

LEINSTER BRANCH IRFU

COMPETITION REGULATIONS

WOMEN'S SECTION LEAGUE AND CUP REGULATIONS - 2021/22 Season

These Regulations have been amended to facilitate the unique circumstances surrounding the 2021/2022 Season due to Covid 19. The Competitions Sub-Committee reserve the right to further amend any Regulation(s), due to changing circumstances caused by Covid 19, including changes to or suspensions of, participation in, promotion, relegation etc. of Leagues and/or Cups, during, or at the end of, the 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.

"DFA" means the Domestic Fixtures Administrator.

"Division 1" means Leinster League Womens Division 1.

"Division 2" means Leinster League Womens Division 2.

"Division 3" means Leinster League Womens Division 3.

"Division 4" means Leinster League Womens Division 4.

"Division 5" means Leinster League Womens Division 5.

"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 Rugby Women's Section.

"IRFU" shall mean the Irish Rugby Football Union

"NCC" shall mean the National Competitions Committee of the IRFU.

"ICM" shall mean the IRFU Competitions Manager.

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

"The Energia Community Series (ECS) shall mean the competition organised by the IRFU in conjunction with the Leinster Branch. "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 2 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. GENERAL

- 2.1 Competitions shall be governed by the Competitions Sub-Committee or IRFU where applicable.
- 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. A player who is not being regularly selected, may apply by 1st of February in that season to transfer to another Club.
- 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
- 2.8 In the event of a clash of playing colours it shall be the home team's responsibility to change their playing strip. If the match is played in a neutral venue the youngest Club shall change their playing strip. The DFA shall have the final decision on the interpretation of the youngest Club.

3. ELIGIBILITY OF CLUBS TO TAKE PART IN 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 season's League must make their request to enter a team for the coming season's League by 1st July and 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. ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS TO TAKE PART IN ADULT COMPETITIONS

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 1st 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 1st 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 1st 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.
 - 4.1.2.9 Transfers and applications re transfers relating to the ECS shall be dealt with by the ICM.

- 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 Prior to October 1st of the applicable season, clubs shall submit a first team panel, players name and IRFU Pin Number, with a minimum of 25 players to include all positions. The players from this panel may not play for the lower team in the club without the prior consent of the Competitions Sub-Committee.
- 4.3.2 Players on a lower team may play for a higher team or teams in the same club at any stage.
- 4.3.3 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.
- 4.3.4 A player must have played in 2 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 2 competitive matches for their club. This would normally only relate to bona fide injured players.
- 4.3.5 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.
- 4.3.6 Players may be re-graded on application to the Competitions Sub-Committee
- 4.3.7 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.
- 4.3.8 In making a consideration with regard regrading the Competitions Sub-Committee may consider a number of factors including but not limited to the following:
- The number of matches played by the applicable player at the higher level
 - The reasons provided for making the regrade request
 - Whether the player had previously been regraded
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 IRFU Regulations in relation to eligibility of players shall apply to the ECS

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 by email to the Competitions Sub-Committee attaching 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 2 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 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 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 points1 point for scoring 4 + tries (NB: This does not apply to Division 4 and 5)
- 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 (4 points in Division 4 and 5):
 - a) 1st and 2nd failure to fulfil a fixture: an automatic deduction of 2 points
 - b) 3rd and 4th failure to fulfil a fixture: an automatic deduction of 4 points
 - c) 5th 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 team in each division will be deemed the winner of that division. In the case of Division 1 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 Division 1 shall be the Leinster candidate for promotion to AIL. The Leinster candidate for promotion, to AIL, if any, shall not take part in the Leinster Cup competition.
 - In the case of Division 1, the 2 teams chosen in accordance with criteria advised by the Competitions Sub-Committee prior to the start of the season will participate in the AIL Cup in accordance with the rules and regulations of the AIL applying at that time.
 - In the case of Division 1, Division 2, Division 3 and Division 4, the team finishing eighth upon the completion of the regular league matches will be relegated to Division 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively.

- The runner up in Division 2, Division 3, Division 4 and Division 5 will play the seventh placed team in Division 1, Division 2, Division 3 and Division 4 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.
- All promotion/relegation playoff games will be governed by the regulations related to the higher division.
- 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 3 and below.

6.6 'NUMBERS A SIDE'

6.6.1 Division 1, 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.
- (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 and Division 5

- (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.
- (v) The maximum points for a win that a team which cannot field more than 10 players in a competitive match shall be limited to 2
- (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 1st try
 - c) The team that scored the first points
- (vi) If the game was scoreless, penalty kicks shall be taken to decide the winner.
- (vii) If one team leads another team by 50 or more points in a match in Division 4 and Division 5 then the match shall end.

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) There shall be no tactical rolling substitutions (i.e. non injury related substitutions) until 20 minutes has elapsed in any game.
- 11) 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:

Each team shall appoint its responsible person (e.g. Coach) who shall be required to notify the appropriate change verbally 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.

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.

In the ECS IRFU rules re front rows shall apply.

8. REFIXING AND CANCELLATION OF MATCHES

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 Clubs cannot re-arrange matches without the consent of the Competitions Sub-Committee. However should clubs fail to agree a new date and time for the refix then the default time shall be 1pm Sunday on the original date unless the Competitions Sub-Committee agrees otherwise.
- 8.3 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.
- 8.4 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.
- 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 5 POINTS. When a Club is awarded a match by means of a walkover etc., where NO bonus points are in operation in that competition, the Club shall be awarded 4 POINTS this regulation does not apply to Covid affected matches.
- 8.7 Before any match can be called off due to Covid-19 the relevant Covid 19 form shall be completed and returned to the DFA who shall call off the match if deemed appropriate.

- 8.8 Any League match called off due to Covid-19 then 2 league points will be awarded to both clubs with a 0-0 score entered. This will also apply to situations where both clubs report a Covid case. Subject to regulation 8.11.
- 8.9 Covid affected league matches will not be refixed. Having had 2 points awarded they will count as matches played.
- 8.10 Any Cup matches called off due to Covid-19 shall be awarded to the non-Covid affected team unless the Committee decide that there is sufficient time to rearrange the match.
- 8.11 The Committee reserve the right to investigate the circumstances involving any postponement or Covid affected match and to vary regulation 8.8 if deemed appropriate and to impose any sanctions deemed appropriate.

9. REFEREES

- 9.1 For all matches 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. Should a match be cancelled it is the responsibility of the home team to ensure the appointed referee is notified.
- 9.3 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 given electronically 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 electronic copy of team sheet. 10.5
- 10.6 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, if requested, to the DFA by the referee.
- 10.7 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 SHALL BE SUBJECT TO COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS AS APPLICABLE

- 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 DFA 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 fill out the relevant form and submit a copy of their passports, together with confirmation from the Club Honorary Secretary that the Player is resident in the country to the DFA online.
- (b) 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) A player from a non-EU Country visiting Leinster on a minimum one year work visa or a fulltime bona fides student. This player must take up and remain in residence and be properly registered one week prior to the commencement of the Competition. For the purposes of interpretation, this player is classified as an overseas player and shall be nominated as such to the DFA.
 - e) In the case of (d) a player who completes a minimum of one year working or in full time education in Leinster, they may then apply to the DFA to be considered a Non-Overseas player. Such status to be reviewed each year until regulation (c) shall apply.
 - f) 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 unless consent is received in advance from the Competitions Sub-Committee

LEINSTER BRANCH REGULATIONS GOVERNING PROTESTS, OBJECTIONS AND APPEALS

1. 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.

2. GENERAL

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

3. AUTHORITY OF RELEVANT COMMITTEES

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

- 3.1 The Competitions Committee in the case of Senior, Under 20'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. In relation to the IRFU the relevant authority shall be the National Competitions Committee.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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 3.2 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.
- 3.4 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".
- 3.5 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.

- 3.6 The first decision shall be communicated to such Club, Player or Person as may be directly affected, as soon as reasonably possible.
- 3.7 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.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 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.
- 3.10 Any such objection shall be dealt with in accordance with the relevant provisions of Regulations 4-7.
- 3.11 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.
- 3.12 If any facts disclosed on investigation under 3.8 above or 4.5 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.

4. CLUB OBJECTIONS

- 4.1 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
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 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.
- 4.6 The Competitions Compliance Officer shall investigate the facts alleged in the objection and report to the Competitions Committee.
- 4.7 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.
- 4.8 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
- 4.9 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.
- 4.10 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.

5. BRANCH INITIATED OBJECTIONS

- 5.1 The Relevant Secretary, the Competitions Compliance Officer, ARLB 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
- 5.2 Any objection initiated by the Branch should be done as soon as is practical after a match.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 Objections can relate to more than one match, in particular where it is found that a Club has played an illegal or ineligible player. Any Clubs affected by the decision of the Committee are bound by rule 4.2.
- 5.5 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.

6. APPEALS

- 6.1 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
- 6.2 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.

- 6.3 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.

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 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.

- 6.5 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.
- 6.6 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.
- 6.7 The Branch shall cause a copy of an Appeal to be sent to any Club, School, Player or Person directly affected (subject to Regulation 4.2 above) with all reasonable speed.
- 6.8 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.

7. HEARINGS

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 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.

- 7.4 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.
- 7.5 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.
- 7.6 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.

8. ENFORCEMENT POWERS

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 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.

9. UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

- 9.1 The Executive Committee of the Branch shall be entitled to make decisions on all matters not provided for in these regulations.
- 9.2 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.
- 9.3 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.
- 9.4 In the event of conflict between these regulations and the IRFU Regulations, the IRFU Regulations shall prevail.