

REGIONAL PROGRAMME

RULES AND REGULATIONS 2009 – 2010

Regional Competitive Structure

1.1 The RFUW Regional Competitive Structure is divided into Senior and Youth (*Under 15 and Under 18 years of age*) Competitions.

1.1.1 The Senior Regional Structure comprises of 3 pool fixtures resulting in a final and a 3rd/4th place play off.

1.1.2 The U18 and U15 Regional Structure comprises of 2 fixtures and a Regional Tournament.

1.2 Age Bands

Senior Programme – A player must be 18 years of age to participate in the programme.

U18 – This age band takes into account players aged 15, 16 and 17 on 1st September.

U15 – This age band takes into account players aged 12, 13 and 14 on 1st September.

2 Rules and Regulations

2.1.1 All games will be played according to IRB laws with all 13 ELV laws
NB. Ball size will be Size 4.5 for seniors and U18's and Size 4 for U15's.

2.1.2 Each Region is responsible for the conduct of its players, volunteers and supporters, both home and away. This rule will be enforced in accordance with the RFUW Equity Policy and Code of Conduct

2.1.3 All teams are expected to provide their own first aid kit. Water spray bottles and sterile wipes for the treatment of blood injuries are also to be provided by each side for their own team, the use of buckets and sponges is to be positively discouraged. Current RFU & IRB guidelines for treatment of blood injuries are to be adhered to. The home side should ensure that there is access to a telephone for emergencies.

2.1.4 The home team is expected to provide women only changing and washing facilities for the opposition, along with appropriate facilities for the referee.

2.2 Eligibility of Players to enter RFUW Pathway Competitions

2.2.1 All players must be eligible to play for England.

2.2.2 The England Elite 44 players are not eligible to play in the regional competition.

2.2.3 All players must complete personal details form and where appropriate a Photo Consent form. These will be held by your individual team manager

2.3 Eligibility of Individual Players

2.3.1 All Senior and Youth players participating in the RFUW Regional Competition must be both:

2.3.1.1 A member of an affiliated club or student team.

2.3.1.2 All Youth players must be members of an affiliated Club or School side and be registered with the CB Registrar.

2.3.1.1 If a region plays an ineligible player they will face an RFUW Disciplinary Ruling which could result in the region having league points deducted (in the senior competition) and a mandatory fine.

2.3.2 A player may play for the region in which their club / university is situated or the region in which they live. Once a player has selected the appropriate region, they must stay with that region for the duration of the programme. English players at a Scottish / Welsh or Irish University are eligible to play as long as they are individually registered with the RFUW. (Please contact RFUW office to receive forms and information on the process – 020-8831-7996)

2.3.2.1 Due to exceptional circumstances a player maybe granted permission by the RFUW to play for another region, Any player who wishes to apply for dispensation to play for another region, must apply in writing to the RFUW Competition's Officer stating the reasons why on keeleyfathers@rfu.com

Only on receipt of a letter from the RFUW granting permission, is a player allowed to train or play for that region.

2.4 Selection

2.4.1 Squad Selection

2.4.1.1 Trial format should be approved by the Club Coach Officer and in turn by the Women's Rugby Development Manager (WRDM).

2.4.1.2 U20 England Players will automatically be selected for their Region **but must attend the trials**. Each Player has an elite coach connected to them and this person will regularly contact Regional coaches.

2.4.1.3 All Super 4 trialists not having made the Elite 44 will be invited to trial for their Region bearing in mind that to progress with England, you must have represented the region or be in the Elite 44. Selectors will receive a list of these players on the day indicating them with a tag.

- 2.4.1.4 Those counties that have run a senior programme will be invited to nominate up to 15 tagged players for the trial. Selectors will be informed which players have been tagged.
- 2.4.1.5 A tag does not indicate immediate selection, only that they have been “spotted” by another coach. It does allow them to come to the first training session if they are ill or injured for the initial trial. This request must be made in writing and approved by the Regional Programme Manager.
- 2.4.2 Team Selection
 - 2.4.2.1 Squad lists for all teams must be submitted in advance of any region’s Fixture. These lists must be presented to the RFUW Competitions Officer by 9pm on the Friday before the match is due to be played. Failure to do this will lead to a mandatory fine and could lead to points being deducted in the senior competition.

2.5 Replacements

- 2.5.1 All replacements shall be made in accordance with current IRB laws, (www.irb.com).
- 2.5.2 All replacements shall be named prior to kick off.

2.6 Substitutions

Senior and U18 Programme

Teams can substitute up to a maximum of 7 players.

U15 Programme

Each team can substitute up to a maximum of 7 players.

Senior Substitutions may only be made when the ball is dead and with the permission of the referee.

- 2.6.1.1 If a player is substituted, that player must not return to play in that match, even to replace an injured player.
- 2.6.1.2 Exception 1: a substituted player may replace a player with a bleeding or opened wound.
- 2.6.1.3 Exception 2: a substituted player may replace a front row player when injured, temporarily suspended or sent off.

2.7 Front row players must be suitably trained and experienced.

- 2.7.1 The table below indicates the numbers of suitably trained and experienced players for the front row when nominating different numbers of players.

No. of Players	Number of Suitably Trained and Experienced Players
15 or less	3 players who can play in the front row
16, 17 or 18	4 players who can play in the front row
19, 20, 21, 22, +	5 players who can play in the front row more if you have more than 22 in a squad

- 2.7.1.1 The replacement of a front row forward may come from suitably trained and experienced players who started the match or from the nominated replacements.
- 2.7.2 Senior Regional Competition

If on the third occasion a front row player requires to be replaced and her team cannot provide a replacement or other player capable of playing in the front row of the scrum, then uncontested scrums will be permitted but the result still stands.
- 2.7.3 U18 Regional Matches

If on the Second occasion a front row player requires to be replaced and her team cannot provide a replacement or other player capable of playing in the front row of the scrum so that uncontested scrums result, then the match result shall stand.
- 2.7.4 If a team has no suitable player available to fill the role of a front row forward who has been “sin binned”, the referee will order uncontested scrums for the period of the temporary suspension. Provided the team started the match with the minimum number of players capable of playing in the front row, this will not affect the match result.

2.8 Senior and U18 Regional programme.

In the event of a team being unable to field a suitably trained front row at the start of any fixture so that uncontested scrums result, that team shall be deemed to have lost the match, but will not have a default awarded against them if they turn up to play the fixture.

A team unable to field a suitably trained front row should still make every effort to fulfil their fixture with uncontested scrums so avoiding a default and disrupting the regional programme.

2.9 Defaulting Fixtures

2.9.1 Senior Competition

A region that defaults their last match of the Competition will automatically lose their home rights to the next season's regional programme.

2.9.2 U18 and U15 Competition

A region that defaults a match will automatically be ineligible to enter the RFUW Youth Tournament in May.

2.10 Referees

The Home region is responsible for arranging the appointment of a qualified referee from their local Referees Society.

2.10.1 The referee may request players to remove jewellery which, in their opinion, is dangerous.

2.10.2 The referee may request that fingernails are cut or taped if they are, in their opinion, dangerous.

2.10.3 All players must abide by the IRB rules and regulations regarding the wearing of protective clothing.

2.11 Abandonment

2.11.1 It is the responsibility of the home region to provide a suitable pitch for the match to be played on. If your chosen Club's ground is prone to being waterlogged or frozen, every effort must be made to secure another ground within a reasonable distance of your designated club to try and ensure the fixture takes place on the designated day.

2.11.2 If a match is abandoned because of weather conditions when sixty minutes or more have been played (in the senior game), then the score at the moment of abandonment shall stand and be deemed to be the final score in the match. The referee's decision as to the necessity for abandonment and the number of minutes played and the time of abandonment shall be final.

2.11.3 If weather conditions prevent a match being played, or a match is abandoned because of such conditions with less than sixty minutes having been played, the match shall be replayed on a date to be set by the RFUW Competitions Officer.

2.11.4 For U18s 2.11.2 above occurs after 50 mins.

2.11.5 For U15s 2.11.2 above occurs after 40 mins.

2.11.6 If the referee finds it necessary to abandon the match for any reason other than weather conditions, then irrespective of the number of minutes played the result of that match may be determined by the Competition Officer or the match be ordered to be replayed.

2.11.7 If the match is abandoned as stated above both teams shall provide a completed match day form signed by the Referee and stating the exact time of the match abandonment, the number of minutes played, the score at the time of abandonment and the reason for abandonment.

2.11.8 If a match is abandoned the Competition Officer must be telephoned, failure to do so will lead to a mandatory fine.

2.12 Kick Off

2.12.1 All matches shall start at the following times:

March and April	2.45pm
February	2.30pm

2.12.2 Kick-off time may be re-arranged by the RFUW or mutual agreement between two regions. If the away team disagrees, they must contact the Competition Officer 4 days in advance of the fixture. Failure to do so will be taken as an agreement to the new time.

2.13 Kick-Off Delay

Any delay to the kick-off of a match may be reported by the non-offending club to the Competition Officer. It is advisable to have confirmation by the referee of any delay. The Competition Officer will then take appropriate action, when all the circumstances have been taken into consideration. It may lead to the fixture being awarded to the non-offending club.

If a delay in kick-off occurs, wherever possible every effort should be made by the two teams concerned to play the match on the day of the fixture.

2.14 Disciplinary Measures

The Competitions Officer shall have the power to discipline any participating region or have the power of referral to the RFU Disciplinary Procedures for breach of any of the competition regulations by way of loss of match or competition points, transfer of points, review of the result, monetary fine or compensation award, and any such region may be liable to be placed at the bottom of their respective tournament. All fines will be removed from the Region's budget.

2.15 Mandatory Fines

Failing to telephone result in by 6pm - £25

Failure to send in match day form within 5 days - £25

Failure to send in squads lists -	£25
Providing false information and the playing of unregistered players -	£75 per player and an RFU disciplinary hearing, which could lead to points being deducted in the Senior Competition
Failing to fill in yellow and red card match day forms -	£20

In the case of repeat offending the fines will be at the discretion of the Competitions Officer.

3.1 Senior Programme League Points

3.1.1 4 points for a Win
2 points for a Draw
1 point for playing

3.1.2 A bonus points system will be used - one bonus point will be awarded to a team:

- i) on each occasion it scores four or more tries in a game
- ii) on each occasion it loses a game by 7 points or less

3.1.3 Final League Positions will be calculated as follows:

- (a) The region scoring the highest number of points shall be placed first, and the other regions placed in descending order according to the points gained.
- (b) If two or more regions have equal points, they will be placed according to the greatest match points difference

Note: *To calculate the match points difference where a defaulted fixture or uncontested scrums are involved, the points scored for and against in any equivalent fixtures for the other region(s) involved will not be used in the final calculations.*

- (c) If two or more regions have equal match points difference, they shall be placed according to the greatest number of match points scored (*incorporating Note above as applicable*).
- (d) If two or more regions have equal points they shall be placed according to the greatest number of tries scored.
- (e) If two or more regions have scored equal number of tries they shall be placed according to the greatest number of drop goals scored.
- (f) If two or more regions are still equal they shall be placed according to the greatest number of conversions scored.
- (g) If two or more regions are still equal their positions shall be decided by drawing of lots.

3.2 Borrowing of Players

No regions can borrow players or lend players to other teams.

4.1 RFUW U18 and U15 Age Grade rugby

Variations for RFUW age grade rugby are detailed below. The variations are specifically for young women, and should be read in conjunction with the guidelines from the RFU regarding youth rugby and 'The Laws of the Game of Rugby Union' written by the IRB, in particular, IRB Variations **for all who play and all who manage players aged under 19 on 1st September**

Please note the following from the IRB variations:

- It is mandatory to wear a pre-formed gum shield for all players aged U18 on 1st September.
- Mismatches can be avoided by talking to the Coach in charge of the opposition before the game.
- No player should be asked to play outside her age group.
- **No player aged 17 and below should be permitted to play against any team in which there are adult players i.e those aged 19 years or over**

U18 – To play to IRB U19 laws

U15 – To play to the RFU U14 Laws.

Squeeze ball – law 14 and 15

No player involved in a match at any age level from under 18 downwards shall use in training or in a match the technique known or referred to as Squeeze ball.

Note: "Squeeze ball" is a technique where the ball carrier goes to ground, head forward (touching or close to the ground), irrespective of immediate contact with opponents, usually keeping parallel to the touchline, holding and protecting the ball close to the chest and when on ground, pushes the ball back between the legs.

Penalty: penalty kick

Rolling Substitutions – Law 3

A player who has been substituted may replace any player, whether or not that player has been injured.

Players may be exchanged at any time during the match, when the ball is dead, and with the knowledge of the referee.

Temporary Suspension Sin Bin Protocol – Law 10

As per the adult game the player will remain in the sin bin for ten minutes actual playing time. The player will stand out of the field of play, in the vicinity of the half way line, at a place readily identifiable to the referee. Then player must be under the control of the teachers and coaches. The player should not be isolated and should be given warm clothing to wear whilst serving the temporary suspension.

4.2 RFUW U15 Regional Programmes

Girls (U15 Rugby)

This age band takes into account players aged 12, 13 and 14 on 1st September. The RFUW's U15 Matches should be played to the RFU U14 variations but with the following difference: U15's girls matches will be 13 a side.

13 aside – 6 in scrum & 7 backs

The game is played between teams having a maximum of thirteen players, six of whom will be forwards and form the scrum, with the remaining players forming the back line. Each side can have a number of substitutes agreed by mutual consent. Substituted players can be re-used at any time. Substitutions may only take place when the ball is 'dead' or at half time and always with the referees knowledge.

The scrum will be made of six players from each team – the front row (a row of three players, i.e. a prop on either side of the hooker, two locks forming the second row and a back-row player who shall bind between the two locks 3-2-1 formation). The locks must bind to each other using the inside arm, with the outside arm around the hips (not between the legs) of the front row (props). The back row player must have their head between the hips of the second row bound with the arms around the hips (not between the legs) of the second row (locks). No player may unbind to pick up the ball at the rear of the scrum but must remain bound into the scrum until the ball is carried or passed out by the scrum half.

Safety Note: Coaches must ensure that only players trained in the front row participate in contested scrums.

RFU U14 variations

Time – Law 5

Playing time not to exceed 25 minutes each way with a size 4 ball. After 50 minutes of playing time, the referee must not allow extra time to be played in the case of a drawn match on any occasion.

Line-out - Law 19

Lifting/supporting is prohibited in these age groups, i.e. a player may not bind to a jumper until that player has returned to the ground.

Penalty: Penalty Kick.

Scrum - Law 20

The scrum-half not throwing the ball into the scrum must not move beyond the middle line of the scrum until the ball has emerged from the scrum or an opponent has placed his hands on the ball. In the event of a strike against the head, the scrum-half who has thrown the ball into the scrum is similarly restricted in not following the ball.

U18 Regional Programme

This age band takes into account players aged 15, 16 or 17 on 1st September. The RFUW's U18 matches should be played to the IRB U19 variations. **This age group will be trialling the ELV's with the exception of rule 17, as per those list at point 4.1**

18 year old players

A player that turns 18 before the senior trials may attend trials for senior and junior regional's but cannot play for more than one age group (U15's, U18's or Seniors) in the regional competition.

General – U19 Law Variations

LAW 3: NUMBER OF PLAYERS – THE TEAM

3.5 (c) If a team nominates 22 players, it **must** have at least six players who can play in the front row in order that there is replacement cover for the loose head prop, hooker and tight head prop. If a team nominates more than 22 players it **must** have at least six players who can play in the front row in order that there is replacement cover for the loose head prop, hooker and tight head prop. There must also be three players who can play in lock position.

3.12 A player who has been substituted may replace an injured player.

LAW 5: TIME

5.1 Each half of an Under 19 match lasts 35 minutes playing time. Play in a match lasts no longer than 70 minutes. After a total of 70 minutes playing time, the referee must not allow extra time to be played in the case of a drawn match in a knock-out competition.

LAW 20: SCRUM

20.1 (f) In an 8 person scrum the formation must be 3-4-1, with the single player (normally the Number 8) shoving on the 2 locks. The locks must pack with their heads on either side of the hooker.

Exception: A team must have fewer than eight players in its scrum when **either** the team cannot field a complete team, or a player is sent off for Foul Play, **or** a player leaves the field because of injury.

Even allowing for this exception, each team must always have at least five players in a scrum.

If a team is incomplete, the scrum formation must be as follows:

If a team is without one player, then both teams must use a 3-4 formation (i.e. no No.8).

If a team is without two players, then both teams must use a 3-2-1 formation (i.e. no flankers).

If a team is without three players, then both teams must use a 3-2 formation (i.e. only front rows and locks).

When a normal scrum takes place, the players in the three front row positions and the two lock positions must have been suitably trained for these positions.

If a team cannot field such suitably trained players because:

either they are not available, **or** a player in one of those five positions is injured **or** has been sent off for Foul Play and no suitably trained replacement is available, then the referee must order uncontested scrums.

In an uncontested scrum, the teams do not compete for the ball. The team putting in the ball must win it. Neither team is allowed to push the other team away from the mark.

20.1 (h) The referee will call "crouch" then "touch". The front rows crouch and using their outside arm each prop touches the point of the opposing prop's outside shoulder. The props then withdraw their arms. The referee will then call "pause". Following a pause the referee will then call "engage". The front rows may then engage. The "engage" call is not a command but an indication that the front rows may come together when ready.

Penalty: Free Kick

Note: *The engagement process above is now identical to senior Law.*

No wheeling. A team must not intentionally wheel a scrum.

Penalty: Penalty Kick

If a wheel reaches 45 degrees, the referee must stop play. If the wheel is unintentional, the referee orders another scrum at the place where the scrum is stopped.

Maximum 1.5 metres push. A team in a scrum must not push the scrum more than 1.5 metres towards their opponents' goal line.

Penalty: Free Kick

Ball must be released from scrum. A player must not intentionally keep the ball in the scrum once the player's team has heeled the ball and controls it at the base of the scrum.

Penalty: Free Kick