

# LEINSTER BRANCH IRFU

## COMPETITION REGULATIONS

### WOMEN'S LEAGUE AND CUP REGULATIONS - 2018/19 Season

#### 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 (IRFU) 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" in the case of the women's Competitions shall mean the Honorary Secretary of the Women's Section of the Branch or such person as 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.

"DGA" means the Domestic Games Administrator.

"AIL QL" shall mean the Leinster All Ireland Qualifying League.

"Division 2" means Leinster League Division 2.

"Division 3" means Leinster League Division 3.

"Division 4" means Leinster League Division 4.

"Competition" shall mean, as the context may require, any competition designated from time to time by the Rugby Standing Committee or the Competitions Committee of the Branch to be a competition.

"Competitive Match" shall mean any match played within any competition organized by Leinster Branch IRFU or the IRFU

"The Executive Committee" shall mean the Executive Committee of the Leinster Branch IRFU

"The Competitions Sub-Committee" shall mean the Competitions Sub-Committee of Leinster Women's Rugby.

"The All Ireland League" (AIL) shall mean the competition organised by the IRFU

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

"The Relevant Committee" shall mean the Competitions Sub-Committee.

"The Relevant Secretary" shall mean the Honorary Secretary of the Leinster Branch or the Honorary Secretary of the Women's Section of the Branch.

"Senior Player" shall mean a player who has played International, provincial, or professional rugby in any jurisdiction in the current or last 3 preceding seasons.

"Student Club" shall mean a third level rugby club which only participates in the leagues for colleges and universities.

"Student Player" shall mean a player who plays for a Student Club.

"Youth Committee" shall mean the Youth Committee of the Branch.

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

## **2. POWERS OF THE COMPETITIONS SUB-COMMITTEE**

- 2.1 Competitions shall be governed by the Competitions Sub-Committee.
- 2.2 With the exception of Dual Status Players and Student Players as provided for in these regulations, 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 Sub-Committee.
- 2.3 The Competitions Sub-Committee shall be entitled to make decisions on matters not provided for in these regulations.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 A Club shall be obliged to fulfil a fixture which has been arranged by the Relevant Committee.
- 2.6 The Competitions Sub-Committee shall have a minimum of five members and the quorum for a meeting shall be three members. The Competitions Sub-Committee may convene a full meeting or empanel any three or more members to make a decision at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Competitions Sub-Committee.
- 2.7 All requests to the Competitions Sub-Committee should be made in a timely manner but no later than 5pm on the Wednesday preceding the applicable match – any requests received after this time will be dealt with the following week. All requests should be made by e-mail only to **WomensCompetitions@LeinsterRugby.ie** All requests should be made by one or both of the applicable club nominated representatives and should contain complete details in order that the request can be dealt with. Responses to the applicable requests will be provided by e-mail by 5pm on the Thursday preceding the applicable match

## **3. ELIGIBILITY OF CLUBS TO TAKE PART IN WOMEN'S COMPETITIONS**

- 3.1 All Clubs must be affiliated to the Leinster Branch and have paid the relevant affiliation fee and insurance premium.
- 3.2 All Clubs must pay the relevant competition fee for each League or Cup Competition.
- 3.3 The Competitions Sub-Committee shall have the power to consider representations as to the eligibility or otherwise of Clubs to take part in the various Competitions.
- 3.4 Teams who have not competed in the previous year's League will be placed in the lowest available Division providing they have met the qualifying criteria laid down by the Competitions Sub-Committee unless the Competitions Sub-Committee decides otherwise.
- 3.5 Teams that enter a Competition and fail to field in same will be subject to a sanction in accordance with Regulation 5 of these Regulations.

## **4. PLAYER REGISTRATION, TRANSFER AND ELIGIBILITY**

### **4.1 REGISTRATION OF ELIGIBLE PLAYERS**

- 4.1.1 No player shall be permitted to play in any Competition unless they are eligible. At the discretion of the Competitions Sub-Committee a club playing in any Competition may be required to submit to the Competitions Sub-Committee a

list of its eligible playing members who are registered with the Branch complete with the relevant IRFU player registration numbers.

- 4.1.2 Eligible players may be subsequently amended to include:
  - 4.1.2.1 Players registered for the first time.
  - 4.1.2.2 Players entering adult rugby having attained the age of 18 years.
  - 4.1.2.3 Transfers from a club where a women's team disbands (subject to confirmation from the Competitions Sub-Committee).
  - 4.1.2.4 Players transferring from one club to another club with the written consent of the former club by the 1<sup>st</sup> October.
  - 4.1.2.5 Players transferring from another Union subject to Regulation 13.
  - 4.1.2.6 Student Players can register with both a Student Club (for student competitions only) and one other club side.
  - 4.1.2.7 In exceptional circumstances the Competitions Sub-Committee may in their absolute discretion, on application in writing by the player to the Competitions Sub-Committee, supported by the consent in writing of both clubs, agree to the player changing clubs notwithstanding that the League Competition has started and that the player has already played in that League Competition, subject to such application being presented or submitted prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> January of any given season after the commencement of that League Competition. This agreement would be subject to any terms and conditions that may be stipulated by the Competitions Sub-Committee.
  - 4.1.2.8 In exceptional circumstances the Competitions Sub-Committee may in their absolute discretion, on application in writing by the player to the Competitions Sub-Committee, supported by the consent in writing of both clubs, agree to the player changing clubs, subject to such application being presented or submitted after 1<sup>st</sup> January of any given season before the commencement of the Cup Competition. This agreement would be subject to any terms and conditions that may be stipulated by the Competitions Sub-Committee.
- 4.2 A player must be 18 years of age to play adult rugby. 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 group.
- 4.3 Eligibility of players where clubs have two teams or more
  - 4.3.1 Players on a lower team may play for a higher team or teams in the same club at any stage.
  - 4.3.2 Any player who plays from the start in six competitive matches (league and/or cup) 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 Competitions Sub-Committee in all Competitions.
  - 4.3.3 A player must have played in 3 competitive matches for their club, before they are eligible to play in knock out stages of any competition, league or cup. In exceptional circumstances, clubs may apply to the Competitions Sub-Committee to include a player who has not played 3 competitive matches for their club. This would normally only relate to bona fide injured players.
  - 4.3.4 Senior Players are ineligible to play with a lower team in the same club in any Competition save with prior consent of the Competition Sub-Committee.
  - 4.3.5 Players may be re-graded on application to the Competitions Sub-Committee

- 4.3.6 Players may only be re-graded once per season unless special consent has been sought from the Competitions Sub-Committee and the Competitions Sub-Committee has given consent. Applications for regrading will be considered by the Competitions Sub-Committee on a weekly basis. Every application shall be submitted providing full particulars of the players to whom it relates – including IRFU PIN Number, playing record – and full details as to why the regrading is being requested. 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 she cannot play for the lower team again without a new re-grading application. The Competitions Sub-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.
- 4.4 In the event of a clash of playing colours it shall be the home team's responsibility to change their playing strip.
- 4.5 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 5 shall 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.

#### **4.6 DUAL STATUS PLAYERS**

- 4.6.1 The term "dual status" refers to a player who although a bona fide registered playing member of another Club in Ireland may play for a Club in the League and/or Cup provided the following regulations are observed. A Club shall be limited to selecting not more than three such players in one season. Selection shall include players who are selected as replacements/substitutes for League and/or Cup matches.
- 4.6.2 A player shall only be a dual status member of one Club in the same season. Players can only play up the divisions. Players from higher division clubs shall not play for lower division clubs.
- 4.6.3 A Club wishing to use the dual status principle shall follow the procedures set out below:
- 4.6.3.1 A request shall be made to the Secretary of the player's home Club. When permission is obtained, an application shall be made in writing to the Competitions Sub-Committee enclosing written permission of the player's home Club.
- 4.6.3.2 Any player who plays from the start in six competitive matches for a higher team or teams as a dual status player shall be ineligible to play for a lower team for the remainder of the season in all Competitions, without the consent of the Competitions Sub-Committee.
- 4.6.3.3 The name/s of dual status player/s shall be indicated on the League or Cup team sheet (D/S) complete with the relevant IRFU player registration numbers.
- 4.6.3.4 Dual status players shall satisfy regulation 4 relating to player eligibility.
- 4.6.3.5 The Competitions Sub-Committee will consider dual status situations on an individual basis and reserves the right to waive the above guidelines at its discretion in the interests of player and game development.

4.6.3.6 A dual status player must have played in 3 competitive matches for their dual status club, before they are eligible to play in knock out stages of any competition, league or cup.

#### **4.7 YOUTHS**

Youths who have not reached their 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday are ineligible to participate in any matches not under the control of the Youths Committee. Youth players who have not reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday are ineligible to play Adult rugby which includes Women's Rugby including friendly and training matches.

### **5. SANCTIONS FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH THESE REGULATIONS**

The Competitions Sub-Committee has the power to sanction Clubs that fail to comply with these regulations 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 or Cup
- 7) Demotion or relegation from a League
- 8) Any other sanction or sanctions as the Competitions Sub-Committee may deem appropriate

### **6. FORMAT - LEINSTER LEAGUES**

6.1 League points will be awarded as follows:

- 4 points for a win
- 2 points for a draw
- 1 point for losing within 7 points
- 1 point for scoring 4 + tries (NB This does not apply to Division 4 or any development league).

6.2 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:

- (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.

- 6.3 If a team fails to fulfil a fixture the following shall apply and the non-offending team shall have 5 points awarded:
- a) 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> failure to fulfil a fixture: an automatic deduction of 2 points
  - b) 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> failure to fulfil a fixture: an automatic deduction of 4 points
  - c) 5<sup>th</sup> failure to fulfil a fixture: an automatic deduction of 4 points and the club to appear before the Competitions Sub-Committee
- 6.4 The following shall be the rules governing division winners, promotion and relegation between divisions:
- Upon the completion of the regular league matches, the top 4 teams in each division will qualify for the knock-out stage with first playing fourth and second playing third – the first and second teams will have home advantage. The winners of these matches will then go forward to contest the final to be played at a neutral venue.
  - In the case of AIL QL play-off final the winning team will be the Leinster candidate for promotion to AIL in accordance with the rules and regulations of the AIL applying at that time. Should the winning team be the second team of an existing AIL team, then the runner-up in the play-off final shall be the Leinster candidate for promotion to AIL. The Leinster candidate for promotion to AIL shall not take part in the Leinster Cup competition.
  - In the case of AIL QL, the top 2 teams as at the Christmas break will participate in the AIL Cup.
  - In the case of AIL QL, Division 2 and Division 3, the team finishing last upon the completion of the regular league matches will be relegated to Division 2, 3 and 4 respectively.
  - The runner up in Division 2, Division 3 and Division 4 play-off finals will play the second last placed team in AIL QL, Division 2 and Division 3 respectively in a promotion/relegation playoff at a neutral venue. The fate of the winners and losers of these playoffs will be determined by the promotion to and relegation from AIL.
  - The Competitions Sub-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
- 6.5 Under 19 variation to scrummaging laws shall apply from Division 2 and below.
- 6.6 'NUMBERS A SIDE'**
- 6.6.1 AIL QL, Division 2 and Division 3
- (i) Teams shall play 15 a side or 13 a side. If a team can only field 13 the Competitions Sub-Committee must be informed no later than 24 hours prior to the match being played. In a 13-a-side game, the scrum must be in 3-2-1 formation.
  - (ii) Teams shall confirm to the opposition their numbers (if less than 15) no later than 24 hours prior to the match being played. In that instance, both teams shall start with an equal number of players.
  - (iii) If a team contacts the opposition to say they only have 13 players for an upcoming match, then on match day that team can only play 13 unless at the request/with the consent of the opposition.
  - (iv) The maximum points for a win that a team which cannot field more than 13 players in a competitive match shall be limited to 2. 1 point for scoring 4 + tries shall still apply if applicable.
  - (v) A team cannot declare to play with 13 players when they have 2 or more available replacement players.

- (vi) If a team cannot field more than 13 players and have failed to inform both the Competitions Sub-Committee and the opposition in accordance with 6.6.1 (i) and 6.6.1 (ii) above, the Competitions Sub-Committee will decide on sanctions for the club in accordance with these regulations.
- (vii) 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, that is the lower number of players.

#### 6.6.2 Division 4

- (i) Teams shall play 15 a side, 13 a side or 10 a side with all attempts to play the full 15 a side. If a team cannot field 15 the Competitions Sub-Committee must be informed no later than 24 hours prior to the match being played. In a 13 a side match the scrum must be in 3-2-1 formation. In a 10 a side match the scrum must be 3-2 formation and 5 in the backs
- (ii) Teams shall confirm to the opposition their numbers (if less than 15) no later than 24 hours prior to the match being played. In that instance, both teams shall start with an equal number of players.
- (iii) If a team contacts the opposition to say they only have 13 or 10 players for an upcoming match, then on match day that team can only play 13 or 10 respectively unless at the request/with the consent of the opposition.
- (iv) A team cannot declare to play with 13 or 10 players when they have at least 2 or 3 available replacement players respectively.
- (vi) If a team cannot field 15 players and have failed to inform both the Competitions Sub-Committee and the opposition in accordance with 6.6.2 (i) and 6.6.2 (ii) above, the Competitions Sub-Committee will decide on sanctions for the club in accordance with these regulations.
- (v) 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, that is the lower number of players.

#### 6.7 Duration:

- (i) Where a match is played with 15 players the match shall be of 80 minutes duration (40 x 2)
- (ii) Where a match is played with 13 players the match shall be of 70 minutes duration (35 x 2).
- (iii) Where a match is played with 10 players the match shall be of 60 minutes duration (30 x 2).
- (iv) If any Cup or League play-off match is drawn at the expiration of normal time, 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. In the event that the match was not of 80 minutes duration, then an extra 10 minutes shall be played.

- (v) If any Cup or League play-off match is drawn after extra time the following shall determine the winning team:
- a) The team who has scored most tries including extra time
  - b) The team who scored the 1<sup>st</sup> try
  - c) The team that scored the first points
  - d) If the game was scoreless, penalty kicks shall be taken to decide the winner.

## 6.8 Determination of Result

If the referee abandons a game, for whatever reason, before three-quarters of the time has been played, then the game shall be void. Otherwise the result shall stand as though the game had been completed.

## 6.9 The following rules relate to substitutions

Numbers a side	Substitutes Allowed	Rolling Substitutions
15	7	Yes
13	1 **	Yes
10	2 **	Yes

\*\* Relates to the substitutes allowed for those teams declaring reduced numbers of available players. The opposition is allowed to name up to the maximum amount of 22 players and as such is allowed 9 and 12 substitutes where matches are played with 13 and 10 players a side respectively.

## 6.10 Rolling substitutions are to be applied as per branch regulations.

- a) 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 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.



- b) Procedural Guidelines for the administration and control of Rolling Substitutions at Matches:
- 1) Each team will have a set (12) of cards (each set will be a different colour)
  - 2) 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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.
  - 3) The referee, touch judge, or 4<sup>th</sup> 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.

## **7. FAILURE TO FIELD A FRONT ROW**

- 7.1 If a team is unable to field a front row from the start, then the fixture shall go ahead with uncontested scrums 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 or 12 players from the start where the match was to be played with 15 or 13 players respectively. No reduction in numbers will take place where the match was to be played with 10 players.
  - 2) The offending team must have 8 or 6 players in the pack where the match was to be played with 15 or 13 players respectively. No change in numbers will take place where the match was to be played with 10 players.
- 7.2 If a Club fails to identify the required number of players capable of playing in front row positions on the team sheet – a prop capable of playing both prop positions and a hooker - so that after injuries or a red/yellow card 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 where the match was to be played with 15 or 13 players respectively. No reduction in numbers will take place where the match was to be played with 10 players.
  - 2) The offending team must have 8 or 6 players in the pack where the match was being played with 15 or 13 players respectively. No change in numbers will take place where the match was to be played with 10 players.

In addition, sanctions and/or penalties as provided and set out elsewhere in the regulations may be applied by the Competitions Sub-Committee having reviewed the referee's report.

## **8. REFIXING AND CANCELLATION OF MATCHES**

- 8.1 Clubs cannot re-arrange matches without the consent of the Competitions Sub-Committee. However should clubs fail to agree then the default time shall be 1pm Sunday unless the Competitions Sub-Committee agrees otherwise.
- 8.2 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. However should clubs fail to agree on a suitable alternate venue, the Competitions Sub-Committee reserves the sole right to re-fix for a different venue on the same day or on a future date.

- 8.3 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 Competitions Sub-Committee, if application is made, at the first available opportunity.
- 8.4 Clubs failing to fulfil fixtures shall be dealt with by the relevant Committee and sanctions applied as provided and set out in these Competition Regulations
- 8.5 Clubs must cancel competitive matches from the bottom up – e.g. if a club cannot field a team on a particular weekend, then the match to be cancelled (with the permission of the Competitions Sub-Committee) must be the lower competitive match rather than any higher competitive match.

## **9. REFEREES**

- 9.1 For matches in AIL QL and Division 2 the referees shall be appointed by the Branch and details of their appointment may be found on the ARLB website in advance of the match
- 9.2. For matches in Division 3 and 4, the home team is responsible for contacting the referee area rep to arrange the appointment of a suitably qualified referee. If the referee area rep is unable to provide one then the home team must give the away team the option to provide a referee which at a minimum should be an associate referees. If the away team is unable to provide a suitably qualified referee, then the home team must provide a referee which at a minimum should be an associate referee.
- 9.3 Should a match be cancelled it is the responsibility of the home team to ensure the appointed referee is notified.
- 9.4 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 suitably qualified referee but such fact must be notified when the result of the match is being communicated to the Competitions Sub-Committee in accordance with Regulation 10.

## **10. RESPONSIBILITY OF CLUBS FOR NOTIFYING SELECTED PLAYERS AND MATCH RESULTS**

- 10.1 Electronic team sheets must be submitted on-line for each team at least twenty four hours in advance of the kick off of each fixture.
- 10.2 Where available the front row replacements should be identified to comply with regulation 7.2
- 10.3 A copy of the submitted Electronic team sheet signed by the team manager/coach must be made available and handed to the referee and to the opposing team manager/coach at least THIRTY minutes prior to kick off.
- 10.4 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.
- 10.5 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.
- 10.6 Prior to the commencement of the leagues, teams will receive information from the Competitions Sub-Committee regarding the submission of results by text.
- 10.7 The final score of the match and number of tries, conversions, drop kicks, yellow cards, red cards, and penalties scored must be contained on one of the team sheets and both team sheets should be submitted by the home team by scanning and emailing **WomensCompetitions@LeinsterRugby.ie** within 24 hours of the completion of the match.

- 10.8 Failure to submit the required information in accordance with this regulation may result in sanctions being imposed on the relevant club. Additional sanctions may be imposed for clubs that persistently fail to comply with this regulation.

## **11. PLAYING ENCLOSURE AND TECHNICAL ZONES**

- 11.1 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 provide and set out elsewhere in these regulations.
- 11.2 Coaches are precluded from entering the playing enclosure (excluding the Technical Zone) during the course of a game except at half time or to attend to an injured player.

## **12. AWARDING OF TROPHIES**

- 12.1 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 Competitions Sub-Committee. 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 the DGA prior to the commencement of the following season.
- 12.2 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 Competitions Sub-Committee.

## **13. OVERSEAS/FOREIGN PLAYERS**

- 13.1 (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) Players who have never played the game of rugby are not required to attend in the Branch office, such players must fill out the relevant form and also forward a copy of their passport by email to the DGA.
- (c) Written confirmation of the individual's IRFU Player Registration number must be obtained from the IRFU and a copy of the confirmation shall be forwarded to the Branch. This also applies to players returning to Ireland having played abroad.
- 13.2 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 (13.3) 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 five 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.

- e) Those that registered for the first time with their current club and are not transferring from another Union
- 13.3 The maximum number of Overseas Players per Leinster Branch Competition is limited to 4 per team per match.

## **14 LEINSTER BRANCH REGULATIONS GOVERNING PROTESTS, OBJECTIONS AND APPEALS**

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, Women's matches and the Laws and Regulations of the Irish Rugby Football Union shall apply

## **15. GENERAL**

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

## **16. AUTHORITY OF RELEVANT COMMITTEES**

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

- 16.1 The Competitions Committee in the case of Senior, Under 21's and Junior Competitions, the Schools' Committee in the case of Schools' Competitions; and the Youths Committee; in the case of Youths Competitions and the Competitions Sub-Committee in the case of women's 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.
- 16.2 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.
- 16.3 Subject to regulation 2.6, 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 such of its functions as it may reasonably decide , confirm ,or ratify 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.
- 16.4 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:
- a) Make decisions himself/herself or
  - b) Ask the Relevant Committee (of which he/she is a member) to make the decision. Any such decision shall be called "the first decision".
- 16.5 If the Relevant Secretary wishes to make a decision himself in a particular case, other than decisions relating to the fixing of matches, he/she must first get consent from the Chairman of the Relevant Committee who shall satisfy himself that a full hearing is not

- required. Where the Relevant 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.
- 16.6 The first decision shall be communicated to such Club, Player or Person as may be directly affected, as soon as reasonably possible.
  - 16.7 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 Relevant Committee who shall make a final decision and there shall be no appeal from that decision.
  - 16.8 In relation to an alleged non-compliance with these Regulations the Relevant Secretary shall refer the matter to be dealt with by the Relevant Committee.
  - 16.9 An objection regarding compliance with these Regulations may be made by a Club or by a Relevant Secretary or by the Relevant Committee on behalf of the Branch.
  - 16.10 Any such objection shall be dealt with in accordance with the relevant provisions of Regulations 17.

## **17. CLUB OBJECTIONS**

- 17.1 Any Club who wishes to object to any decision made in relation to these regulations relating only to their Club or to the result of a match their Club played in, 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
- 17.2 Any Club who wishes to object to another Club on the basis of a breach of these Regulations 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 match between the Clubs. A Club cannot object to a decision of the Committee relating to the finding of eligibility or ineligibility of a player from another Club if that decision was made more than 3 days after the match against the relevant Club.
- 17.3 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.
- 17.4 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.
- 17.5 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,
- 17.6 All objections in relation to Breaches of these Regulations must be accompanied by a deposit of €250 unless same is waived by the Relevant Committee.
- 17.7 No person shall be entitled to be a member of any committee hearing an objection or acted on any committee who has made, the decision which is the subject of the objection, or who is a member of a Club involved in the objection
- 17.8 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.
- 17.9 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.

## **18. BRANCH INITIATED OBJECTIONS**

- 18.1 The Relevant Secretary or member of the Relevant Committee on behalf of the Branch may initiate an objection. The Relevant Committee shall make a decision on such objection.
- 18.2 Any objection initiated by the Branch should be done as soon as is practical after a match.
- 18.3 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.
- 18.4 Objections can relate to more than one match, in particular where it is found that a Club has played an illegal player.
- 18.5 Only participants in the most recent match shall be notified and deemed to be directly affected.
- 18.6 Following receipt of submissions from the relevant Clubs, the Relevant Committee may make a decision if so requested by the relevant Clubs. Otherwise it shall hold an oral hearing prior to making a decision.

## **19. APPEALS**

- 19.1 Any Club who wishes to Appeal any decision made by the Relevant Secretary or the Relevant 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
- 19.2 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.
- 19.3 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.
- 19.4 Any Appeal shall contain the following:-
  - a) The date of the decision appealed against;
  - b) The specific aspect(s) and parts of the decision being challenged, if it is an appeal against severity only or against the entire decision,
  - c) The specific grounds of challenge. No further grounds of challenge may be advanced without the express prior consent of the Committee of Appeal.
  - 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.
- 19.5 All Appeals must be accompanied by a deposit of €500 of which €200 is a non-refundable administration fee. The balance of the appeal fee may be refunded if the appeal is not deemed to be frivolous.
- 19.6 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.
- 19.7 The Branch shall cause a copy of an Appeal to be sent to any Club, School, Player or Person directly affected (subject to Regulation 17.2 above) with all reasonable speed.
- 19.8 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.

## **20. HEARINGS**

- 20.1 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.
- 20.2 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.
- 20.3 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.
- 20.4 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.
- 20.5 The decision of the Hearing Committee shall be notified after the hearing and where appropriate in writing, to all parties directly affected as soon as possible or orally immediately after the hearing.
- 20.6 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 such appeal shall be heard by the Appeals Committee.

## **21. ENFORCEMENT POWERS**

- 21.1 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.
- 21.2 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 5 on the offending Club, School, Player or Person.

## **22 UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES**

- 22.1 The Branch shall be entitled to make decisions on all matters not provided for in these regulations.
- 22.2 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.
- 22.3 Where under these regulations any time is allowed or prescribed, the Relevant Secretary or the Relevant 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.
- 22.4 In the event of conflict between these regulations and the IRFU Regulations, the IRFU Regulations shall prevail.