

Women's Variations to the World Rugby Laws of the Game

All matches played under the jurisdiction of the RFU and/or in RFU Women Competitions or any other competition or merit table must be played in accordance with the World Rugby Laws (including any variations or trials that may be adopted by the RFU) and any such other additional RFU law variations agreed by the RFU in respect of a specific league or competition. The RFU law variations pertaining to the adults women's competition at Championship and below are as set out in this Appendix 1:

1. Squad Sizes

In Championship North & South, Championship 2 and National Challenge 1 and below, the maximum squad size is 22 players.

2. Law Variations

Championship North & South

There are no RFU variations and the World Rugby Laws of the Games shall apply in full.

Championship 2 and National Challenge 1 and below

Rolling substitutions are permitted and in accordance with the regulations set out in 4 below.

National Challenge 2 and below only

All matches shall be played in accordance with the World Rugby Under 19 Law Variations and the following:

Team numbers: Matches can be played with reduced numbers of either 10 or 12 a side. 12 a side will comprise of 6 forwards and 6 backs (front row, second row, number 8). The lowest number of Players a team can play with is 10. In all matches, there must be the same number of players from each team on the field of play, subject to the Laws of the Game.

3. Uncontested Scrums

Championship North & South, Championship 2 and National Challenge 1

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

A team unable to field a suitably trained front row should still make every effort to fulfil their fixture with uncontested scrums in order to avoid being awarded a default.

National Challenge 2 and below

In the event of a team being unable to field a suitably trained front row at the start of any match or during the match, the Referee will order uncontested scrums and the result of the match shall stand.

4. Rolling Substitutions

- 4.1 After the Player Interchanges have been made no other replacements, substitutions or Player Interchanges will be permitted for any reason (including temporary or permanent injuries, sending offs and suspensions) and in the event that a Player is injured, sent off or suspended from the field the team will play with one less Player and with uncontested scrums in the event that this involves a front row Player and the game cannot continue safely with contested scrums.
- 4.2 For the avoidance of doubt, Player Interchanges replace the “blood bin” which means that if a Player has uncontrolled active bleeding and thus has to leave the field, this will be classified as a Player Interchange if that Player is replaced by another Player. If a team has used all of its Player Interchanges, that Player may not be replaced and the team shall continue with one less Player than was on the pitch prior to the injured player leaving the field. The Player is permitted to return once the wound has been treated and the bleeding stopped.
- 4.3 Not more than two Player Interchanges per team may occur at any one time and may only occur during a stoppage in play and in all cases with the permission of the Referee.
- 4.4 A Player must enter the field of play on the halfway line.
- 4.5 A Player who is a replacement shall not be entitled to take a kick at goal until a passage of play has taken place since that Player took to the field of play.
- 4.6 A Player who is previously injured in the match may return to play as a Player Interchange provided the Player is fit to continue playing in the match save that a Player who suffers two injuries in a match which has necessitated that Player being replaced on each occasion is not permitted to act as a replacement following the second injury.
- 4.7 In addition to the powers set out in the Laws of the Game, Referees are entitled in their sole opinion to prohibit or postpone a Player Interchange if they believe either that the Player Interchange would prevent the opposition from restarting the game quickly or where the replacement Player is not fit to continue playing in the match.
- 4.8 Under dispensation provided to Unions by World Rugby, where these rolling substitutions Regulations conflict with the Laws of the Game these Regulations shall take precedence.