

SCOTTISH RUGBY NATIONAL COMPETITION RULES 2021-22

1 DEFINITIONS

‘Board’	means the Scottish Rugby Board, or any sub-committee of the Board operating under the specific authority of the Board.
‘Best Playing Record Calculation (“BPRC”)	means average Competition Points gained in completed Matches multiplied by total Matches possible (e.g. a Club plays in 15 of its 22 possible Matches, achieving 34 Competition Points: BPRC adjusted points = $34/15 \times 22 = 49.86$).
‘Championship Committee’	means the Scottish Rugby Championship Committee.
‘Championship Secretary’	means the person who deals with the day-to-day running of the Scottish Rugby Competitions.
‘Club’	means any club, team or other body (as the context may require) which participates in a Scottish Rugby Competition.
‘Competitions’	means the Scottish Rugby league and knock-out competitions designated by the Board from time to time and listed in Appendix 3.
‘Competitions Committee’	means a committee elected or appointed to assist in the organisation of an individual Scottish Rugby Competition.
‘Competition Secretary’	means the person appointed by Scottish Rugby to act as Secretary to a Scottish Rugby Competitions Committee.
‘Cup’ and ‘Women’s Cup’	means such knock-out competitions as are designated as Scottish Rugby Competitions by the Board and as the context may require.
‘Emergency Loan Player’	means a player permitted to participate for a club by virtue of Rules 4.28-4.30 4.28-4.306.
‘Game On’	means the Law variations approved for use in certain Scottish Rugby Competitions, as further detailed in Appendix 2.
‘International Clearance’	means the formal process under World Rugby Regulation 4 and Scottish Domestic Regulation 4.2 (<i>Clearance to Play in another Union</i>) whereby a Player is granted permission by both Unions to change the Union within which they are registered to play.
‘Laws of the Game’	means the <i>Laws of the Game</i> as issued by World Rugby from time to time and a reference to a “Law” shall be to that Law as worded within the Laws of the Game.
‘Match’	means a match played or to be played in a Competition.
‘Player’	means any person who is named by a Club to participate in a Match.
‘Playing Enclosure’	means the Field of Play and the Perimeter Area as set out in Law 1.
‘Primary League Club’	means the Club which currently holds the Player’s registration and is responsible for maintaining all aspects of the Player’s registration details.
‘Regulations’	means any supplementary regulations provided or approved by the Board in respect of individual Competitions, or generally.
‘Rules’	means the Scottish Rugby Competition Rules approved by the Board from time to time.
‘Scottish Rugby’	means Scottish Rugby Union Limited.
‘Secondary League Club’	means the one additional Club for which a Player is formally registered to play.
‘Supporting Clubs Investment Programme’	means the minimum standards and requirements issued by Scottish Rugby from

- ("SCIP") time to time.
- 'World Rugby' means the game's world governing body.

2 ORGANISATION AND APPLICATION

The Competition Rules

- 2.1 The Competitions shall be governed by the Rules.
- 2.2 The Rules and changes to them shall be subject to approval by the Board.
- 2.3 The Board may provide supplementary Regulations in respect of individual Competitions (see Appendix 1). The Board reserves the right to amend the Rules and Regulations from time to time.
- 2.4 The Board shall have the power to rectify any error or omission in the Rules and the Regulations in such manner as it deems fit.
- 2.5 In the Rules and Regulations, unless specified or the context otherwise requires, words importing any gender shall include all other genders, and importing singular shall, where appropriate, include plural.
- 2.6 Should any provision of the Rules or Regulations be held by any court or other competent authority to be illegal, void or unenforceable (in whole or in part) the remainder of the Rules and/or Regulations shall continue to be enforceable.

Championship Committee

- 2.7 The Board shall be assisted in the organisation of the Competitions by a Championship Committee. Membership of the Championship Committee shall comprise:
- 2.7.1 the Championship Convenor (the "Convenor") who shall be appointed by the Board;
- 2.7.2 the Women's Competitions Committee Convenor (appointed by the Board);
- 2.7.3 the Reserve League Committee Convenor (appointed by the Board);
- 2.7.4 one representative elected in accordance with the *Championship Committee Election Rules* from each of the following club groups: the Premiership; National League 1; National League 2 and 3; the Caledonia Regional League; the East Regional League; and the West Regional League;
- 2.7.5 a referees' representative; and
- 2.7.6 a schools and youth rugby representative.
- 2.8 The Championship Committee shall have the authority to delegate any of its powers, duties or obligations under these Rules to any person, Competitions Committee, sub-committee or other body provided that it retains the ability to resume the exercise of those powers at any point. Delegation of powers, duties or obligations shall not prevent the Championship Committee from exercising those powers or undertaking those duties or obligations should the Championship Committee consider it necessary or appropriate to do so. References in the Rules and Regulations to a Competitions Committee shall be deemed to include the Championship Committee where the Championship Committee has itself elected to exercise that power.
- 2.9 Where by reason of the routine nature of the matter, or such urgency that a meeting of the Championship Committee cannot reasonably be arranged, and subject to any direction given by the Championship Committee, the Convenor may exercise any of the powers, discretions and/or authorities given to the Championship Committee under the Rules and Regulations.
- 2.10 The Championship Committee and the Convenor shall be assisted by a Championship Secretary appointed by Scottish Rugby.

Compliance

- 2.11 By agreeing to participate in a Competition the participating Club agrees to be bound by both the letter and the spirit of the Rules and Regulations, and such other Scottish Rugby Rules, Regulations, Policies or Procedures as may affect participation in competitions.

- 2.12 The participating Clubs shall ensure compliance by all of their Players and officials with applicable Rules and Regulations.
- 2.13 Participating Clubs shall comply with the Supporting Club Investment Programme Standards issued from time to time by Scottish Rugby unless a dispensation has been given to them by Scottish Rugby. Scottish Rugby shall have the power to suspend the participation rights of any Club which fails to meet or to maintain these Standards.
- 2.14 Except where a Scottish Rugby Bye-Law, Policy, Rule or Regulation provides to the contrary, World Rugby's *Laws of the Game of Rugby Football* (the "Laws") and the *World Rugby Regulations Relating to the Game* shall apply.

3 FIXTURES

Date and Kick-Off Time

- 3.1 The date, time and the identity of the home and away Clubs in any Match shall be as determined and notified by the relevant Competition Secretary.
- 3.2 Matches shall be played on the date and at the time notified. By exception, and where both Clubs agree, the home Club may make written application to the Competition Secretary for a Match to be played at an alternative time or on an alternative date (including evenings and weekdays). Applications shall be made no later than 7 days prior to the scheduled kick-off time and must be accompanied by evidence as to the consent of both Clubs.
- 3.3 Matches taking place on the same day as a home international played by the senior men's Scotland team (and in the case of Women's competitions matches, the senior Scotland Women team), shall kick-off no later than 2 hours prior to the international match kick-off unless written permission is obtained from the relevant Competitions Committee.
- 3.4 The Championship Committee and the relevant Competitions Committee reserve the absolute right to reschedule any Match, including at short notice. In the event of a postponed or abandoned Match requiring to be rescheduled, other Matches may require to be rescheduled or further rescheduled in order to accommodate that Match.
- 3.5 Matches shall normally be played at the home Club's regular venue. The home Club must advise the relevant Competition Secretary, the visiting Club and the referee promptly if a Match is to be played at a different venue.
- 3.6 Copyright, database and all other rights in the fixtures, fixture lists and result lists shall be the property of Scottish Rugby.

Postponed and Cancelled Matches

Covid-19

- 3.7 If, as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, either (i) government travel or other restrictions mean a Match cannot be played, or (ii) a club has received professional medical advice and/or a Club's own Covid-19 Risk Assessment means that a Match should not be played for medical reasons due to (for example) transmission risk following an outbreak amongst **P**layers at the Club; the Club must without delay inform the relevant Competition Secretary of the full circumstances and the Match shall be postponed.
- 3.8 Matches postponed under Rule 3.7 shall ordinarily be rearranged/rescheduled for a date prior to the conclusion of the season. Should any such Match not be played by that date, and subject to Rule 10.2, the Competition Points awarded to each Club in the relevant league table shall be adjusted according to the 'Best Playing Record Calculation' to determine the final league positions.
- 3.9 In the event of any re-arranged knock-out or play-off Match having to be cancelled in accordance with Rule 3.7, the Championship Committee may determine that the Club with the higher standing in the final league table shall be declared as the winner of that Match.

Other Causes

- 3.10 If a Match is likely to be postponed for any other reason, the home Club must seek to play at an alternative venue or, if the home team is in the first half of its league season, may seek the opposition Club's consent for the fixture to be reversed. In the event of a postponement the home Club shall promptly notify the opposition Club, the Match referee and the Competition Secretary. Where a Club fails to find an alternative venue the relevant Competitions Committee reserves the absolute right to apply sanctions to the offending Club, including a formal reprimand and warning and/or deduction of ~~competition~~Competition pointsPoints.
- 3.11 If a second or subsequent postponement is likely, the Match must be played, at the original venue or at an alternative venue (including the opposition's pitch if it is playable and available), failing which the Competitions Committee may direct where and when the Match should be played (including midweek where necessary).

Abandoned Matches

- 3.12 Where a Match is abandoned before 20 minutes of the second half have elapsed it shall be replayed at a date and time notified by the Competition Secretary. This shall normally be the first available fixture date free of Competition fixtures but may also be midweek where necessary.
- 3.13 If a Match is abandoned after at least 20 minutes of the second half have elapsed the Match shall be deemed to have been completed and the score at the time of the abandonment shall stand as the Match result.
- 3.14 The right is reserved for the relevant Competitions Committee to investigate the causes of any abandonment and to take such action as it deems appropriate.
- 3.15 For the avoidance of doubt the procedures regarding any red or yellow cards, citing or misconduct complaints during an abandoned Match shall be the same as if the Match had been completed.

Non-Fulfilment of Fixtures

- 3.16 No Club may, without just cause, fail to fulfil its fixture obligations. The relevant Competitions Committee shall be the sole judge as to whether just cause exists.
- 3.17 If a Club fails to fulfil a fixture on the date notified it shall receive the following automatic penalty:
- 3.17.1 First default (in season): a three ~~competition~~Competition pointPoint deduction;
- 3.17.2 Second default: a four ~~competition~~Competition pointPoint deduction; and
- 3.17.3 Third default and subsequent defaults: a five ~~competition~~Competition pointPoint deduction and the Competitions Committee shall have the additional power to relegate and/or disqualify the Club where it considers this to be either necessary or appropriate.
- 3.18 A Club subject to penalty under Rule 3.17 may request that the penalty be reviewed by the Competitions Committee, but only on the grounds that the default was caused by exceptional and unforeseen circumstances wholly outwith its control. Requests must be lodged with the Competition Secretary within 72 hours of the scheduled kick-off time. On review the Competitions Committee shall have right to cancel, reduce, affirm or increase the penalty.
- 3.19 Where in the view of the Competitions Committee any default was due to the wilful actions of any Club it may additionally:
- 3.19.1 apply sanctions to either or both Clubs, including a formal reprimand and warning as to future conduct and/or deduction of up to an additional five ~~C~~competitionPpoints and/or disqualification from the relevant competition and/or a financial penalty of up to the full amount of any participation money which the Club may be entitled to; and
- 3.19.2 award the ~~C~~competitionPpoints to either Club, divide them between the Clubs as it sees fit or decide that no ~~C~~competitionPpoints should be awarded and order that the Match be replayed.
- 3.20 In the event of a Club not fulfilling a fixture and the opposition Club incurring unnecessary expense, the

relevant Competitions Committee may award a financial penalty of up to £1,800 per Match towards the reimbursement of the non-offending Club's and the Match Official's actual costs. Proof of actual costs will be required.

- 3.21 If a Club fails to fulfil three or more Competition fixtures in consecutive seasons the Championship Committee may suspend the Club from participation in Competitions for such period as the Championship Committee deems appropriate.

4 THE PLAYERS

Registration and De-Registration

- 4.1 All Players participating in Competitions must be registered on the Scottish Rugby registration system (SCRUMS).
- 4.2 All Players participating in Competitions (other than as *Emergency Player Loan Scheme* Players or as allowed within the Regulations of an individual competition) must be properly registered as an active Player with the Club that they are representing.
- 4.3 A Player is registered when, subject to these Rules, the Player has been allocated a unique reference number and the Player appears on the system under the Club's list of active registered Players. Scottish Rugby reserves the right to refuse, suspend or request further information in respect of any application.
- 4.4 A Player may be registered to only one Primary League Club and one Secondary League Club. A Player's Primary League Club shall ordinarily be the Club with which the Player trains and plays most frequently. The Player may ask their Primary League Club to also register them with a Secondary League Club.
- 4.5 A Player wishing to transfer Club must notify their current Club of their desire to transfer. The Player's new Club shall apply in the prescribed manner to transfer the Player's registration. The Player shall not be eligible to play for their new Club until their name appears on that body's list of active registered Players.
- 4.6 A Player cannot be first registered with a Secondary League Club if that Club has five or fewer Matches to play or if it has qualified for the quarter-final (or later round) of a Cup competition.
- 4.7 Clubs shall ensure that their list of registered Players is at all times accurate and up to date, including in relation to whether each Player remains active. Clubs shall deactivate a Player's registration on receipt of a request from the Player. Clubs wishing to deactivate a Player's registration shall inform the Player in writing.
- 4.8 Where a Player receives International Clearance to play outwith Scotland the Player's registration must be deactivated by their Club promptly.
- 4.9 Where a Player requires a work permit, visa or other consent to play in Scotland, the Player's Club must deactivate their registration at the end of that consent.
- 4.10 A Player's registration may be suspended or cancelled (including with retrospective effect), where the Player or his Club has breached the *Regulations Relating to the Game* or any of Scottish Rugby's Bye-Laws, Policies, Rules, Regulations or registration procedures.
- 4.11 Subject to the foregoing, a Player's registration status on any particular date shall be determined by the listing of active registered Players on that date.

Eligibility

- 4.12 Incoming Players requiring International Clearance shall not be eligible to participate until Scottish Rugby has provided written confirmation of the completion of the International Clearance process.
- 4.13 Other than as set out within the Rules/Regulations or with the written permission of the relevant Competition Committee, a Player may not play in Matches for more than two Clubs in any season.
- 4.14 A Player may not participate in a Match in an adult competition until the Player has attained the age of 18 years unless the Player has received prior written dispensation to do so from Scottish Rugby.
- 4.15 It shall be a specific offence:

- 4.15.1 to register or attempt to register a Player without the Player's consent;
 - 4.15.2 to play a Player in a Match who is not eligible to participate;
 - 4.15.3 for a Player or Club to fail to comply with Player payment provisions of SDR 4.1 *Player Status and Player Contracts*. For the avoidance of doubt, the payment and/or the provision of material benefits to any Player in return for their participation is prohibited unless specifically permitted by SDR 4.1;
 - 4.15.4 for a Player to participate in a Match for a Club to which the Player is not registered or for which the Player is not otherwise eligible to participate for; or
 - 4.15.5 to mislead the Championship Committee, Competitions Committee or Scottish Rugby in any matter relating to Player registration or eligibility.
- 4.16 Where a Club has been found to have fielded an ineligible Player, or to have fielded a Player whose name did not appear on the Team Sheet, the relevant Competitions Committee shall have the right to impose a penalty on the Club for which the Player participated. The Player shall also be liable to such additional penalty or suspension as the relevant Competitions Committee considers appropriate.

Dual Registration

- 4.17 A Player's Primary and Secondary League Clubs must be in different league divisions. Should a Player's Primary or Secondary League Club be promoted / relegated into the same division as their other dual registered Club, the Player must be deregistered from their Secondary League Club.
- 4.18 A dual-registered Player may not play for the first XV of their lower-placed Club in any of its last five Matches, or in the quarter-final (or later round) of the Cup, unless at least 50% of their previous first XV Matches that season have been for the lower-placed side or where the Player has obtained the prior written permission of the relevant Competitions Committee.
- 4.19 Other than as may be allowed in the Regulations of an individual competition, no more than five dual registered Players may be included in the Match squad of their lower placed Club.

Transfer Deadline

- 4.20 Scottish Rugby shall set Male and Female transfer deadline dates each season (see Appendix 3).
- 4.21 Any Player receiving International Clearance to play in Scotland, being Dual Registered or being transferred between Clubs after the relevant transfer deadline may not participate for their new Club in a Competition for the remainder of that season unless either:
 - 4.21.1 the relevant competition Regulations permit; or
 - 4.21.2 the Player attains the age of 18 years after the Transfer Deadline; or
 - 4.21.3 the Player receives written permission from the relevant Competitions Committee to do so.

Pro Team Contract Players

- 4.22 Players contracted to Edinburgh Rugby or the Glasgow Warriors shall not be eligible to participate in Competition Matches.

Academy Stage 3 Players

- 4.23 Scottish Rugby Contracted Academy Players shall be eligible to participate in the Premiership but not in any other National Competition Matches.

Super6 Contract Players

- 4.24 Players registered in a Super6 Tournament Squad shall, subject to the *Super6–Premiership_ Player Protocol*, be eligible to participate in the Premiership (but not in any Premiership Club's final five Matches) but not in any other Competition Matches.
- 4.25 Players who cease to be a member of a Super6 registered Tournament Squad shall, subject to 4.26

below, to the general provisions of the Rules and to any competition specific Regulations, be eligible to participate in Matches from the date they cease to be a member of their Super6 Tournament Squad ~~in any match played in the current Premiership (or National and Regional) season's competition~~ (but, under the terms of the Super6 Protocol, shall then be unable to register/re-register for a Super6 team until after the first anniversary of the end of their previous Super6 contract).

- 4.26 No more than three Players who have ceased to be a member of a Super6 registered Tournament Squad within the current season may be included in any match day squad.
- 4.27 Participation as a Super6 Emergency Player (as defined within the Super6 Tournament Rules) shall not break the Player's registration for Competition purposes nor affect that Player's ability to participate in Competition Matches.

Emergency Loan Scheme

- 4.28 A Club which would otherwise be unable to fulfil a Match or to meet the requirements of Law 3.8 due to a short-term lack of suitably experienced front-row forwards, may take on loan up to two front-row Players from other Clubs. Emergency Loan Players shall not become registered to their loan Club for these purposes.
- 4.29 No Player may play on loan in a Match for:
 - 4.29.1 a Club in the same ~~competition division~~ as the Player's Primary Club; ~~or~~
 - 4.29.2 a Club in a lower division in its final five Competition Matches or from the quarter-finals (or later) of the relevant competition; ~~or~~
 - 4.29.3 ~~a~~ Club where their participation on loan risks compromising their Primary Club's ability to meet its own competition ~~requirements~~ obligations.
- 4.30 Without the prior approval of the relevant Competitions Committee:
 - 4.30.1 no Player may play on loan with the same Club in more than three Matches per season or for more than two Clubs in any season; and
 - 4.30.2 no Player who has participated for his Primary League Club in more than eight Matches (excluding in the Reserve League) may play on loan with a Club in a lower division.

5 THE TEAMS

Team Colours

- 5.1 Clubs must ensure that they avoid a clash of team colours (jersey and/or socks). The Match referee shall be the sole judge as to whether colours clash. Where necessary it shall be the responsibility of the home Club to change.
- 5.2 Clubs proposing to play other than in their normal colours (as set out in the Scottish Rugby Record) must advise the opposition and the Match referee not less than 72 hours before kick-off.

Team Sheets

- 5.3 Clubs must deliver a fully completed team sheet to the Match referee and to the opposition manager/coach not later than 30 minutes before kick-off. Changes to the team sheet may be made up to kick-off.
- 5.4 The team sheet must specify the jersey number, full name and registration number of each Player. Players capable of playing at tight-head prop, loose-head prop and hooker must be highlighted as such. The team sheet must separately identify any Player playing for their Secondary League Club and any Emergency Player Loan Scheme Players.
- 5.5 Players, previously contracted with a Super6 Licensee during the current season, must be highlighted as such on the ~~Match-Day~~ team sheet.
- 5.6 Team sheets must be submitted to Scottish Rugby within 48 hours of kick-off.

5.7 For the avoidance of doubt it shall be a specific offence to:

- 5.7.1 fail to timeously deliver a team sheet to the other Club and Match referee; or
- 5.7.2 fail to submit a team sheet to Scottish Rugby fully, accurately or timeously. A Club may forfeit £20 of their 'SCIP' payment in respect of each such default. In the event of five or more failures the relevant Competition Secretary shall consider raising a Complaint ([in accordance with Rule 11 as defined in Rule 10](#)) against the Club.

Replacements / Substitutes

- 5.8 The maximum number of replacements shall be seven. This number may be further restricted within the Regulations of individual competitions. Unless otherwise stated within the Regulations there is no requirement for there to be parity as to the number of replacements available to each team and the requirements of Law 3.8 in respect of the number of front row players within any Match squad must be observed.
- 5.9 The maximum number of rolling substitutions a team may use in any Match shall be 12. The 15-minute limit on temporary Blood Replacements in Law 3 does not apply to rolling substitutions.
- 5.10 No Player may be included in squads for Matches which are being played either concurrently or are overlapping.

Late Arrival

- 5.11 Where some or all of its Players have been unavoidably delayed, a Club may request the Match referee to delay the kick-off to enable it to achieve a full side. No Match may be delayed such that the Match would not be completed in good time. The Match referee shall be the sole judge in this regard.

6 THE GROUND

The Pitch

- 6.1 The home Club shall provide a suitable pitch complying with Law 1. The dimensions of the pitch shall be as near as is practicable to the maximum permitted by Law 1 and must exceed any requirement set by Scottish Rugby.
- 6.2 Padding around the goalposts, conforming to Law 1.7, must be provided.
- 6.3 If the home Club fails to meet the requirements of Rule 6.1 or 6.2 the Match referee may order that the Match be postponed.

Technical Zones

- 6.4 Two technical zones (one for each team) must be provided. The technical zones shall be on the same side of the pitch and shall be marked on the ground. Where practicable they shall be located in the Perimeter Area of the Playing Enclosure and shall commence not less than 5m either side of the half-way line. The technical zones must be set back at least 2m from the touch line.
- 6.5 A maximum of six club personnel (coaches, medics, water carriers or other officials) may be present in each technical zone. All persons present in the technical zone (a) must conduct themselves at all times in an orderly fashion in accordance with the highest standards of disciplined and sporting behaviour; and (b) must not obstruct, interfere with or direct any comments towards the Match officials. All technical zone personnel must abide by Scottish Rugby's Technical Zone Protocol.
- 6.6 Replacements must stay outwith the Playing Enclosure, unless warming up or about to enter the Field of Play as a replacement.

Sin Bins

- 6.7 Two "sin bin" areas (one for each team) must be provided. The sin bin areas shall be at least 10m apart and shall be afforded a clear view of the Playing Enclosure.

Fitness of Ground or Conditions for Play

- 6.8 If, prior to the day of the Match, there is doubt as to the potential fitness of the ground the following arrangements must be made:
- 6.8.1 Advance warning, being at least 24 hours where reasonably practicable, must be provided to the visiting Club and the Match referee. The visiting Club and referee must be advised as to any potential contingency arrangements.
 - 6.8.2 The visiting Club shall provide details of a point of contact in relation to the potential postponement and shall also advise as to their intended time of departure.
 - 6.8.3 The home Club shall arrange for an independent assessment of the pitch. The assessment should, where reasonably practicable, be made by the Match referee, failing which by another independent person (such as a local referee, referee coach/assessor, Scottish Rugby official or an official from another club).
 - 6.8.4 The assessment shall be undertaken not less than 60 minutes prior to the visiting Club's intended departure time. The result of the inspection shall be communicated to the visiting Club not less than 30 minutes before its intended departure time and to the Match referee.
 - 6.8.5 Should the home Club fail to arrange for an independent assessment the visiting Club may do so. Where said assessment indicates the ground to be playable and the home Club has postponed the fixture, the relevant Competitions Committee may investigate as to whether an offence has been committed.
- 6.9 Where prior to kick-off there is doubt as to the fitness of the ground or the conditions for play, the Match referee and the team captains shall inspect the pitch. If any one of these three persons deems the pitch or conditions to be unplayable then the Match shall be postponed. This decision shall lie solely with the team captains and the Match referee. The captains shall notify their own Club of the decision.
- 6.10 Within 48 hours of the decision not to play a Match the home Club shall advise the relevant Competition Secretary as to the reason why that Match was not fulfilled. The Competition Secretary may seek further information in order to decide whether a Complaint should be raised against either or both Clubs.
- 6.11 Where a Club does not own or have rights over its ground, and the ground is declared unplayable by the holder of said rights, written evidence of such decision must be obtained and must be submitted to the Competition Secretary. In the event of failure to provide written evidence to the Competition Secretary, the Competition Committee may decide whether a Complaint should be raised against the home Club.

7 THE MATCH

Match Organisation

- 7.1 Unless otherwise directed by the relevant Competitions Committee, the home Club shall be responsible for the logistics involved in the staging of the Match.
- 7.2 The home Club shall ensure that the designated venue is fit for the purpose of staging the Match including, but not limited to, ensuring that:
- 7.2.1 the designated venue complies with all applicable government and local restrictions, health and safety legislation, local authority consent and associated requirements, and is safe for the purpose of admitting persons to the venue to assist in the organisation of, or to play in and/or spectate at the Match;
 - 7.2.2 at all times it maintains appropriate insurance to cover its potential liabilities arising from the staging of the Match, including the admission of spectators and others to the venue.
- 7.3 The home Club shall ensure that the visiting Club are advised of all relevant venue health and safety and associated requirements.
- 7.4 The home Club shall ensure that spectators are kept at a reasonable distance from the Playing Enclosure and at no time are able to enter the Playing Enclosure to interfere or interact with the Match, the Match officials or any of the Players or other Persons entitled to be within the Playing Enclosure.

Match Ball

7.5 The home Club shall provide at least three match balls compliant with the Laws.

Half-Time Interval

7.6 The half-time interval shall normally be five minutes. The length of the interval may be altered by agreement between the Clubs provided that this is notified to the Match referee prior to kick-off but shall not be more than 15 minutes.

7.7 The teams may retire to covered accommodation at half-time.

Competition Points

7.8 In all competitions, four points shall be awarded for a win and two points shall be awarded for a draw (“**Match Points**”). In addition, one bonus point shall be awarded to a Club scoring four or more tries and one bonus point shall be awarded to a losing Club which finishes within seven points or fewer of the winning Club (“**Bonus Points**”).

Notification of Results

7.9 Both the home and away Clubs shall be responsible for notifying the Match result to the Competition Secretary in accordance with the procedures set out by Scottish Rugby.

8 METHOD FOR DECIDING ON LEAGUE PLACINGS AND IN TIED KNOCK-OUT MATCHES

Tied League Placings

8.1 In the event of two or more Clubs in a division, pool, conference or competition being equal on Competition Points, placings shall be determined based on their respective points differences (being points scored for less points against).

8.2 Should points difference fail to separate the Clubs then the aggregate score over the competition fixtures between the Clubs shall be used to decide between them.

8.3 If neither of the above can determine which Club should be placed the higher and an issue of qualification to the next stage of competition, promotion, relegation, or a competition title depends on the respective rankings;

8.3.1 a play-off Match shall ordinarily be arranged by the Competition Secretary at a neutral venue.

8.3.2 where a play-off match cannot be arranged as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, because either (i) government travel or other restrictions mean a Match cannot be played, or (ii) a club has received professional medical advice and/or a Club’s own Covid-19 Risk Assessment means that a Match should not be played for medical reasons due to (for example) transmission risk following an outbreak amongst players at the Club, the Championship Committee may determine that the criteria in 8.4.1-8.4.5 be applied, firstly to the Competition Matches between the teams and, if this fails to separate the Clubs, to all of the Clubs’ Matches in the Competition over the season. Should this fail to separate the Clubs the Championship Committee may determine that the Clubs be separated by the toss of a coin.

Play-Off and Knock-Out Matches: Extra Time

8.4 If the scores at full-time in a play-off or knock-out Match are equal, extra time shall be played comprising 10 minutes each way with a one-minute interval. A coin shall be tossed by the Match referee to determine the direction of play. If the scores are still equal after extra time the following criteria (in the order given and including occurrences in extra time) shall be used to decide the winner:

8.4.1 the team scoring more tries;

8.4.2 the team scoring more conversions;

8.4.3 the team scoring more drop goals;

8.4.4 the team receiving fewer red cards; and

8.4.5 the team receiving fewer yellow cards.

8.5 If the event that none of the above is able to separate the teams further periods of extra time shall be played during which the Club which scores first shall be the winner.

9 CLUBS DISQUALIFIED, SUSPENDED OR WITHDRAWING

9.1 If a Club is disqualified, suspended or voluntarily withdraws from a league after the start of the season, the results of all Matches played by that team shall be deleted and the positions in the division shall be established from the Matches played between the remaining Clubs.

9.2 If the deletion of a Club's results and the subsequent revised positions in the division have a direct effect on a Teams' qualification into the next stage of competition or the promotion or relegation of a team which has already completed its full programme of fixtures, the relevant Competitions Committee may make such arrangements as it deems appropriate to best resolve the issue.

10 PROMOTION AND RELEGATION IN LEAGUE COMPETITIONS

10.1 Subject to the application of Scottish Rugby's Bye-Laws (if relevant, and to the extent applicable), the basis on which Clubs are to be promoted/relegated shall be as set out in Regulations associated with the individual National Competition. Normally, any vacancy arising shall be filled by an additional Club being promoted before one fewer is relegated. In the event of an additional Club requiring to be promoted from a regional based competition, the additional Club shall normally be promoted from the withdrawing Club's Region. In the event that, for whatever reason, an aggregate of 65% of all possible league Matches have not been played by the conclusion of a season (Close Time), or where the Championship Committee deems that there is no reasonable prospect of 65% of the league Matches being played by that date, the Championship Committee may declare the season to be null and void and there shall be no promotion/relegation in respect of that season.

10.2 The final placings in each division, the determination of league titles, the Clubs to be promoted/relegated between divisions and the composition of those divisions for the succeeding season shall be subject to the lists issued by the Competition Secretary at the conclusion of the Season.

10.3 A Club may apply to the Championship Committee to request an exemption from promotion. In respect of such applications:

10.3.1 a Club may only apply once in a two-year period in respect of any league or division;

10.3.2 the application must be submitted no later than 1 April in that Season; and

10.3.3 prior to granting the exemption the applicant shall satisfy the Championship Committee that the promotion would be materially detrimental to player welfare and/or the finances or infrastructure of the Club.

10.4 Where a request for exemption from promotion is approved and the Club concerned was subject to a play-off, the other play-off team shall be promoted.

10.5 The determination of the relevant Competition Committee or Championship Committee in respect of relegation and promotion matters shall be final and binding on all participating Clubs.

11 COMPLAINTS

11.1 A complaint into an alleged breach of the Rules or Regulations (a "Complaint") may be raised by:

11.1.1 the Championship Secretary (in relation to any Competition);

11.1.2 a Competition Secretary (but only in relation to matters affecting that competition); or

11.1.3 a Club (but only in relation to a matter which affects it directly and which causes it to suffer

significant disadvantage in a Competition, or some other form of material prejudice).

11.2 All Complaints must:

11.2.1 state (a) the nature of the Complaint, including the Rule/Regulation alleged to have been breached, and (b) the nature and the extent of the disadvantage/prejudice allegedly suffered; and

11.2.2 be signed on behalf of the complainant (in the case of a Club this shall be by either the Club President or Secretary).

11.3 Complaints submitted on behalf of participating Clubs must be submitted to the relevant Competitions Committee or, as the case may be, the Championship Committee within 14 days of the alleged infringement occurring (for the avoidance of doubt the 14-day period shall run from the actual event, not from the date of the complainant becoming aware of it).

11.4 The subject of the Complaint shall be sent a copy of it as soon as practical following receipt.

Complaint Process

11.5 Complaints shall be heard by the relevant Competitions Committee, or a sub-committee of it comprising not less than three members (the “**Complaints Committee**”). Where the Complaint is heard by a sub-committee, the Complaints Committee shall elect one of its members as Chair. Any member with an actual or potential conflict of interest shall be required to recuse themselves.

11.6 The Complaints Committee may:

11.6.1 Regulate its own procedure and determine any matter arising in relation to the Complaint. Meetings of the Complaints Committee may take place either in whole or in part in one place, by letter, telephone, e-mail, video-conference, on-line forum, webcast or by any combination of convenient means. Complaints shall normally be heard based on the papers but may be by way of hearing where the Complaints Committee or one of the parties so requests;

11.6.2 Determine the timescale for the proceedings. For the avoidance of doubt the Complaints Committee shall be entitled to expedite the process where it considers that this is required for the benefit of the competition. The Complaints Committee may also set aside the requirement for Complaints to be brought within 14 days where it believes that it is in the best interests of the game to do so;

11.6.3 Call upon, receive and consider such evidence as it thinks appropriate; and

11.6.4 Request the attendance at any hearing into a Complaint of any Club, team or person under the jurisdiction of Scottish Rugby. Where a Club, team or person requested to attend refuses or fails to do so the Complaints Committee may adjourn the hearing, proceed in their absence or refuse to allow their evidence to be given in any other form. Any Club, team or person refusing to attend without reasonable cause, failing to co-operate with the Complaints Committee or seeking to mislead at any point in the Complaint process may be subject to Misconduct proceedings under Scottish Rugby’s *Disciplinary Rules*.

11.7 The subject of the Complaint shall have the right:

11.7.1 to be represented at any hearing by up to two people, in the case of a Club one of whom must be a Club member. The name and capacity of those attending shall be advised to the Complaints Committee in advance of the hearing;

11.7.2 to submit evidence, call witnesses and make representations at any hearing; and

11.7.3 to be notified in writing of the outcome of the hearing as soon as is reasonably practicable.

11.8 The onus of proof shall be on the complainant to establish the breach of the Rule or Regulation alleged. The standard of proof shall be on the balance of probabilities.

11.9 A written statement giving reasons for the decision of the Complaints Committee shall be provided if so requested by the parties and upon the lodging of a note of appeal.

Sanctions

11.10 Where a Complaint has been upheld, the Complaints Committee shall be entitled in its absolute discretion to impose any or all of the following sanctions or penalties (including on a suspended basis):

11.10.1 a caution, a warning as to future conduct or a reprimand;

11.10.2 a fine or award of costs;

11.10.3 require any Match complained of to be replayed on such terms as are deemed appropriate;

11.10.4 the deduction of up to five Competition Points in respect of each offence;

11.10.5 forfeiture of and/or the granting to another Club of the Competition Points for a Match (including Bonus Points) or the awarding of the result in the Match complained of;

11.10.6 the suspension or expulsion of a Club, team, Player or person from participation in any Competition for such period as may be deemed appropriate;

11.10.7 such other penalty or sanction as may be deemed appropriate.

Acts of Misconduct

11.11 For the avoidance of doubt a Competitions or Complaints Committee shall be entitled to refer any act of potential Misconduct (as defined in the Disciplinary Rules) to the Discipline Manager for further consideration.

12 APPEAL PROCEDURE

The Appeals Committee

12.1 The Board shall establish an independent *Competition Appeals Panel* (the "**Appeals Panel**") to hear and determine appeals against decisions of the Championship Committee and Competitions Committees, including decisions delegated to the Championship Convenor, Championship Secretary and/or other bodies or individuals appointed to assist with the organisation of specific competitions.

12.2 The Board shall appoint the members of the Appeals Panel and, from those members, a Chair of the Appeals Panel. The members of the Appeals Panel shall comprise legally qualified persons together with current and former administrators/players and such others as are considered by the Board to have skills and experience relevant to the work of the Appeals Panel.

12.3 The Chair of the Appeals Panel shall from time to time select not less than three members of the Appeals Panel to sit as an Appeals Committee and shall select one of those members (who shall ordinarily be a legally qualified solicitor or advocate of at least five years' standing) to act as Chair of the Appeals Committee. The Scottish Rugby Regulatory Department shall provide administrative support to the Appeals Committee.

12.4 All decisions of the Appeals Committee shall be made by majority. No member of the Appeals Committee may abstain. The Chair of the Appeals Committee shall have both a deliberative and, where the Appeals Committee consists of an even number of members, a casting vote.

Grounds for Appeal

12.5 The grounds for appeal shall be limited to the following:

12.5.1 the original decision was unduly harsh or oppressive;

12.5.2 the body or person making the decision misdirected itself in relation to the Laws of the Game and/or the relevant competition Rules and Regulations;

12.5.3 the body or person making the decision, in the exercise of its discretion, took account of factors it should not have or failed to take account of factors it should have;

12.5.4 there has been a breach of natural justice; or

12.5.5 no other reasonable body or person appointed to that role would have reached that decision.

12.6 For the avoidance of doubt:

- 12.6.1 no Club, team or person may appeal in respect of any sanction imposed on, or other decision made concerning, another Club, team or person; and
- 12.6.2 no Appeal may be brought against an operational decision made in the running of a Competition, notwithstanding that the effect of such decision could impact financially or otherwise on the Club, body or individual.

Timing and Form of Appeal

- 12.7 Notes of appeal must be in writing, be signed by the appellant and must be lodged with the Appeals Committee Secretary within seven days of the decision appealed against being made. The note of appeal must contain the following:
 - 12.7.1 the name of the party making the appeal and the office held /capacity of the person signing it;
 - 12.7.2 the decision appealed against, including details of the party which made the original decision, the date of the decision and any sanction imposed;
 - 12.7.3 the full grounds of appeal; and
 - 12.7.4 any documentation upon which the appellant intends to rely in relation to the appeal.
- 12.8 Other than on cause shown and with the approval of the Appeals Committee, it shall not be permissible to introduce evidence which was available, or could reasonably have been available, at the time the decision appealed against was made but which was not brought to the attention of the original Complaints Committee.

Appeal Process

- 12.9 The Appeals Committee shall, subject to the requirements of natural justice, have the power to:
 - 12.9.1 regulate its own procedure and determine any matter arising in relation to the Appeal. Meetings of the Appeals Committee may take place either in whole or in part in one place, by letter, telephone, e-mail, video-conference, webcast or by a combination of convenient means;
 - 12.9.2 determine the timescale for the appeal. The timescale shall be advised to the appellant, who may request a postponement of any hearing on cause shown. For the avoidance of doubt the Appeals Committee shall be entitled to expedite the process where it considers that this is required for the benefit of the competition or in the best interests of the game to do so;
 - 12.9.3 call upon, receive and consider such evidence as it thinks appropriate; and
 - 12.9.4 request the attendance at any hearing of any Club, team or person under the jurisdiction of Scottish Rugby. Where a Club, team or person requested to attend refuses or fails to do so the committee may adjourn the hearing, proceed in their absence or refuse to allow their evidence to be given in any other form. Any Club, team or person refusing to attend without reasonable cause, failing to co-operate with the Appeals Committee or seeking to mislead at any point in the Complaint process, may be subject to Misconduct proceedings under Scottish Rugby's *Disciplinary Rules*.
- 12.10 The appellant shall have the right to be represented at any hearing by up to two people, in the case of a Club one of whom must be a Club member. The name and capacity of those attending shall be advised to the Appeals Committee in advance of the meeting.
- 12.11 Scottish Rugby's Discipline Manager or his nominee may represent the original decision making body or person at any Appeal Hearing.
- 12.12 Where evidence is given before the Appeals Committee, there shall be no cross-examination of witnesses except through the Chair and to the extent that the Appeals Committee in its discretion permits. The deliberations of the Appeals Committee shall be in private.
- 12.13 No appeal shall be decided upon grounds not contained within the note of appeal lodged by the appellants. The Appeals Committee may, on cause shown, allow further grounds of appeal to be stated providing that the party who made the original decision or its representative is given an opportunity,

within a reasonable time, to answer the same.

Appeal Decision

12.14 Having heard such evidence it deems appropriate and any submission made by or on behalf of the appellant, the Appeals Committee may decide to:

12.14.1 affirm the original decision; or

12.14.2 uphold the appeal by setting aside the decision appealed against and quashing any sanction imposed under it; or

12.14.3 uphold the appeal in part by setting aside part only of the decision appealed against and/or modifying any sanction imposed; or

12.14.4 refuse the appeal and increase the sanction imposed on the appellant or substitute an alternative sanction; or

12.14.5 take any step which in the exercise of its discretion the Appeals Committee considers it would be appropriate to take in order to deal justly with the appeal.

12.15 The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be advised to the appellant as soon as reasonably practicable after the conclusion of the hearing. Where it considers it appropriate, the Appeals Committee may deliver an oral decision at the conclusion of the hearing. A written statement giving reasons for a decision of the Appeals Committee shall be provided in due course if so requested by the appellant. Scottish Rugby reserves the right to make public the outcome of any appeal and the identity of any Club, team or individuals concerned.

12.16 The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be notified to all parties in writing and shall be final and binding on all concerned.

Acts of Misconduct

12.17 For the avoidance of doubt the Appeals Committee shall be entitled to refer any act of potential Misconduct under Scottish Rugby's Disciplinary Rules to the Discipline Committee for further consideration.

13 NOTICES

13.1 Any notice served pursuant to the Rules and Regulations shall be in writing and shall be delivered by email or first-class post. All notices shall be deemed, until the contrary is proved, to have been received on the date of sending if sent by email or within 48 hours if sent by first-class post.

14 OMISSIONS, INTERPRETATION AND EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

14.1 A Competitions Committee, the Championship Committee, a Complaints Committee or the Appeals Committee may, on cause shown, relieve a Club, team or person from the consequences of a failure to comply with the Rules and Regulations which is shown to be a mistake, oversight or other excusable cause on such conditions as the Committee so determines.

14.2 With the prior approval of the Board, the Championship Committee (or relevant Competition Committee) or Appeals Committee shall have the discretion to:

14.2.1 decide on matters not provided for in the Rules and Regulations and to take appropriate action thereon;

14.2.2 interpret the meaning of the Rules and Regulations in accordance with the underlying principles and intent (insofar as it can be ascertained) of the relevant Rule / Regulation and the interests of the game;

14.2.3 determine any inconsistency between the Rules and Regulations and to rectify any administrative error.

14.3 The Championship Committee or relevant Competitions Committee's decision(s) in respect of those

matters referred to in Rule 14.2 shall be final and binding save for any right to appeal as may be allowed under these Rules.

Draft

APPENDIX 1-: NATIONAL COMPETITION REGULATIONS

The competitions listed in Appendix 3 shall be governed by the *National Competition Rules* (the “Rules”). Matches within these competitions shall be played in accordance with the Rules other than where a specific *National Competition Regulation* provides to the contrary.

The National Competition Regulations applicable for season 2021/22 shall be as follows:

1. PREMIERSHIP AND NATIONAL LEAGUE REGULATIONS

1 ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

- 1.1 The Premiership and National Leagues shall be administered by the Championship Committee.

2 COMPOSITION OF THE PREMIERSHIP AND NATIONAL LEAGUES

- 2.1 The Premiership and the National Leagues shall comprise:

- 2.1.1 a Premiership, to be contested by 10 Teams in one division;
- 2.1.2 National League Divisions 1 and 2 to be contested by 24 Teams in two divisions of 12; and
- 2.1.3 a National League Division 3 to be contested by 10 teams in one division.

- 2.2 The Premiership shall be played in two stages.

- 2.2.1 Stage 1: the Teams shall play each other on a home-and-away basis.
- 2.2.2 Stage 2: the Teams finishing in places one to four at the end of Stage 1 shall contest a knock-out competition to decide the Premiership winners. The Teams ranked one and two shall play at home against the Teams ranked four and three respectively. The winners shall contest the Premiership Final, with the finalist placed higher at end of Stage 1 being the home Team. If the scores are level at full-time in any Stage 2 Match the Knock-Out Match Extra Time Rules (Rule 8.4) shall apply.

- 2.3 In each National League division the Teams shall play each other on a home-and-away basis.

- 2.4 The structure of the Premiership and the National Leagues, including the number of Teams in each division, shall ordinarily not be changed without a full playing season’s notice being given by Scottish Rugby unless the Board specifically decides that a shorter period is necessary for the effective organisation and implementation of the National Competitions. Such notice must be accompanied by details as to how the new structure will be effected through revised promotion and relegation.

3 CHAMPIONS, PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

- 3.1 Subject to [NCR10Rule 10.2](#):

3.1.1 The Team winning the Premiership Final shall be the Scottish Champions.

3.1.2 The Team finishing tenth in the Premiership Stage 1 shall be relegated to National 1.

3.1.3 The Team finishing first in National League Division 1 shall be promoted to the Premiership.

3.1.4 The Teams finishing in first and second places in each of National League Division 2 and 3 shall be promoted to National League Division 1 and 2 respectively.

3.1.5 The Teams finishing in eleventh and twelfth places in each of National League Division 1 and 2 shall be relegated to National League Division 2 and 3 respectively.

3.1.6 The Team finishing in tenth place of National League Division 3 shall be relegated to the appropriate Regional League Division 1.

3.1.7 The Team finishing in first place in each of the Regional Leagues shall be promoted to National League Division 3.

4 PLAYERS

Number of Starting Players

4.1 Both teams must start the Match with 15 Players, including a suitably experienced front-row. Any Match not complying with this requirement shall be declared unfulfilled and shall be treated as a Non-Fulfilled Fixture.

Number of Replacements

4.2 The number of permitted replacements / substitutes shall be as follows:

Premiership Stage 1 and National League Division 1: Four or five.

National League Divisions 2 and 3: Two, three or four.

Premiership Stage 2: Five, six or seven.

4.3 The number of replacements able to play in the front row must be in accordance with the Laws.

5 REFEREES, ASSISTANT REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES

5.1 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a referee and assistant referees for each Match in the Premiership.

5.2 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a referee for all Matches in the National Leagues. Each National League team must provide a touch judge.

5.3 Responsibility for confirmation of the referee and, where appropriate, the assistant referees shall lie with the home Club.

2. REGIONAL LEAGUE REGULATIONS

1 ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1 The Regional Leagues shall be administered by the Caledonia, East and West *Regional Competitions Committees* under the delegated authority of the Championship Committee.

1.2 The membership of each Regional Competitions Committee shall comprise:

1.2.1 the Regional Representative serving on the Championship Committee (elected in accordance with the *Championship Election Rules*).

1.2.2 four Club representatives elected in accordance with the *Regional League Election Rules*. Other than with prior consent of the Board, it shall be a requirement that two Club representatives shall come from each of the Council Areas within the Region;

1.2.3 the Regional Representatives on the Scottish Rugby Council (in a non-voting capacity); and

1.2.4 such other individuals as may be co-opted to the Committee (in a non-voting capacity).

1.3 The members of each Regional Competitions Committee shall elect a Chair from amongst the Committee's membership.

2 COMPOSITION OF THE REGIONAL LEAGUES

2.1 The Regional Leagues shall comprise:

2.1.1 the *Caledonia Regional League*, which shall be contested by Clubs in the Region in a league format to be decided by the Caledonia Regional Competitions Committee;

2.1.2 the *East Regional League*, which shall be contested by Clubs in the Region in a league format to be decided by the East Regional Competitions Committee; and

2.1.3 the *West Regional League*, which shall be contested by Clubs in the Region in a league format to be decided by the West Regional Competitions Committee.

- 2.2 Each Regional Division 1 shall normally comprise 10 Teams playing each other on a home-and-away basis.
- 2.3 The format and competition structure of each lower division, though normally comprising a maximum of 10 Teams, shall be defined by the appropriate Regional Competitions Committee.
- 2.4 A Club's second and lower XVs may play in the Caledonia Regional League's second and lower divisions but cannot be promoted to the first division. Second and lower XVs may not play in the East and West Regional Leagues.

3 CHAMPIONS, PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

3.1 Subject to the requirements of NCR 10.2:

3.1.1 the Team finishing in first place in each of the Regional Leagues shall be promoted to National League Division 3.

3.1.2 the Team relegated from National League Division 3 shall be accommodated in the relevant Region's Division 1.

3.2 Subject to the requirements of NCR 10.2 and Regional League Regulation 2.4, the first-placed Team in each Regional League Division 2 shall be promoted to the relevant Regional League Division 1.

3.3 Before the start of each season the promotion and relegation between each Regional League's second and lower divisions shall be notified by the relevant Competition Secretary.

3.4 Each Regional Competitions Committee reserves the right to amend the format of promotion/relegation to accommodate any imbalance in the number of Teams being relegated from National League Division 3, in the event of a second XV winning Caledonia Regional 2 or for other operational reasons.

4 THE PLAYERS

Player Registration

4.1 Players participating for a Team in Regional League Division 2 and lower divisions do not require to be registered to that Club, provided always that they are registered with a Club on Scottish Rugby's registration system. Playing as a loan Player shall not mean that the Player becomes registered to that Club.

4.2 A Player may not play for a Club to which they are not either primary or secondary registered in any of its last five league Matches or in the quarter-final (or later round) of the Cup unless at least 50% of their previous Matches that season have been for that Club.

Transfer Deadline

4.3 The Transfer Deadline shall not apply below Regional League Division 1.

Number of Starting Players

4.4 In each Regional Division 1 and ~~in Division 2 of the West Leagues~~, each team must start the Match with 15 Players, including a suitably experienced front row.

4.5 In all other Regional Divisions:

4.5.1 a team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 12 Players), subject to it fielding at least five Players in the scrum at all times;

4.5.2 a Match may start with uncontested scrums, subject to there being at least five Players in the scrum at all times. A Team requiring to start a Match with uncontested scrums must advise the opposition and the referee as soon as possible and, other than in exceptional circumstances, no later than 30 minutes before kick-off. The Team requesting uncontested scrums must also advise the relevant Competition Secretary no later than 48 hours after kick-off.

4.6 Matches not complying with the above requirements shall be declared unfulfilled and treated as a Non-Fulfilled Fixture.

Number of Replacements

4.7 The number of permitted replacements / substitutes shall be as follows:

Regional League Division 1: Up to four.

All other Regional Divisions: Up to seven.

4.8 The number of replacements able to play in the front row must be in accordance with the Laws.

5 THE MATCH-: LAW VARIATIONS

5.1 In each Regional Division 3 and lower divisions:

5.1.1 the U19 Scrummage Law Variations shall apply; and

5.1.2 the Game On Law Variations may be applied (see Appendix 2).

6 REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES

6.1 The Match referee shall be appointed by the home Club's local referee society. Responsibility for confirmation of the Match referee shall lie with the home Team. Each Club must provide a touch judge.

3. RESERVE LEAGUE REGULATIONS

1 ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1 The Reserve Leagues shall be administered by the *Reserve League Committee* under the delegated authority of the Championship Committee.

1.2 The membership of the Reserve League Committee shall comprise:

1.2.1 the Reserve League Committee Convenor (appointed by the Board);

1.2.2 four Club representatives who, other than with the prior consent of the Board, shall be elected respectively by those Clubs participating in each of the East Reserve 1 division, East Reserve 2 and any lower East Reserve divisions, the West Reserve 1 division and West Reserve 2 and any lower West Reserve divisions; and

1.2.3 such other individuals as may be co-opted to the Committee (in a non-voting capacity).

1.3 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a Competition Secretary to assist in the administration of the League.

1.4 Where, by reason of the routine nature of the matter and/or such urgency that a Committee meeting cannot with reasonable practicality be arranged, the Reserve League Convenor may exercise any of the powers, discretions and/or authorities given in terms of these Regulations.

2 COMPOSITION OF THE RESERVE LEAGUES

Composition of the Reserve Leagues

2.1 The Reserve League shall be contested by such teams as may be admitted to the competition on a season-by-season basis. Applicant Clubs shall satisfy the Reserve League Committee that the proposed team will be able to fulfil a full programme of fixtures in the forthcoming season.

2.2 The Reserve League shall comprise:

2.2.1 an East Regional Reserve League, which shall consist of an East Reserve 1 division and such other lower divisions as determined by the Reserve League Committee.

2.2.2 a West Regional Reserve League, which shall consist of a West Reserve 1 division and such other lower divisions as determined by the Reserve League Committee.

2.3 A Club may enter more than one XV in the Reserve League, but a Club may not have more than one XV in any division.

Format of Competition

- 2.4 The Reserve League shall be played in two stages:
- 2.5 *Stage 1*: In Stage 1 each Team shall play each other team in their division on a home-and-away basis.
- 2.6 *Stage 2*: At the end of Stage 1:
 - 2.6.1 those teams in places 1 and 2 of East Reserve 1 and West Reserve 1 shall contest a knock-out competition to decide the Reserve League winner. In the semi-finals the team placed first in each Reserve division 1 shall play at home against the team placed second in the other division;
 - 2.6.2 the winners of the semi-final matches shall contest the final. Where only one of teams contesting the final was placed first in their division at the end of stage 1 that team shall have home advantage for the final. Otherwise, a coin shall be tossed to determine home advantage;
 - 2.6.3 if the scores are level at full-time in any Stage 2 Match the *Knock-Out Match Extra Time Rules* (Rule 8.4) shall apply.

3 PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

- 3.1 Before the start of each season the basis of promotion/relegation between each Regional Reserve division shall be notified by the Competition Secretary.
- 3.2 Subject to the requirements of [NCR Rule 10.2](#), promotion and relegation shall normally be on the basis of one up, one down, but the Reserve League Committee reserves the right to amend promotion/relegation between any division where it considers this either to be appropriate in the circumstances or where:
 - 3.2.1 a Club's 3rd XV or other lower designated team would otherwise be promoted to play in the same or higher division as that Club's 2nd XV or other higher designated team; or
 - 3.2.2 the relegation of a Club's 2nd XV or other lower designated team would otherwise result in a Club having two XV's in the same division.

4 NON-FULFILMENT OF FIXTURES

- 4.1 If a Match has been postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions the fixture shall be rearranged/rescheduled. Any re-arranged Match must be played prior to the scheduled final round of league fixtures. Should the re-arranged Match subsequently not be played at the end of the season the league table shall, subject to the requirements of [NCR Rule 10.2](#), be updated to calculate the 'best playing record' to determine the final league position of each participating team.
- 4.2 In all other circumstances, if a club fails to fulfil a Match that Match shall not be rearrange and:
 - 4.2.1 the Club's opponents shall be credited with a 28-0 win and awarded five Competition Points;
 - 4.2.2 the Club responsible for the cancellation shall receive no points (unless a friendly match is played, in which case one Competition Point shall be credited to it); and
 - 4.2.3 Rule 3.17 shall not apply but the Club responsible for the cancellation shall receive the following automatic penalty depending on the number of Matches it has failed to fulfil that season:
 - 4.2.3.1 First or second default: Subject to Rule 3.18, no additional point deduction;
 - 4.2.3.2 Third default: a one [Competition Point](#) deduction;
 - 4.2.3.3 Fourth default: a two [Competition Point](#) deduction;
 - 4.2.3.4 Fifth default: a three [Competition Point](#) deduction;
 - 4.2.3.5 Sixth default: a four [Competition Point](#) deduction; and
 - 4.2.3.6 Seventh and subsequent defaults: additional five [Competition Point](#) deductions.
- 4.3 The Competitions Committee shall have the additional power to relegate and/or disqualify the Club

where it considers this to be either necessary or appropriate.

- 4.4 For the avoidance of doubt Rules 3.18 (as modified to reflect the penalties set out in Reserve League Regulation 4.1.3) and 3.19 shall apply.
- 4.5 If a Match is called-off on the match-day itself (except under Rule 3.7 where Covid-19 restrictions determine), one additional Competition Point shall be deducted from the Club responsible for the cancellation. If the home Club is responsible for such cancellation it shall also be liable to reimburse the visiting Club and/or Match Officials for any unavoidable, validated travelling expenses incurred up to a maximum of £1,800. For the avoidance of doubt the Competition Secretary shall remain entitled to consider whether a Complaint should be raised in respect of the non-fulfilment.

5 THE PLAYERS

Player Registration

- 5.1 [NCR-Rule 4.13](#) shall not apply in the Reserve Leagues.
- 5.2 In an East or West Reserve 1 team's last five Stage 1 Matches and in all Stage 2 Matches, other than with prior permission from the Reserve League Committee:
 - 5.2.1 all Players must be registered with the Club for which they are participating; and
 - 5.2.2 dual-registered Players may not play for their Secondary Club unless at least 50% of that Player's previous Reserve League Match appearances in that season have been for that Club.
- 5.3 In all other Matches a Player may play for a Club to which the Player is not registered, provided always that the Player is registered with a Club on Scottish Rugby's registration system. Playing as a loan Player shall not mean that the Player becomes registered to that Club.
- 5.4 There is no restriction on the number of Dual Registered Players which can be fielded in a match day squad
- 5.5 Other than as set out within the Rules/Regulations or with the written permission of the relevant Competition Committee, a Player may not play in Matches for more than two Clubs in any season.

Transfer Deadline

- 5.6 The Transfer Deadline shall not apply in the Reserve Leagues.

Ineligible First XV Players

- 5.7 A Player starting a first-team Match shall be ineligible to play in Reserve Team competition Matches that season unless:
 - 5.7.1 less than 50% of the Player's appearances that season have been in the starting XV of the first team; or
 - 5.7.2 the Player's Club's first and second teams have concurrent or overlapping Matches; or
 - 5.7.3 dispensation has been granted by the Reserve League Committee

Number of Starting Players

- 5.8 In all Reserve League divisions:
 - 5.8.1 a team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 12 Players), subject to it fielding at least five Players in the scrum at all times.
 - 5.8.2 a Match may start with uncontested scrums, subject to there being at least five Players in the scrum at all times. A Club requiring to start a Match with uncontested scrums must advise the opposition and the referee as soon as possible and, other than in exceptional circumstances, no later than 30 minutes before kick-off. The Club requesting uncontested scrums must also advise the Competition Secretary no later than 48 hours after kick-off.
- 5.9 Matches not complying with these requirements shall be declared unfulfilled and may be investigated as

a Non-Fulfilled Fixture.

Number of Replacements

5.10 The maximum number of Replacements shall be seven. The number of replacements able to play in the front row must be in accordance with the Laws.

6 THE MATCH:-

6.1 In league competitions four points shall be awarded for a win, two points shall be awarded for a draw and one point shall be awarded to the losing Team ("**Match Points**"). In addition, one bonus point shall be awarded to a Team scoring four or more tries and one bonus point shall be awarded to a losing Team which finishes within seven points or fewer of the winning Team ("**Bonus Points**").

6.2 The U19 Scrummage Law Variations shall apply in all Reserve Team competitions.

6.3 The Game On Law Variations may be applied below Reserve Team Competitions 2 (see Appendix 2).

7 REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES

7.1 The Match referee shall be appointed by the home Club's local referee society, failing which by the home Club. For the avoidance of doubt a Match must not be postponed if the only available official is an appropriately qualified referee from either of the participating Clubs.

7.2 Each Club must provide a touch judge.

7.3 Responsibility for confirmation of the referee shall lie with the home Club.

4. WOMEN'S COMPETITION REGULATIONS (2021 SEASON)

1 ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1 The Women's Competitions shall be administered by the Women's Competitions Committee under the delegated authority of the Championship Committee.

1.2 The membership of the Competitions Committee shall comprise:

1.2.1 a Convenor (appointed by the Board);

1.2.2 one representative elected from the Clubs participating in each of the Premiership, National League Division 1, Caledonia North 1, Caledonia Midlands/East 1 and West 1 Divisions; and

1.2.3 such other individuals as may be co-opted to the Committee (in a non-voting capacity).

1.3 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a Competition Secretary to assist in the administration of the Championship.

1.4 Where, by reason of the routine nature of the matter and/or such urgency that a Committee meeting cannot with reasonable practicality be arranged, the Convenor may exercise any of the powers, discretions and/or authorities given in terms of these Regulations.

2 COMPOSITION AND FORMAT

Composition of the Women's competitions

2.1 The Women's championship shall comprise:

2.1.1 a Premiership, to be contested by six teams in one division;

2.1.2 a National League Division 1, to be contested by eight teams in one division; and

2.1.3 three Regional Leagues, being Caledonia Midlands/East 1, Caledonia North 1 and West 1.

2.2 Clubs seeking admission to the Women's competitions must apply in writing to the Competition Secretary. Admission shall be subject to such conditions as the Competitions Committee may require. Successful applicants may be placed in an appropriate league or division at the Competitions

Committee's sole discretion.

2.3 A Club may not have more than one team in any division.

Format of Competition

2.4 The **Premiership** shall be played in two stages.

2.4.1 *Stage 1*: the Teams shall play each other on a home-and-away basis.

2.4.2 Stage 2: at the end of Stage 1:

(a) the Teams in places one to four shall contest a knock-out competition to decide the Premiership winners. The Teams ranked one and two shall play at home against the Teams ranked four and three respectively. The winners of these Matches shall contest the Premiership Final and the losers shall contest a third/fourth place play-off Match;

(b) the Teams finishing fifth and sixth shall play an elimination Match.

(c) the home team in each Match shall be the Team placed higher in Stage 1;

(d) If the scores are level at full-time the *Knock-Out Match Extra Time Rules* (Rule 8.4) shall apply.

2.5 In **National 1** the Teams shall play each other on a home-and-away basis.

2.6 **Caledonia Midlands/East 1** shall comprise nine teams and shall play each other on a home-or-away basis.

2.7 **Caledonia North 1** shall comprise nine teams and shall play each other on a home-or-away basis.

2.8 **West 1** shall comprise nine teams and shall play each other on a home-or-away basis. In exceptional or emergency circumstances (including where the playing season is delayed or suspended) the Competitions Committee may temporarily revise the format of the Women's Competitions.

3 METHOD FOR DECIDING ON PLACINGS

~~3.1~~ In the event of two or more teams being tied as to the number of Match-Competition Points:

~~3.23.1~~ The criteria for distinguishing between the teams shall be the aggregate Competition Points achieved by the teams in the head-to-head Matches between them, failing which the aggregate Match points difference in these head-to-head Matches. Should this fail to separate the Teams Rule 8.3 shall apply.

Drawn Matches

~~3.33.2~~ Where the teams are level at full time in any knock-out match, extra-time shall be played and the winner determined in accordance with the *Knock-Out Match Extra Time Rules* (Rule 8.4).

4 CHAMPIONS, PROMOTION AND RELEGATION

4.1 Subject to the requirements of NCR10Rule 10.2:

4.1.1 The Team winning the Premiership Final shall be the Scottish Champions.

4.1.2 The losing Team in the Premiership fifth/sixth place elimination Match shall be relegated to National League Division 1.

4.1.3 the Teams in places one and two in National 1 shall contest a home and away competition to decide the National 1 winners. The Team ranked in first shall have the home advantage in the first match. The winner of these Matches shall be promoted to the Women's Premiership;

4.1.4 The eighth placed Club in National 1 and the winners of the three Regional Leagues shall contest a knock-out competition to determine which one of the four Clubs will play in National 1 in the following season. A draw shall be made to establish two ties, with the Club drawn first having home advantage. The winner of the first tie drawn shall have home advantage for the final. If the scores are level at full-time in any Match, the *Knock-Out Match Extra Time Rules* (Rule 8.4) shall apply. The winner of the knock-out competition will play in the following seasons National 1

division. The remaining three Clubs will play in the following season's Regional Leagues.

- 4.2 All promotions shall be subject to the promoted club being able to demonstrate that it is able to meet the published criteria for membership of the relevant league.

5 NON-FULFILMENT OF FIXTURES

- 5.1 If a Match has been postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions the fixture shall be rearranged/rescheduled. Any re-arranged Match must be played prior to the scheduled final round of league fixtures. Should the re-arranged Match subsequently not be played at the end of the season the league table shall, subject to the requirements of [NCR-Rule 10.2](#), be updated to calculate the 'best playing record' to determine the final league position of each participating team.
- 5.2 Under any other circumstances, if a Club fails to fulfil a Match the Match shall not be rearranged and:
- 5.2.1 the Club's opponents shall be credited with a 28-0 win and awarded five Competition Points;
 - 5.2.2 the Club responsible for the cancellation shall receive no points; and
 - 5.2.3 the automatic penalty regime set out in Rule 3.13 shall not apply but the Competition Secretary shall consider whether a Complaint should be raised in respect of the non-fulfilment.

6 THE PLAYERS

Player Registration

- 6.1 All Players participating in the Premiership and National League Division 1 shall require to be registered with the Club for which they are competing.
- 6.2 In the Regional Leagues a Player may play for a Club to which she is not registered, provided always that she is registered with a club on Scottish Rugby's registration system. Playing as a loan Player shall not mean that the Player becomes registered to that Club.
- 6.3 Subject to [5.9 Regulation 6](#), in the Regional competitions there is no restriction on the number of Dual Registered Players which can be fielded in a match day squad.

Transfer Deadline

- 6.4 The Transfer Deadline shall not apply other than in the Premiership and National 1

Dual Registered Players

- 6.5 A Player who has been selected for Scotland Women (or the Senior National Team of another Union) in the preceding 12 months shall be ineligible to be Dual Registered unless she receives dispensation from the Competitions Committee.
- 6.6 Dual Registered Players may not play for their lower placed Club if they have played more than 40 minutes for their higher placed Club in the same weekend.
- 6.7 A dual-registered Player may not play for the first XV of her lower-placed Club in the semi-final (or later round) of the competition, unless at least 50 % of her previous first XV Matches that season have been for the lower-placed side or where the Player has obtained the prior written permission of the Competitions Committee.
- 6.8 The number of Dual Registered Players permitted to participate for their lower-placed Club in a Match squad shall be:
- National 1:* Up to three;
 - Regional Leagues:* Squad of at least 15 Players – up to five; Squad of less than 15 Players – up to three.
 - Semi-final and Final Matches:*
- 6.8.1 The number of Dual Registered Players permitted to participate for their higher-placed Club in a Match squad in any play-off Match shall be three.

- 6.8.2 Any such Player referred to in 6.108.1 must also have played in a minimum of two matches that season for her higher-placed Club in order to be eligible to play in any semi-final or final Match for her higher-placed Club.

Number of Starting Players

6.9 In the *Premiership and National 1*:

- 6.9.1 a Club may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 12 Players), providing that this includes a suitably experienced front row and subject to it fielding at least five players in the scrum at all times; and
- 6.9.2 if a Club is reduced (through injury or the dismissal of Players) to less than 12 Players then the Match shall be abandoned at that point.

6.10 In the *Regional Leagues*:-

- 6.10.1 A Club may start a Match with less than 15 Players (but not less than 10 Players), subject to it fielding at least five Players in the scrum at all times. If a Club starts the Match with less than 15 Players both Clubs must start with an equal number of Players (“**Player Matching**”). Player Matching must be maintained throughout the Match other than where a player has been permanently or temporarily dismissed from the field.
- 6.10.2 A Match may start with uncontested scrums, subject to there being at least five Players in the scrum at all times and the Club requesting uncontested scrums not being allowed to include any replacements in its Match squad. A Club requiring to start a Match with uncontested scrums must advise the opposition and the referee as soon as possible and, other than in exceptional circumstances, no later than 30 minutes before kick-off. The Team requesting uncontested scrums must also advise the Competition Secretary no later than 48 hours after kick-off.
- 6.10.3 If a Club is reduced (through injury or the dismissal of Players) to less than 10 Players then the Match shall be abandoned at that point.

6.11 Any Match not complying with the above requirements shall be declared unfulfilled and may be investigated as a Non-Fulfilled Fixture.

Number of Replacements

6.12 The number of permitted replacements / substitutes shall be as follows:

- Premiership and National 1* – Up to five; and
- Regional Leagues* – Up to seven.

6.13 The number of replacements able to play in the front row must be in accordance with the Laws.

Dispensation for International Players

6.14 Where five or more Players from a club are selected for the Scotland Senior National Representative Teams on a National Competition date, that Club may apply for permission to play the Match using Player Matching (down to a minimum of 12-a-side).

7 VENUE

- 7.1 Unless otherwise stated, each knock-out Match shall be played at the home ground of the Club drawn or allocated first.
- 7.2 The venues for the finals shall be determined by or under delegated authority from the Board. The home team in each final shall be determined by the order of the semi-final draw, with the finalist drawn first being the home team.

8 THE MATCH (LAW VARIATIONS)

- 8.1 The U19 Scrummage Law Variations shall apply to all Matches in the Regional competitions.
- 8.2 The Game On Law Variations may be applied in Regional competitions ~~friendly fixtures~~ (see Appendix 2).

9 REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES

- 9.1 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a referee and assistant referees for each Match in the Premiership.
- 9.2 In National 1 and all Regional Leagues the referee shall be appointed by the home Club's local referee society. Each National 1 and Regional League team must provide a touch judge.
- 9.3 Responsibility for confirmation of the referee and, where appropriate, the assistant referees shall lie with the home Club.

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APPENDIX 2-: GAME ON PRINCIPLES

Game On Principles

1. Where permitted within the Competition Regulations, and subject to:
 - a. the agreement of the relevant Competitions Committee (in respect of application of the *Game On Law Variations* within any particular league or division);
 - b. the agreement of both captains and the Match Referee (in respect of the application of each individual *Game On Law Variation* within any individual Match); and
 - c. compliance with any supplementary administrative guidance provided by the Championship Committee as it may affect the use of the Game On Principles;the Scottish Rugby *Game On Law Variations* may be used in any competition Match.
2. For the avoidance of doubt, where used each *Game On Law Variation* may be applied individually.

Game On Law Variations

Law 3: Number of Players

3. The team captains and the Match referee may agree that team a may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 10 Players), subject to it fielding at least five Players in the scrum at all times. If a Club starts the Match with less than 15 Players both Clubs must start with an equal number of Players ("**Player Matching**"). Player Matching must be maintained throughout the Match other than where a player has been permanently or temporarily dismissed from the field.
4. The team captains and the Match referee may agree that rolling substitutions may be used.

Law 3 / Law 19: Scrums

5. The team captains and the Match referee may agree that, where not otherwise permitted, scrummaging may be uncontested.

Law 5: Match Duration

6. The Match shall consist of two halves. The duration of each half shall be agreed by the team captains and the Match referee but shall be no less than 20 minutes and no greater than 40 minutes (each excluding any time lost).

APPENDIX 3-: DESIGNATED ADULT COMPETITIONS AND KEY DATES

1 Designated Competitions

The National Competition Rules shall apply in respect of the following competitions and such other competitions as may be designated by the Board from time to time:

Adult Men

Premiership and National Leagues

Caledonia, East and West Regional Leagues

Regional Reserve Leagues

(where scheduled) Scottish Rugby Union Cup competitions (*Scottish Cup, National League Cup, Shield and Bowl*)

Adult Women

Women's Premiership, National 1, Regional Leagues

(where scheduled) Women's Cup Competitions (*Sarah Beaney Cup, National Plate and National Bowl*)

2 Dates for 2021 and 2022

Transfer Deadline	13 December 2021
Close Time begins	23 May 2022
Close Time ends	01 August 2022