

Decision of PRL Panel regarding the appropriate points allocation following the cancellation of the Gallagher Premiership Rugby Match between London Irish and Northampton Saints.

Date: Thursday 31st December 2020

Panel:

- Andy Higginson (PRL Chairman)
- Darren Childs (PRL CEO)
- Phil Winstanley (PRL Rugby Director)

Summary of Panel's Decision

1. As a result of London Irish's inability to fulfil a fixture as a result of Covid-19 and the cancellation of the Round 5 Gallagher Premiership match between London Irish and Northampton Saints, Northampton Saints shall be awarded the win and 4 league points and London Irish shall be deemed to have lost the match but awarded 2 league points. The match score shall be recorded as 0 – 0.

Background to the match cancellation

2. On Saturday 26th December 2020, London Irish were unable to fulfil its fixture obligations under Premiership Regulations for its Round 4 match against Bath Rugby. The reasons for this were due to Covid-19 and are set out in the PRL Panel Decision dated Thursday 24th December 2020.
3. Further testing was completed on Monday 28th December 2020 which identified an additional 16 positive cases (10 players, 6 staff) with a further 4 players identified as close contacts. Following consultation with Public Health England, London Irish was advised to keep the Club's training facility closed and not to play its Round 5 match against Northampton Saints as there could not be any certainty that the outbreak was under control. A further round of testing would be undertaken on Monday 4th January 2021.
4. Due to the advice of Public Health England, London Irish is no longer able to fulfil its fixture obligations under Premiership Regulations for its Round 5 match against Northampton Saints on Sunday 3rd January 2021.

Decision of the Panel

5. Pursuant to Covid-19 regulations set out in Schedule 5 of the Premiership Regulations a PRL Panel has been convened to determine the result and points allocation as follows: -

*"In the event that the PRL Panel decide that a Referred Match in the League Season is cancelled, or any governmental authority recommends or requires that a Match in the Premiership League Season is cancelled (in either case, a "**Cancelled League Season Match**"), then (without prejudice to any action which may be taken under or relating to any Covid Minimum Operating Standards):*

- *the result of that Cancelled League Season Match shall be deemed to be 0-0; and*
- *four league points shall be allocated to Club who was able to play the Cancelled League Season Match and two league points shall be allocated to the other Club."*

6. The Panel has concluded that due to London Irish's inability to fulfil the fixture due to Covid-19, Northampton Saints shall be awarded the win and 4 league points and London Irish shall be deemed to have lost the match but awarded 2 league points. The match score shall be recorded as 0 – 0.

Appeal

7. The decision of the PRL Panel as to whether it is one or both clubs who have been unable to fulfil the match, and the decision as to the allocation of points shall be subject to appeal under RFU Regulation 19.12.6 (and for the purposes of that Regulation, the PRL Panel shall be deemed to be a Constituent Body Disciplinary Panel).

Andy Higginson

Darren Childs

Phil Winstanley

31st December 2020