

RFU REGULATIONS

RFU REGULATION 13 – ADULT COMPETITIONS (APPENDIX 2)

1. General

- (a) All matches played under the jurisdiction of the RFU and/or in RFU Competitions or any other competition, friendlies or merit table must be played in accordance with the World Rugby Laws (including any variations or trials that may be adopted and approved by the RFU), World Rugby Regulations, the RFU Rules, the RFU Regulations and any competition specific Regulations applicable to a competition including, without limitation, the Premiership Regulations and Championship Regulations (as applicable).
- (b) Sections A to C below set out variations to the Laws of the Game that are either pre-approved by the RFU or for which there is an approval process in place. These are in addition to any law trials which may be adopted by the RFU from time to time.
- (c) Any other variations not referenced in this Appendix 2 must undergo the approval process set out in RFU Regulation 13.1.3 and 13.1.4.

SECTION A – RFU LEAGUES AND RFU CUPS, MERIT TABLES AND FRIENDLIES (NOT INCLUDING LEVEL 1 AND LEVEL 2 LEAGUES AND CUPS)

2. Number of Replacements and Substitutions

- (a) Replacements and substitutions are permitted in accordance with the provisions of this Section A and any additional procedures in place by the Organising Committee (such as substitution cards).
- (b) The number of replacements and substitutes is as set out below:

LEAGUES:

The number of replacements and substitutes in all League Matches shall be as follows:

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| • Levels 3 and 4 | Not more than five |
| • Level 5 and below | Not more than three |
| • Play-Off matches at level 5 and below | Not more than four |

CUPS:

The number of replacements and substitutes in all Cup matches shall be as specified by each Divisional Organising Committee and for National semi-finals and finals as specified by the RFU, in accordance with Law 3.5, the World Rugby Regulations and any current RFU Regulations relating thereto.

- (c) Replacements and substitutes must be named to the Referee or Match Official no later than 15 minutes before the commencement of a match.
- (d) A Player participating in a match can be used as a replacement or substitute in another match being played at the same time. Injured players may be replaced by Players from

RFU REGULATION 13 – ADULT COMPETITIONS (APPENDIX 2)

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another pitch. It is also possible to replace the replaced or substituted Player from another pitch or by a nominated replacement/substitute.

- (e) Players who were replacements or substitutes in an earlier match may participate in a later match on the same day.
- (f) The attendance of replacements and substitutes is not compulsory. If one team wishes to use replacements or substitutes then it may do so even if the other does not.
- (g) The terms ‘replacements’ and ‘substitutions’ referred to in this Appendix and RFU Regulation 13 shall have the same meaning as the definitions set out in World Rugby Law 3.

3. Rolling Substitutions

- (a) Divisional Organising Committees or the NCA Committee may, in their discretion, permit rolling substitutions in League Matches at Level 3 and below (as applicable), and in the RFU Intermediate Cup, Senior Vase and Junior Vase matches. If the relevant Divisional Organising Committee or NCA Committee decides to implement rolling substitutions such implementation must be in accordance with paragraphs 3(b) to 3(k) below. In respect of non-RFU Competition matches (such as merit table matches and friendlies) rolling substitutions are permitted in accordance with Section B - Game On Principles.
- (b) In a match where consent has been given prior to the Season and subject to Regulations each team shall be permitted to use rolling substitutions of not more than the maximum number of the Player interchanges (“Player Interchanges”) set out in the table below:

Number of Replacements	Player Interchanges
Up to 3	8
4	9
5 or 6	10
7 or 8	12

- (c) In a League Play-Off Match, Player Interchanges will only be permitted where both participating teams have played their previous matches with Player Interchanges.
- (d) 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.
- (e) 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.
- (f) 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.

- (g) A Player must enter the field of play on the halfway line.
- (h) 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.
- (i) 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.
- (j) 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.
- (k) 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.

4. Front row forward requirements

- (a) Unless permitted in accordance with RFU Regulation 15, no Player may play in the front row of the scrum during contested or uncontested scrummages in adult rugby until he has reached his eighteenth birthday. Any breach of this RFU Regulation shall be considered a serious breach and may give rise to a severe penalty.

Level 3 and 4 Leagues Matches, all Play-Off Matches and Cup Matches

- (b) In League Matches at Level 3 and 4, Play-Off Matches at all Levels and Cup Matches, each team must have and nominated in advance at least five suitably trained and experienced front row Players in their nominated match squad, all at least eighteen years old (unless otherwise permitted pursuant to RFU Regulation 15) to ensure that:
 - on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums; and
 - on the first occasion that a replacement prop is required the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.

Level 5 and below League Matches

- (c) In League Matches at Level 5 and below, each team must have and nominated in advance at least four suitably trained and experienced front row Players in their nominated match squad, all at least eighteen years old (unless otherwise permitted pursuant to RFU Regulation 15) to ensure that:
 - on the first occasion that a replacement hooker or a replacement prop is required the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.

Note: As set out in World Rugby Law 3, the replacement of a front row player must come from the suitably trained and experienced Players who started the match or from nominated replacements. A Player other than a nominated front row player is permitted to play in the front row only when uncontested scrums are being played and there are no available front row replacements.

5. Uncontested Scrum(s)

- (a) The Referee shall order uncontested scrum(s) when:
 - (i) a front row Player is required to be replaced if, having made enquiry of and having confirmed with the captain of the team (or such other person nominated by the Club as the manager or other person responsible for the team), there is no suitably trained and experienced front row replacement who started the match or from the nominated replacements in accordance with paragraphs 4(a) to 4(c) above; or
 - (ii) the Referee deems it unsafe for any other reason to start or continue the Match with contested scrums, in which case paragraph 5(e) below will apply.
- (b) The RFU has exercised its discretion under Law 3.16 to invoke the 'man-off' rule in accordance with the Laws of the Game.
- (c) If a league match is completed or contains uncontested scrum(s) and a Club has failed to comply with the requirement in paragraphs 4(b) or 4(c) to replace a front row Player on the first and second occasions (first occasion only at Level 5 and below) with another suitably trained and experienced front row Player, that Club shall forfeit the match which will be awarded to the other team who shall be deemed to have won with a bonus point. The match will be recorded a 5 Championship Point win with a 0-0 score line.
- (d) If a cup match is completed or contains uncontested scrum(s) and a Club has failed to comply with the requirement in paragraph 4(b) to replace a front row Player on the first and second occasion with another suitably trained and experienced front row Player, that Club shall forfeit the match which will be awarded to the other team.
- (e) If a match is completed with or contains uncontested scrum(s) and there has been compliance with paragraphs 4(b) to 5(b), the Organising Committee (or Committee in the case of a Cup Match) may take such action as it deems appropriate (including altering the result or ordering a replay of the Match) in respect of any suspected, alleged or actual breach of Regulations as it shall decide and shall notify all Clubs. The Referee and the Clubs must provide such information and assistance as may be requested by the Organising Committee (or Committee in the case of a Cup Match). Any Club may appeal against the decision of the Organising Committee (or Committee) in accordance with RFU Regulation 13.10.10.

SECTION B – ALL NON-RFU COMPETITIONS INCLUDING MERIT TABLES AND FRIENDLIES - THE 'GAME ON PRINCIPLES'

6. Game On Principles

- (a) In addition to the variations set out above, the RFU has pre-approved additional variations to the Laws of the Game which apply to all matches in non-RFU Competitions (including merit tables and friendlies) - the 'Game On Principles', subject to the provisions below:

LAW	GAME ON PRINCIPLE	APPROVAL
Law 3.2: Team Numbers	A match can take place with a minimum of 10 players on each team at the start of the match. It is encouraged that the number of players on each team is equal, subject to the laws of the game.	Both teams must agree which of the Game On Principles will apply to the match, and notify the referee accordingly at least 30 minutes prior to kick-off using the Game On match card. If both teams cannot agree which principles to apply the, the match will proceed without the application of the Game On Principles.
Law 5.3: Match Duration	A match can be a minimum of 40 minutes in duration.	
Law 3.34: Rolling substitutions	Rolling substitutions are permitted in accordance with paragraphs [3(a) to 3(b)] above.	
Law 3.34: Half Game rule	Where rolling substitutions are adopted, teams are encouraged to apply the half game rule to ensure each player in every match day squad plays at least half of the Available Playing Time (as defined in RFU Regulation 1 ¹).	
Law 18: Line outs	Teams may agree not to contest or lift in the line out	
Law 19: Scrums	Teams may agree that scrums will be uncontested	

(b) Subject to the approval process outlined in paragraph 7(a), a competition organiser may request for the Game On Principles not to apply to a competition. For the avoidance of doubt, without such approval the Game On Principles will be available for teams to apply on a match by match basis in accordance with paragraph 6(a).

SECTION C: ADDITIONAL VARIATIONS REQUESTED BY DIVISIONAL ORGANISING COMMITTEES ('DOC') & CONSTITUENT BODIES

7. Additional Variations (including applications to not apply the Game On Principles)

(a) In relation to additional variations requested by competition organisers (including DOCs), the following process will apply:

¹ 'Available Playing Time' means the total amount of playing time available to a team on any particular day. Where a team is participating in multiple matches in one day, the total available playing time will be the total number of minutes across all matches played by the team on that day; and in all cases (a) includes playing time spent off the pitch due to a temporary injury or yellow card and (b) excludes playing time that would have been available had a match not be abandoned or shortened due to bona fide reasons or in accordance with Regulation 15.11.3.

- (i) Competition organiser must write to the RFU Head of Regulations setting out the proposed variations, the level and matches to which the variations will apply and the rationale for requesting such variations;
- (ii) RFU Head of Regulations will submit the proposed variations to the Adult Competitions Management Sub-Committee for discussion and recommendations;
- (iii) If the Adult Competitions Management Sub-Committee supports the variations, the variations will be presented to the Committee for approval. Any approval granted by the Committee may be subject to additional conditions being imposed on the competition organiser in respect of the application of the variations.