



Policy on Pitch Usage when Impacted by Inclement Weather

Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles in deciding if playing surfaces can be used for training or matches will be:

- (i) player safety
- (ii) minimising damage to pitches.

Policy

When pitches and playing surfaces are impacted by inclement weather they will be subject to inspection by a Committee Member, or designated representative. Inspection(s) will take place in a timely manner to allow decisions to be communicated as early as possible. The decision on playability will be the committee's agreed position and will be final. The Club has a duty of care for all players, but there is more responsibility required of the Club in this area for youth (U17 and below) players. Therefore, the risk/safety playability decision may well be different for youth players and senior players. The pitches and playing surfaces will be assessed as follows:

- (i) Are the pitches and playing surfaces safe to either train or play a match on? This will be determined by levels of standing water, quantity of mud, frost, ice, snow etc. that would expose players to an unacceptable level of risk. This view will likely be subjective but will be based on duty of care requirements, experience and knowledge of the playing surfaces in these types of conditions.
- (ii) Should the pitches and playing surfaces be assessed as safe, will they be subject to excessive damage by training on them? It is recognised that a key factor in the success of the senior and youth teams (U13 to Colts) is dependent of being able to train midweek. In particular, the Seniors play in a highly competitive League and the standing of the Club is determined by the 1st XV and its League position and performances. In this context, midweek training should be held whenever practical do to so. However, if pitch damage is likely on training nights, then use of portable lighting on the surrounding ground is the recommended option. Training on the floodlight pitch when damage could occur should be an exception, not the default position. The Club requires that teams take responsibility for ensuring pitch damage is minimised.
- (iii) For the youth/minis teams training on a Sunday the primary reason for not using pitches or playing surfaces will be safety, as per this policy. Should the pitches and playing surfaces be deemed safe following assessment then the final decision on whether to use them will rest with individual team coaches.

Fareham Heathens RFC Committee – February 2018

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