

September 2016

COMPETITION REGULATIONS

1. DEFINITIONS

In these regulations, the following expressions shall have the following meanings:

“**The Branch**” shall mean the Leinster Branch of the Irish Rugby Football Union which shall, where the context so admits or requires, include the Executive Committee of the Branch or any person nominated or authorised by the Branch or the Executive Committee to act on behalf of the Branch for the purpose of these regulations

“**The Administrator**” shall in the case of:

- i. Senior and Under 20 Competitions mean the Honorary Secretary of the Branch or such person as he/she may appoint
- ii. Womens Competitions mean the Honorary Secretary of the Womens Section of the Branch or such person as he/she may appoint
- iii. Junior Competitions mean the Honorary Secretary of the Junior Section of the Branch or such person as he/she may appoint
- iv. Youths Competitions mean the Honorary Secretary of the Youths Section of the Branch or such person as he/she may appoint
- v. Schools Competitions mean the Honorary Secretary of the Schools Section of the Branch or such person as he/she may appoint

“**The Appeals Committee**” shall mean the Committee appointed by the Executive Committee of the Branch under the Bye Laws of the Branch to hear appeals

“**DFA**” means the Domestic Fixtures Administrator.

“**The Competition**” shall mean, as the context may require, any competition designated from time to time by the Rugby Standing Committee, or the Competitions Committee to be a competition;

“**The Executive Committee**” shall mean the Executive Committee of the Leinster Branch I.R.F.U.;

“**The Competitions Committee**” or “**the Committee**” shall mean the Sub Committee of the Rugby Standing Committee appointed by the Rugby Standing Committee of the Branch under the Bye Laws of the Branch.

“**The Competitions Compliance Officer**” shall mean the person authorized from time to time by the Competitions Committee to investigate, report and present cases of alleged breaches of these Regulations

“**The All Ireland League**” (AIL) shall mean the competition organised by the I.R.F.U. for Senior Clubs.

“Junior Club” shall mean any affiliated Club other than one graded as Senior, School, Youth or Occasional

“Junior Committee” shall mean the Committee of the Junior Section of the Branch

“Schoolboy/Schoolgirl” shall mean any person who is a bona fide schoolboy/girl within the meaning of the regulations governing the Schools’ Competitions.

“Youth” shall mean any person who is not over the age of eighteen years within the meaning of the regulations governing Youths Competitions.

“The Hearing Committee” shall mean the relevant committee hearing an objection or appeal.

“The Relevant Committee” shall mean the Competitions Committee, Schools Committee or the Youths Committee as appropriate.

“The Relevant Secretary” shall mean the Honorary Secretary of the Leinster Branch, the Honorary Secretary of the Junior Section of the Leinster Branch, the Honorary Secretary of the Schools Section, the Honorary Secretary of the Youths Section, the Honorary Secretary of Womens Section or the DFA as appropriate.

Unless otherwise specifically defined in these Regulations definitions in the Branch Bye-laws shall apply.

2. GENERAL

2.1 Competitions shall be governed by the Competitions Committee.

2.2 An individual shall not be allowed to play in a Competition for more than one Club in any one season without the majority consent of the Competitions Committee save for the exclusion outlined in 5.4 of these Regulations

2.3 No proceedings or decisions made pursuant to these regulations shall be quashed or held invalid by reason only of any defect, irregularity, omission or other technicality, provided there has been no miscarriage of justice. In case of conflict between these Regulations and the Bye-laws of the Branch the Bye-laws of the Branch shall prevail.

2.4 The Competitions Committee shall have a minimum of seven members and the quorum for a meeting shall be three members. The Competitions Committee may convene a full meeting or empanel any three or more members to make a decision at the discretion of the Chairman of the Competitions Committee.

2.5 A Club shall be obliged to fulfil a fixture which has been arranged by the Relevant Committee.

2.6 In the event of a clash of playing colours it shall be the home team’s responsibility to change their playing strip.

3. SANCTIONS FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THESE REGULATIONS

In all cases where there is a breach or non-observance of these Regulations.

The Competitions Committee has the power to sanction Clubs or Schools with a variety of penalties that include:

- (1) Loss of matches or League points at any level,
- (2) Points deduction at any level; and/or awarding of points to an opposing Club in the current season or into the future,
- (3) Refixing of match or matches at any level and/ or at any venue,
- (4) Loss of home advantage in any match or matches,
- (5) Monetary fine
- (6) Expulsion from a League(s) or Cup(s),
- (7) Demotion or relegation from a League(s)
- (8) Any other sanction as the Competitions Committee may deem appropriate

Where individual players, members or persons breach these Regulations they may be referred to the Disciplinary Committee.

4 ELIGIBILITY OF CLUBS TO TAKE PART IN COMPETITIONS

- 4.1 All Clubs must be affiliated to the Leinster Branch and have paid the relevant affiliation fee and insurance premium.
- 4.2 Club affiliated to other Branches may by invitation take part in specific Competitions, subject to compliance with these Regulations and having paid the relevant fee. Such Clubs must have paid the relevant insurance premium.
- 4.3 All Clubs must pay the relevant Competition Fee for each League or Cup Competition.
- 4.4 The Committee shall have the power to consider representations as to the eligibility or otherwise of Clubs to take part in the various Competitions.
- 4.5 If a Junior Club is invited by the Committee to take part in the Leinster Senior Cup/League or Shield in a particular season, the fact that the Club plays in the Competition shall not render such Club, or any member thereof who played for it, ineligible to compete in any Competition run by the Committee, provided that such Club or player is otherwise eligible.

4.6 The Committee reserves the right to insist that a Club plays at a higher level in a Cup Competition even if they do not have a team participating in a League at that level.

5. ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS TO TAKE PART IN ADULT COMPETITIONS

5.1 No individual shall be permitted to play in any Competition unless he/she is registered with a Club and has been issued with an IRFU Player Registration Number.

5.2 Under 20's players shall complete a registration form specifically for under 20 players ("the Registration Form") before commencing to play with a Club each year. The form shall confirm that there has been no financial inducements, as defined in IRFU Regulation 6, given, or promised, to the player. It shall also confirm the age and playing record of the player. It shall be the responsibility of the Club to ensure that the details are correct and the player is eligible to play. Under 20's who transfer to a new Club must complete a new Registration Form.

5.3 Under 20 Dual Status players must complete a Registration Form with the Dual Status Club.

5.4 With the exception of Dual Status Players, no individual shall be permitted to play in Competitions for more than one Club in any current season without the consent of the Committee. (A Player who registers for an U20's team, and who is not being regularly selected, may apply by 1st of February in that season to transfer to another Club and play competitive football for that Club for the remainder of the season.)

5.5 In the event of a Club being defeated in a Cup match or winning any Cup Final (other than the Senior League), the members of such Club who played in that match from the start shall be ineligible to play in any lower level Cup Competition in that season. A Club may apply to the Committee to seek clearance for a player, who is otherwise ineligible to play, clearly detailing the circumstances surrounding that application.

5.6 Players from lower level teams that play in the Plate are not Cup tied from further participation in the lower level Cups (provided they are already eligible to play in lower Cup).

5.7 All players falling within the categories as set out below are ineligible to participate in the Competitions as follows:

i. Any Players who were contracted to play for Leinster or for any of the other Irish provinces or an equivalent overseas professional team are ineligible to play in any Competition .

ii In Metro League Div 4 and below League and Cup Competitions (excluding Over 35's), any Players who during the last 3 years have been selected to play on any International representative team (other than the Club, Schools, Youths or U20 teams).

- iii Any current fully contracted players may not play Metro League Div 1, 2 and 3 or under 20's Competition, other than Academy contracted players who can **only** play Under 20's, Metro League Div 1, 2 or above or for any 2nd 15 team of a Senior Club or any first team of a Junior Club..

Note: International or contracted professional players cannot play in the Tom Fox Cup (Over 35's) or similar competition for a period of 5 years from the date of the cessation of their contracts.

Clearance for players to play in particular competitions, if required, should be sought in accordance with the procedures for regrading as set out elsewhere in these Regulations.

- 5.8 Any player who plays from the start in six competitive matches for a higher team or teams shall be ineligible to play for a lower team for the remainder of the season without the consent of the Committee in all Competitions, with the exception of the Leinster Senior League, Leinster Senior League Shield, All Ireland Provincial League Championship, All Ireland Junior Cup, Bateman Cup and Area Competitions. Dual Status Players who play in the All Ireland League **are** subject to this rule.
- 5.9 On regrading a player can only play for the next team down in that Club for the remainder of that season. If a player who has been regraded starts at a higher level on even one occasion then he cannot play for the lower team again without a new re-grading application.
- 5.10 Where the consent of the Committee is required to enable a player to play in a Competition, notice in writing applying for such consent must be given to the DFA setting out the fullest possible information regarding the player in question.
- 5.11 A player who has played for a Club in the All Ireland League (excluding a dual-status player) shall be ineligible to play for any other Club in any competitions under the control of the Committee during the same season without the consent of that Committee.
- 5.12 A Club shall not permit an ineligible player to represent it and any Club who contravenes this Regulation shall at a minimum lose any League points awarded or lose the match if the fixture is a Cup match and sanctions set out in Regulation 3 shall also apply. It is the responsibility of each Club to satisfy itself that all of its players, current and new, are correctly and legitimately registered under their correct name and date of birth within the IRFU system. Furthermore, the onus shall rest with the individual Club to ensure that all of its players are eligible to play for the relevant team, in the relevant competition and within the appropriate age grade.
- 5.13 For a player to be eligible to play in any Metropolitan Cup or the play-offs of any Metro League Competition or under 20's Competitions, they shall have played in at least 4 matches at **that** level or below in the current season. In any non Under 20 Competitions under 20's players who do not satisfy the 4 game rule must apply for the consent of the committee. Under 20's players to be eligible to play in any Metropolitan Cup or the play-offs of any Metro League Competition shall have played in at least 4

matches at **that** level or below in the Metro League (not under 20's) in the current season.

- 5.14 Under 20's players registered with a Club that do not have a team participating in the JP Fanagan Under 20's Leagues, shall be eligible to play Dual Status, at Under 20's, with a Club that participates in the JP Fanagan Leagues.
- 5.15 Clubs that participate in the JP Fanagan Leagues shall be entitled to play a maximum of 3 Dual Status Players in any one season. Dual Status players must Sign a Dual Status Registration Form before they commence playing.

6. SUBMISSION BY CLUBS OF NAMES OF PLAYERS SELECTED FOR MATCHES AND NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

- 6.1 Electronic team sheets must be submitted on-line for each team at least **THREE** hours in advance of the kick off of each fixture.
- 6.2 A copy of the submitted Electronic team sheet signed by the team manager/coach must be made available and handed to the referee and the opposing team at least **THIRTY** minutes prior to kick off.
- 6.3 Any changes to the submitted team sheet must be brought to the attention of the referee prior to kick off and marked on the copy of team sheet. The referee shall initial the changes.
- 6.4 Changes to submitted team sheets that have been noted by the referee must be confirmed electronically on-line within **48 HOURS** of the end of the game.
- 6.5 The final score of the match and number of tries, conversions, drop kicks, yellow cards, red cards, and penalties scored must be contained on the team sheet and submitted to the DFA by the referee.
- 6.6 In the event of the official referee failing to attend at a match, or being incapacitated during the match, in any of the Competitions, a qualified referee mutually agreed upon by the captains of the respective teams may officiate, and if not agreed the Home Club shall appoint a qualified referee but such fact must be notified when the result of the match is being communicated to the Secretary of the Committee. If there is no qualified referee available the match shall be re-fixed.

7. PLAYING ENCLOSURE AND TECHNICAL ZONES

- 7.1 All Leinster Branch approved fixtures shall be played on pitches that conform to the regulations stated by the International Rugby Board.
- 7.2 The playing enclosure of the main (first XV) pitch should be defined by a fence unless impractical when it shall be defined by a rope.
- 7.3 If there is a stand, designated seats should be made available for subs.

- 7.4 Two technical zones should be designated, clearly marked with white paint, each nine meters long and three meters wide and not less than two meters from the touchline, one on either side of the halfway line, in which benches shall be placed to accommodate substitutes, and three members of the coaching/medical staff. If there is no bench the substitutes must remain outside the barrier. Players who are sin binned shall remain in the technical zone. The referee shall order them out of the playing enclosure if they fail to adhere to this requirement. A persistent failure to comply shall result in the team being reported to the Leinster Branch and sanctions applied as provided and set out elsewhere in these regulations.
- 7.5 Coaches are precluded from entering the playing enclosure (excluding the players' technical zone) during the course of a game except at half time.
- 7.6 The home Club must provide stewards (minimum two) to ensure compliance with Regulation 8.4
- 7.7 The “**minimum**” requirements for the staging of fixtures under floodlights are as follows:

Lux (Eav): Uniformity (U): Glare (GR): Colour (Ra)
200 0.6 <50 <60

The minimum requirements shall be maintained and certified biannually.
(This is an IRFU Class 11 minimum and may be subject to change.)

- 7.8 Clubs failing to comply with the above Regulations shall be dealt with by the Relevant Committee and sanctions applied as provided and set out elsewhere in these Regulations.

8. CANCELLATION OF MATCHES, THE POWER OF THE -COMMITTEE TO FIX DATES AND RELATED PROCEDURES

- 8.1 Clubs do not have the right to re-arrange matches without the consent of the Committee. Any Club contravening this regulation may be dealt with as provided and set out elsewhere in the regulations.
- 8.2 If a Club cancels a competitive match and is still fielding team(s) at a lower level(s) the players that played from the start of the last competitive match at the level of the cancelled game shall be deemed ineligible to play at any lower level that weekend. This team sheet does not affect player eligibility under the 6-game Regulation 5.8. Under 20's premier 1,2 and 3 players shall not be affected by this rule.
- 8.3 Where there is a doubt about the fitness of the ground and there is reasonable prospect that with improved weather conditions the ground could be playable by kick-off time, a decision on whether or not the pitch is playable shall be postponed until close to kick off time. Matches may **not** be postponed on grounds that the safety of players might be prejudiced, unless with the additional approval of the match referee.
- 8.4 In cases where doubt arises regarding playing conditions for a cup or league tie, the home Club must nominate a suitable alternate pitch locally within 48 hours or offer the

away team the option of hosting the match. The Committee reserves the sole right to re-fix for a different venue on the same day or on a future date.

- 8.5 Games may be re-fixed for a different day in the same weekend or re-fixed for an earlier date, with the consent of the Committee, if application is made, at least one week before the fixture is due to take place.
- 8.6 When a Club is awarded a match by means of a walkover etc., where bonus points are in operation in that competition, the Club shall be awarded the number of points for winning the match (bonus points are not awarded). However, at the end of the competition, if the non-awarding of the said points has a bearing on the results e.g. winning, promotion, relegation, the league may be re-calculated with the offending Club(s) results excluded and the Club(s) finishing higher/lower in this calculation may be declared winner and/or promoted/relegated as appropriate. However the Committee have a discretion not to recalculate where teams have played a match or matches against the same opposition and one team has earned a bonus point and the other team have not and such a recalculation would cause an unfair advantage to a team
- 8.7 Clubs failing to fulfill fixtures shall be dealt with by the relevant Committee and sanctions applied as provided and set out elsewhere in these regulations.

9. AWARDING OF TROPHIES

- 9.1 The successful Club in the final match of the Competitions each season shall be entitled to hold the Perpetual Challenge Cup or Shield or Plate appropriate to such Competition from the date of such final match until such date in the ensuing year as may be specified by the Committee, if such trophy exists. The successful Club shall be responsible for returning the said Cup to the Honorary Secretary of the Leinster Branch in as good order and condition as it was received. Failure to do so will result in the costs of restoring or replacing the trophy being borne by the offending Club. It shall be the responsibility of the successful Club to have its name engraved on the trophy in a manner agreed with DFA prior to the commencement of the following season. The relevant trophy to be returned to the Branch by the 1st of February.
- 9.2 The Honorary Secretary for the time being of the Leinster Branch shall be, to all intents and purposes, the legal owner, in trust for the Branch, of the Cup appropriate to each Competition played under the control of the Committee.

10. REGRADING OF PLAYERS

All applications for the regrading of players must be submitted in writing to the DFA setting out the fullest possible information regarding the player in question. Applications for regradings will be considered by the Committee on a weekly basis; applications must be received on or before 5pm on Wednesday. Any applications received after 5pm on Wednesday will be dealt with the following week. Every application shall be submitted on the form provided containing full particulars of the playing record of the player to whom it relates. On regrading a player can only play for the team below in that Club. The Committee before making a decision on a regrading

application may seek additional information which may result in an adjournment of a decision until the following week.

RULES RELATING TO SUBSTITUTIONS, FRONT ROWS AND OVERSEAS PLAYERS

Competition	Level	Sub	P & H	Overseas players	Rolling Subs
Senior League	Senior	7	2	1 per match	Yes
Leinster Senior Cup	Senior	7	2	1 per match	Yes
Leinster League 1A,1B,2A,2B,3	Junior 1	5	2	1 per season	Yes
Metro Divisions 1,2,3		5	2	1 per match	Yes
Leinster Seconds League	Junior 2	5	2	2 per match	Yes
Metro Divisions 4,5,6,7,8,9		5	2	2 per match	Yes
Metro Divisions 10,11		12	0	2 per match	Yes
JP Fanagan Leagues	Under 20's	7	2	1 per match	Yes
Gale Cup	Under 20's	7	2	1 per match	Yes
Towns Cup & Plate	Junior 1	5	2	1 per match	Yes
Metro Cup & Plate		5	2	1 per match	Yes
Prov 2nds Cup & Plate	Junior 2	5	2	2 per match	Yes
O'Connell Cup		5	2	2 per match	Yes
Anderson Cup	Junior 3	5	2	2 per match	Yes
Moran Cup		5	2	2 per match	Yes
Dunne Cup	Junior 4	5	2	2 per match	Yes
Winters Cup		5	2	2 per match	Yes
O'Connor Cup		5	2	2 per match	Yes
Guilfoyle-James Cup	Jnr 6	5	2	2 per match	Yes
Fox Cup	Over 35's	5	2	2 per match	Yes
McCorry Cup	Under 20's	7	2	1 per match	Yes
Purcell Cup	Under 20's	7	2	1 per match	Yes

- (a) P and H subs shall mean front row substitutes/replacements capable of playing both prop forward positions and hooker position respectively and must be identified on team sheets as P and H.
- (b) Rolling substitutions
1. A maximum of 12 substitutions (Changes) per team per match will be allowed.
 2. Changes under this Law shall include blood replacements and injuries; indeed any time one player replaces another player from the same team other than front-row replacements required after a yellow card (see 6. below).
 3. When a player has a blood injury and is replaced by another player and then returns to the field of play within the permitted time that will count as 2 changes.
 4. When a player is sent from the field of play under a red card that is not a change.
 5. When a player is temporarily suspended under a yellow card and leaves the field of play that is not a change.

6. When a scrum is ordered during the temporary suspension of a front-row player (Player A), and as a result a player (Player B) is required to leave the field to allow another front-row player (Player C) to come on that does NOT count as a change.
7. If, at the end of the period of temporary suspension, Player A resumes and Player C leaves the field that does NOT count as a change.
8. Player B returning to the field of play is also NOT a change.
9. If, however, the team opts to leave Player C on at the end of the temporary suspension period instead of Player A returning that IS a change.
10. After all 12 changes have been made, no other changes will be allowed for whatever reason including injuries. If, after the 12 changes have been made there is any reason for a player to leave the field of play, the team must play on with one less player. Uncontested scrums will apply if this involves a front-row player.

(c) Procedural Guideline for the Administration and Control of Rolling Substitutions at Matches:

- A. Each team will have a set (12) of cards (each set will be a different colour)
- B. Each team shall appoint its responsible person (e.g. Coach) who shall be required to hand the appropriate change card in the correct sequence to the referee, touch judge, or 4th official. This must happen before each change takes place and a player enters the field of play. There is no requirement to record or write anything on the card.
- C. The referee, touch judge, or 4th official shall receive and retain the cards during the match and shall monitor each team's use of its changes. The referee is not required to record any information but shall retain the submitted cards until after the end of the match.

12. FAILURE TO FIELD FRONT ROWS (Does Not Apply To Div 10,11)

- A. If a team is unable, to field a front row from the start, then the fixture shall go ahead with uncontested scrums and remain uncontested and the following shall be the consequence:
 1. The team unable to field the front row will play the match with a maximum of 14 players from the start.
 2. The offending team must have 8 players in the pack

- B. If a Club fails to nominate the required number of players capable of playing in front row positions so that after injuries or a red card /yellow given to the front row the captain of that team declares that he has no front row replacements, the match will continue with non-contested scrums and the following shall apply,
 1. The team unable to field the front row cannot replace that front row player thereby reducing their number by one..
 2. The offending team must have 8 players in the pack

And sanctions and/or penalties as provided and set out elsewhere in the regulations may be applied by the Competitions Committee having reviewed the referees report.

13. YOUTHS

Youths who have not reached their 18th Birthday are ineligible to participate in any matches not under the control of the Youths Committee. Youth players who have not reached their 18th birthday are ineligible to play Adult rugby which includes Under 20's. The onus shall rest with the individual Club to ensure that all of its players are eligible to play for the relevant team, in the relevant competition and within the appropriate age grade.

14. OVERSEAS/FOREIGN PLAYERS

- 14.1 (a) All individuals from countries other than Ireland must, prior to playing at any level in this country attend with their passports at the Leinster Branch Offices.
(b) Written confirmation of the individual's IRFU Player Registration number must be obtained from the I.R.F.U. and a copy of the confirmation shall be forwarded to the Branch. This also applies to players returning to Ireland having played abroad.
- 14.2 All individuals other than those who fall into one or more of the following categories are regarded as Overseas Players and are subject to the restrictions applicable to the various Leinster Branch Competitions as set out at (3) below:
- (a) Those who qualify to play for Ireland under World Rugby Regulations;
(b) Those that hold a passport issued by a country which is a member of the E.U.;
(c) Those that have lived permanently in Ireland for a period of three years immediately preceding the time of playing subject to proof of residency being produced.
(d) Those who are qualified under International Agreements (e.g. Cotonou) agreed with the IRFU must produce their work permits in the Leinster Branch offices or those with Stamp 4 Visas issued by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs ("Stamp 4 players") whose principal source of income is playing rugby.
- 14.3 Overseas Players – Restrictions in respect of Leinster Branch Competitions
(a) Number permitted – See chart at 12 above

15. RESIDENCY

- 15.1 All players must be resident in this Country at least one week prior to the commencement of the Competition. Evidence of residence may be requested by the Leinster Branch.
- 15.2 Any overseas player or Irish qualified player who has been playing abroad and who arrives after the qualifying dates above cannot play without the consent of the relevant committee

16. TRANSFERS BETWEEN CLUBS

Transfers to or from Senior Clubs shall take place on or before the 1st of June with or without the consent of the transferor or the 1st of January of the following year with the consent of the transferor. Transfers from and between Junior Clubs shall take place on or before the 1st of September without consent or the 1st of January the following year with the consent of the

transferor. A player may not transfer if they have played competitive rugby for any other Club (with the exception of under 20's players pursuant to regulation 5.4). Any transfers thereafter must be due to **exceptional circumstances** and must be approved by the Sub-Committee. If a player has not played any rugby in Ireland for at least two years then the need for consent is dispensed with.

17. TEAMS TIED ON EQUAL POINTS IN ALL LEAGUE COMPETITIONS

17.1 In all League Competitions, with the exception of U20 qualifiers, unless otherwise specifically stated, points will be awarded as follows : 4 points for a win; 2 points for a draw; 0 points for a loss ; 1 bonus point for losing by 7 or less points; 1 bonus point for scoring 4 or more tries

17.2 In the event of two or more teams in a Division/Section finishing level on League points, whether at the top or the bottom of the Division/Section, final placings shall be decided by the following criteria (subject to Regulation 9.6 being satisfied):

- (i) The team with the most wins in the League;
- (ii) The team with the most drawn games in the League;
- (iii) The team with the greater number of League points in the games against each other;
- (iv) The team with the best match points difference in the games against each other;
- (v) The team that has scored most tries in the games against each other
- (vi) The team with the best match points difference against all teams in the league
- (vii) The team that has scored most tries in all games in the League
- (viii) A play off or playoffs at neutral grounds unless all relevant teams agree or due to time constraints a coin should be tossed.

18. LEINSTER SENIOR LEAGUE and CUP

18.1 Playing in the League will NOT affect eligibility for other Leinster Branch Competitions, it will not be taken into consideration for regulation 5.8 (The 6-match rule).

18.2 Substitution: 7 for League and 7 for the Cup. (see chart)

18.3 Overseas Players: Only one overseas player allowed PER MATCH.

18.4 Dual Status: One player per match (from a Junior Club not playing in competition). If a Dual Status player plays in the Senior Cup and loses a match or wins the final, he will be unable to play in a Lower Cup for his home Club without the consent of the Committee .

19. THE LEINSTER LEAGUE DIVISIONS 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B AND 3

19.1 The Competition shall be open annually to every Club not participating in the All Ireland League.

19.2 Substitution: 5 (see chart)

19.3 Overseas Players: Only one overseas player allowed PER SEASON per Club.

19.4 Cotonou Agreement or Stamp 4 players: Each Club is allowed play only **one** holder of a Cotonou Work Permit or Stamp 4 professional player coach.

- 19.5 Clubs competing in Division 1A shall have a 2nd XV competing in Leinster Seconds League Division 1A to be eligible to play in Division 1A.

Composition of League

- (a) The League for **2016-17** will be as follows:
- (i) **Div 1A – 8 teams** playing each other home and away;
 - (ii) **Div 1B – 8 teams** playing each other home and away;
 - (iii) **Div 2A – 8 teams** playing each other home and away;
 - (iv) **Div 2B – 8 teams** playing each other home and away;
 - (v) **Div 3 – 7 teams** playing each other home and away;
- (b) **Promotion and relegation** between the divisions will be as follows
- Div 1A and Div 1B** – bottom team relegated from Div 1A to Div 1B and winner of Div 1B promoted to Div 1A; playoff between the second last team in Div 1A and 2nd placed team in Div 1B with the winner playing in Div 1A and loser in Div 1B in 2017-18 (playoff will be at neutral venue)
- Div 1B and Div 2A** – bottom team relegated from Div 1B to Div 2A and winner of Div 2A promoted to Div 1B; playoff between the second last team in Div 1B and 2nd placed team in Div 2A with the winner playing in Div 1B and loser in Div 2 in 2017-18 (playoff will be at neutral venue)
- Div 2A and Div 2B** – the bottom team in Div 2A will be relegated into Div 2B and winner of Div 2B will be promoted to Div 2A; playoff between the second last team in Div 2A and 2nd placed team in Div 2B with the winner playing in Div 2A and loser in Div 2B in 2017-18 (playoff will be at neutral venue)
- Div 2B and Div 3** – the bottom team in Div 2B will be relegated into Div 3 and winner of Div 3 will be promoted to Div 2B; playoff between the second last team in Div 2B and 2nd placed team in Div 3 with the winner playing in Div 2B and loser in Div 3 in 2017-18 (playoff will be at neutral venue)

NOTE: The above promotion and relegation regulations only apply between all Divisions if no team is promoted to or relegated from (or one is promoted and another relegated) the Ulster Bank League (AIL). In the event of any other promotion and/or relegation the following will apply:

- (i) If ONE team is promoted to the Ulster Bank League both teams contesting the playoff will play in the higher Division in 2017-18
 - (ii) If ONE team is relegated from the Ulster Bank League (or if two teams are relegated and one promoted) both teams contesting the playoff will play in the lower Division in 2017-18
 - (iii) If TWO teams are relegated from the Ulster Bank League both teams contesting the playoff together with the 6th placed team in the higher Division will play in the lower Division in 2017-18
- (c) At the end of each season the following arrangements will apply:
- (i) The winning Club in Division 1A shall be the Leinster candidate for promotion into Division 2C of the Ulster Bank League.
 - (ii) The Top 4 teams in Division 1A shall qualify for the All Ireland Junior Cup for the following season. The 5th placed team in Division 1A will qualify for the All Ireland Junior Cup if the winner of Division 1A is promoted to the Ulster Bank League.
- (d) The League for the following seasons will be structured as follows:

The Competitions Committee will draw up a seeding structure based on the previous season's results. Teams will be allocated to Divisions according to their seeding. Divisions 1A, 1B, 2A will consist of eight teams in each Division with the teams playing each other home and away. The formation of Divisions 2B and 3 will be dependent on the number of participating Clubs. If there are sufficient teams the Sub-Committee may sub-divide both Divisions.

19.7 Leinster Seconds League

- (i) 4 points for a win, two points for a draw and one point for losing by 7 points or less.
- (ii) Minimum number on a team is 12 and maximum 15 on the pitch.
- (iii) If one team has more players than the other, in order to balance the sides, the team with the greater number of players may allow players to play on the opposing team. The team with the lesser number of players cannot compel the team with the greater number of players to give them players, but the game shall start with an equal number of players on both teams (i.e. the lower number of players).

19.8 Teams conceding walkovers

If a team concedes a walkover in the Leinster League

- a. 1st walkover: an automatic deduction of 4 points and the loss of the match
- b. 2nd walkover: an automatic deduction of 4 points, the loss of the match and the next Cup match of that team to be played in the grounds of the opposing team.
- c. 3rd walkover, appear before Competitions Committee

If a team concedes a walkover in the Leinster Seconds League

- a. 1st and 2nd walkovers: an automatic deduction of 2 points and the loss of the match,
- b. 3rd walkover: an automatic deduction of 2 points, the loss of the match and next Cup match of that team to be played in the grounds of the opposing team.
- c. 4th walkover: deduction of 2 points, the loss of the match, Clubs first team to play their next Cup match in the grounds of the opposing team and the Club to appear before the Competitions Committee.

20. UNDER 20 LEAGUE COMPETITIONS

- 20.1. The Leagues shall be open for competition annually to all Clubs affiliated to the Branch or by invitation to Clubs affiliated to other Branches.
- 20.2 Players must complete a Registration Form each season to be eligible to play in under 20's Competitions.
- 20.3 Eligibility of players to take part in the Competitions. (See also Regulation 5.)
 - (a) Any player who is under the age of 20 years on 1st July prior to the season in which the Competitions are played shall be eligible to play in the Competition.(2016-2017 born on or after 1st of July 1996),

- (b) The selection of a player or players in any other Representative match, League or Cup Competition on the same weekend as a match in this Competition shall not be grounds for postponement of either match.
- (c) All players must play at least four games in any combination of the Under 20 competitions, JP Fanagan Leagues to become eligible to play in the final two games of the appropriate league, playoffs and/or Cup.
- (d) Dual Status players as defined in Regulation 5.11

21. METRO LEAGUES

21.1 The composition of the Leagues shall be determined by the Competitions Committee. The Leagues shall be merit based and divided into Divisions of 8 teams playing each other home and away. (unless the Competitions Committee deem otherwise)

21.2 There shall be a playoff at the end of the League to determine the League winners, which team shall also be promoted, between the top two teams at the end of the League. The playoff to take place at the home venue of the team that finishes higher in the League.

21.3 There shall be a playoff at the end of the League to determine the team to be relegated, between the bottom two teams at the end of the League. . The playoff to take place at the home venue of the team that finishes higher in the League.

21.4 There shall be one team promoted and one team relegated, with the exception of Division 1 where there shall be no promotion and the bottom Division where there shall be no relegation (subject to Regulations 22.5, 22.6, and 22. 8 below)

21.5 No Club shall have 2 teams in the same Division.

21.6 In the event of a team winning promotion where that Club has a team in the Division above that team shall not be promoted but the team that finishes second shall be promoted unless they also have a team in the Division above.

21.7 Only teams finishing first or second in a Division can be promoted.

21.8 In the event that a team is relegated and that Club has a team in the immediate lower Division(s) then the team(s) below are also relegated.

21.9 The maximum number of teams that can be relegated or promoted in any Division is two teams.

21.10 If no teams are promoted due to regulation 6 then there shall be no relegation from the Division above.

21.11 Under 19 variation to scrummaging laws shall apply from Division 4 and below.

21.12 Divisions 10 and below scrummaging regulations: no requirement for front row players.

21.13 Division 6 and below. i.4 points for a win, two points for a draw and one point for losing by 7 points or less. ii Minimum number on a team is 12 and maximum 15 on the pitch .iii if one team has more players than the other, in order to balance the sides- the team with the greater number of players may allow players to play on the opposing team. The team with the lesser number of players cannot compel the team with the greater number of players to give them players, but the game shall start with an equal number of players on both teams. (ie the lower number of players).

21.14 SANCTIONS AGAINST TEAMS CONCEDED WALKOVERS IN METRO LEAGUES

- a. If the bottom team in a club concedes a walkover that team will be deducted 4 League points
- b. If a team other than the bottom team in a club concedes a walkover and team(s) at lower levels from that club play their game(s) the following sanctions will apply:
 - a. Deduction of 4 League points
 - b. Every other team in the club below that team, that is not participating in AIL Qualifying Leagues, will be deducted ONE League point
- c. A second walkover conceded by a team from that club (not necessarily the same team):
 - a. Deduction of 4 League points
 - b. Every other team in the club that is not participating in AIL Qualifying Leagues will be deducted TWO League points
- d. A third walkover conceded by a team from that club (not necessarily the same team):
 - a. Deduction of 4 League points
 - b. Every other team in the club that is not participating in AIL Qualifying Leagues will be deducted FOUR League points
- e. The Competitions Committee may impose further sanctions if it deems such sanctions appropriate

21.14 The Competitions Committee reserve the right to promote, relegate or fail to promote or relegate teams in order to facilitate new teams or for any other circumstance deemed necessary.

22. DURATION OF MATCHES AND PROVISION FOR EXTRA TIME IN CUPS OR LEAGUE PLAY-OFFS

- 22.1 The duration of each match in the Competition shall normally be eighty minutes.
- 22.2 If any Cup or League play-off match is drawn at the expiration of eighty minutes, an extra twenty minutes shall be played, unless, in either case, the referee decides that conditions as to state of ground, light or otherwise are unfit for further play.
- 22.3 In the event of a draw after extra time the following shall apply:

A Senior Cup, Metropolitan Cup, Albert O'Connell Cup, Metro Leagues Divisions 1,2,3,4, Under 20 Premier 1 and 2– JP Fanagan & McCorry Cup – Towns Cup, Seconds Towns Cup and Leinster League Play-offs there shall be a replay

B Metro Leagues Divisions 5 and below, Under 20 Premier 3 and all other Cups – tie-break will operate as follows up to and including semi-finals (replay in the final):

- (a) Team that scores most tries including extra time,
- (b) Team that incurs the least number of red cards,
- (c) Team that incurs the least number of yellow cards,
- (d) Away team goes through to next round .

23. ELIGIBILITY OF CLUBS TO ENTER CUP COMPETITIONS

23.1 Metro Divisions 1 and 2 may be eligible play in the Metro Cup.
Metro Division 3 may be eligible to play in the O'Connell Cup
Metro Divisions 4 and 5 may be eligible to play in the Moran Cup
Metro Divisions 6,7,8 and 9 may be eligible to play in the Winters Cup
Metro Divisions 10,11 may be eligible to play in the O'Connor Cup

23.2 A Club can apply to the Competitions Committee to play in a higher or lower Cup .

23.3 Clubs not in any Division may apply to the Competitions Committee to play in a Cup.

23.4 The Competitions Committee may use its discretion to allocate teams into Cups.

24. DRAWS/VENUES FOR PROVINCIAL TOWNS CUP COMPETITIONS

24.1 The draw for each round of the Provincial Towns Cup shall be by open draw. The first team drawn in Rounds One, Two and Three shall have home advantage, except in the case of a Second or Third Round tie where the first team drawn has won its previous tie at home and the second team drawn has won its previous tie away from home. In this case, the second team drawn shall have home advantage.

24.2 For other Provincial Towns Cup Competitions, the venues for the Second and subsequent Rounds (up to the semi-finals) will be determined in the following manner:

- (a) A team winning a match at home in one round will play its next match away unless its opponents, being drawn on the bottom of the draw, have also won their previous match at home, or a match is a Second Round match and its opponents have drawn a bye to the bottom position in the draw.

- (b) A team winning a match away in one round will play its next round match at home unless: (i) its opponents, being drawn on the top of the draw, have also won their previous match away, or (ii) the match is a Second Round match and its opponents have drawn a bye to the top position in the draw.

24.3 Semi-finals and Finals shall be played at neutral venues.

24.4 Teams beaten in the first round of the Anderson Cup shall be eligible to play in the Michael Dunne Cup and Regulation 5.5 shall not apply.

NOTE In the case of a team winning a tie following a replay or replays, the venue for that tie shall be deemed to have been the first venue.

Also, a walkover will be considered the equivalent of a bye when determining home and away venues.

LEINSTER BRANCH REGULATIONS GOVERNING PROTESTS, OBJECTIONS AND APPEALS

31. These regulations which have been approved by the Executive Committee shall apply to all Competitive matches held under the auspices of the Leinster Branch, including Senior Matches, Junior Matches including Area Matches, Schools Matches and Youths Matches and the Laws and Regulations of the Irish Rugby Football Union shall apply.

32. GENERAL

All Clubs and Players competing in Competitions shall be deemed to have accepted and be bound by these regulations.

33. AUTHORITY OF RELEVANT COMMITTEES

Subject to the overriding authority of the Branch and the other provisions of these regulations:

33.1 The Competitions Committee in the case of Senior, Under 21's, Womens and Junior Competitions, the Schools' Committee in the case of Schools' Competitions ; and the Youths Committee; in the case of Youths Competitions (which Committees are respectively hereinafter referred to as the Relevant Committee) shall have responsibility for the operation and control of their respective competitions by all Clubs, Schools, Players and Persons involved with these regulations and other relevant competition regulations.

33.2 The Relevant Committee shall have power to act on its own initiative and subject to these Regulations to make decisions (a)for the proper administration of competitions under its jurisdiction and (b) regarding compliance with regulations , and to impose such sanctions as may be permitted by these Regulations.

33.3 The Relevant Committee shall be entitled to delegate to the Relevant Secretary (or in his/her absence such other person as may be nominated by the Honorary Secretary of the Branch) or such one or more members of the Relevant Committee as it may determine its functions under (a) in 33.2 above ,and any decision of such person or persons shall be as valid and effective as if made by the full Relevant Committee and for the purposes of these Regulations shall be regarded as a decision of the Relevant Committee. The Branch shall have no liability to any Club or any person arising from negligence or failure to ensure compliance with these Regulations.

33.4 In relation to the proper administration of competitions the Relevant Secretary shall have at his or her discretion subject to subsequent ratification by the relevant Committee the authority to:

- (i) Make decisions himself/herself
- (ii) Ask the Relevant Committee (of which he/she is a member) to make the decision or
- (iii) Ask the Competitions Committee to make the decision.

Any such decision shall be called "the first decision".

- 33.5 . Where the Relevant Committee or the Competitions Committee is asked to make the decision, such committee shall take submissions by phone or email and shall communicate among themselves by phone or email save where the affected Club or Clubs specifically request a full hearing.
- 33.6 The first decision shall be communicated to such Club, Player or Person as may be directly affected, as soon as reasonably possible.
- 33.7 Any Club affected by a decision of the Relevant Secretary shall be entitled to object by email to the said decision, such objection shall be considered by the Competitions Committee but the Relevant Secretary shall not act as part of the Competitions Committee in such consideration by it .The decision of the Competitions Committee in this regard shall be final and there shall be no appeal from that decision.
- 33.8 In relation to compliance or an alleged non-compliance with these Regulations the Competitions Compliance Officer shall investigate the matter and who shall, if he deems there is a case to be answered, refer the matter to be dealt with by the Relevant Committee or the Competitions Committee. The Competitions Compliance Officer shall not consult with any member of the hearing Committee save the acting Chairman regarding the matter.
- 33.9 An objection regarding compliance with these Regulations may be made by a Club or by a Relevant Secretary or by the Competitions Committee on behalf of the Branch.
- 33.10 Any such objection shall be dealt with in accordance with the relevant provisions of Regulations 34-37.
- 33.11 Any decision made by the Relevant Secretary, the Relevant Committee or the Competitions Committee shall be put in writing with a brief summary of the facts and the reason for the decision and sent by the Relevant Secretary to all parties involved in the decision.
- 33.12 If any facts disclosed on investigation under 33.8 above or 34.5 below or that come to light during a Hearing indicate that a serious breach has occurred, in particular in relation to an individual player or Club member, the Chairman of the Competitions Committee should refer the matter to the Disciplinary Committee.

34. CLUB OBJECTIONS

- 34.1 Any Club who wishes to object to any decision in relation to a breach of these regulations or the result of a match shall do so in writing and such objection shall be received by the Branch not later than three working days from midnight on the date of the event or decision giving rise to the objection
- 34.2 The basic principle is that an incident or a decision can give rise to ONE only objection.. Only the teams who have participated in the relevant match that gives rise to the objection are entitled to object.

- 34.3 All objections must be signed by the Honorary Secretary or Acting Honorary Secretary of the Club or if by a school, by the Rugby Games master or Acting Rugby Games master in the school.
- 34.4 Any Objection shall contain the following:-
- (a) The date of the relevant event or decision;
 - (b) Specific details of the objection, particularly in relation to objections to players their names and playing positions.
- 34.5 The Competitions Compliance Officer shall investigate the facts alleged in the objection and report to the Competitions Committee.
- 34.6 All objections in relation to Breaches of these Regulations must be accompanied by a deposit of **€250 unless same is waived by the Competitions Committee.**
- 34.7 No person shall be entitled to be a member of any committee hearing an objection who acted on any committee that has made, the decision which is the subject of the objection , or who is a member of a Club involved in the objection
- 34.8 The Branch shall cause a copy of an objection to be sent to any Club, School, Player or Person directly affected with all reasonable speed.
- 34.9 Where a decision is made pursuant to these regulations by a competent person or Committee which affects the league or cup position of any Club, it shall not be permissible for any Club which was not involved in or did not participate in the match in respect of which the objection or appeal arose, to lodge an objection against any such decision.

35. BRANCH INITIATED OBJECTIONS

- 35.1 The Relevant Secretary, the Competitions Compliance Officer or any member of the Competitions Committee on behalf of the Branch may initiate an objection. The Competitions Committee shall make a decision on such objection but the person who initiates the Objection cannot act on the Competitions Committee in hearing the Objection
- 35.2 Any objection initiated by the Branch should be done as soon as is practical after a match.
- 35.3 It is understood that such objections may arise due to a complaint by a referee or after a random examination of team sheets or any other circumstance.
- 35.4 Objections can relate to more than one match, in particular where it is found that a Club has played an illegal player.
- 35.5 Only participants in the most recent match shall be notified and deemed to be directly affected.

35.6 Following receipt of submissions from the relevant Clubs, the Competitions Committee may make a decision if so requested by the relevant Clubs. Otherwise it shall hold an oral hearing prior to making a decision.

36. APPEALS

36.1 Any Club who wishes to Appeal any decision made by the Relevant Secretary or the Competitions Committee in relation to a breach of these regulations or the result of a match shall do so in writing and such objection shall be received by the Branch not later than three working days from midnight on the date of having been notified of the decision giving rise to the Appeal

36.2 The basic principle is that a decision can give rise to ONE only Appeal Only the teams who have participated in the relevant match that gives rise to the Appeal are entitled to Appeal.

36.3 All Appeals must be signed by the Honorary Secretary or Acting Honorary Secretary of the Club or if by a school, by the Rugby Games master or Acting Rugby Games master in the school.

36.4 Any Appeal shall contain the following:-

- (a) The date of the decision appealed against;
- (b) A copy of the decision being appealed,
- (c) The specific aspect(s) and parts of the decision being challenged, if it is an appeal against severity only or against the entire decision,
- (d) When an appeal is made on behalf of a player by a club it shall only be done with the prior written consent of the player.
- (e) All documents produced or relied on in the first hearing, to include any reports or computer generated details, shall be produced in advance of the Appeal hearing.
- (f) Any new documents, reports or computer generated details to be relied on by the appellant, Competitions Compliance Officer or any party to the Appeal shall be lodged in advance of the hearing. The Appeals Committee reserve the right to refuse to consider any documents not produced in advance.

The specific grounds of challenge must be specified in the appeal. No further grounds of challenge may be advanced without the express prior consent of the Committee of Appeal.

36.5 All Appeals must be accompanied by a deposit of **€500**. Such payments will be refunded if the appeal is not deemed to be frivolous.

36.6 No person shall be entitled to be a member of any committee hearing an Appeal or who has acted on any committee who has made, the decision which is the subject of the Appeal, or who is a member of a Club involved in the Appeal.

- 36.7 The Branch shall cause a copy of an Appeal to be sent to any Club, School, Player or Person directly affected (subject to Regulation 34.2 above) with all reasonable speed.
- 36.8 Where a decision is made pursuant to these regulations by a competent person or Committee which affects the league or cup position of any Club, it shall not be permissible for any Club which was not involved in or did not participate in the match in respect of which the appeal arose, to lodge an Appeal against any such decision.

37. HEARINGS

- 37.1 The Branch shall arrange for the hearing of any objection or appeal with all convenient speed at such time and place as it may determine, provided that any Club, School, Player or Person directly affected shall be given not less than 48 hours' notice either in writing, email or orally confirmed in writing, of the time and place of such hearing, unless the parties agree to shorter notice.
- 37.2 The Hearing Committee shall permit any Club, School, Player or Person directly affected by such objection, including a representative of the relevant Committee, to submit evidence, call witnesses and make representations at the hearing.
- 37.3 No Club, School, Player or Person appearing at a hearing before the Hearing Committee shall be entitled to be represented by more than two persons (in addition to a legal representative) attending the hearing and legal representation at the hearing shall not be permitted unless reasonable notice of this, prior to the hearing shall be given to the Appeals Committee and any Club, School, Player or Person directly affected by the objection.
- 37.4 Subject to the requirements of Natural Justice, the procedures to be adopted at the hearing shall be entirely at the discretion of the Hearing Committee. The Hearing Committee shall be entitled to call such witnesses and seek such advice as it may require.
- 37.5 Any decision made by the Hearing Committee shall be put in writing with a brief summary of the facts and the reason for the decision and sent by the Relevant Secretary to all parties involved in the decision.
- 37.6 Any Appeal arising from a decision relating to the proper administration of the competitions or any appeal of a decision relating to a breach of Regulations appeal shall be heard by the Appeals Committee.

38. ENFORCEMENT POWERS

- 38.1 Where the Relevant Secretary or any Committee request a Club, School, Player or Person to provide information in relation to any matter, a reasonable time limit may be imposed and notified for the provision of such information and in the event that such time limit is not complied with, a decision may be made in the absence of such information.

- 38.2 In any Competition where there is a breach or non-observance of any of these Regulations – the Hearing Committee, shall be entitled to impose all or any of the sanctions or penalties listed in Regulation 3 on the offending Club, School, Player or Person.

39. UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

- 39.1 The Executive Committee of the Branch shall be entitled to make decisions on all matters not provided for in these regulations.
- 39.2 No proceedings or decisions made pursuant to these regulations shall be quashed or held invalid by reason only of any defect, irregularity, omission or other technicality, provided there has been no miscarriage of justice.
- 39.3 Where under these regulations any time is allowed or prescribed, the Relevant Secretary the Relevant Committee or the Competitions Committee as appropriate, shall have full discretionary powers on good cause shown to extend or abridge the time prescribed or to postpone a prescribed date or time.
- 39.4 In the event of conflict between these regulations and the IRFU Regulations, the IRFU Regulations shall prevail.