



KEY 2020/21 HEINEKEN CHAMPIONS CUP RULES

The following is a summary of the rules of the 2020/21 Heineken Champions Cup tournament:

1. LAWS OF THE GAME

The tournament will be played in accordance with World Rugby's Laws of the Game of Rugby Union (as amended from time to time), as varied or supplemented by EPCR.

2. NEW FORMAT

Pool Draw

2.1 The 24 clubs (eight from each league) are divided into four tiers based on their performances in the knockout phases of their respective leagues, and/or on their qualifying positions in their respective league tables as follows:

Tier 1 (6 clubs): 1st and 2nd ranked clubs from each league

Tier 2 (6 clubs): 3rd and 4th ranked clubs from each league

Tier 3 (6 clubs): 5th and 6th ranked clubs from each league

Tier 4 (6 clubs): 7th and 8th ranked clubs from each league

NB : *If not already ranked number one, the winners of the 2020 Heineken Champions Cup will become the second-ranked club from its league. If not already qualified, the winners of the 2020 Challenge Cup will take the place of the eighth-ranked club from its league.*

2.2 The clubs are then drawn and/or allocated from the four tiers into two pools of 12 – Pool A and Pool B. Clubs from the same league in the same tier **cannot** be in the same pool.

2.3 For the purposes of creating the fixtures, clubs from the same league **cannot** play against one another, and clubs will only play against other clubs in the **same** pool.

The Tier 1 clubs and the Tier 4 clubs which have been drawn in the same pool, but which are not in the same league, will play one another home and away.

The Tier 2 clubs and the Tier 3 clubs which have been drawn in the same pool, but which are not in the same league, will play one another home and away.

Pool Stage

2.4 Each club will play four matches during the pool stage, two at home and two away.

2.5 Four match points for a win, two match points for a draw. A bonus point will be awarded to a club scoring four or more tries and to a club losing by seven points or fewer.

If two or more clubs in the same pool are equal on match points, their ranking will be determined as follows:

(i) the best aggregate points difference from the pool stage; or

(ii) if equal, the number of tries scored in the pool stage; or

(iii) if equal, the club with the fewest number of players suspended for disciplinary incidents in the pool stage; or

(iv) if equal, by drawing lots.

Quarter-finals

2.6 The four highest-ranked clubs in Pool A and the four highest-ranked clubs in Pool B will qualify for the quarter-final matches which will be played over two legs on a home and away basis as follows:

QF1: Number 1-ranked club in Pool A v Number 4-ranked club in Pool B

QF2: Number 2-ranked club in Pool B v Number 3-ranked club in Pool A

QF3: Number 2-ranked club in Pool A v Number 3-ranked club in Pool B

QF4: Number 1-ranked club in Pool B v Number 4-ranked club in Pool A

NB *The clubs ranked numbers 1 and 2 from Pool A and Pool B will play the second leg of their quarter-finals at home.*

2.7 The clubs ranked 5 to 8 in Pool A and 5 to 8 in Pool B will qualify for the round of 16 of the Challenge Cup.

Semi-finals

2.8 Semi-finals, played over one match, will be staged at venues designated by EPCR and the highest-ranked clubs from the pool stage will have home country advantage.

Winner QF1 v Winner QF2

Winner QF3 v Winner QF4

Final

2.9 The 2021 final will be played in Marseille.

NB *In the event of drawn matches or equal aggregate scores at the end of normal time during the knockout stage, extra-time will be played with the exception of the first legs of the quarter-final matches. If the scores remain tied at the end of extra time, the winner will be determined as follows:*

(a) the club that has scored the most tries in the match or matches (including extra time) or

(b) if equal, by a place kick competition.

3. ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

3.1 Each club must nominate a squad, however, there is no limit on the number of players nominated at first registration of the season. A minimum of 12 of the players nominated by the club must be capable of playing in front row forward positions. The First Registration deadline is midday (GMT) on **Thursday 19 November 2020** and all players must be fully and properly registered with their club and Union.

3.2 A club must nominate a squad of between 19 and 23 players for each match.

3.3 A minimum of six front row players must be included in each match day squad such that on the first occasion that a replacement is required in each position, a replacement can be made. Where uncontested scrums are ordered due to the departure of a front row player and there is no suitable replacement, the player whose departure caused the uncontested scrums may not be replaced (i.e. the club will be required to play with 14 players).

3.4 Each club may register up to five Additional Players during the pool stage but none during the knockout stage, each to replace a player previously registered. A minimum of three Additional Players must be front row players, one Additional Player can be from any position and one Additional Player must be a medical replacement. Players must have a three-month

contract with the club and must not have played for another club in the same tournament. Additional Player registrations must be submitted by 12 noon (GMT) on the Wednesday before the match. De-registered players may be re-registered (in place of the relevant Additional Players) during the pool stage.

3.5 For Second Registration, clubs can add up to three players to supplement their squads and one of the players must be a front row player. The deadline for Second Registration is midday (GMT) on **25 March 2021**.

3.6 Each club is permitted an unlimited number of 'non-European players' in each match day squad for the 2020/21 season.

4. CLUB COLOURS

4.1 For pool matches and quarter-finals, if a club fails to wear the strip designated by EPCR and there is a colour clash, that club must change strip. For the semi-finals and final, in the event of a colour clash, the club to change strip will be at EPCR's discretion.

5. ANTI-DOPING PROGRAMME

5.1 Players will be subject to doping control as set out in EPCR's Anti-Doping Programme, which is based on and subject to Regulation 21 (Anti-Doping) of World Rugby's regulations.

6. ABANDONMENT

6.1 Where a match is abandoned after 60 minutes or more, the result will stand.

6.2 Where a match is abandoned after fewer than 60 minutes, (a) if both clubs and the EPCR Board agree, the result will stand, or (b) the match will be replayed in full no earlier than 48 hours after kick-off of the abandoned match (unless both clubs and EPCR agree otherwise), with both clubs entitled to select new match day squads.

7. MEDIA REGULATION – Match Day Squad announcements

7.1 Each club must announce its match day squad by midday (GMT) on the Thursday before a Friday match and by midday (GMT) on the Friday before a weekend match. The match day squad announced must not differ from the squad that plays save in exceptional circumstances. Breaches of match day squad regulations may result in fines being imposed by the Board of EPCR.