

September 2022

## WOMENS COMPETITION REGULATIONS

**The Competitions 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 which shall, where the context so admits or requires, include the Executive Committee of the Branch or any person nominated or authorised by the Branch or the Executive Committee to act on behalf of the Branch for the purpose of these regulations

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

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

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

**“WDFA”** means the Womens Domestic Fixtures Administrator.

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

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

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

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

**“The All-Ireland League”** (AIL) shall mean the competition organised by the IRFU for AIL Clubs.

**“ARLB”** shall mean the Association of Referees Leinster Branch

**“ineligible or illegal player”** is a player who is not entitled to play for a Club or in a match under these Regulations.

**“IRFU”** shall mean the Irish Rugby Football Union

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

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

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

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

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

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

**“The Relevant Secretary”** shall mean the Honorary Secretary of the Leinster Branch, the Honorary Secretary of the Junior Section of the Leinster Branch, the Honorary Secretary of the Schools Section, the Honorary Secretary of the Youths Section, the Honorary Secretary of Women’s Section or the WDFA as appropriate.

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

## **2. GENERAL**

**2.1** Competitions shall be governed by the Competitions Committee where applicable.

**2.2** An individual shall not be allowed to play in a Branch Competition for more than one Club in any one season without the consent of the Competitions Committee save for the exclusion outlined in 5.8 of these Regulations

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

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

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

**2.6** In the event of a clash of playing colours it shall be the home team's responsibility to change their playing strip. If the match is played in a neutral venue the youngest Club shall change their playing strip. The WDFA shall have the final decision on the interpretation of the youngest Club.

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

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

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

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

Where individual players, members or persons breach these Regulations they may be referred to the Disciplinary Committee for further sanctions or they may be dealt with by the Competitions Committee as appropriate

#### **4. ELIGIBILITY OF CLUBS TO TAKE PART IN COMPETITIONS**

**4.1** All Clubs must be affiliated to the Leinster Branch and have paid the relevant affiliation fee and insurance premium.

**4.2** Club affiliated to other Branches may by invitation take part in specific Competitions, subject to compliance with these Regulations and having paid the relevant fee. Such Clubs must have paid the relevant insurance premium.

**4.3** All Clubs must pay the relevant Competition Fee for each League or Cup Competition.

**4.4** The Committee shall have the power to consider representations as to the eligibility or otherwise of Clubs to take part in the various Competitions.

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

**4.6** The Committee reserves the right to insist that a Club plays at a higher or lower level in a League Competition.

#### **5. ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS TO TAKE PART IN ADULT COMPETITIONS**

**5.1** No individual shall be permitted to play in any Competition unless he/she is registered with a Club and has been issued with an IRFU Player Registration Number. Note: Players must renew their registration annually to be eligible to play in any Competition.

**5.2** With the exception of Dual Status Players, no individual shall be permitted to play in Competitions for more than one Club in any current season without the consent of the Committee.

**5.3** All players who have played international (including 7's), provincial, or professional rugby in any jurisdiction for the Senior full team, in the current or last 2 preceding seasons shall be ineligible to participate in any Competitions .

**An application shall be made for exceptions to the above regulation. Notice in writing applying for such consent must be given to the WDFB setting out the fullest possible information regarding the player in question. If consent is granted the Committee may restrict the level at which the player is allowed to play.**

**5.4** Any player who plays from the start in six competitive matches for a higher team or teams shall be ineligible to play for a lower team for the remainder of the season without the consent of the Committee in all Competitions, with the exception of competitions notified by the Committee from time to time. Dual Status Players who play in the All-Ireland League **are** subject to this rule.

**5.5** 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.

**5.6** Where the consent of the Committee is required to enable a player to play in a Competition, notice in writing applying for such consent must be given to the WDFA setting out the fullest possible information regarding the player in question.

**5.7** A player who has played for a Club in the All Ireland League (excluding a dual-status player) shall be ineligible to play for any other Club in any competitions under the control of the Committee during the same season without the consent of that Committee.

**5.8** 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.

**5.9** 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.

**5.10** A Club wishing to use the dual status principle shall follow the procedures set out below: 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.

**5.11** 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.

**5.12** 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.

**5.13** A Club shall not permit an ineligible player to represent it and any Club who contravenes this Regulation shall be sanctioned as per Sanctions set out in Regulation 3. 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

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

**6.1** Electronic team sheets must be submitted on-line for each team at least THREE hours in advance of the kick off of each fixture.

**6.2** A copy of the submitted Electronic team sheet signed by the team manager/coach must be made available or given electronically to the referee (a photograph will suffice) and the opposing team at least THIRTY minutes prior to kick off.

**6.3** Any changes to the submitted team sheet must be brought to the attention of the referee prior to kick off and marked on the electronic copy of team sheet.

**6.4** 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 WDFA by the referee.

**6.5** In the event of the official referee failing to attend at a match, or being incapacitated during the match, in any of the Competitions, a qualified referee mutually agreed upon by the captains of the respective teams may officiate, and if not agreed the Home Club shall appoint a qualified referee but such fact must be notified when the result of the match is being communicated to the Secretary of the Committee. If there is no qualified referee available, the match shall be re-fixed.

## **7. PLAYING ENCLOSURE AND TECHNICAL ZONES SHALL BE SUBJECT TO COVID RESTRICTIONS AS APPLICABLE**

**7.1** All Leinster Branch approved fixtures shall be played on pitches that conform to the regulations stated by the International Rugby Board.

**7.2** The playing enclosure of the main (first XV) pitch should be defined by a fence unless impractical when it shall be defined by a rope.

**7.3** If there is a stand, designated seats should be made available for subs.

**7.4** On the main (First XV) pitch 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 failure to comply with the referee's requirements may result in the abandonment of the match. A Clubs failure to comply with the directions of the referee shall result in the team being reported to the Leinster Branch and sanctions applied as provided and set out elsewhere in these regulations.

**7.5** On all other pitches two technical zones should be designated, clearly marked with two traffic cones, 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 (or such other area as shall be agreed with the referee), to accommodate substitutes, and three members of the coaching/medical staff. 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 failure to comply may result in the abandonment of the match. A Clubs failure to comply with the directions of the referee shall result in the team being reported to the Leinster Branch and sanctions applied as provided and set out elsewhere in these regulations.

**7.6** Coaches are precluded from entering the playing enclosure (excluding the players' technical zone) during the course of a game except at half time. The coach is not permitted to act as water boy.

**7.7** The home Club must provide stewards (minimum two) to ensure compliance with Regulation 7.4

**7.8** The “**minimum**” requirements for the staging of fixtures under floodlights are as follows:

<b>Lux (Eav):</b>	<b>Uniformity (U):</b>	<b>Glare (GR):</b>	<b>Colour (Ra)</b>
<b>200</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>&lt;50</b>	<b>&lt;60</b>

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

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

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

**8.1** Clubs do not have the right to re-arrange matches without the consent of the Committee. Any Club contravening this regulation may be dealt with as provided and set out elsewhere in the regulations.

**8.2** Where there is a doubt about the fitness of the ground and there is reasonable prospect that with improved weather conditions the ground could be playable by kick-off time, a decision on whether or not the pitch is playable shall be postponed until close to kick off time. Matches may **not** be postponed on grounds that the safety of players might be prejudiced, unless with the additional approval of the match referee.

**8.3** 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. The Committee reserves the sole right to re-fix for a different venue on the same day or on a future date.

**8.4** Games may be re-fixed for a different day in the same weekend or re-fixed for an earlier date, with the consent of the Committee, if application is made, at least one week before the fixture is due to take place.

**8.5** 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.

**8.6** Clubs failing to fulfill fixtures shall be dealt with by the relevant Committee and sanctions applied as provided and set out elsewhere in these regulations.

## **9. AWARDING OF TROPHIES**

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

**9.2** The Honorary Secretary for the time being of the Leinster Branch shall be, to all intents and purposes, the legal owner, in trust for the Branch, of the Cup appropriate to each Competition played under the control of the Committee.

## **10. REGRADING OF PLAYERS**

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

## **11. RULES RELATING TO SUBSTITUTIONS**

<b>NUMBERS A SIDE</b>	<b>Sub</b>	<b>Rolling Subs</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>1 **</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>2 **</b>	<b>Yes</b>

\*\* 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.

### **11.1 Rolling substitutions**

- 1) A maximum of 12 substitutions (Changes) per team per match will be allowed.
- 2) Changes under this Law shall include blood replacements and injuries; indeed, any time one player replaces another player from the same team other than front-row replacements required after a yellow card (see 6. below).



- 3) When a player has a blood injury and is replaced by another player and then returns to the field of play within the permitted time that will count as 2 changes.
- 4) When a player is sent from the field of play under a red card that is not a change.
- 5) When a player is temporarily suspended under a yellow card and leaves the field of play that is not a change.
- 6) When a scrum is ordered during the temporary suspension of a front-row player (Player A), and as a result a player (Player B) is required to leave the field to allow another front-row player (Player C) to come on that does NOT count as a change.
- 7) If, at the end of the period of temporary suspension, Player A resumes and Player C leaves the field that does NOT count as a change.
- 8) Player B returning to the field of play is also NOT a change.
- 9) If, however, the team opts to leave Player C on at the end of the temporary suspension period instead of Player A returning that IS a change.
- 10) 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.

## **11.2 Procedural Guideline 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 4<sup>th</sup> official. This must happen before each change takes place and a player enters the field of play.

## **12. FAILURE TO FIELD FRONT ROWS**

**12.1** 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. Page 10
- 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.

**12.2** 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.

**12.3.** Uncontested scrums to be notified, together with a report, to the Referees Administrator by the referee.

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

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

### **13. YOUTHS**

Youths who have not reached their 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 Under 20's. The onus shall rest with the individual Club to ensure that all of its players are eligible to play for the relevant team, in the relevant competition and within the appropriate age grade.

### **14. OVERSEAS/FOREIGN PLAYERS**

**14.1** (a) All individuals from countries other than Ireland must, prior to playing at any level in this country, fill out the relevant form and submit a copy of their passports and attend with their passports at the Leinster Branch Offices.

(b) Written confirmation of the individual's IRFU Player Registration number must be obtained from the I.R.F.U. and a copy of the confirmation shall be forwarded to the Branch. This also applies to players returning to Ireland having played abroad.

**14.2** All individuals other than those who fall into one or more of the following categories are regarded as Overseas Players and are subject to the restrictions applicable to the various Leinster Branch Competitions as set out at (3) below:

- (a) Those who qualify to play for Ireland under World Rugby Regulations;
- (b) Those that hold a passport issued by a country which is a member of the E.U. or the UK;
- (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 Ireland 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 WDFA.
- (e) In the case of (d) a player who completes a minimum of one year working or in full time education, they may then apply to the WDFA to be considered a Non-Overseas player. Such status to be reviewed each year until regulation (c) shall apply.

**14.3** The maximum number of Overseas Players per Leinster Branch Competition is limited to 4 per match

## **15. RESIDENCY**

**15.1** All players must be resident in this Country at least one week prior to the commencement of the Competition. Evidence of residence may be requested by the Leinster Branch.

**15.2** Any overseas player or Irish qualified player who has been playing abroad and who arrives after the qualifying dates above cannot play without the consent of the relevant committee

**An application shall be made for exceptions to the above regulation. Notice in writing applying for such consent must be given to the WDFB setting out the fullest possible information regarding the player in question. If consent is granted the Committee may restrict the level at which the player is allowed to play.**

## **16. TRANSFERS BETWEEN CLUBS**

Transfers to or from Senior Clubs shall take place on or before the 15th of June with or without the consent of the transferor or the 1<sup>st</sup> of January of the following year with the consent of the transferor. Transfers from and between Junior Clubs shall take place on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> of September without consent or the 1<sup>st</sup> of January the following year with the consent of the transferor. A player may not transfer if they have played competitive rugby for any other Club Any transfers thereafter must be due to **exceptional circumstances** and must be approved by the Sub-Committee. If an Irish player has not played any rugby in Ireland for at least two years, then the need for consent is dispensed with.

## **17. TEAMS TIED ON EQUAL POINTS IN ALL LEAGUE COMPETITIONS**

**17.1** In all League Competitions, with the exception of U20 qualifiers, unless otherwise specifically stated, points will be awarded as follows: 4 points for a win; 2 points for a draw; 0 points for a loss; 1 bonus point for losing by 7 or less points; 1 bonus point for scoring 4 or more tries (this does not apply to Divisions 4 and 5)

**17.2** In the event of two or more teams in a Division/Section finishing level on League points, whether at the top or the bottom of the Division/Section, final placings shall be decided by the following criteria (subject to Regulation 8.5 being satisfied):

- i. The team with the most wins in the League;
- ii. The team with the most drawn games in the League;
- iii. The team with the greater number of League points in the games against each other;
- iv. The team with the best match points difference in the games against each other;
- v. The team that has scored most tries in the games against each other
- vi. The team with the best match points difference against all teams in the league
- vii. The team that has scored most tries in all games in the League

- viii. A play off or playoffs at neutral grounds unless all relevant teams agree or due to time constraints a coin should be tossed.

## **18. SANCTIONS AGAINST TEAMS CONCEDED WALKOVERS**

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.

The Competitions Committee may impose further sanctions if it deems such sanctions appropriate

## **19 NUMBERS A SIDE**

### **19.1 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 19.1 (i) and 19.1 (ii) above, the Competitions Sub-Committee will decide on sanctions for the club in accordance with these regulations.

### **19.2 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 Committee and the opposition in accordance regulations above, the Competitions Committee will decide on sanctions for the club in accordance with these regulations.

**19.3** 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.

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

**20.1** The duration of each match in the Competition shall normally be eighty minutes except where otherwise stated in these regulations.

**20.2** Where a match is played with 13 players the match shall be of 70 minutes duration

**20.3** Where a match is played with 10 players the match shall be of 60 minutes duration (30 x 2).

**20.4** 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.

**20.5** 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 (vi) If the game was scoreless, penalty kicks shall be taken to decide the winner.

**20.6** 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.

### **20.7 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.

## **21. PROMOTION AND RELEGATION BETWEEN DIVISIONS**

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.

**21.1** 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.

**21.2** 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.

**21.3** In the case of Division 1, Division 2, Division 3 and Division 4, the team finishing last upon the completion of the regular league matches will be relegated to Division 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively.

**21.4** The runner up in Division 2, Division 3, Division 4 and Division 5 will play the second last 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.

**21.5** 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

## **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 33.2 above ,and any decision of such person or persons shall be as valid and effective as if made by the full Relevant Committee and for the purposes of these Regulations shall be regarded as a decision of the Relevant Committee. The Branch shall have no liability to any Club or any person arising from negligence or failure to ensure compliance with these Regulations.

**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 34-37.

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 33.8 above or 34.5 below or that come to light during a Hearing indicate that a serious breach has occurred, in particular in relation to an individual player or Club member, the Chairman of the Competitions Committee should refer the matter to the Disciplinary Committee.

#### **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.

6.4 Any Appeal shall contain the following: -

- a) The date of the decision appealed against;
- b) A copy of the decision being appealed,
- c) The specific aspect(s) and parts of the decision being challenged, if it is an appeal against severity only or against the entire decision,
- d) When an appeal is made 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 34.2 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.