

SOUTHWEST REGION MEN'S LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS – 2025/26

These Administration Instructions apply to any Team playing in the England Men's Leagues (the Leagues) organised and managed by the South West Regional Organising Committee (SWROC). All Teams should read these Instructions in conjunction with RFU Regulation 6 and Appendixes 2, 3 and 4, and their Constituent Body De-Regulated League Amendments for teams at Counties 2 and below, as applicable.

Apart from registration of players and telephoning of match results a Club's first point of contact in relation to the interpretation of these instructions or any regulation in relation to the Leagues is its League Secretary. Up to date details of League Secretaries are published on the S.W. Division's website: www.swrugby.co.uk

1 Nominated League Contact (NLC):

1.1 All Teams must appoint a NLC to receive all information in connection with the administration of the Leagues. The Team is deemed to have agreed that it has received any such information sent to its NLC who will be responsible for disseminating the information to the relevant members of their Team. The NLC must have unlimited access to a secure email account which can receive information from the SWROC.

1.2 The NLC and their contact details must be confirmed by 1st August each year to the SWROC Admin Office (SWROC-AO) via the website (www.swrugby.co.uk). Any change to the NLC or their contact details during the season must be advised via the website within 14 days of it occurring. Until such time as a Team has correctly reported a change it shall be deemed not to have changed its nominated contact.

Failure to do either of the above will be liable to a minimum fine of £50.00.

2. Team's Name:

2.1 Each Team will be known by its Club name and numbered 1stXV, 2ndXV, 3rd XV etc

2.2 Clubs wishing to change the name of their Club must comply with RFU Regulation 3. Any such change must also be notified to the SWROC-AO no later than 1st May for the following season.

3. Player Registration

3.1 All players should be registered via GMS under the relevant provisions of RFU Regulations 13 and 14. Advice and online guides can be found at <https://help.rfu.com/support/solutions>

3.2 All enquiries regarding player registration must be made, preferably in normal office hours Tuesday – Saturday, to the Registrar at the SWROC-AO by; telephone (01822 678 272) or email admin@swrugby.co.uk

4 Reporting of Match Results (this is the responsibility of the 'HOME TEAM'):

4.1 The result of the match played, together with the number of points and tries scored by both Teams, must be reported by 17.30hrs on match day (for evening matches the deadline is 22.00hrs). This can be done by either: a) Completing the score and tries section of the Electronic Match Card (EMC) and submitting it to the RFU Game Management System (GMS), or b) By telephoning 01822 678 007 or texting 07908 683 303, then completing, confirming, and submitting the EMC no later than 12 noon on the Tuesday following the match. A copy of the

EMC will be sent by GMS to all relevant parties. If a copy is not received before the deadline, then it must be considered as not having been received by GMS and will need to be confirmed and re-submitted.

4.2 Failure to comply with submitting the result as required in 4.1, will incur a fine of £25.00 for each offence, or greater if the Home Team persistently fails to complete and submit the EMC correctly.

4.3 Any query or observation on the recorded score, points or tries must be made to the League Secretary, in writing, within 7 days of the game being played.

5 Postponed and/or Abandoned Matches:

5.1 No match shall be postponed, for whatever reason, without consultation with the relevant League Secretary. Where the issue is one of 'suitability of pitch' the League Secretary may require an independent inspection of the pitch before any decision is made to postpone a match. If it is agreed to postpone a match, it is the Home Team's responsibility to inform the SWROC-AO before 15.30hrs for weekend matches and 19.30hrs for evening matches. Failure to do so will result in a £25.00 fine.

5.2 Where there is a possibility that a match could be postponed for any reason, the Team seeking the postponement must keep the opposing team informed as early as possible via their NLC of the potential reasons for a postponement.

5.3 Where a pitch is pronounced unfit or is unavailable, it is the Home Team's responsibility to source an alternative pitch. If it is the first of the two matches between the Teams, it is acceptable to reverse the venue if the opposition's pitch and a referee are available. The SWROC-AO must be informed prior to kick-off. The Home Team will deem to be the Team upon whose pitch the match is played and as such must comply with the reporting responsibilities of the Home Team.

5.4 When a match is postponed due to weather more than once at the same venue, the SWROC may, on the third attempt, specify that the match be played at a different venue. This may be at a neutral venue or the opposition's ground.

5.5 When a match is abandoned the Home Team must inform the relevant League Secretary and SWROC-AO, giving the reason, the score and time of the abandonment before the 17.30hrs results deadline. Failure to do so will result in a £25.00 fine.

5.6 Where a game kicks off later than planned or is delayed while in progress such that it would not be possible to report the score by the usual deadline, the results service should be contacted to make them aware. This will prevent unnecessary chasing of the score after the deadline.

5.7 In the event of a match not being played or completed, as 4.1 the EMC MUST NOT be submitted to GMS.

6 Scheduling of Matches

6.1 All matches shall be played, subject to the availability of a pitch and referee, on the dates specified in the Fixture Schedules issued by the SWROC before the start of the season unless agreed otherwise with the SWROC. It is the responsibility of the Home Team to ensure the

availability of a Society Referee or an alternative, and a pitch, whether it is their normal home ground or not.

6.2 Re-scheduled Matches to be played on next available weekend (NAW). Where it is necessary to re-schedule a match due to a postponement or abandonment, the match will be re-scheduled for the NAW unless another date is specified by the SWROC. The SWROC-AO will inform both Teams via the SW Website and GMS within three days. If either Team does not accept this date they may ask for a Review. If the re-scheduled date is within eight days of the original match date, the Review Request, along with the necessary fee, must be sent direct to The RFU Appeal Panel (RFU Reg19.13) within three days of the original scheduled date. If the re-scheduled date is more than eight days after the original match date, the Review Request should be sent to the SWROC Review Facilitator at SWROC-AO (see 10), within seven days of the original scheduled date. When a Team requests a Review, they must also advise their opponents at the time the request is submitted.

IMPORTANT THE RFU APPEAL PANEL HAS THE AUTHORITY TO RETROSPECTIVELY SANCTION TEAMS WHO LODGE AN APPEAL AND DO NOT PLAY THE MATCH ON THE NAW.

6.3 Teams in Leagues of 10 Teams or less will be able to nominate up to one NAW weekend as unavailable to play a re-scheduled match. This must be done at least eight weeks before the reserve weekend via the appropriate online form on the SWROC website. Any application that is not made via this method or within eight weeks of the date will not be accepted. Teams may not nominate a weekend that is designated as a 'play-off' weekend where play-offs are required in their League, nor any weekend where a rescheduled match has already been arranged. Where appropriate, a weekend also includes any following Bank Holiday Monday.

7. Unplayed Matches:

7.1 Where a Team declines, refuses, or is unable due to disciplinary reasons, to fulfil a League fixture, which the SWROC deems unacceptable, it will (subject to its right of appeal for review) be liable to a fine, a deduction of League points or other sanction as deemed appropriate.

7.2 At Counties 1 or below, the following Walkover Protocol will apply:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(vii) An Electronic Match Card should not be used to record matches played under this arrangement.

(viii) This protocol is subject local CB de-regulations which can be found on www.swrugby.co.uk/regs

7.3 At Counties 2 or below where a Team plays a match as a friendly with borrowed or unregistered players, the defaulting team must provide a minimum of 10 players in line with Game On principles game and should have an equal number of players per side, excluding replacements, to qualify as a friendly. The League points will be awarded to the nonoffending side, but the defaulting team will NOT suffer a points deduction PROVIDING notification of this is reported to the League Secretary and SWROC AO before the scheduled kick-off. There is then no requirement to telephone the match score or submit a match card afterwards as it will be recorded as a 0-0 win to the non-offending team. A Team cannot play more than three (3) fixtures per season as friendlies.

7.4 Where a Team declines or fails to fulfil more than 25% of the fixtures it had scheduled at the start of the season for reasons unacceptable to the SW Committee it shall be recommended that its league results be expunged from the League with immediate effect. Teams may and are encouraged to play the remaining fixtures as "friendlies", but the results will not be included in the tables. The committee may, at its discretion, recommend to the RFU Competitions Management Committee that the team be excluded from membership of the England Men's leagues in the following season

7.5 Higher Level Team Not Fielded

i) General

A club with more than one team competing in the England Rugby Men's Leagues must always adhere to the principle of selection on merit of a 1st XV, 2nd XV and lower XV. The League Secretary of the lower team(s) may review the result and match squads of such matches if it is suspected that a lower team has been strengthened by a player(s) from higher-level teams.

A club must always honour its highest fixture, either in the England Rugby Men's League or any other RFU recognised competition, it plays in.

If a higher team unjustifiably defaults and the Lower team plays and wins on the same day, then the lower team result shall be set aside and a '0 – 0' win and 5 league points will be awarded to the opposition, unless the League Secretary exceptionally agrees otherwise.

There will be no further sanction against the team fielding the higher-level players, unless the League Secretary deems that this is a recurring offence in which case a further sanction, including removal of League points, may be applied.

If a higher team fixture does not take place for reasons beyond their control or the higher team does not have a fixture, then any lower XVs should be selected as though the higher XV(s) were playing.

ii) Post Transfer Deadline

Any player (apart from a nominated front row player) who represented the 1st XV in their previous league match will not be eligible to represent the 2nd or lower XV, after the Transfer Deadline unless:

- (a) they were only playing for the higher team to replace an injured higher team player;
- (b) they are returning from a period of injury, which needs to be more than four (4) playing weekends; or
- (c) the committee exceptionally agrees otherwise. A similar guideline will apply on player movement between 2nd and 3rd XVs where applicable.

The League Secretary may request the playing and/or availability record for any player contributing to a breach of the above guidelines.

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

7.7 If the teams agree to play the friendly under the Game On protocol it is considered a normal league game and the score reported and the EMC completed in the usual way.

8. Carrying over of Sanctions to the following season:

8.1 Where a Team receives a points deduction sanction, after the season's Transfer Deadline that will not affect promotion or relegation for the following season, or involves a non-payment of a fine, the SWROC may decide to carry the sanction over to the following season.

9. Fines:

9.1 The imposition of a monetary fine by the SWROC/League Secretary will be notified directly to the Team NLC, who is responsible for ensuring that the Club pay the fine. Failure to pay the fine within 14 days will result in additional sanctions, except where a Review Request has been received within 7 days of the fine invoice.

10. Review Request:

10.1 A Team wishing to lodge a Review Request against any decision or sanction made by the League Secretary on behalf of the SWROC may do so in writing, together with a fee of £50, to the

Review Facilitator via the SWROC-AO in accordance with RFU Reg 6.88.10.2 A Team may appeal against the decision of the SWROC Review Panel to the RFU in accordance with RFU Reg 19.13.

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