

## SCHOOLS RUGBY LEAGUE – CHAMPION SCHOOLS TOURNAMENT RULES

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### **1. THE TOURNAMENT**

- 1.1 The tournament shall be conducted under the rules of the Rugby Football League (RFL) and shall be organised by the RFL.
- 1.2 Any team participating in the tournament shall agree to be bound by the RFL rules and regulations, Schools Rugby League tournament rules and the RFL Community Game disciplinary policy.
- 1.3 An entry fee of £10 per team will be payable per year for participation in the Regional & National competitions.

### **2. INSURANCE**

It is the responsibility of each participating school to ensure they have appropriate insurance cover in place for players in the event of injuries sustained in the tournament. The school upon request by the RFL must provide evidence of insurance.

### **3. TOURNAMENT ENTRY**

- 3.1 Entry into the tournament shall be reviewed annually and applications must be submitted before the deadline provided by the designated organising officer.
- 3.2 To maintain competition integrity, multiple teams from one year group of one school cannot be entered into the Tier 1 Champion Schools' competition.
- 3.3 The tournament will be open to any secondary school across England and Wales.
  - I. Secondary school boys' teams from year 7 through to year 11
  - II. Secondary school girls' teams from year 7 through to year 11

### **4. START AND END DATE OF THE TOURNAMENT**

- 4.1 The RFL shall determine the commencement dates of the regional through to national stages of the tournament. For annual timelines, please email [Jonny.Dowler@rfl.co.uk](mailto:Jonny.Dowler@rfl.co.uk) or [Andrea.Murray@rfl.co.uk](mailto:Andrea.Murray@rfl.co.uk)
- 4.2 The RFL organising committee will determine the precise structure of the tournaments as soon as the number of participating teams have been finalised.
- 4.3 The regional and national structure will be published to all schools participating in the tournament.
- 4.4 Local structures will be published to all schools participating in the tournaments at the start of each academic year.
- 4.5 Schools must take part in their local competition structures as determined by the RFL. In the event that there is no local competition the RFL, at their discretion may grant permission for a school to play in another area.

**5. TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE**

- 5.1 In all games the first named team in the draw is the home team and the second named team is the away team, including central venue games.
- 5.2 In the event of games being postponed or cancelled, in order to meet the regional and national stage entry deadline, the tournament organiser in conjunction with the RFL will have the power to rank their teams.
- 5.3 All games will be played under international rules with reference to the following exceptions:
  - 40/20 and 20/40 will not be allowed.
  - Sin bin length will be 5 minutes per player, per offence.

**BOYS**

- 5.4.1 The local and regional stages will be played in the following formats depending on provision: knockout, round robin, festival or league format.
- 5.4.2 The national stages will be a seeded draw determined by the RFL annually.
- 5.4.3 Quarter-final ties will be a home and away fixture with the first named team being the home team.
- 5.4.4 The semi-finals will be played following the announced competition structure, at a venue organised by the RFL. In the event of a central venue being unavailable due to time or facility restriction, this game can be played as a home and away fixture with a centrally appointed referee.
- 5.4.5 The national finals will be organised by the RFL at a central venue.

**GIRLS**

- 5.5.1 The local and regional rounds will be played in the following formats depending on local provision: round robin, festival or league format.
- 5.5.2 The national festivals and venues will be organised by the RFL.
- 5.5.3 The national finals will be organised by the RFL at a central venue.

## **6. PLAYER ELIGIBILITY**

- 6.1 To be eligible to participate in the Tournament a player must be permanently on roll and in attendance at the participating school.
- 6.2 To be eligible for the team, players must be the following age on 1<sup>st</sup> September.

<b>Age on 1 September</b>	<b>School Team</b>
11	Year 7
12	Year 8
13	Year 9
14	Year 10
15	Year 11

- 6.3 A player is allowed to play up one age group only. Players are not allowed to play down an age group, unless there are exceptional circumstances agreed by the RFL.
- 6.4 Players who are on the national player performance pathways such as playing on a scholarship should not play at two age groups. The school should decide which year group they play at before the competition begins. Teachers should read the playing policy for signed players for further clarification.
- 6.5 No player may play for more than one team on any given day.
- 6.6 The selection and fielding of ineligible players should be reported to the designated organising officer within 24 hours of the game being played, this will then be referred to the RFL and the appropriate action taken. Any team found breaching regulations risks disqualification from the tournament.

## **NUMBER OF PLAYERS**

- 6.7.1 The number of players per boys' team shall be 13-a-side. At national rounds, teams will be allowed up to 5 named substitutes, with a maximum squad size of 18. There is no limit on the number of interchanges allowed. At local and regional stages maximum squad size will be determined by the local co-ordinator.
- 6.7.2 The number of players per girls' team shall be 11-a-side. Teams will be allowed up to 5 substitutes and the maximum squad size is 16. There is no limit on the number of interchanges allowed. At local stages maximum squad size will be determined by the local co-ordinator.

## **7. FIXTURES**

7.1 If games are conceded or cannot be played for any reason the RFL will determine which team can be awarded the victory. The result will be recorded as a 24-0 victory.

7.2 In the regional leagues, if there are two teams tied on points for a qualifying position the final position will be determined in the following order:

1. Head to head result between the two teams
2. Overall points difference
3. Coin Toss

7.3 The school drawn at home should contact their opponent immediately after receiving the draw to arrange the fixture and offer 3 dates (preferably on different weekdays) that fall before the deadline. If the 3 dates offered are not appropriate, the away team should suggest a date. If an agreement can't be reached please contact the RFL.

7.4 Where the home team is unable to provide a suitable venue for the match, the fixture can be reversed and played at the away team venue to ensure the match is completed by the due date. If neither team has an available venue the matter must be referred to the RFL, who will have the power to extend the date by which the game must be played, or decide which team shall go forward to the next round.

7.5 If the fixture is reversed the original home team will remain the home team and the original away team will have the advantage if the game is drawn following golden point score periods.

7.6 If a team fails to fulfil a fixture, they will be deemed to have conceded the fixture and it will result in a walkover. This includes a team withdrawing from a fixture on the day the game is due to be played, without due reason.  
i. Teams have the right to appeal a concession via an email to the education department at the RFL within 24 hours of the concession. This will be reviewed internally by an independent panel.

7.7 In the case of a team conceding a match for no due reason, the RFL reserves the right to suspend the team from the following year's tournament.

7.8 To maintain the continuity of the playing programme the RFL shall be empowered, if necessary, to amend a fixture date.

## **8. MATCH DAY OPERATIONS**

8.1.1 Where a home tie is given, it is the responsibility of the home team to provide a suitable venue for the fixture and appoint a qualified match official from a local Referee's Society.

In the case of the local Referee's Society being unable to appoint a referee, the home team may provide a Rugby League Foundation member of staff, a neutral experienced referee from the school or otherwise suitably qualified impartial individual to act as referee, but only if the away team is notified at least 48 hours before the fixture is due to take place.

If the home side cannot provide a suitable referee the away team must be given the opportunity to provide one for the game. Both schools playing in the tournament must be in full agreement with these arrangements prior to the game being played.

8.1.2 Exceptions include the boys' national semi-finals, regional and national finals and girls' festivals, national semi-finals, regional and national finals where the venue and match officials will be appointed by the RFL.

**8.2 TRANSPORT**

The RFL will endeavour to contribute towards the transport costs when reaching the national stages.

**8.3 ACCOMMODATION**

It is the responsibility of the school to arrange and pay for all accommodation for teams travelling to games if appropriate.

**8.4 MATCH BALLS**

In compliance with the laws of the game the following size match balls must be used for each age group:

Boys Y7, Y8: Size 4 ball

Boys Y9, Y10 Y11: Size 5 ball

Girls Y7 – Y11 Size 4 ball

**MATCH DURATION**

**BOYS**

8.5.1. The duration of each match shall be measured by the match official and shall be:

Y7 20 minutes each way with 5 minute half time interval

Y8, Y9 25 minutes each way with 5 minute half time interval

Y10, Y11 30 minutes each way with 5 minute half time interval

8.5.2 In knock out rounds, in the event that the scores are level at full time then the winners will be decided by virtue of a "Golden Point Score" i.e. a sudden death first score. Teams are to toss a coin at the start of the period to determine who will kick off. Teams are to change ends after the first period of play. There will be a maximum of two periods played.

8.5.3 The duration of each "Golden Point Score" period shall be measured by the match official and shall be:

All years 5 minutes

After two "Golden Point Score" periods, should the score still be level;

- The team scoring the most tries goes through,
- If both teams are still level, the away team goes through\*

\*At Semi-final stage (due to being played at a neutral venue), the policy following a draw after golden point extra time will be confirmed.

\*At the national finals, the trophy will be shared in the event of a draw after golden point extra time, with the exception of any national finals played as curtain raisers at neutral

venues (e.g. Wembley, Magic Weekend etc) where the trophy will be shared in the event that there is a draw at full time.

## **GIRLS**

- 8.6.1 For festival formats overall playing time should not exceed 60 minutes.
- 8.6.2 The duration of each single standalone match in Y7 & Y8, shall be measured by the match official and shall be 20 minutes each way with a 5 minute half time interval.
- 8.6.3 The duration of each single standalone match in Y9, Y10 & Y11, e.g. shall be measured by the match official and shall be 25 minutes each way with a 5 minute half time interval.
- 8.6.4 In the event that the scores are level at full time in the semi-finals then the winners will be decided by virtue of a “Golden Point Score” i.e. a sudden death first score. Teams are to toss a coin at the start of the period to determine who will kick off. Teams are to change ends after the first period of play. There will be a maximum of two periods played.
  - 5 minutes each way golden point will be played
  - Should the scores still be level, the competition organiser will confirm the next stages.

### **8.7 LATE START**

Teams must be ready to take the field before the designated kick off time as and when directed by the match officials. Any team failing to adhere to the agreed start time may result in a fixture forfeit.

### **8.8 TEAM SHEET**

- 8.8.1 For centrally organised fixtures, an official team sheet must be completed in full prior to kick off and should include the school name along with forename and surname (no initials) of all participants and must be handed in to the tournament organiser before kick off.
- 8.8.2 Each school must ensure that information provided on the team sheet is accurate and correct.
- 8.8.3 Failure to submit a team sheet, late submission, or false and misleading information on players and replacements will result in a School being liable to sanctions by the RFL.

### **8.9 REPORTING RESULTS**

- 8.9.1 For local rounds it is the responsibility of the winning team to submit the match result to their local tournament organiser within 24 hours of the completion of the game. It is the responsibility of the local tournament organiser to inform the RFL within 24 hours.

For regional rounds it is the responsibility of the winning team to submit the match result to the competition administrator at the RFL within 24 hours of the completion of the game.

- 8.9.2 The following information should be submitted:
  - Name of winning school
  - Result
  - Age Group

8.9.3 For national stages, it is the responsibility of the winning team to submit the match result to the competition administrator at the RFL within 24 hours of the completion of the game. Information required is the same as point 8.9.2. The Competition Manager for the national rounds is Jonny Dowler [Jonny.Dowler@rfl.co.uk](mailto:Jonny.Dowler@rfl.co.uk)

**8.10 FIELDING OF INELIGIBLE PLAYERS**

The selection and fielding of ineligible players should be reported to the designated organising officer within 24 hours of the game being played. Any team found breaching regulations risks disqualification from the tournament. The RFL reserves the right, in the case of a team having been found guilty of fielding an ineligible player, for the team to face suspension or expulsion from the tournament and for their beaten opponents to seek re-election (where applicable).

**8.11 ABANDONMENT OF GAMES**

If a game is abandoned with more than three-quarters of the playing time elapsed, the result shall stand unless otherwise determined by the RFL. If less than three-quarters of the playing time has elapsed the RFL, at its sole discretion, may order a game to be re-played.

8.12 If a team withdraws from a match without due reason while the game is in progress, they will be deemed to have conceded the fixture, and it will result in a walkover.  
i. Teams have the right to appeal this decision via an email to the education department at the RFL within 24 hours of the concession. This will be reviewed internally by an independent panel.

**8.13 POSTPONEMENTS**

8.13.1 In the event of the home team suspecting that it's ground will not be fit for play, owing to adverse weather conditions or other cause, the home team must immediately inform their opposition, appointed match official and the RFL. The game will be rearranged and replayed unless the RFL specifies otherwise.

8.13.2 If on arrival the match official deems that the ground is not fit for play, and in their opinion there is no chance of it being so before the scheduled kick off, then that decision must be communicated immediately to the visiting team and the RFL. The game shall be replayed on a date agreed.

**9. RULES**

9.1 Boys games will be played under full community rules, except the following amendments;

- No 40/20 or 20/40 in play.
- From a penalty, teams can choose to 'Take 10' instead of a kick to touch.

9.2 The girls competition adopts the 2 rules changes in 9.1, plus the following amendments;

- One marker at the play the ball.
- No bounceouts from kick off; The receiving team maintains possession unless they make the ball dead.
- 3 person scrums.

9.3 In girls festival activity, the changes in 9.1 and 9.2 above are adopted, plus the following amendments;

- No scrums.
- No conversions – bonus box tries will be worth 6 points, all others worth 4 points.

- No goal-line drop outs – the attacking team will take a play the ball on 20m line.
- Kick off will only take place to start each half of a game. After a try is scored, the conceding team will take possession on the half way line and restart play with a tap (with no markers).

## **10. DISCIPLINE, SUSPENSIONS AND FINES**

- 10.1 Any disciplinary action relating to general misconduct in the stages prior to the regional rounds of the competition would be the responsibility of the school to deal with internally, following the community game on field disciplinary guidelines (available on request).
- 10.2 Any disciplinary action relating to general misconduct in the regional or national stages of the competition should be referred to the RFL disciplinary panel. Sanctions will be imposed in line with the RFL sentencing guidelines.
- 10.3 Any breach of the RESPECT policy, RFL safeguarding policy or assault on a match official prior to the regional stages will be dealt with by a disciplinary panel appointed by the RFL. Incidents must be reported to the RFL Education Officer by the match official and or participating schools within 48 hours of the game.
- 10.4 All matters of discipline from the regional stages of the competition onwards must be reported by the match official within 24 hours of the game and will be dealt with by a disciplinary panel appointed by the RFL.