



Rugby Football Union
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Good afternoon,

You will be aware from previous communications that the RFU, like all other Unions, NGBs and businesses, is facing a challenging few years in responding to, and recovering from, the impact of COVID-19. We are having to make tough, and in some cases, extreme decisions to preserve the RFU, to ensure we are well placed in the future to support our lifeblood, the community game, and to give us the best chance of having winning England teams going forward.

The RFU Council met today and reviewed a range of scenarios for 20/21 season. This included the impact of the Government's current social distancing guidelines on Twickenham Stadium's match day operations, what the revised capacity could be and ticket allocations for a reduced capacity stadium. Of particular focus is the Quilter Autumn International Series and, possibly, the Guinness Six Nations for the 20/21 season and the subsequent impact on ticketing rights for these games. Whilst there is still a lot more detailed planning required, based on the current two metre social distancing guidelines, Twickenham's capacity might only be 7-14% of a normal match day, i.e. just under 10,000.

The allocation of tickets to align to a reduction in stadium capacity is a challenge as over half of ticket entitlements are normally reserved for RFU member clubs and the Game's other key stakeholders such as constituent bodies, referee societies and schools and colleges, with around 28,000 contracted to debenture holders, hospitality clients and sponsors. When assessing how tickets should be allocated we therefore considered three options:

- A Proportional approach, where each group receives a similar % to current allocations;
- An Income-Focused approach, which seeks to maximise revenue to protect the RFU and the future of the Game by prioritising higher income yielding ticket groups and those with contracted rights;
- A hybrid of the two approaches.

Whilst it is hard to accurately model revenues at this stage, we estimate the difference between the Proportional and Income-Focused approach to be at least £1m per game.

Given the unprecedented situation and the extreme financial pressure the RFU is consequently under, with an anticipated loss of £85m if the four planned Autumn Internationals are not played and in front of a full stadium, the RFU Council has agreed to temporarily suspend the current ticket distribution policy and entitlements and adopt the Income-Focused approach to focus on fulfilling contracted ticket groups, wherever possible, for the 20/21 season only. Once these groups have been serviced, the remaining ticket stock will be focused on RFU member clubs and the other key rugby stakeholders. It is anticipated that when a capacity of 50,000 is allowed, we will return to a proportionate allocation system.

Further details will be shared once there is confirmation on final stadium capacities and when more work has been done on the detailed allocation policy and the re-distribution process.

The RFU thanks its member clubs and the Game's other key stakeholders for their understanding and co-operation on this matter and looks forward to reverting to normal practice and returning to a full Twickenham Stadium as soon as it is safe to do so.

Yours sincerely,

Bill Sweeney

Chief Executive Officer