

Please find the August 2018 edition of the Community Game Update. We hope you find the update a benefit to your club, and if you have any feedback, queries or content you would like to feature, please email Tom Ainscough, RFU Senior Communications Manager [tomainscough@rfu.com](mailto:tomainscough@rfu.com).



## **Combating the drought and hard pitches – plus managing players and fixtures**

With the start of the 2018/19 season less than a month away, we are aware that the recent dry weather has left some natural turf pitches in a condition that is not conducive to training or matches.

Please see [Keith Kent's advice on how best to manage pitches during times of low rainfall and drought](#) and further [advice from Sport England on how to manage sports facilities](#). The best but probably the hardest solution for most clubs is to be patient, keep irrigating (if possible) and to wait for the rain. If any club has a question about a specific issue with their pitch, they can email [groundsmenconnected@rfu.com](mailto:groundsmenconnected@rfu.com).

Player welfare should be central to any decision on whether a pitch is appropriate to play on due to the potential injury risk. Common sense should be applied when monitoring hard pitches – take a similar approach to when you consider whether a frozen or waterlogged pitch is safe to play on in winter.

The RFU's Competitions Team is in communication with Divisional Organising Committees and League Secretaries regarding the potential impact on games at the start of the season. Please be assured there are regulations in place that provide clarity about rearranging fixtures due to a pitch being unfit for play and League Secretaries have been encouraged to proactively use them. The most relevant regulation is 13.6.6 (b) iii

**'A Club whose home ground is unfit to play must seek an alternative venue. In the event of Clubs failing to agree on the suitability of the alternative venue, a ruling can be made by the Organising Committee. During the first part of the season, Clubs playing in home and away Leagues will be expected in the first instance to exchange the venue to the one originally scheduled for the second half of the Season'**

\*Please be aware that AGPs could offer an alternative venue for clubs. You can book an AGP through the following link <https://rugby365.sports-booker.com/customer/>

If the situation should worsen, communication will come direct to clubs through Divisional Organising Committees and League Secretaries / League Organisers. If clubs have questions about the interpretation of a regulation or have general questions about postponement or rearrangement of fixtures they should speak to their League Secretary or League Organiser.



## **GMS – Age grade registration changes**

We have now introduced an updated process to record age grade registrations in GMS. Club registrars, with appropriate access in GMS, now have the ability to distribute a unique URL to parents that are interested in signing their child up to play at the registrar's club. Parents will be required to create a record for themselves and their child. Club registrars will then have the ability to login to GMS, review who have requested registration, and process these requests via the Player Registration module. These steps will assist the club in complying with GDPR and reduce the administrative time required to process registration requests that a club receives.

We have also created two step-by-step guides; the first guide **outlines the steps a parent must take to fill in the form** provided by the club to create an account and request a registration for their club. The second **provides guidance for a club registrar to process the requested registrations in GMS.**

Please note that there will also be a system upgrade in the week commencing 13th August, that will see an updated Roles & Permissions structure introduced in to GMS.



## **GMS – roles & permission changes**

The RFU recently **notified the community game of some upcoming changes to the Roles and Permissions in GMS.**

In the week commencing 13th August, the RFU will introducing a new model that will see several permissions levels available to be granted to individuals within GMS. All individuals will be defaulted to a Level 0 which will only grant access for that user to access and edit their own personal details. Each individual that has logged in to GMS with administrative privileges within the last 12 months will be contacted with instructions regarding next steps.

An exception to the above will be individuals that currently hold the role of either 'Data Officer' or

‘Honorary Secretary’ at their club or CB. These individuals will be automatically granted the ‘Level 5’ permission. This level will enable these users to access an area of GMS where they can assign any individuals within their organisation with a level of permission appropriate to their position of responsibility.

Within the ‘Organisation Admin’ module inside GMS, each ‘Level 5’ user will have access to a description of each level and the modules contained for the permission type. Any individual will be able to be assigned a permission level, providing they have a role at the club or CB.

The RFU sees this as an important change to empower clubs and CBs to efficiently manage access to their data and ensure that each organisation understands who has access to their data.

To keep up to date with latest information on the GMS, visit [englandrugby.com/gms](https://englandrugby.com/gms)



The RFU has taken a build break on Phase 4 of our Rugby365 programme, to undertake a strategic review of the impact of the project to date. The decision will not affect our host clubs whose facilities have already opened, nor will it affect facilities confirmed for construction in Phase 2 or 3, where pitches are not due to be completed until summer 2019.

The RFU has communicated with all clubs who have been engaged with the Rugby365 programme to date, to update them on their respective status.



## **Payment of players’ declaration**

Following on from previous communications around payment of players, we would further encourage clubs to utilise the [regulation](#), [our frequently asked questions \(FAQs\)](#), and [additional information on the declaration](#) (including how to complete the declaration on GMS).

Clubs are also encouraged to participate in a test run of completing and submitting a declaration for the 2017/18 season, to familiarise themselves with the process and test the system. Please note this would be a test run, and it is not mandatory at this stage. It will also not impact RFU financial benefits for the 2018/19 season.



From 2019/20 season, if clubs wish to receive financial benefits from the RFU, they will need to submit an accurate and completed signed annual declaration at the end of the coming 2018/19 season, confirming if players have been paid, and the total value of those payments. Therefore, any payments or material in kind received by players from 1 June 2018 will need to be included in that declaration. Clubs will be free to exceed the maximum payments laid out in the regulation, but in doing so will render the club ineligible for RFU financial benefits. For more information or any queries, please contact [paymentofplayers@rfu.com](mailto:paymentofplayers@rfu.com).

For clubs at Levels 3 & 4, to enquire about projected costs of Match Officials, please contact John Lawn ([johnlawn@rfu.com](mailto:johnlawn@rfu.com)), Head of Game Development, RFU.



## 2018/19 RFU Regulations are now effective

All 2018/19 RFU Regulations are now effective (as of 1st August 2018) and **available on our website**. This includes, amongst others, a completely redrafted version of **RFU Regulation 15** (Age Grade Rugby) which has been re-drafted with the aim of being more accessible and digestible for clubs. For any questions on the regulations, please contact [regulations@rfu.com](mailto:regulations@rfu.com).



## Introduction of DocuSign to RFU Player Registration service

The RFU have announced a significant improvement to the RFU Player Registration service, providing a more effective and efficient process for players and clubs. The introduction of a new digital application process via DocuSign, will start at the beginning of August, and will allow registration for men's clubs at level 1-4, and women's clubs at level 1 to be processed entirely online. Men's clubs at levels 5-12 and women's clubs at levels 2-6 may also need to use this new system, in order to approve any players that are moving between their club and the applicant club who are using the DocuSign process exclusively.

Benefits of the new process include:

- Reduces the administrative burden on clubs and their registrars, with time required to submit applications reduced, which is important for time sensitive applications
- Removes the need for printing, scanning and postage
- Reduces the frequency of additional communication often required between clubs and their RFU registrar. It

will not be possible to submit forms without mandatory fields completed and attaching the required documentation.

To learn more about this process, please **visit the player registration pages on the England Rugby website**. If you would also like to contact your local RFU registrar, please **find contact details here**.



## Half game rule to be introduced in September

To support the application of half game in Age Grade clubs, schools and colleges, we will be launching a series of videos, guides and posters in the coming weeks. Assets will be available for download from [www.englandrugby.com/halfgame](http://www.englandrugby.com/halfgame). Once released, please do help by sharing with your club, school or college. For more information, please contact Chris Sigsworth, Schools Operations Manager, RFU ([chrissigsworth@rfu.com](mailto:chrissigsworth@rfu.com)).



## Project Rugby approaches second season

As you are aware, the RFU and Premiership Rugby entered into a new Heads of Agreement 2016 – 2020, which included community investment for first time. This gave us the opportunity to enhance the relationship between the Premiership Rugby club's community programmes and the RFU development strategy, and to work closely together with agreed investment of £6m over the 4 years to support Rugby Development across England.

As of May 2018, Project Rugby has to date engaged over 12,000 participants in 544 locations. The programme has engaged over 100 grassroots clubs. **Further information on Project Rugby is available online.**

PRL clubs are working through the Area Manager to develop plans for the 18/19 season. By the start of September, there will be a list of grassroots clubs and schools targeted which we will circulate to you. Through September and October we will look to run regionalized sessions for CBs involved with the programme, to look



at both 18/19 and 19/20 planning. CBs who have Project Rugby delivery, will be contacted by your Area Manager in the coming weeks and invited to a Project Rugby regionalized session this Autumn. If you have any questions, please contact [alexteasdale@rfu.com](mailto:alexteasdale@rfu.com)



## **Accidental injury loss of income cover**

RFU and Howden have arranged a personal accident cover that can pay up to £300 per week to players in nominated teams if they injure themselves whilst playing or training and are unable to work. Cover for the whole season can be arranged for just £980 per team. Full details on the England Rugby Insurance website at [www.englandrugbyinsurance.co.uk/TTD](http://www.englandrugbyinsurance.co.uk/TTD)



## **Links with local authorities**

Your local authority will provide a number of services that affect your club and therefore it is worth building up a good working relationship with them. However a number of rugby clubs don't fully know the role of local government and how best to engage with it.

The RFU has worked with the Local Government Association to provide an [introductory guide for rugby clubs](#) on working more effectively with local government so clubs can build up a good working relationship.



## **VAT helpline**

The VAT helpline provides a free 30-minute telephone or email consultation for clubs to clarify VAT issues that arise. This includes advice on:

- when VAT should be charged on certain incomes
- when VAT can be recovered on costs
- what actions need to be considered to optimise the recovery of VAT incurred on capital projects such as relocations, clubhouse and changing room builds, floodlight installation, pitch improvement works and new artificial pitches.

If the matter cannot be resolved within this initial 30-minute slot, or clubs would like to discuss any issue in detail, Russell Moore can be engaged at an exclusive RFU rate of £100 per hour. Russell can be contacted via telephone 07710 329317 or email [russellmoore@sportsvat.co.uk](mailto:russellmoore@sportsvat.co.uk)



## **Get fit for the new season with Virgin Active and the Fit for Rugby programme**

England Rugby and Virgin Active have partnered up to help rugby clubs and players “Get Fit for Rugby”.

All players can book their team in for a Fit for Rugby training session at their local Virgin Active Club. Devised by the RFU's Head of Sport Science and Medicine, the training programme is specifically designed for players who want to push their game further. The session will be led by a qualified personal trainer, just for your team and completely free.

They are also offering all players 25% off membership at any Virgin Active Club. To book your team's Fit for Rugby training session or find out about membership get in touch at [rugby@virginactive.co.uk](mailto:rugby@virginactive.co.uk). Find out more and get fit this pre-season at [www.englandrugby.com/virginactive](http://www.englandrugby.com/virginactive).

*\*25% off membership for the first year, all subsequent membership years will be 15% off.*