

REGIONAL PROGRAMME RULES AND REGULATIONS 2006 - 2007

Regional Competitive Structure

- 1.1 The RFUW Regional Competitive Structure is divided into Senior and Youth (*Under 14 and Under 17 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 U17 and U14 Regional Structure comprises of 2 fixtures and a Regional Tournament (RSA)

1.2 Age Bands

Senior Programme – A player must be 17 years of age on the 1st September 2006.

NB: A 17 year old is not eligible to play in the front row. They must have reached their 18th Birthday.

U17 – This age band takes into account players aged 14, 15 or 16 on September 1st

U14 – This age band takes into account players aged 11, 12 and 13 on 1st September.

2 Rules and Regulations

- 2.1.1 All games will be played according to IRB laws.
NB. Ball size will be Size 4.5 for seniors and U17's and Size 4 for U14'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 RFU/W 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 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.
- 2.3.2 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.
- 2.3.3 A player may play for the region in which their club / uni 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 Uni are eligible to play as long as they are individually registered with the RFUW. (please contact RFUW office to receive forms and process – 020-8831-79996)

2.4 Selection

- 2.4.1 Squad Selection
 - 2.4.1.1 Trial format should be approved by the Regional Coach Developer and in turn by the WRDM
 - 2.4.1.2 U19 England Players will automatically be selected for their Region. 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 will be invited to trial for their Region. 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 Director 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

2.6.1 Senior and U17 Programme

Senior teams can substitute up to a maximum of 7 players

U17s teams can substitute up to a maximum of 10 players

U14 Programme

Each team can substitute up to a maximum of 8 players

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

2.7.3 U17 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 U17 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

If a team defaults a fixture then their next fixture will automatically become an away fixture for the defaulting region.

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 U17 and U14 Competition

A region that defaults a match will automatically be ineligible to enter the RSA Tournament.

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 For U17s 2.11.2 above occurs after 50 mins
- 2.11.4 For U14s 2.11.2 above occurs after 40 mins
- 2.11.5 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 Director
- 2.11.6 For U17s 2.11.5 above occurs with less than 50 mins played
- 2.11.7 For U14s 2.11.5 above occurs with less than 40 mins played
- 2.11.8 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 Director or the match be ordered to be replayed.
- 2.11.9 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.

2.11.10 If a match is abandoned the Competition Director 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:

September, March and April	2.45pm
October and February	2.30pm

2.12.2 Kick-off time may be re-arranged by mutual agreement between two regions. If the away team disagrees, they must contact the Competition Director 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 Director. It is advisable to have confirmation by the referee of any delay. The Competition Director 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 Director 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 1 st and 2 nd XV squads -	£25
Providing false information and the playing of unregistered players - and an RFU disciplinary hearing, which could lead to points being deducted in the Senior Competition	£75 per player
Failing to fill in yellow and red match day forms -	£20

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

3.1 Senior Programme League Points

3.1.1 5 points for a Win
3 point for a Draw
1 points 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 five or more tries in a game
- ii) on each occasion it loses a game by 15 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.

RFUW U17 and U14 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 U17 on 1st September.
- 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 Squeezeball.
- 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.

U14 Regional programme

This age band takes into account players aged 11, 12 and 13 on 1st September. The RFUW's U14 variations generally follow the RFU U14 variations but there are a few differences.

Matches are played to the IRB's Laws of the Game, unless modified as shown below.

4 General

- 4.1.1 Playing time is 30 minutes each way with a size 4 ball. After 60 minutes of playing time, the referee must not allow extra time to be played in the case of a drawn match.
- 4.1.2 A full size pitch will be required.
- 4.1.3 Teams will be made up of twelve players, five of whom will be forwards, with The remaining seven forming the backs.
- 4.1.4 The hand off/fend off is permitted where it is not considered unsafe by the referee.
- 4.1.5 Kicking the ball on the ground (often called fly hacking) is permitted where it is not considered unsafe by the referee..
- 4.1.6 Replacements Maximum 8.

4.2 Scrummages

- 4.2.1 Scrummages will be uncontested. In an uncontested scrum, the teams do not compete for the ball. The team putting the ball in must win it. Neither team is allowed to push the other team away from the mark.
- 4.2.2 Scrummages will normally consist of 5 players from each side; a front row and a second row. For stability, Locks are to bind outside the hips of the props, not through the legs.

- 4.2.3 Front rows coming together: In the interest of safety, and where thought to be necessary, referees should talk the scrum down through the Crouch, Touch, Pause, Engage sequence. Each prop touches the opponent's upper arm and then pauses before the front rows meet.
- 4.2.4 No pushing the scrum. Players should not push against their opponents and the scrum should not move from the referee's mark. If the scrum unintentionally moves from the mark, the referee should re-set the scrummage. If a team intentionally moves the scrum, the referee will award a Penalty to the non-offending side.
- 4.2.5 No wheeling the scrum. A team must not intentionally wheel a scrum. If the scrum is unintentionally wheeled, the referee should re-set the scrummage. If a team intentionally wheels the scrum, the referee will award a Free Kick to the non-offending side. There is no 'turnover' law at U14.
- 4.2.6 The scrum-half not putting the ball into the scrum must not move beyond the middle line of the scrum until the ball has emerged from the scrummage or an opponent has placed his hands on the ball.
- 4.2.7 The 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

4.3 Lineouts

- 4.3.1 There must be a minimum of two players in the lineout. Penalty: Free Kick.
- 4.3.2 The team throwing in the ball decides the maximum number of players forming the line-out. Penalty (for the non-throwing in team having too many players): Free Kick.
- 4.3.3 The line-out extends from 5 metres from touch to 15 metres in-field and at right angles to the touchline. Lifting/supporting is prohibited at this age group, i.e. a player may not bind to a jumper until she has returned to the ground. Penalty: Penalty Kick.

U17 Regional Programme

This age band takes into account players aged 14, 15 or 16 on September 1st. The RFUW's U17 variations generally follow the RFU U17 variations. Matches are played to the IRB's Laws of the Game unless modified as shown below.

4.4 General

- 4.4.1 Playing time not to exceed 35 minutes each way playing with a size 4.5 ball. After 70 minutes of playing time, the referee must not allow extra time to be played in the case of a drawn match.
- 4.4.2 Teams will be made up of fifteen players, eight of whom will be forwards, with the remaining seven forming the backs.

4.4.3 Replacements: Maximum ten.

4.5 Scrummages

- 4.5.1 Each team must always have at least five players in a scrum and both scrums must always be equal in numbers. 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).

- 4.5.2 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 those positions. If a team cannot field such suitably trained players because:

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.

- 4.5.3 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.

There is no 'turnover' law at U17. If scrums are reset for wheeling beyond 45 degrees the throw-in is to the side in possession at the time it is wheeled beyond 45 degrees.

- 4.5.4 Maximum 1.5 metres push. A team in a contested scrum must not push the scrum more than 1.5 metres towards their opponents' goal line.
Penalty: Free Kick

- 4.5.5 The non-throwing in scrum half is no longer restricted in staying at the middle line after the ball has been thrown in. Whilst remaining on side she may follow the ball round. The offside line for the scrum- halves runs through the line of the ball in the scrum

- 4.5.6 Safety: In the event of one front row being stronger than the other, referees should be mindful to instruct the stronger pack to reduce the power of its shove sufficiently to ensure the opposing front row is able to stay on their feet.

4.6 Line Out

- 4.6.1 Minimum numbers. At least two from each team.
Penalty: Free kick.

Maximum numbers. The team throwing in the ball decides the maximum number of players forming the line-out.
Penalty (for the non-throwing in team having too many players): Free Kick.

4.6.2 The line-out extends from 5 metres from touch to 15 metres in-field and at right angles to the touchline.

N.B There is no longer a requirement to peel close to and parallel with the line-out.

4.6.3 Players may now pre-grip a team-mate but not below the waist.
Penalty: Free Kick

4.6.4 A player must not support a jumping team-mate below the shorts from behind or below the thighs from the front.
Penalty: Penalty Kick.

Players who support a jumping team-mate must lower that player to the ground as soon as a player of either team has won the ball.
Penalty: Free Kick.