

London & South East Reserve League Rules and Regulations

The London DOC delegates the power to the league organizer of the:

(League(s) name)

To administer the league and to appoint “the Committee” to administer the rules and regulations set out below and to produce and apply the league structure, league points and applicable penalties for failure to comply.

1. General

1.1 The Committee shall have power:

- (a) To manage the competitions which are contested by the members of the League
- (b) To formulate and publish a fixture schedule for each playing season, involving league and cup competitions and the points structure for that league(s)
- (c) To produce an annual budget for the playing of league and cup competitions, including but not limited to the purchase of trophies, the staging of finals, and the payment of administrative expenses – this can be administered by the CB if appropriate
- (d) To assume such other responsibilities as may be considered reasonable in connection with the management of the competitions from time to time.

1.2 The Committee may delegate such powers as it deems appropriate to individuals (League Secretaries) or sub committees to manage the leagues.

1.3 The Committee may amend these Rules during the course of a playing season, if such variation or amendment shall not be reasonably held to alter the outcome of any league or cup competition.

1.4 The Committee shall have discretion to decide on matters not provided for, and in the interpretation of, these Rules.

1.5 The Committee’s decision(s) in respect of these Rules is final and binding save for any club’s right to appeal or review or such other rights of appeal or review as may be reserved.

1.6 Please note it is NOT the referee’s responsibility to know and fully apply these rules/regulations during a league game. Both teams in any game are responsible for their application and both or either side may be sanctioned if the rules/regulations are not adhered to.

2. League Competition

- 2.1 All league competitions involving members of the League are governed by these Rules, except for such variations as either the DOC or the organizing league Committee may determine from time to time in respect of specific levels of the league.
- 2.2 The name of the league competition, and of different levels of the league, shall be determined by the Committee and may include the names of sponsors as the Committee shall determine. All references to a league must include the full name of the league.
- 2.3 All league matches shall be played in accordance with the IRB Laws of the Games, except as specifically provided for within these Rules.
- 2.4 The structure of the league shall be determined by the Committee. The number of teams in each division of the league shall be determined by the Committee, but shall not normally exceed 12.
- 2.5 1st XV, 2nd XV, 3rd XV teams, etc., shall be permitted to play together in the same division of the league. Teams from the same club shall not normally be permitted to play together in the same division.
- 2.6 Except as provided for within these Rules, teams shall be awarded the league points as per the points schedule outlined in the league summary as agreed by the Committee.
- 2.7 League tables shall be maintained by the Committee based on the award of league points. In the event that two or more teams are level on points at any stage of the season, their respective placings shall be determined by:
 - (a) The number of wins achieved during the season to date;
 - (b) If the number of wins is identical, points difference (that is, the difference between the number of points scored and the number of points conceded);
 - (c) If points difference is identical, the average number of points scored per match;
 - (d) If the difference and average are identical, then the aggregate score in matches played between the teams will be used with the superior record being placed first.
 - (e) If there is still no resolution, then the teams shall be placed in alphabetical order unless the league winner is to be decided then the teams will be declared joint winners.
- 2.8 Following completion of all league matches in the playing season, the team which finishes at the top of the league table in each division shall be named league champions and awarded a trophy.
- 2.10 Promotion and relegation:
 - (a) The principles of promotion and relegation shall be determined by the Committee from time to time, in accordance with the league structure and the number of teams in each division;
 - (b) Promotion and relegation shall normally be automatic, and shall not be governed by additional requirements other than performance on the field of play. The Committee may institute end-of-season play-offs to determine promotion and relegation if it so decides;

- (c) The top two teams in a division shall normally be promoted to the division above;
 - (d) Where one division is fed by one lower division, no more than two teams shall be relegated;
 - (e) Where one division is fed by two lower divisions, no more than four teams shall be relegated;
 - (f) Notwithstanding the above, the Committee shall have power at its absolute discretion to disapply, suspend, amend and/or vary the foregoing in order to address extraordinary circumstances which may arise from time to time and to ensure clubs are offered a suitable level of rugby.
- 2.11 In the event that a team withdraws or is excluded from a league competition prior to the end of a season, it shall not be replaced and shall have its results expunged from the league table.
- 2.12 In the event that a team withdraws or is excluded from a league competition after 1 August prior to the start of a season, it shall not be replaced and the division in which it was due to play shall continue with one less team unless the committee can replace the side with no disruption to any other team in the league.
- 2.13 Any team applying to join or rejoin the league will normally be placed at the discretion of the committee.

3. *Cup competition*

- 3.1 Cup competitions shall be organized by the Committee being mindful of the number and standard of teams at each level of the league.
- 3.2 Cup competitions may be played:
- (a) On a straightforward knock-out basis, between as many teams as are included. In the event that the number of teams in the competition is not conducive to a knock-out tournament, preliminary matches may be played or byes may be issued in the first round to as many teams as is necessary to achieve the required number; or
 - (b) With a preliminary pool phase in which teams play round-robin matches against each other, from which the pool winners progress to a knock-out phase.
- 3.3 Draws in cup competitions will be arranged by the Committee.
- (a) Either in a round by round basis with each draw made within seven days of the preceding round.
 - (b) Or in a seeded "waterfall" draw which is drawn once at the start of the competition.
- 3.4 The first named team to be drawn in a match up to and including the semi finals shall be the home team and unless otherwise mutually agreed, the venue of that match shall be the ground of such home team.
- 3.5 The final shall be played at a venue determined by the Committee, and which shall normally be neutral to both of the participating teams. The Committee shall be responsible for determining all matters relating to the management of the final, including the disbursement of any financial proceeds.
- 3.6 All cup matches shall be played to a conclusion, and there shall be no replays. Before a match both teams should agree that in the event that scores are level after 80 minutes:

- (a) Two periods of extra-time shall be played between the teams of 10 minutes each way, with a one-minute interval;
 - (b) If the scores are then still equal, the team that has scored most tries shall be declared the winners;
 - (c) If this does not produce a result, the team that has scored the most goals from tries shall be declared the winners;
 - (d) If the scores remain equal, in all matches save for the final the away team shall be declared the winners;
 - (e) If the scores remain equal in the final, then additional time shall be played until one team scores, whereupon that team shall be deemed the winner.
- 3.7 If, having agreed to participate, any team does not take part in the cup competition(s) or having participated fails to honour a fixture then that team's opponents in the round as drawn will receive a bye into the next round.
- 3.8 With the agreement of the Committee and / or the relevant League Secretary, and both participating teams, a cup match may count as a league match which was otherwise scheduled between those two teams. In this event, the league game will finish at the end of normal time but in the event of a draw the cup game can be concluded using the clauses in 3.6.

4. Eligibility & Restrictions

- 4.1 The Committee shall have the power at any time prior to or during the season to impose conditions upon the participation of any team in either league or cup competitions.
- 4.2 Where there is registration for players, teams must adhere to the rules applying to the registration of players applicable to their league and/or determined by the Committee.
- 4.3 Where there is no system of registration for players, teams are expected to operate in good faith with regard to the players that they select and field in any match. These players must be bona fide playing members of the club they are selected for. The Committee shall have power to act in its absolute discretion in cases where such good faith can reasonably be demonstrated to have been abused.
- 4.4 No team shall knowingly play in any match players who have been suspended or expelled by the RFU.
- 4.5 Except as provided for by Rule 4.4, a player who moves between clubs may play for his new club immediately.
- 4.6 A team may not be represented in any match in cup competition by any player who has played or been selected as a replacement for another team in the same cup competition in the current season unless notice is given and permission granted by the committee.

5. Team composition

- 5.1 All reasonable efforts shall be used to ensure that matches are played between two teams of 15 players each.
- 5.2 In the event that a team is unable to field 15 players:
 - 5.2.1 Matches may be played with a minimum number of players per team as agreed by the committee in the league summary document.
 - 5.2.2 No team may have an advantage of more than one player at the start of any match;
 - 5.2.3 A team may seek to fulfil a fixture with any number of players, on the understanding that its opposition will offer players from its own team to make up the required minimum. In this event, the team captains must agree the exchange of players before the match begins. Should there be a failure to agree then both teams are liable to forfeit any league points following investigation of the circumstances by the Committee.
 - 5.2.4 No team may continue to play a match with more than two extra players than the opposition, ie where a team has been reduced during play by injuries. The team containing the extra players must remove a player (or players) from the pitch to bring the sides within 2 players of each other (eg 15 v 13, 14 v 12, 13 v 11 etc). Teams are encouraged to lend players to avoid removing players from a game. This provision does not apply where a player(s) has been sent off by the referee.
- 5.3 Front row requirements:
 - 5.3.1 No player may play in the front row of the scrum during contested scrummages in adult rugby until he has reached his eighteenth birthday;
 - 5.3.2 There is no specific requirement for clubs to have specialized front-row replacements in the event of injury except in games where the committee instructs both teams to have such replacements.
 - 5.3.3 In the event of a league match being started or played for more than half a game with uncontested scrums through the inability of one of the clubs to field a full front row the offending team will be penalised as per the league summary sheet. The offending team will also be obliged to play with one less player ("man off law") for the duration of any uncontested scrums. If at any time contested scrums can resume then the man off may be replaced.
 - 5.3.4 Should a League match take place where neither club is able to field a full front row, and the match takes place with uncontested scrums throughout, the game may proceed as usual and the result and score will stand..
 - 5.3.5 Any match which involves uncontested scrums must be reported to the relevant League Secretary.
- 5.4 The Committee shall determine the maximum number of replacements that a team shall use in any league or cup match and as outlined in the league summary

- 5.5 Rolling substitutions shall be permitted in all league and cup matches in accordance with RFU regulations, subject to a maximum number of interchanges determined by the Committee in the league summary.
- 5.6 The Committee is at liberty to investigate any games played with uncontested scrums, the numbers of players per team or the misuse of replacements (which may be against the spirit of the game as well as the regulations) and award further points penalties or financial penalties as per league summary or award a walkover to the non-offending team.

6. Match & Fixture Management

- 6.1 Fixture lists in respect of league and cup competitions shall be prepared by the Committee and sent to clubs and to the RFU by 15th July in each year.
- 6.2 All matches will be normally be played on a Saturday, at a time agreed between the two participating teams, unless otherwise specified by the Committee or the relevant League Secretary. In the event that teams are unable to agree a kick-off time, the relevant League Secretary shall determine the time.
- 6.3 If both clubs agree then any game may be moved to another day or time within the week that the fixture was due. Only with the express agreement of the league secretary and the Committee can a match be scheduled for another week either in advance of the scheduled date or after it.
- 6.4 The local referee society shall appoint Referees to all matches, and such officials shall be the arbiter of these Rules in regard of the playing of matches. In the event that an appointed Referee does not arrive, the teams shall agree between them the appointment of a replacement Referee who shall be appropriately experienced and knowledgeable in the Laws of the Game, but shall not generally be regarded as the arbiter of these Rules.
- 6.5 Both teams are required to report the result of each match, after first checking the score with the appointed Referee. The result must be reported to the relevant League Secretary by the time and date outlined in the league summary and by the method described. Failure to report the result of a match in a timely fashion will be subject to the application of sanctions by the Committee.
- 6.6 Any delay from the specified or agreed kick-off time may be reported by the non-offending team or the Referee to the Committee and may lead to sanctions being imposed
- 6.7 Cancellations:
- 6.7.1 League and cup matches may only be postponed in the event that the pitch or the weather is considered unfit or unsafe either for play or for travel. In the event of dispute as to whether the pitch or weather is fit or safe for play or for travel, the matter will be determined by the appointed Referee acting in consultation with the relevant League Secretary;
- 6.7.2 Matches postponed for this reason may be rescheduled with the agreement of both teams and under instruction of the Committee.
- 6.7.3 Any team which fails to fulfil a fixture for reasons other than those described in Rule 6.7.1 will forfeit the match and any/all league points, except where the circumstances are deemed by the Committee to be extraordinary. In the event of a forfeit, the

opposing team will be awarded maximum league points;

- 6.7.4 Any team which fails to fulfil an away league fixture in the first half of the season may be required by the Committee or by the relevant League Secretary to play the corresponding home fixture away from home;
- 6.7.5 Any team which fails to fulfil three matches in league and/or cup competition during the course of any season may have their results excluded from the league tables and their fulfilled fixtures ignored in establishing the league table.
- 6.7.6 Clubs must ensure that their senior team or teams fulfil their fixture(s) in the event that they are unable to fulfil all scheduled fixtures. That is, if a club has two teams but sufficient players only to field one team, then the lower team will be the one which forfeits its fixture. In the event that a senior team forfeits its fixture, but a lower team or teams fulfil their fixtures, then all teams below the team that forfeited from the club will be deemed to have lost their fixture and (in league matches) forfeit any points gained from that fixture and (in cup competition) forfeit their place in any subsequent round. For the avoidance of doubt, the opponents in each of these fixtures will be awarded maximum league points or the place in the subsequent round. In exceptional circumstances this rule can be waived with the agreement of the Committee.
- 6.7.7 Any clubs cancelling a game after the time(s) specified will be subject to a financial penalty as per the league summary.
- 6.8 Any team which is excluded from the league pursuant to Rule 6.7.5 will not automatically be readmitted to the league for the following season but may at the Committee's discretion be required to fulfil specific conditions for re-entry including but not limited to the payment of a financial bond.
- 6.9 If any team is expelled from the league pursuant to Rule 6.7.5, then any lower teams from the same club will also be expelled.
- 6.10 Any match which is abandoned for any reason whatsoever before 80 minutes have been played shall be reported by both teams to the league organizer within 48 hours, stating the reasons for the abandonment, the score at the time of abandonment and the number of minutes played. The Committee shall thereafter determine the outcome of the match.
- 6.11 In the event of teams having clashing or similar colours, the home team shall be required to change their kit to the satisfaction of the appointed Referee.
- 6.12 The home team shall be responsible for:
 - (a) The availability of a pitch, correctly and clearly marked;
 - (b) The costs of the appointed Referee;
 - (c) The cost of providing a reasonable meal and other refreshments for the away team's players, replacements and officials.
- 6.13 The away team shall be responsible its own travelling and other expenses.

7. *Discipline and Disputes*

- 7.1 All matters relating to on-field discipline will be dealt with by the RFU's Constituent Bodies in accordance with the RFU's disciplinary regulations. The decisions of the Constituent Bodies in this regard will be final and binding upon all players and teams involved in the competitions under the Committee's management.
- 7.2 Any alleged breach of these Rules should be reported to the Committee, if appropriate via the league secretary within seven days of the alleged breach taking place. Such allegation must be accompanied by documentary evidence including any referee's report and written statements from officers of the club making the allegation. On receipt of the allegation the Committee shall forward details to the club against whom the allegation is made, who shall respond within seven days. The Committee shall then determine the matter at its absolute discretion and issue their findings within seven days and inform all involved.
- 7.3 Where a club, team or individual is found to be in breach of these Rules, the Committee shall have power to impose sanctions which may include but not be limited to:
- (a) A caution in regard of future conduct;
 - (b) A monetary fine of such amount as the Committee shall determine;
 - (c) Suspension from the competition or competitions under the Committee's management for such period as the Committee shall determine;
 - (d) In the case of a team, the deduction of league points;
 - (d) In the case of a team, relegation to a lower division of the league;
 - (f) Expulsion from the competition or competitions under the Committee's management;
 - (e) Such other sanction as the Committee may reasonably determine.
- 7.4 A club may appeal against the findings of the Committee pursuant to Rule 7.3 or against any other ruling of the Committee made pursuant to these Rules. An appeal must be formally notified to the Committee, stating the grounds on which the appeal is raised, and accompanied by the payment of £50, whereupon the Committee will refer the matter to the DOC who may uphold or overturn the ruling of the Committee.
- 7.5 A further appeal is available to the RFU which would be set out in any DOC judgement. In the determination of any appeals raised in accordance with Rule 7.4, time shall be of the essence and a schedule will be specified by the Committee/DOC/RFU in all instances.

8. *Sundry matters*

- 8.1 Each team shall be responsible for ensuring that it has adequate insurance cover for itself and its players for all risks which might reasonably be associated with participation in league and cup competitions, and in the game of rugby generally.
- 8.2 No club, team or player shall hold the Committee responsible for any material loss incurred while participating in the league and cup competitions, except where such loss can be reasonably attributed to the negligence of the Committee.

LEAGUE SUMMARY

League Points(2.6)

League points are awarded as follows

WIN

LOSS

DRAW

OTHER

BONUS

PENALTY

MINIMUM NUMBER OF PLAYERS REQUIRED FOR A GAME TO START(5.2.1)

PENALTY FOR STARTING GAME WITH UNCONTESTED SCRUMS(5.3.3)

NUMBER OF REPLACEMENTS ALLOWED(5.4)

NUMBER OF INTERCHANGES USING REPLACEMENTS(5.5)

PENALTIES FOR NOT FOLLOWING TEAM NUMBERS RULES(5.6)

RESULT REPORTING(6.5)

FINES FOR LATE CANCELLATIONS(6.7.7)