

Midlands Division Administrative Instructions / Rules for 2011-12

Although the RFU Regulations and Midlands Division Administrative Instructions/Rules appear each year in the RFU Handbook, it is recommended that the RFU Regulations as they appear on the RFU Website are read and noted, in order to obtain the most up to date and correctly worded version of the Regulations and Rules.

1. Notification of Results

- 1.1 Club Secretaries are responsible for their Club's compliance with the rules regarding notification of results.
- 1.2 Home clubs must telephone Russell's News and Sports Agency. Tel: 0116 233 2200 as soon as possible after the game, before **5:00** p.m. on the day of the match. When a game is played at any time other than Saturday afternoon the result must be phoned through within 30 minutes of the end of the game.
- 1.3 Home clubs must not only comply with the rules and regulations, but must also, when telephoning in the result to Russells, give the bonus points won by both sides on the day of the match. *[Four points is awarded for a win. Two points is awarded for a draw. A bonus point is awarded to any side scoring four tries and a bonus point is awarded to any losing side that loses by seven points or fewer.]*

2. Match Result Cards

- 2.1 The Match Result Cards are the responsibility of both clubs. **The cards must be completed fully and legibly in capital letters** and record the names of the squad showing **surname first**, followed by the first name. The names should be recorded **as they appear on the official RFU Senior Player Registration Computer Listing**. The cards from both the Home and Away clubs, **already countersigned by the opposition official**, must be passed to the Referee **before the match**.
- 2.2 A club not passing the match result card to a referee before the match may have 5 championship points deducted.
- 2.3 (a) **It is recommended that fully completed, signed and checked Match Cards are scanned and forwarded by e-mail attachment to the League Secretary within two days of the game being played. These scans and cards should be filed by the club for future retrieval and further forwarding to the League Secretary if necessary. They must all be kept until the end of the season and only discarded at the end of June.**
 - (b) **If this is not done** then a club's Match Result Card must be posted, **by First Class post**, to the League Secretary, so that it is received by the League Secretary within 3 days of the game being played. It must have been completed fully in all respects and signed appropriately. Signed duly checked Match Cards will be considered free of any errors.
- 2.4 Clubs will have up to 14 days from the playing of a league game to query any "missing" bonus points in the published League Table of their League. After that period any omissions will be "timed out" and League Secretaries will not be able to amend the figures. Bonus points awarded incorrectly will be deducted as soon as the error is brought to the League Secretary's attention, with the affected Club having the same 14 day period in which to appeal.

- 2.5 The Regulation allowing 2 unregistered players to be on the card will apply at Level 9 and below, subject to the conditions in RFU Regulation 13.4.1 being followed. This Regulation states that 2 unregistered players may be selected provided they are eligible for registration and do not play on a second or subsequent occasion until correct papers are lodged with the Registrar or in the case of online Registration the procedural obligations have been fulfilled; and such players are not Effectively Registered with another club and are identified on the Match Card as not having Effective Registration and with their date of birth. **RFU Regulation 13.4.1 regarding the use of unregistered players does not apply in RFU Cup Competition matches.**
- 2.6 A club shall be deducted at least **20** championship points on each occasion that false information has been provided on the match result card. This will be in addition to any points which may have been deducted if the players in the squad were ineligible to play.
- 2.7 In the event of a game being deemed to be abandoned under Regulation 13.6.7 (a) or (b) it is the responsibility of the clubs to state on the match cards the exact time of abandonment, the match score at the time and the reason for the abandonment. This is particularly important for games abandoned because of uncontested scrums. These cards must be signed by the referee. The clubs must also **telephone** the League Secretary **on the day of the match**, to inform him of the circumstances causing such abandonment.

3. Fines

- 3.1 Failure to telephone results in (and bonus points where applicable) to Russell's News and Sports Agency Tel: 0116 233 2200 by **5:00** pm, or to post the Match Card (if it is not scanned and sent by e-mail) within the time limits, will incur an immediate fine of £25. If the e-mail option in Rule 2.3 is not chosen then League Secretaries will not be able to ask for a copy of the card to be sent by e-mail if a card goes missing, therefore vital information not reaching the League Secretary will be deemed **not to have been sent**, unless official proof of posting is provided. Post Office counters will provide a Certificate of Posting if one is requested. Offending clubs will be notified by the League Secretary of fines imposed.
- 3.2 Failure to pay fines within 28 days **will** result in the fine being increased, and **may** result in the offending club also having **5** championship points deducted.
- 3.3 A club with any fines outstanding at the end of the season will be reported to the RFU, with a recommendation that the club be suspended or expelled from the League for the following season.

4. Postponed Games

- 4.1 No English Clubs Rugby Union Championship League or RFU Cup game may be postponed without first having the consent of the League Secretary (or Chairman or Secretary of the MLOC if the League Secretary is uncontactable).
- 4.2 Postponed games must be played on the next available non RFU League/non RFU KO Competition weekend. **This rule will be strictly enforced.** The Christmas and New Year weekends will be deemed not to be "an available weekend" unless, by mutual agreement, the two clubs decide to utilise these weekends. **EASTER WEEKEND WILL BE DEEMED TO BE "A NEXT AVAILABLE WEEKEND"**.
- 4.3 Rearranged league games take precedence over all other competitions **except RFU National KO Competitions.** (This also means that these Saturday games also take precedence over other games that might be arranged by a Constituent Body or Domestic Union on a Sunday)

- 4.4 Clubs will notify the League Secretary and Russell's immediately it is known that a match cannot be played, enabling the League Secretary to then notify the clubs involved of the date of the rearranged match, thereby giving the clubs 7 days notice if the match could be played the following week. Clubs failing to so notify the League Secretary or Russells will incur a fine of £25. The League Secretary will notify Russells of the new date for the match. If 7 days notice of the new date cannot be given, then the clubs will play on the next available reserve date. The home club will ensure that the local Referees Society is made aware of the new date, so that a referee may be appointed in good time.
- 4.5 A club may not postpone a League game because of lack of availability of its ground. In such circumstances the game may be brought forward, or in the first half of the season the fixture may be exchanged with the corresponding fixture in the second half of the season. In the second half of the season an attempt to seek an alternative venue should be made.
- 4.6 A club whose home ground is unfit to play on should try to seek an alternative venue. In the event of clubs failing to agree on the suitability of the alternative venue, a ruling can be made by the League Secretary.
- 4.7 Clubs will be deducted 5 championship points if they unjustly fail to honour a league game, and the game will be played on the next available weekend. Repeated offences under this rule will result in further disciplinary action. (See RFU Regulations)
- 4.8 When a club at Level 8 or below is unable to select a team from its list of registered players, they should offer to play the game as a friendly, using unregistered or borrowed players, or with uncontested scrums. If the non-offending club turn down the offer to play or indeed arrange to play the game as a friendly the League Secretary will then be able to award the game to the non-offending club as a notional 0-0 win and 5 Championship points added to their record,. Failure to give this option of playing the game as a friendly (by the club short of players), resulting in the game not being played, will mean that the failure to play will be considered an "unjust" cancellation, and will result in the deduction of 5 Championship points from the offending club's record. The League Secretary must be informed of the possibility of this event occurring as soon as possible and certainly before the game is due to be played. The League Secretary (or an MLOC Official if the League Secretary is unavailable) must confirm this arrangement to Russell's Agency directly. It is not for the clubs to communicate this decision to Russell's, other than by the Home Club telephoning in the result as a notional win, as soon as the decision is made by the League Secretary.
- 4.9 At all other Levels clubs are expected to be of a standard that should not require the use of non registered or borrowed players. A fixture cancellation through lack of players will be considered "unjust" and 5 Championship Points will be deducted from the offending club's record. The game will be played on the next available weekend.
- 4.10 At Level 5 and below, if on the first occasion a team is required to replace a front row player with a replacement front row player and it cannot do so, then uncontested scrums will be ordered and the defaulting team will be deemed to have lost the match 0-0. The offending team will, in addition to losing the match 0-0, be deducted 5 Championship points (see Sanction Guidelines – Front Row – insufficient suitable players).
- 4.11 Any club which gives away 20% or more notional 0-0 wins to their opposition during the league season may find that it will be sanctioned by the MLOC with disciplinary action taken / a possibility of being relegated / a possibility of being expelled from the leagues / the Club's record being reported to the RFU.

- 4.12 Clubs in 12/11 club Leagues may request that **1** specific non League Saturday be not designated as “a next available Saturday”. Clubs in 10/9 club Leagues may designate **2** such Saturdays. Clubs in 8 club Leagues may designate **3** such Saturdays. **Clubs in 14/13 club Leagues will not be able to request any such Saturdays.** This request must be made officially in writing, on Club headed notepaper, by the Secretary of the Club, to the Secretary of the MLOC at least 8 weeks before the non- League Saturday so designated. An e-mail is not an acceptable method, although a letter as an attachment to the e-mail would suffice. League Secretaries are not empowered to grant requests of this nature.

Remember: In season 2011-2012 the Christmas and New Year weekends will be deemed not to be a “next available weekend”. **Easter weekend WILL be a “next available weekend”.**

5. Computer Print-Outs and Player Registration

- 5.1 Player registration can be done on-line via RugbyFirst. Clubs registering on line must have a fully completed, signed registration form in their possession before registering on line, and must retain all hard copy documentation. Registration via the Registrar is still available to all clubs. The Registrar is always willing to give help and assistance to any Midlands club requiring it.
- 5.2 All registration forms being sent to the Registrar for registering of players, must on completion, be forwarded by first class post to: The Rugby Registrar, PO Box 183, Leicester. LE3 8BZ. Faxed registration will not be accepted. Special arrangements apply to Expedited Registrations (see RFU Registration of Players Regulation 13). If in need of assistance telephone the Registrar on 0116 233 2200, or e-mail nicola-russell@rfumidlands.demon.co.uk
- 5.3 An A4 stamped addressed envelope with the name of the club in the top left-hand corner must accompany requests for registration. An up-dated copy of the computerised list will then be returned to the club.
- 5.4 Clubs are advised to have an up to date copy of the computerised list at hand on the day of the match, in order to check the names of the selected squad against the list of registered players, to ensure that unregistered players are not chosen to play or to be on the bench.
- 5.5 The RFU Registrar will retain submitted player registration forms until the end of the season. These will then be sent to the RFU for storage.
- 5.6 Every club must appoint an officer and a deputy to be responsible for all registration matters. These officers must be fully aware of the RFU Registration of Players, Regulations and Operating Procedures. These are published annually and sent to Club Secretaries.

6. Appeals

- 6.1 Any club wishing to lodge an appeal against a decision made by a League Secretary must do so to the Chairman of the Midlands Leagues Organising Committee. Any appeal must be signed by the Secretary (or an authorised deputy) and one other Officer of the Club. It must be in writing and on Club headed notepaper (preceded by an e-mail if necessary). An appeal by one person from a club will not be considered.
- 6.2 The appeal must not only be in writing but should be accompanied by the appeal fee, in the form of a cheque for £50. Cheques should be made payable to the Midlands Leagues Organising Committee. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is won. Appeals should be made within 14 days of the receipt of the decision appealed against. Clubs will be offered a personal hearing. If, however, they lose the personal appeal, they will be liable for expenses in addition to the appeal fee already paid.

7. Ground and Match Management

- 7.1 It is the responsibility of the home club at all levels to ensure that spectators do not encroach on the playing enclosure. Suitable barriers should be erected to ensure compliance with this Rule. At Levels 5, 6 and 7 technical areas in accordance with Regulation 13.7.3 (b) must be provided. Regulations 13.7.6 to 13.7.8 must be adhered to. However, where a club Committee at Level 8 or below is satisfied that it is impractical or unnecessary for barriers to be erected this requirement may be waived. (This applies particularly to clubs playing on school or local authority pitches) If the Home club's Referees Society insists on the use of barriers then the Home club must comply.
- 7.2 In the interest of safety, Regulation 13.7.9 regarding the use of floodlights will apply. However, by mutual agreement of the clubs involved, lights may be turned on at half time or in a long injury break, if this will save the game from being abandoned for bad light.

8. RFU KO Cup Competitions

- 8.1 The RFU National Cup Regulations apply in general to the administration of these competitions by the MLOC. The MLOC however has stipulated that the number of replacements allowed in the Cup games whilst it administers the competitions will be **three**, as in league matches at the same level. (Clubs at Level 9 and below will not be allowed their "rolling five replacements" in the Junior Vase) In the Midlands Finals, **seven** replacements will be allowed.
- 8.2 The MLOC will administer the RFU KO Cup Competitions at Level 7 – Intermediate Cup, Level 8 – Senior Vase and Levels 9 & below – Junior Vase, up to and including the Quarter Finals stages (Midlands Finals). The RFU will administer the Competitions from the Semi Finals through to the Finals of the National Competition.
- 8.3 The National Cup Competition games will take precedence over rearranged RFU League games and all Constituent Body Competition games.
- 8.4 Match Result Cards will be sent to the Home and Away clubs by Russell's News & Sport Agency. The filling in of the details on the card and handing it on to the referee before the match will be as in Instruction 2.1. The method of returning the Match Result Card to the Registrar for checking and verification of details provided will be as in Instruction 2.3 (a) **or** (b). When the RFU takes over the administration of the Competitions from the MLOC, arrangements may be different.
- 8.5 Kick off times, for these National Cup Competition games, in September, October, March and April will be **3:00** pm. The kick off times in November, December, January and February will be **2:00** pm., however clubs with suitable floodlights may kick off at **3:00** pm by mutual agreement. These earlier kick off times are necessary in the event that extra time needs to be played, when the result after 80 minutes is a drawn game.
- 8.6 RFU Regulation 13.4.1 regarding the use of unregistered players does not apply in RFU Cup Competition matches.

9. Kick-off Times for League Matches

- 9.1 Normal kick-off times for RFU League matches will be **2:15** pm. in November, December, January and February and **3:00** pm. at all other times. Variation of kick-off times may be mutually agreed, but the League Secretary, Russell's News & Sports Agency and the match referee must be informed.

10. Applications to join the RFU Leagues

- 10.1 An application from a club wishing to join the RFU Leagues must be on Club headed paper, signed by two officers and should be accompanied by a letter from the Club's Constituent Body supporting their application.
- 10.2 The application must be forwarded to the MLOC Secretary before April 1st of the season preceding the one when the Club wishes to join the leagues.
- 10.3 The club will need to be able to prove that a) it can fulfil a full league programme of games, by supplying its fixtures list and results of the season preceding the season in which it would like to join the leagues, and that b) the club has the organisation in place to make sure that all the RFU Regulations and Midlands Division Administrative Instructions / Rules are followed implicitly, by supplying the full contact details of the Club Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer for the season in which the Club wishes to join the leagues.

11. Warning of possible sanctions

- 11.1 The MLOC are able to sanction any club that does not comply with or adhere to the RFU Regulations and the Midlands Division Administrative Instructions / Rules. Although not an exhaustive list, the following are some of the sanctions the MLOC are able to impose on defaulting clubs :- a fine / payment of compensation to an innocent party / deduction of points in the current or following season / ordering a game to be replayed / awarding the match to the non offending side / determining the result of an abandoned match / removal of a result from the league table / awarding of points to a non offending club.
- 11.2 RFU Regulation 13.10.11 Sanctions, and RFU Sanctions Guidelines give a more comprehensive list of the sanctions available to the MLOC to impose. However the words, "The Committee (or its delegate) may impose any sanction which it considers appropriate in all the circumstances", are written in as a rider.

12. End of season "dead rubbers"

- 12.1 Unplayed and rearranged league matches in the month of April must be honoured.
- 12.2 The League Secretary has the ultimate responsibility and discretion to decide which game may be considered a "dead rubber" or not.
- 12.3 Unplayed and rearranged league matches in the month of May, which do not have a bearing on promotion or relegation issues within that league ("dead rubbers"), need not be played, unless both sides mutually agree that they wish to play the outstanding game(s).

13. New for Season 2011-2012. "Rolling Replacements" at Levels 9 and below in league games.

- 13.1 At Level 9 and below, up to a maximum of 5 players may be named as replacements and players will be allowed to "roll on and roll off" on an unlimited basis, to hopefully maintain 15 players a side on the field of play at all times, other than when the game has moved to uncontested scrums when the side causing the uncontested scrums plays with 1 player fewer.
- 13.2 There is no compulsion to have 5 replacements and sides do not have to have equal numbers of replacements.

- 13.3 Replacements will be made, with the referees permission, at stoppages of play other than at penalty and free kick situations, to make sure that a replacement doesn't come on to the field of play simply to take a kick at goal and then be replaced again.
- 13.4 The requirement to have **one** replacement front row player within the squad is still necessary, so that at the first time of asking a side can replace a front row player in order that the game carries on with contested scrums.
- 13.5 This rule is not intended to encourage clubs to pick the maximum number of replacements for league games to the detriment of turning out a second or third XV.