 2.5.1 (e).

2.5.2 The following is not permitted:

- (a) A player who played in the last 1<sup>st</sup> team League or Cup match may not play in the next 2<sup>nd</sup> team League or Cup fixture unless:
  - (1) They were replacing an injured regular 1<sup>st</sup> team player who is now fit;
  - (2) They have been dropped in favour of a better player in agreement with the RFUW Competitions Director.

Any situation which would breach these rules, must be cleared with the RFUW Competitions Director, prior to 9pm the Friday before the match for which permission to play is sought.

- (b) If the 1<sup>st</sup> team do not have a fixture you must still name a squad as per rule 2.5.

2.6 Replacements

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

2.6.2 All replacements shall be named prior to kick off.

2.7 Substitutions

2.7.1 Premier 1 & 2, National Challenge 1 and National Challenge 2, can substitute up to a maximum of 7 players. Substitutions may only be made when the ball is dead and with the permission of the referee.

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

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

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

2.7.2 Challenge 3 & below. All matches can be played with reduced numbers and teams either match 15, 12 or 10 a side  
Squad size 18 with a maximum of 10 interchanges roll on roll off substitutions

2.8 Permanent Replacements

A player may be replaced if injured. If the player is permanently replaced, that player must not return to play in that match. The replacement of the injured player must be made when the ball is dead and with the permission of the referee.

2.9 Suitably Trained and Experienced Players in the Front Row

2.9.1 The table below indicates the numbers of suitably trained and experienced players for the front row when nominating different numbers of players.

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

**Comment:** I follow IRB, I H website

2.9.1.1 Each player in the front row and the potential replacement must be suitably trained and experienced.

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

2.9.2 Club Premier Division 1 & 2, National Challenge Leagues 1 & 2, Club National Cup Competition:

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

A substituted player can return to the field of play for an injured front row player if no other suitably trained replacement is available.

2.9.3 Club Challenge Leagues 3 and below

If on the first occasion a front row player requires to be replaced and her team cannot provide a replacement or other player capable of playing in the front row of the scrum so that uncontested scrums result, then the match result shall stand.

A substituted player can return to the field of play for an injured front row player if no other suitably trained replacement is available.

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

## 2.10 Uncontested Scrums – Premier 1 &amp; 2, National Challenge 1 &amp; 2,

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

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

## 2.10.1 Challenge 3 and below.

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

In the event of this taking place communication must be made with the opposition and every effort must be made within your club to train suitable front row replacements.

## 2.11 Defaulting Fixtures

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

## 2.11.1 Premier Division 1 &amp; 2,

For the 2005/06 season, Clubs that do not fulfill two or more of their fixtures will be automatically relegated at the end of the season.

## 2.11.2 National Challenge 1

Clubs that do not fulfill one of their fixtures will have their league status reviewed at the end of the season, Clubs that do not fulfill two of their fixtures will automatically be relegated at the end of the season.

## 2.11.3 National Challenge Division 2 and below

Clubs that do not fulfil two or more of their fixtures will have their league status reviewed for the next season by the competition director and this may result in relegation or removal from the leagues.

## 2.12 Referees

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

## 2.12.1 Club Premier League 1 &amp; 2 and National Challenge League 1, &amp; 2, and all Cup Competitions a Society Referee must be appointed who is neutral to both teams

## 2.12.2 Club Challenge Division 3 and below, every attempt should be made to provide a Society Referee, otherwise a qualified referee must be used. The status and any relationship to the home club of the person, who will officiate at the match, must be declared to the opposition prior to kick off.

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

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

### 2.13 Abandonment

2.13.1 It is the responsibility of the home club to provide a suitable pitch for the match to be played on. If your Club's ground is prone to being waterlogged or frozen, every effort must be made to secure another ground within a reasonable distance of your club to try and ensure the fixture takes place on the designated day.

2.13.2 If a match is abandoned because of weather conditions when sixty minutes or more have been played, then the score at the moment of abandonment shall stand and be deemed to be the final score in the match. The referee's decision as to the necessity for abandonment and the number of minutes played and the time of abandonment shall be final.

2.13.3 If weather conditions prevent a match being played, or a match is abandoned because of such conditions with less than sixty minutes having been played, the match shall be replayed on a date to be agreed by both teams and the RFUW Competitions Director

2.13.4 If the referee finds it necessary to abandon the match for any reason other than weather conditions, then irrespective of the number of minutes played the result of that match may be determined by the Competition Director or the match be ordered to be replayed.

2.13.5 If the match is abandoned as stated above both teams shall provide a completed match day form signed by the Referee and stating the exact time of the match abandonment, the number of minutes played, the score at time of abandonment and the reason for abandonment.

2.13.6 If a match is abandoned the Result service must be telephoned, failure to do so will lead to a mandatory fine.

### 2.14 Re-arrangement of Fixtures

#### 2.14.1 Priority of Fixtures:

National Club Cup Competitions  
Club League Competitions  
Student Cup Competition  
Student Tournament  
Friendly Matches

#### 2.14.2 All League & Cup Competitions

A fixture may only be moved in circumstances, which in the opinion of the Competition Director are considered extreme. Both clubs must be in agreement and must notify the Competition Director, at least 5 days prior to the original fixture.

- 2.14.3 If agreement is not reached between the two clubs on the re-arranged date, the fixture will be played as directed by the Competitions Director.
- 2.14.4 It is the clubs responsibility to inform the Competitions Director and the Result service of the new date, failure to do so could lead to a mandatory fine or loss of league points
- 2.14.5 Prem 1 & 2, National Challenge 1 & 2 and Club Challenge Leagues (Division 3 & Below)  
In the event of a League Match not being played the Competition Director at his/her absolute discretion, may award the competition points to either side, divide the competition points equally between the sides, decide that no competition points shall be awarded or if he/she is in the view that a club has unjustifiably failed to fulfil it's obligations or deduct competition points from the Club. In addition the Competition Director may order the match to be replayed on a date specified or order a match to count as a "double header" whereby the outcome of the match will count against both fixtures, by having had regard to the promotion and relegation issues in the league concerned, (including the effect on other Clubs in the league not involved in the league match) the commitments of the club concerned and giving priority to arguments of the club who was not at fault in the event of a dispute on any re-arranged match date.

## 2.15 Kick-Off Delay

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

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

## 2.16 Match Day Forms & Results

Score Reporting – The home side is required to telephone their results in immediately after the game has finished, and by no later than 6pm on the day of the match. All results for all leagues must be telephoned to the RFUW Result line on **0870 741 5117**.

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

2.16.1 The match day forms are crucial to the workings of the league and cup competitions. All home teams are ultimately responsible for ensuring they return a match day form for all RFUW Competition Matches within 5 days of the fixture being played to the addresses indicated in Section 1 "League & Cup Contacts" for each league.

2.16.2 Failure to comply will lead to the offending club having a monetary fine imposed. Persistent offenders will ultimately lead to league points being

deducted or cup fixtures forfeited. Continued non-return of forms may lead to expulsion from the league.

- 2.16.3 Each club is responsible for correctly completing a match result sheet in accordance with the Match Day Requirements.
- 2.16.4 Providing false information on players or replacements taking part in a match shall be a serious offence.
- 2.16.5 A club proved to be guilty of providing false information:
- 2.16.5.1 League Competition - the offending team shall receive a mandatory fine and be deducted no more than eight championship points on each occasion false information has been provided. This will be in addition to any points which may have been deducted if the players or replacements were ineligible.
- 2.16.5.2 Cup Competition - the offending team shall be disqualified immediately from the competition and fined a minimum of £100.
- 2.16.6 The Competition Director is empowered to impose monetary fines for failure to comply with any of the above or Match Day Instructions and non-payment of fines by the due dates may lead to a deduction of two competition points for each such offence.

## 2.17 Disciplinary Measures

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

## 2.18 Mandatory Fines

Failing to telephone result in by 6pm -	£20
Failure to send in match day form within 5 days -	£20
Failure to send in 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> XV squads -	£20
Providing false information and the playing of unregistered players - and an RFU disciplinary hearing, which could lead to points being deducted.	£50 per player
Failing to fill in yellow and red match day forms -	£15

In the case of repeat offending the fines will be at the discretion of the Competitions Director.

## Senior Rugby

### 3 Club League Competitive Structure – Rules

#### 3.1 Premier Division 1 & 2

- 3.1.1 Will comprise of a maximum of 9 teams.
- 3.1.2 Each team will play every other team twice: a home fixture and an away fixture.
- 3.1.3 The fixture dates will be pre-set by the RFUW Competitions Director. Dates will be available by 1<sup>st</sup> July of the current year at the latest, provided relevant affiliation fees and insurance premiums have been paid.
- 3.1.4 All League fixtures must be completed on or before 31st May of that current season.
- 3.1.5 Premier Division 1 & 2 may not borrow players from other clubs for League games under any circumstances.
- 3.1.6 Matches can only be cancelled/re-arranged for:
  - i) Unforecast freak weather conditions or
  - ii) 5 or more players are away on England International Duty
- 3.1.7 Match day squad numbers are limited to a maximum of 22 players
- 3.1.8 Entry to Premier 1 is gained by closed application. Applications to Premier 1 will be individually investigated by the RFUW:
  - i) All clubs must have a Club development plan by the end of the 2005/06 season
  - ii) Strength of club and at least 30 registered players
  - iii) Recent playing history

#### National Challenge 1

- 3.1.10 Will comprise of a maximum of 9 teams.
- 3.1.11 Each team will play every other team twice: a home fixture and an away fixture.
- 3.1.12 The fixture dates will be pre-set by the RFUW Competitions Director. Dates will be available by 1<sup>st</sup> July of the current year at the latest, provided relevant affiliation fees and insurance premiums have been paid.
- 3.1.13 League fixtures must be completed on or before 31<sup>st</sup> May of that current season.

3.1.14 Match day squad numbers – maximum of 22 players

3.1.15 Matches can only be cancelled / rearranged for:

- i) Unforecast freak weather conditions or
- ii) 5 or more players are away on England Senior International Duty

3.1.16 The winning teams from the North, Midlands South East and South West will participate in a play off round robin tournament. All games will be played on the same day and each match will be 30 minutes long. The team that tops the round robin league will have the opportunity to accept promotion to premiership 2 if they meet the RFUW criteria.

National & Club Challenge Leagues (2 & below)

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

3.1.18 All matches will be 35 minutes each way

3.1.19 All leagues will be run with a fixed amount of dates and structured fixtures

National Challenge 2

3.1.20 Matches will be 15 a side

3.1.21 Match day squad numbers will be a maximum of 22

3.1.22 Scrum: No wheeling; no more than 1.5 m push in scrum.

3.1.23 A Society referee is required.

Challenge 3 & below

3.1.24 All matches can be played with reduced numbers and teams either match 15, 12, or 10 a side. 12 a side will comprise of 6 forwards and 6 backs (front row, second row, number 8) 10 a side will comprise of 5 forwards and 5 backs (front row, second row).

3.1.25 Maximum of 18 players with 10 interchanges allowed using roll on roll off substitutes.

3.1.26 Teams are required to contact their opposition by no later than Thursday evening to confirm playing numbers for the scheduled fixtures to enable both teams to agree on the format of the match.

3.2 Match Duration

3.2.1 The duration of the game shall be 40 minutes each way, no extra time shall be played if the result is a draw.

3.2.2 Exception: Challenge 2 & below shall be 35 minutes each way maximum.

### 3.3 Kick Off

3.3.1 All matches shall start at the following times:

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

3.3.2 Kick-off time may be re-arranged by mutual agreement between two clubs. If the away team disagrees, they must contact the Competition Director 4 days in advance of the fixture. Failure to do so will be taken as an agreement to the new time.

### 3.4 League Points

3.4.1 Premier 1 & 2 and National Challenge 1 and 2 are as follows -

4 points for a Win  
2 point for a Draw  
0 points for a Loss

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

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

3.4.3 Final League Positions will be calculated as follows:

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

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

- (c) If two or more teams have equal match points difference, they shall be placed according to the greatest number of match points scored (*incorporating Note above as applicable*).
- (d) If two or more teams have equal points they shall be placed according to the greatest number of tries scored.
- (e) If two or more teams have scored equal number of tries they shall be placed according to the greatest number of drop goals scores.
- (f) If two or more teams are still equal they shall be placed according to the greatest number of conversions scored.
- (g) If two or more teams are still equal their positions shall be decided by drawing of lots.

- 3.4.4 Club Challenge 3 and below are as follows-
- 3 points for a win
  - 2 points for a draw
  - 1 point for playing
  - 0 for not playing

3.4.5. **Borrowing of Players**

**No teams playing in Prem 1, Prem 2 and National Challenge 1 can borrow players or lend players to other teams.**

The borrowing and lending of players is allowed by the RFUW at Club Challenge 2 and below to assist with fulfilling fixtures. Therefore, if in order to put out a side a challenge team needs to borrow or lend players the following rules must be adhered to:

- (a) A maximum of two players can be borrowed
- (b) A borrowed player must be declared to the opposition prior to the start of the fixture, giving name and club details.
- (c) Players from teams in Premier Division 1 & 2 or National Challenge 1 may not be borrowed.

**Player Loan Agreement**

Prem 1,2 and National Challenge 1 teams can loan a player from National challenge 2 or below for a maximum of 6 games per season.

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

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

For a loan agreement form please contact the Competitions Director or the RFUW office.

3.5 Promotion and Relegation

3.5.1 Club League

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

3.5.1.2 Premier Division 1

The league will consists of 9 sides, who will play each other home and away

The team finishing bottom of the league may be asked to play in a playoff if –

- a) A 1<sup>st</sup> XV wins Prem 2
- b) The team that wins Prem 2 meets the criteria to play in Prem 1 and wishes to participate in a playoff.

NB: Please note that for any playoff all teams will have all their players released from England duty

#### 3.5.1.3 Premier Division 2

The league will consist of 8 sides who will play each other home and away.

If a 1<sup>st</sup> XV finishes top of the league they may be given the opportunity to playoff with the bottom placed team in Prem 1 if -

- a) A 1<sup>st</sup> XV wins Prem 2
- b) The team that wins Prem 2 meets the criteria to play in Prem 1 and wishes to participate in a playoff.

NB: Please note that for any playoff all teams will have all their players released from England duty

Any second team in premierships 2 will automatically be demoted if their first team is relegated from Premiership 1

#### 3.5.1.4 National Challenge Division 1

The winning teams from the North, Midlands, South East, South West will participate in a play off, each team will play each other in a round robin tournament on the same day at the same venue. The winner of those games will have the opportunity to accept promotion to Premiership 2.

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

Each match will be 30 minutes each way. Maximum squad numbers of 25 for the day.

#### 3.5.1.5 National Challenge 2 & below

Promotion - There will be 1 side promoted from each League

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

If a team declines to take promotion, the second placed team from that division will automatically qualify for promotion, if they decline promotion then no other clubs from that division will automatically be promoted, unless a request has been made by the Competitions Director

## 4 Student League Competitive Structure – Rules

All Student Leagues are run by BUSA. For further details and information please

contact Anna Liddell at BUSA on 020 7357 8555.

## 5 Cup Competitions

For the coming season the RFUW will endeavour to run three separate Competitions, The National Cup, The National Shield and the National Challenge Cup.

All Final will take place, except in circumstances considered by the Board of Directors to be extreme, at a neutral ground. Venue to be decided.

Matches will be played on the dates as set out in the RFUW Calendar and the Competitions will run as follows:

### 5.1 NATIONAL CUP Competition

All teams in Premier 1, Premier 2 will be invited to participate in this competition. A £100 entrance fee must be paid and £75 will be returned as a deposit.

Prem 1 and Prem 2 (16 Clubs) - 3 Weekends

Round 1 – Tournament @ a Central Venue

4 Pools (A, B,C,D) of 4 teams – The 4 pool leaders will be the top 4 clubs from the half way stage in Prem 1, the rest of the clubs will be drawn randomly from their leagues into the pools, 2<sup>nd</sup> teams cannot be drawn with their first team.

Matches will be 20 mins each way and played to U19 Scrummage Rules  
Squad size – Max 25 players

Top 2 team from each pool will be drawn into Quarter Finals at the end of the tournament and complete the following draw.

Round 2 – Quarter Final 40 minutes each way – Squad Size 22 – Full IRB laws

Round 3 – Semi Finals 40 minutes each way – Squad Size 22 – Full IRB laws

Round 3 – National Cup Final

### 5.2 NATIONAL SHIELD

All clubs who play their rugby in National Challenge 1, will be invited to participate in this competition. A £100 entrance fee must be paid and £75 will be returned as a deposit.

National Challenge 1 (32 teams)

Round 1 – 2 tournaments split into North and South

North 1 and Midlands 1 – 16 teams = NORTH

South East 1 and South West 1 – 16 Teams = SOUTH

4 pools (A,B,C,D) of 4 teams - Drawn at random

Matches will be 20 mins each way and played to U19 Scrummage Rules  
Squad size – Max 25 players

The top side from each pool will be drawn into Quarter Finals

Round 2 – Quarter Finals 40 minutes each way – Squad Size 22 – Full IRB laws

Round 3 – Semi Final

Round 4 – National Shield Final

### 5.3 NATIONAL CHALLENGE CUP

All clubs who play their rugby in National Challenge 2 and below are invited to participate in this competition on a first come first served basis.

A £100 entrance fee must be paid and £75 will be returned as a deposit

Round 1 – 4 Tournaments split into 4 regions

North – Maximum 16 clubs

Midlands – Maximum 16 clubs

South West – Maximum 16 clubs

South East – Maximum 16 Clubs

4 pools (A,B,C,D) of 4 teams - Drawn at random

Matches will be 20 mins each way and played to U19 Scrummage Rules

Squad size – Max 25 players

Top side of each pool will continue in the cup

Round 2 – Tournament split into North and South

North and Midlands – 8 teams = North

South East and South West – 8 teams = South

2 pools (A and B) of teams – Drawn at Random

The 4 pool winners will progress to a semi final

Round 3 – Semi final – 35 mins each way – Squad size 22

Round 4 – National Challenge Final

### 5.4 Cup Competition Rules (Club)

5.4.1 RFUW Cup Fixtures take priority over all other RFUW Competition matches.

5.4.2 Clubs who enter more than one team into any cup competition will be required to register their individual squads with the Competitions Director prior to the first round of the competition. Failure to do so will lead to the removal of the team/s from the competition.

- 5.4.2.1 Movement of players between squads may be allowed after consultation and agreement from the Competitions Director
- 5.4.2.2 Players that move clubs during the current playing season who have played in a cup match for their first club will be cup tied. Therefore they will not be eligible to play in a Cup Competition for their new club. This does not apply if the players did not play in any cup matches for their previous club.
- 5.4.3 No players may be borrowed for Cup Fixtures unless their team is not taking part in any Cup Competitions
- 5.4.4 The dates for the cup rounds shall be fixed in advance by the RFUW and must be played on the specified date and may only be moved in circumstances which in the opinion of the Competition Director are considered extreme.
- 5.4.5 The home venue is randomly selected and will be at the club which is drawn 'first out of the hat'.
  - 5.4.5.1 If the home team cannot provide a society referee and the opposition are able to, the home team will have to relinquish home advantage
  - 5.4.5.2 Home Advantage: A team who has home advantage should make every reasonable effort to secure a home pitch. If the weather looks destined to be bad and a team knows there is a possibility that the pitch will be unfit, they should secure a second pitch in reserve nearby. If they are unable to do this and their opponents can offer a fit pitch on the fixture date then the home team must relinquish home advantage.
  - 5.4.5.3 Unforecast, freak weather conditions, snow/ice may be deemed an exception. The Competition Director should be informed of all circumstances leading up to a fixture where problems may occur. The Competition Director will adjudicate in all circumstances and the decision will be final.
- 5.4.6 Teams who default in any of the Cup Competition will lose their deposit and have their case of entering the next years' competition reviewed by the Competition Director
- 5.4.7 The team that scored the greatest number of points shall be deemed the winners of the cup-tie.
  - (a) If after full time the scores are equal, a period of 10 minutes each way extra time shall be played. The

team scoring the greatest number of points shall be deemed the winners of the cup-tie.

- (b) If the scores are still equal the winners shall be deemed the team that has scored the most tries.
- (c) If the number of tries is equal the winners shall be the team that has scored the most drop goals.
- (d) If the number of drop goals is equal the winners shall be the team that has scored the most conversions.
- (e) If the number of conversions is equal the winners shall be the team that has scored the most penalties.
- (f) If the number of penalties is equal the winner shall be deemed the away team.

EXCEPT for the Final when:

The RFUW Board of Directors may rule the option of a penalty shoot out, instead of extra time, or after extra time.

#### 5.5 Student Cup Competition

Information regarding the Student Cup Competition (including entry forms, rules and regulations) will be sent out to all affiliated Student Clubs. .

### 6 RFUW Senior Variations of the Laws of the Game

The Variations to the laws of the game for National Challenge leagues (Division 2 & below) are as follows;

#### LAW 3 - Number of Players

- (13) (b) A player who has been substituted may replace an injured player.

#### LAW 5 – Time

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

#### LAW 20 – Scrum

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

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

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

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

If a team cannot field such suitably trained players because:

either they are not available, or

a player in one of those five positions is injured or has been sent off for Foul Play and no suitably trained replacement is available, then the referees must order uncontested scrums.

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

Front rows coming together. Each prop touches the opponent's upper arm and then pause before the front rows meet. The sequence should be: Crouch, Touch, Pause, Engage.

No wheeling. A team must not intentionally wheel a scrum.

Penalty: Penalty Kick

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

Maximum 1.5. meters push. A team in a scrum must not push the scrum more than 1.5. meters towards their opponents' goal line.

Penalty : Free Kick

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

Penalty: Free Kick

## 7 Match Day - Responsibilities

- 7.1 The home team is responsible for the conduct of spectators. This includes keeping spectators off the pitch, ensuring no pushchairs, wheelchairs etc. are within 10 feet of the pitch.
- 7.2 The home team is expected to provide half-time refreshments such as oranges and shall provide after match food for their opposition and Referee.
- 7.3 It is the responsibility of each competing team to provide their own drinking water.
- 7.4 Match Day Forms
  - 7.4.1 The listings of both playing sides on the match result sheet are to be handed to the referee prior to kick off. The referee, after the game, completes the final score and signs. The team captains then add the scorer/s and substitution details and signatures.
  - 7.4.2 The Home team is responsible to ensure the match day form and red and yellow card form are completed and returned to the Competition Director within 5 days of the fixture being played. If a team is uncooperative, the

form must be completed as far as possible. The uncooperative team may be penalised.

- 7.4.3 Any member of the RFUW may challenge the legality or identity of any of the players playing/listed.
- 7.4.4 Player registration cards should be made available prior to kick off or immediately after final whistle to eliminate any discrepancies between the result sheet and who plays.
- 7.4.5 If the referee's signature is not obtained, the society and referee's name must be completed. If the referee is not a society referee, their connection to the club must be stated.
- 7.4.6 If a player is sent off, this information must be written on the red card form, and where possible, the referee report attached. Likewise if a player is yellow carded the form must be filled in.
- 7.4.7 Any club who fails to send in a Red and Yellow card form will find themselves liable to a mandatory RFUW fine and repeat offending can lead to a deduction in league points or removal from the Cup competitions.
- 7.4.8 Any player who receives a red card will be expected to attend a RFU disciplinary hearing in accordance with RFU/W disciplinary procedures
- Any player who receives more than 3 yellow Cards in one playing season will receive an immediate one match ban, the Club and player will be informed in writing by the RFUW Competition Director of which match they will be expected to miss.
- 7.4.9 Where players have been borrowed (as applicable), this must be indicated on the form, together with the club (and team if applicable) with whom they are registered.
- 7.4.10 Delayed kick-off information, reasons, comments etc must be written on the back of the match form.
- 7.4.11 Forms are readily available from the Competitions Director and the RFUW headquarters. Not having a form is **not** an acceptable excuse for non-completion. In emergency an A4 Sheet of paper detailing the requirements is acceptable.

## 8 Complaints and Appeals

### 8.1 Complaints

- 8.1.1 Any complaint should be referred, in writing, to the Chairman of the Board within 7 days of the occurrence giving rise to the complaint. This means that a fixture must be played and the complaint made after the event. Clubs have a responsibility to clearly state that they wish to make a complaint.
- 8.1.2 Any party aggrieved at the decision of the Competitions Director may refer

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their complaint to the Chairman of the Board within 7 days of the occurrence, giving rise to the complaint.

- 8.1.3 The Chairman of the Board of the RFUW shall refer the objections to the Board of Directors where a member will be appointed to act as a Complaints Director
- 8.1.4 The Chairman of the Board of the RFUW on receipt of the written complaint shall require the other party to the complaint, if applicable, to answer the complaint within 7 days. The Chairman of the Board on receipt of the written complaint shall give a response within 28 days.
- 8.1.5 If either the complaining club, or the other party to the complaint, or the club against whom the complaint is made, requires an oral hearing, whether or not a ruling has been given by the Complaints Director, it shall be requested in writing and the Complaints Director, shall, within 7 days, appoint a time, date and place for the hearing of the complaint.
- 8.1.6 The Club and/or appellant may be required to pay the costs of the complaint when a personal hearing is requested and granted.
- 8.1.7 Where the complaint is heard before the Complaints Director, it shall be the obligation of the complaining club (or the person making the complaint) to establish that upon the balance of probabilities the complaint is justified. If the Complaints Director considers that the complaint is not justified they may dismiss it without hearing the representation of the club or person against whom the complaint is made. The Complaints Director cannot find a complaint proved without giving the person or club against whom the complaint is made an opportunity to make representations or call relevant evidence.

## 9. Appeals

- 9.1.1 Any party aggrieved at the decision of the Complaints Director may appeal to the Appeals Committee.
- 9.1.2 Appeals must be addressed, in writing, to the Chairman of the Board within 14 days of the decision made. Clubs have a responsibility to clearly state that they wish to appeal against the decision made.
- 9.1.3 The Chairman of the Board of the RFUW shall refer the objections to the Board of Directors where members will be appointed to act as an Appeal Committee. The Complaints Director who has given the original ruling shall not be entitled to take any part in the review of the ruling, but the Complaints Director shall be called upon to explain their reasoning behind the decision.
- 9.1.4 The Club and/or appellant may be required to pay the costs of the appeal when a personal hearing is requested and granted.
- 9.1.5 Any part to an appeal shall provide such information or evidence and within such time as the Appeal Committee shall require.

- 9.1.6 Upon a party to an appeal failing to provide such information within the time required, the Appeal Committee shall be entitled to refuse to hear that party when considering an appeal.
- 9.1.7 The decision of the Appeal Committee shall be final and binding.

## Youth Rugby

### Laws of Play – RFUW Age Grade Rugby

Please note that it is mandatory for players aged under 17 on 1<sup>st</sup> September to wear a pre-formed gum shield.

- 10 To avoid any confusion for players, coaches and referees, the playing laws for RFUW age grade rugby is detailed below. The pages below are specifically for young women, which should be read in conjunction with the “Variations” paper in this handbook which are guidelines from the RFU regarding youth rugby.

#### U7 to U12 age grades

The playing regulations for these age grades are detailed in the RFU/RFUW’s Rugby Continuum, which can be found on the RFU’s web site in the Refereeing Section.

#### Lower age band (U14)

This age band takes into account U14’s and U13’s and, if considered suitably trained and experienced, U12’s as well. The RFUW’s U14 variations generally follow the RFU U14 variations but there are a few differences.

Matches are played to the iRB’s Laws of the Game, unless modified as shown below.

#### 10.1 General

- 10.1.1 Playing time is not to exceed 25 minutes each way with a size 4 ball. After 50 minutes of playing time, the referee must not allow extra time to be played in the case of a drawn match in a knock-out competition.
- 10.1.2 Teams will be made up of twelve players, five of whom will be forwards, with The remaining seven forming the backs. Teams should **not** however cancel fixtures because they have fewer than 12 players but should play with equally reduced numbers as agreed by team coaches.
- Note: Playing numbers for Representative games may vary; details will be promulgated on the website.
- 10.1.3 The hand off/fend off is now permitted.
- 10.1.4 Kicking the ball on the ground (often called fly hacking) is now permitted. Teams may use any number of substitutions or replacements by mutual agreement between coaches.
- 10.1.5 A player who has been substituted may replace an injured player. Pitch size, matches should be played across half the pitch with touch marked at the 10m and 5m lines.

“However, if both coaches agree then a full pitch can be used taking into account the numbers playing and the standard, experience and fitness of the players.”

## 10.2 Scrummages

- 10.2.1 Scrummages will be uncontested. In an uncontested scrum, the teams do not compete for the ball. The team putting the ball in must win it. Neither team is allowed to push the other team away from the mark.
- 10.2.2 Scrummages will normally consist of 5 players from each side; a front row and a second row. For stability, Locks are to bind outside the hips of the props, not through the legs.
- 10.2.3 When teams have 9 players or less, the scrum size will reduce to 3 players from each side. Scrummages will therefore have 5 players for 12, 11 and 10 player teams.
- 10.2.4 Front rows coming together: In the interest of safety, and where thought to be necessary, referees should talk the scrum down through the Crouch, Touch, Pause, Engage sequence. Each prop touches the opponent's upper arm and then pauses before the front rows meet.
- 10.2.5 No pushing the scrum. Players should not push against their opponents and the scrum should not move from the referee's mark. If the scrum unintentionally moves from the mark, the referee should re-set the scrummage. If a team intentionally moves the scrum, the referee will award a Penalty to the non-offending side.
- 10.2.6 No wheeling the scrum. A team must not intentionally wheel a scrum. If the scrum is unintentionally wheeled, the referee should re-set the scrummage. If a team intentionally wheels the scrum, the referee will award a Free Kick to the non-offending side. There is no 'turnover' law at U14.
- 10.2.7 The scrum-half not putting the ball into the scrum must not move beyond the middle line of the scrum until the ball has emerged from the scrummage or an opponent has placed his hands on the ball.
- 10.2.8 The ball must be released from scrum. A player must not intentionally keep the ball in the scrum once the player's team has heeled the ball and controls it at the base of the scrum. Penalty: Free Kick

## 10.3 Lineouts

- 10.3.1 There must be a minimum of two players in the lineout. Penalty: Free Kick.
- 10.3.2 The team throwing in the ball decides the maximum number of players forming the line-out. Penalty (for the non-throwing in team having too many players): Free Kick.
- 10.3.3 The line-out extends from 5 metres from touch to 15 metres in-field and parallel with the touchline. Lifting/supporting is prohibited at this age group, i.e. a player may not bind to a jumper until he/she has returned to the ground. Penalty: Penalty Kick.

#### 10.4 Upper Age Band (U17)

This age band takes into account U15's, U16's and U17's. Players who are aged 17 on 1<sup>st</sup> September should normally move up to adult rugby but may elect to remain in the U17 age band but this must be approved by the RFUW. (Only two overage players from each side may be allowed on the pitch at any time.)

The RFUW's U17 variations generally follow the RFU U17 variations.

Matches are played to the IRB's Laws of the Game unless modified as shown below.

#### 10.5 General

- 10.5.1 Playing time not to exceed 35 minutes each way playing with a size five ball. After 70 minutes of playing time, the referee must not allow extra time to be played in the case of a drawn match.
- 10.5.2 Teams will be made up of fifteen players, eight of whom will be forwards, with the remaining seven forming the backs. Teams should **not** however cancel fixtures because they have fewer than 15 players but should play with equally reduced numbers as agreed by team coaches.
- 10.5.3 Note: Playing numbers for Representative games may vary; details will be promulgated on the website.
- 10.5.4 Teams may use any number of substitutions or replacements by mutual agreement between coaches.
- 10.5.5 A player who has been substituted may replace an injured player.

#### **Variations**

##### **For all who play and all who manage players aged under 19 on 1<sup>st</sup> September.**

Please note that it is mandatory to wear a pre-formed gum shield for all players aged U17 on 1<sup>st</sup> September.

In September 1983, the RFU first issued a number of Law Interpretations, which were for all who played under the age of nineteen years on 1st September. (These were designed to improve safety and help prevent injury).

From November 2001, these have been reviewed and revised and should be read in conjunction with The LAWS OF THE GAME OF RUGBY UNION, written by the International Rugby Board (IRB)

'Junior' rugby is now regarded as for all who play in teams identified as aged between under 13 and under 19.

#### **Squeeze Ball**

No player involved in a match at any age level from under 18 downwards shall use in

training or in a match the technique known or referred to as Squeezeball.

Note: 'Squeezeball' is a technique where the ball carrier goes to ground, head forward (touching or close to the ground), irrespective of immediate contact with opponents) usually keeping parallel to the touchline, holding and protecting the ball close to the chest and, when on the ground, pushes the ball back between the legs.  
Penalty: Penalty Kick

Any player at any stage in the scrum, ruck or maul who has or causes an opponent to have, his shoulders lower than his hip joint must immediately be penalised by awarding a Free Kick. The object of this interpretation is to try to prevent a collapse of scrum, ruck or maul. It is to help the coach to coach good technique and the referee to penalise bad technique. Any player who has his shoulders lower than his hip joint can only move

downwards unless he has very great strength. The force through the shoulders should be directed forwards and upwards; all players should remain on their feet, thus preventing a pile-up and possible injury.

**Law 14 Ball on the ground - no tackle and Law 15 Tackle: Ball carrier brought to the ground.**

It is illegal for any player to voluntarily fall on or over a player lying on the ground with the ball in his possession, to voluntarily fall on or over players lying on the ground with the ball between them, or near them.

Penalty: Penalty kick at the place of infringement.

Additional Notes to help interpret Laws 14 and 15.

- (a) No advantage shall be played under this Law
- (b) A player is assumed to have fallen voluntarily unless the referee is absolutely certain the fall was accidental.
- (c) In the very rare instances when the fall is accidental, play must be stopped and a scrum awarded. The object of this change in interpretation in Law is to keep players on their feet and to prevent them from falling to the ground; thus removing a dangerous area of play. This will create proper rucks and mauls defined as "players from each team on their feet" (Law 16, Ruck; Law 17, Maul).

Should the correctly formed ruck or maul then collapse, the referee must immediately act to prevent a pile-up from developing.

Play the game for the right reason - first learn how to play skillfully, and then apply that Skill in order to win.

Seminars, internal courses and working to a regular syllabus are essential steps to proficiency. Players must be adequately prepared for any match.

Mismatches can be avoided by talking to the Coach in charge of the opposition before the game.

Attention must be paid to pre-season preparation. Players need to be fit to play rugby rather than hope to become fit by playing it. Adequate fitness training, including special exercises for the front row, is vital - necks and shoulders need to be strong. The fatigue factor needs careful watching - see RFU publication, 'Fitness Training for Rugby'.

Tackling is a skill that needs to be taught. See appropriate RFU publications and videos,

the RFU Continuum and Player Safety Pamphlets 1-9. For up to date products contact [www.rfu.com](http://www.rfu.com) or email [refereeinfo@rfu.com](mailto:refereeinfo@rfu.com)

No player should be asked to play outside his or her age group (see RFU Continuum).

**No player aged 16 and below should be permitted to play against any team in which there are adult players i.e those aged 19 years or over**

Clubs must exercise great care and close supervision over the playing of those who, although 17, are eligible to play in adult teams.

Violence has no place in the game. Any player using their boot against another player, or committing other obvious acts of violence, should be removed from the game by their school or club for a very significant length of time. Disciplinary results should be

forwarded to the local RFU Constituent Body.

Injuries from pile-ups are often caused by a player refusing to part with the ball. Getting rid of the ball early rather than late makes for a faster and more enjoyable game.

#### **Under 13 and 14**

1. Playing time not to exceed 25 minutes each way with a size 4 ball. After 50 minutes of playing time, the referee **must not** allow extra time to be played in the case of a drawn match in a knock-out competition.
2. Teams will be made up of fifteen players, eight of whom will be forwards, with the remaining seven forming the backs.
3. The hand off/fend off is now permitted.
4. Kicking the ball on the ground (often called fly hacking) is now permitted.

#### **Law 20 – Scrum**

In an eight-person scrum the formation must be 3-4-1, with the single player (normally the number 8) bound on the 2 locks. The locks are now permitted to bind between the legs of the props with their outside arms.

Exception: A team may have fewer than eight players in its scrum when either the team cannot field a complete team, or a player is sent off for foul play, or a player has to leave the field because of injury.

Even allowing for this exception, each team must always have at least five players in a scrum and both scrums must always be equal in numbers.

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

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

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

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

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

If a team cannot field such suitably trained players because:

They are not available, **or** a player in one of those five positions is injured or has been sent off for Foul Play and no suitably trained replacement is available, then the referee must order uncontested scrums.

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

Front rows coming together: In the interest of safety referees should talk the scrum down through the "Crouch, Touch, Pause,(or hold) Engage" sequence. Each prop touches the opponent's upper arm and then pauses before the front rows meet.

Referees should be vigilant to ensure that hookers are in hooking position.  
Penalty: Free Kick

No wheeling. A team must not intentionally wheel a scrum.  
Penalty: Penalty Kick.

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

There is no 'turnover' law at U18. If scrums are reset for wheeling beyond 45 degrees the throw-in is to the side in possession at the time it is wheeled beyond 45 degrees.

Maximum 1.5 metres push. A team in a contested scrum must not push the scrum more than 1.5 metres towards their opponents' goal line.  
Penalty: Free Kick

The scrum-half not throwing the ball into the scrum must not move beyond the middle line of the scrum until the ball has emerged from the scrum or an opponent has placed his hands on the ball. In the event of a strike against the head, the scrum-half who has thrown the ball into the scrum is similarly restricted in not following the ball.  
Penalty: Penalty Kick

Ball must be released from scrum. A player must not intentionally keep the ball in the scrum once the player's team has heeled the ball and controls it at the base of the scrum.  
Penalty: Free Kick

Safety: In the event of one front row being stronger than the other, referees should be mindful to instruct the stronger pack to reduce the power of its shove sufficiently to ensure the opposing front row is able to stay on their feet.

### **The Line-Out Law 19**

Minimum numbers. At least two from each team.  
Penalty: Free kick.

Maximum numbers. The team throwing in the ball decides the maximum number of players forming the line-out.  
Penalty (for the non-throwing in team having too many players): Free Kick.

The line-out extends from 5 metres from touch to 15 metres in-field and parallel with the touchline. Lifting/supporting is prohibited at this age group, i.e. a player may not bind to a jumper until he/she has returned to the ground.  
Penalty: Penalty Kick.

There is no longer a requirement to peel close to and parallel with the line-out.

### **Replacements**

Up to seven replacements. Any number of substitutions or replacements by mutual agreement.  
A player who has been substituted may replace an injured player.

### **Under 15**

As per under 13 and 14 except:

Playing time not to exceed 30 minutes each way playing with a size five ball. After 60 minutes of playing time, the referee must not allow extra time to be played in the case of a drawn match in a knock-out competition.

### **Under 16,17 and 18**

Playing time not to exceed 35 minutes each way playing with a size five ball. After 70 minutes of playing time, the referee must not allow extra time to be played in the case of a drawn match in a knock-out competition.

### **The Scrum**

The non-throwing in scrum half is no longer restricted in staying at the middle line after the ball has been thrown in. Whilst remaining on side he may follow the ball round. The offside line for the scrum- halves runs through the line of the ball in the scrum

### **The Line-out**

Players may now pre-grip a team-mate but not below the waist.  
Penalty: Free Kick

A player must not support a jumping team-mate below the shorts from behind or below the thighs from the front.  
Penalty: Penalty Kick.

Players who support a jumping team-mate must lower that player to the ground as soon as a player of either team has won the ball.  
Penalty: Free Kick.

### **Replacements**

Maximum seven.  
If a team nominates 22 players, it must have at least six players who can play in the front row in order that there is replacement cover for the loose-head prop, hooker and tight-head prop.  
A player who has been substituted may replace an injured player.

### **Under 19**

The only variation from the Under 16-18 groups is that the technique, which has become known as "Squeezeball", is permissible.

On 8th November 2001 the International Rugby Board (IRB) issued the following Note on Interpretation of Law 15.6(d) - the tackled player:

Law 15.6(d) states: "A tackled player may release the ball by pushing it along the Ground in any direction except forward, providing this is done immediately".

In recent times players having been tackled, or who go to ground have done so ensuring that the ball is underneath them, they then push the ball along the ground and through their legs (a practice known as squeeze ball).

On most occasions when players attempt to push the ball along the ground under their bodies they are not making the ball available immediately and they are in contravention of Law 14.1 and Law 15.6(d). Players who attempt the action are liable to penalty unless the ball is immediately available".

Pages are from the RFU Website – Referees Section 6