

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

Date: Saturday 9th January 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 Northampton Saints' inability to fulfil a fixture as a result of Covid-19 and the cancellation of the Round 6 Gallagher Premiership match between Northampton Saints and Leicester Tigers, Leicester Tigers shall be awarded the win and 4 league points and Northampton Saints 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. Club testing completed on Monday 28th December as part of the weekly Premiership Rugby testing programme presented one positive case. There was no evidence that this case had any contact with the subsequent cases set out below.
3. Club testing completed on Monday 4th January 2021 as part of the weekly Premiership Rugby testing programme presented 7 positive cases (5 new positives and 2 confirmatory results following symptomatic positives from Saturday 2nd January 2021). With the number of cases seen this week and given the rapid spread of cases that has been seen previously in rugby clubs after similar outbreaks, Public Health England could not rule out if this was the start of a Covid-19 outbreak within the club. This was of particular concern in respect of the increased infectiousness of the new variant and the potential impact from a player and staff welfare point of view, together with the wider public health of their families and the community, it was considered unwise for the club to continue training.
4. Following consultation with Public Health England, Northampton Saints was advised to close the Club's training facility and not to play its Round 6 match against Leicester Tigers as there could not be any certainty that this outbreak was under control. A further round of testing would be undertaken on Monday 11th January 2021.
5. Due to the advice of Public Health England, Northampton Saints is no longer able to fulfil its fixture obligations under Premiership Regulations for its Round 6 match against Leicester Tigers on Saturday 9th January 2021.

Decision of the Panel

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

Appeal

8. 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

9th January 2021