



THE WELSH RUGBY UNION NATIONAL WOMEN'S LEAGUE RULES 2024-2025

1. Description:

The Competition shall be called:

- i) In respect of the Premier Division, "The Admiral Women's Premiership;" and
- ii) In respect of the Championship, North, East, Central & West Divisions, "The WRU Admiral Women's National Leagues".

2. Interpretation:

For the purposes of these National League Rules, the following terms have the meaning assigned to them:

- **ARTICLES** shall mean the Articles of Association of the Union.
- **CLUB** means a Club that is a member of the Union only and does not include Affiliated Organisations (as defined in the Articles) or any other entity which may be admitted to membership of the Union.
- **DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS** shall mean the disciplinary regulations of the Union for the time being in force
- **DISTRICT MEMBER** shall have the definition given in the Articles.
- **COMPETITIONS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** means the Committee appointed by the Board of Directors of the Union in accordance with the Articles which is a Sub Committee of the Community Game Board.
- **UNION** means The Welsh Rugby Union Limited.

All other defined terms shall be interpreted in accordance with the Union's Memorandum of Association and Articles.

3. Form

The League comprises 6 Divisions, which shall be formed as follows:

<i>Premier Division</i>	-	<i>8 Clubs</i>
<i>Championship</i>	-	<i>8 Clubs</i>
<i>North Division</i>	-	<i>5 Clubs</i>
<i>East Division</i>	-	<i>6 Clubs</i>
<i>Central Division -</i>	-	<i>6 Clubs</i>
<i>West Division</i>	-	<i>6 Clubs</i>

Note: Promotion and relegation will be discussed throughout the season in relation to the 2025-26 season and further consultation will take place prior to Christmas.

CLAUSES

- (i) For the avoidance of doubt, subject to clause (iii) below, Clubs playing in Premiership and Championship of the Leagues will be placed by the Union within the relevant Division on a meritocracy basis, with the North, East, Central and West Divisions based on geography.
- (ii) In the event that a Club fails to complete its League programme, the Competitions Management Committee shall have the discretion to deal with that Club, as well as any consequential changes to the National League, as it deems appropriate. Such discretion shall include, but is not limited to, relegating the Club concerned to the lowest Division and promoting such other Club(s) as it deems appropriate in the circumstances as well as being removed from the National League pyramid for the following season.
- (iii) A Club which fails to complete its League programme and is sanctioned by the Competitions Management Committee shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Competitions Management Committee to an appeal body appointed by the Board of Directors in accordance with Rule 8i (ii) below.

In the event that a Club fails to complete any scheduled National League match during the season, the Competitions Management Committee shall consider the circumstances of that failure and apply such sanctions in accordance with these National League Rules as it deems appropriate in its absolute discretion. The Competitions Management Committee shall also consider any necessary consequential changes to the National League, as it deems appropriate. Such discretion shall include, but is not limited to, relegating the relevant Club to the lowest Division in the League pyramid and being required to have a year's sabbatical before re-entering the National League structure.

A Club which fails to complete its League programme and is sanctioned by the Competitions Management Committee shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Competitions Management Committee to an appeal body appointed by the Board of Directors in accordance with Rule 8i (ii) below.

4. Structure of League for the 2025-2026 Season

The National League structure for the 2025-2026 season will be discussed with current and new member sides throughout the season with decision made during the season in order to give Clubs as much notice as possible.

5. Eligibility to Participate

a. Clubs

- (i) The Competition will be restricted to those Clubs who are full members of the Union with all being registered with the WRU
- (ii) New teams are not permitted to enter the WRU Admiral Women's Leagues until they complete the New Team Process (NTP) and have it confirmed by the WRU.
- (iii) All Clubs have a responsibility to field a minimum of twelve players at the commencement of any National League match.

b. Players

- (i) No player may represent a Club in the National League unless she is a registered member of that Club or a permit has been granted for her to play by her parent Club. With the exception of registered players from a Club who has withdrawn from the League. In this instance, the Union may grant the permit to play for a Club in the National League.
- (ii) No player may play in any National League fixture unless they are at least 18 years of age. The only exception to this regulation is for players who are no younger than 17 years of age and have received dispensation from the Union's U20 & U18 Lead Coach and parent or guardian.
- (iii) A player has to be registered in Wales with a Club and her registration must be notified to the Union before she is eligible to play for a Club in the National League.

All players must be named on the team sheet submitted by the Club to the Match Official prior to the match (see the protocol for matches played in Wales as set out in the Union's Disciplinary Regulations). The Team sheets must also identify the tight head, loose head replacements. In addition, the Team sheets must identify the Head Coach of each team.

- (iv) The team sheet **must** identify any player(s) who are on permit.
- (v) **Team sheets are to be submitted electronically via the relevant app and to the match official prior to kick off of each respective League fixture. This is mandatory for all clubs and paper copies will not be accepted. There will be sanctions against clubs should they fail to submit electronic team sheets on a regular basis.**
- (vi) It is mandatory that any player who has suffered concussion shall not participate in any match or training session for a minimum period of 21 days. All players should be reviewed by a medical practitioner and should not return to train or play until symptom free and having successfully completed the WRU graduated return to play programme. It is recommended that players should not return to full contact sport until cleared by a medical practitioner. The WRU Concussion Guidance document is available online at [Welsh Rugby Union | Club & Community | Concussion \(wru.wales\)](http://welshrugbyunion.com/club-and-community/concussion)
- Please also follow the UK Concussion Guidelines for Grassroots Sport - <http://sramedia.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/9ced1e1a-5d3b-4871-9209-bff4b2575b46.pdf>
- (vii) It is strongly recommended that each club is to have a nominated and qualified First Aider with up to date qualifications for each National League Fixture and training session. Please contact the WRU for more information on St. Johns Ambulance courses should any club be interested.

5.1.1 A Player will be ineligible to play for a Club in any National League fixture if she transfers or is registered after 11:59 pm on 31 January 2025, unless such a player is:

- (i) a player registered with that Club's U18 team, who has attained the age of 18 and is subsequently registered as a senior player with that Club;
- (ii) a player who is subject to a permanent residential relocation from another area where extensive travel (in excess of 100 miles round trip) precludes the player continuing to

play for her former Club. Before such a player may play, the Competitions Management Committee must sanction the player’s registration; or

- (iii) a player not previously registered with any other rugby Club. Before such a player may play, the Competitions Management Committee must sanction the player’s registration; or
- (iv) a player not registered with any club prior to January 31st, 2025. For the avoidance of doubt, if a player was de-registered on January 30th and then wishes to register for a new club on February 1st or at any time in the Season thereafter then this would be acceptable. However, if a player was de-registered after 11:59pm on January 31st, 2025, then she would be ineligible to register with another club as of February 1st, 2025.

Player transfer requests must be lodged online via MyWRU with the Rugby Operations Department of the Union by 11:59 pm on 31 January 2025, in accordance with the Union’s Player Registration and Transfer Regulations.

Clubs may only transfer a maximum of 3 players from any one club during a season unless there is mutual agreement between two clubs for additional players.

Transfer of players is only applicable to National League teams as NTP clubs only being allowed to transfer players following the approval of the WRU or by mutual consent.

5.1.2 A player who transfers in the period between the end of the previous season and 11:59 pm on 31 January 2025 will be eligible to play for her new Club in National League matches provided that the process has been completed in accordance with the Player Registration and Transfer Regulations.

5.2 **Player Permits**

The Player Permit Scheme will operate as follows:

5.2.1 In any National League match:

- (i) A Club may play up to a maximum of four players in total on permit in a National League match.
- (ii) For any player who has U19 eligibility, which is 19 years of age between September 1st, 2024, and May 31st, 2025, they will be eligible to permit to any team within the National League pyramid regardless of the Club they are registered with. These permits are to be made known to the Union’s Rugby Operations department for verification.

Permits may be obtained as stipulated in and subject to the restrictions contained in the following table:

Division	Clubs from where permits may be obtained
Premier Division	Premier Division (max 4) Championship (max 4) North, East, Central and West Divisions (max 4) (OVERALL MAXIMUM OF 4 PERMIT PLAYERS PER MATCH) Registered Premier Division players will be allowed to permit down into the Championship

	as well as the club who held their registration immediately before joining their current club.
Championship	Premier Division (max 4) Championship (max 4) North, East, Central and West Divisions (max 4) (OVERALL MAXIMUM OF 4 PERMIT PLAYERS PER MATCH) Registered Premier Division players will be allowed to permit down into the Championship as well as the club who held their registration immediately before joining their current club.
East, Central & West Division	Premier Division (max 4 – limited to the Club who held the previous registration) Championship (max 4) North (max 4) East, Central and West Divisions (max 4) (OVERALL MAXIMUM OF 4 PERMIT PLAYERS PER MATCH) Registered Premier Division players will be allowed to permit down into the Championship as well as the club who held their registration immediately before joining their current club.
North	Premier Division (max 2) Championship (max 4) East, Central and West Division (max 4) Teams in the North Division are permitted a maximum of 2 players per game from Premier Division sides regardless if the player is permitting to their previous club.

A permit must be sought for each match in which a player plays and such permit may be granted for a match at any time during the season subject to the conditions set out in Regulation 7 of the Player Registration and Transfer Regulations.

Electronic team sheets submitted prior to the start of a match must identify players on permit and their parent Club/Regional Team.

Permitted players must start on the bench if a Club has 15 players to begin a respective match.

5.6 Dual Registration scheme

University students will be allowed to dual register with a club in England and Scotland whilst also being able to play for their registered club in Wales under a Home Nations Student Pass. Once approved by both clubs and Union, it will mean that international clearance is not required for the player for either team throughout the season.

5.7 Replacements

In all Divisions

In the Premiership, Championship, Divisions North, East, Central and West up to eight replacements may be named for any National League match. **It is recommended that there are five suitably trained and experienced players who can play in the front row within the squad.** It is recommended that it will include Two Hookers and three (3) prop forwards. The replacement prop should be either a Tight Head or Loose Head or a player capable of playing on both Heads. This will ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required the game can continue safely with contested scrums. If a Tight Head were to be required and a team only has a Loose Head as a Front Row replacement and he is not trained or able to play in that position, then the referee will order uncontested scrums. Similarly, if a Loose Head were to be required and a team only had a Tight Head named as a Front Row replacement and he is not trained or able to play in that position then again uncontested scrums will be ordered by the referee.

If they are available, a team must have three (3) front row players in the front row at all times in an uncontested scrum, only when there is no available front row replacement or substitute is any other player permitted to play in the front row Law 3.15 applies

A Club may play without any named replacements. If a Club names 12 players only there is no need to name more than three suitably trained and experienced front row players.

However, should a team not be able to start a game with contested scrums then they would be required to start with 14 players but still be entitled to name up to eight (8) replacements.

Where uncontested scrums are ordered as a result of there being no suitably trained and experienced front row players for any reason, the team concerned shall not be entitled to replace the player whose departure caused the uncontested scrums. Law 3.16 applies.

If a front row player is issued with a red or yellow card and as a result, uncontested scrums are requested, then there is no need to further reduce the playing numbers.

- Should a team be unable to field a front row at the start of a match, the match will begin with uncontested scrums. In such a scenario, the offending team will have to start the match with 14 players (it is the decision of the offending club which player they choose to remove, save that each team will be required to have 8 players in each uncontested scrum). The offending club will be entitled to the maximum number of replacements available.
- Should a fixture start with contested scrums but, during the course of the match, a front row forward is unable to continue (the "Injured Forward"):
 - a) Where there is a front row forward replacement on the bench, the Injured Forward shall be replaced by the front row forward replacement. In such a scenario, the offending team may elect to move to uncontested scrums. However, should the offending team elect to do so, they must remove another player of their choice from their team (i.e., they will continue the match with 14 players). Each team will be required to have 8 players in each uncontested scrum.
 - b) If a team starts a fixture with contested scrummaging but has to go to uncontested scrummaging they will still be allowed to use the named replacements for the remainder of the match but continue with 14 players.

- c) Where there is no front row forward replacement on the bench, the Injured Forward shall be removed but not replaced. In such a scenario, the match will proceed with uncontested scrums. Each team will be required to have 8 players in each uncontested scrum.
- d) If a team is notified by their opponents prior to a scheduled fixture that scrums will be going uncontested, then the team not electing to begin uncontested will be recommended to name five front row forwards.

NB: In uncontested scrums there must always be 8 players in the scrum and the No.8 from either side cannot pick up.

CHANGES ARE ALSO IN ACCORDANCE WITH REGULATION 5.7 OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE RULES

The replacement of a front row forward must come from suitably trained and experienced players who started the match or from the nominated replacements.

If after a front row player has been sent off or during the time a front row player is temporarily suspended, and there are no further front row players available from the nominated team, then uncontested scrums will be ordered and the team electing to go uncontested will be unable to replace the offending player. It is not the responsibility of the match official to determine the suitability of trained front row replacements nor their availability, as this is a team responsibility.

To avoid confusion and to make everyone aware of the rules relating to the number of substitutes that can be used, please see the following examples, relating to World Rugby Law 3 (Number of Players) and these National League Rules.

- (a) If Team A has only fifteen players (or less) available and it has three suitably trained front row forwards, then the match will start with contested scrums. Team A will also be entitled to up to eight replacements.
- (b) If Team A has fifteen players (or less) and does not have three suitably trained players to play in the front row, then the match will start with uncontested scrums. Team A will begin with only 14 players but will be entitled to have eight replacements (providing they have 22 available players for selection at the start of the match).
- (c) If Team A has only three suitably trained front row forwards and Team B has four suitably trained front row forwards, then the match will start with contested scrums. Both Team A and Team B will be entitled to up to eight replacements.
- (d) If Team A has less than three suitably trained front row forwards and Team B has five suitably trained front row forwards, either on the field or as replacements, then Team A will begin with only 14 players but will be entitled to eight replacements (providing they have 22 available players for selection at the start of the match) and Team B will also be entitled to the full complement of replacements (providing they have 23 available players for selection at the start of the match.) The match will start with uncontested scrums.
- (e) If Team A only has 12, 13 or 14 players to begin a match, there is a requirement of Team B to match numbers however should Team A lose players as a result of injury or discipline then Team B will not be required to lose further players. In this instance, Team B will be allowed to use 23 players should they be available with the remaining players being used as replacements.
- (f) If Team A only has 12, 13 or 14 players to begin a match, then Team A will be required to have 6 players in a scrum should they start with 12, 7 players in a scrum should they

start with 13 and 8 players in a scrum should they start with 14. Team B will be required to match numbers in the Scrum in these instances.

All suitably trained front row players must be highlighted on the official team sheet prior to the match.

If a match goes to uncontested scrums the relevant details are to be forwarded by the Match Official to the Union's Fixture Manager (see Rule 8b below).

In relation to uncontested scrums, the Number 8 from both teams are not allowed to pick up from the base of the scrum

AT ALL TIMES SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT.

5.8 Rolling Substitutions

All teams are entitled to unlimited rolling substitutions with the below to be adhered to:

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.

If a team opts to go to uncontested scrums, they will not later be allowed to return to contested scrummaging.

- 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 not be classified as a Player Interchange if another Player replaces that Player. The Player is permitted to return once the wound has been treated and the bleeding stopped.
- Not more than three 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.
- A Player must enter the field of play on the halfway line.
- 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.
- A Player who is previously injured in the match shall not return to play as a Player Interchange.
- 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.

- Any player leaving the field of play with suspected concussion is not allowed to return to the field of play.
- 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.

6. Entry Conditions

All Clubs participating in the National League shall comply with:

- these National League Rules;
- the Union's Memorandum of Association and the Articles;
- the Regulations and Resolutions of the Board of Directors of the Union;
- the World Rugby Bye Laws, Resolutions and Regulations relating to the Game, and
- the Laws of the Game.

7. Responsibility for Organisation

All matches in every Division of the National League will be under the control of the Union. The Competitions Management Committee will deal with all matters relating to every Division of the National League.

8. General Rules (refer to attached Guidance Document)

All National League matches must be played and each Club must complete its National League programme. In the event that a National League match is not played the matter will be reported to the Competitions Management Committee who will establish why the match was not played. Where a match does not take place, it is the responsibility of the Honorary Secretary or Fixture Secretary of each Club to notify the Union's Regulatory & Competitions Manager, in writing, within 24 hours of the reason(s) for the postponement (with supporting evidence if necessary). It is also the responsibility of the home side to make every effort to notify the appointed match official of the game not taking place. If the Competitions Management Committee is not satisfied with the explanation of the Club concerned it will apply a 2-point deduction. Other sanctions available to the Competitions Management Committee include (but are not limited to) the deduction of League points, the imposition of a fine, expunging the Club's League points total and/or expulsion from the National League.

a. Passive scrums

i) For all divisions other than the Premier Division

No match may be postponed because of the lack of suitably trained/experienced front row forwards. The match must be played on the due date with uncontested scrums. If prior to any match a Club becomes aware that it will be unable to field for that match a sufficient number of suitably trained/experienced front row forwards it shall, as soon as reasonably practicable, notify the opposing club and match officials that it will elect to take uncontested scrums during the match. Following the match, the Competitions Management Committee may consider the conduct of the Club and the reason for uncontested scrums and whether any sanction should be

applied. The Competitions Management Committee may apply any sanction it deems appropriate if it is not satisfied with the Club's explanation.

If during the course of a match a team elects to take uncontested scrums, it must continue to have 8 players committed to each scrum in relation to point 5.7.f. In addition, only the player in the scrum half position may play the ball from the scrum. For the avoidance of doubt the ball may not be played by the player in number 8 position within the scrum.

The team electing to go passive will be required to then continue with 14 players.

b. Declaration of winners.

Winners of National League matches will be teams which have scored the greater number of points at the end of each match. For the avoidance of doubt and in compliance with the Laws of the Game (Law 6.A.12), the Referee will be the final arbiter as to the score of each National League match. National League points shall be awarded as follows:

Win	-	4 points
Draw	-	2 points
Defeat	-	0 points
Bonus Points	-	1 point for a team scoring 4 or more tries
		1 point for a team losing by 7 points or less

- c. **National League placings** will be decided on the basis of League points gained during the season. Where teams have gained equal numbers of League points, the team with the most wins shall be given preference. If the number of wins is equal, the team with the fewest losses shall be given preference. If the number of losses is equal then the Club having recorded the most tries in the Season shall be given preference. If the number of tries is equal the points 'for' shall be divided by the points 'against' and the team with the highest factor shall be declared to have the better record.
- d. **Duration of play** – 80 minutes each match (40 minutes each half) plus any time permitted by the Match Official for delays (Laws of the Game – Law 5). At half time, an interval of not more than 10 minutes is allowed. If starting numbers are reduced to 12, 13 or 14 due to available players then the match will be 70 minutes duration (35 minutes per half)
- e. **Fixture Arrangements.** National League matches must be played on the dates allocated unless otherwise previously agreed by the Competitions Management Committee. These will be decided by the Competitions Management Committee and circulated to Clubs as soon as practicable. The match will take place on the home Club's first pitch or on a suitable alternative.
- f. **Notification of Results.** The appointed Match Official will notify the Union of the result of each match by submitting the match result card electronically within 1 hour of the match taking place via the match official app. The appointed Match Official will also submit by e-mail team lists, which must be completed by officials from each team and handed to the match official prior to the kick-off.
- g. **Postponed, rearranged, and abandoned matches**

- i) Postponed or Mutually Rearranged National League matches must be played on the allocated dates unless a match is postponed because of ground or weather conditions, or the Clubs concerned have mutually agreed to the postponement and have received the prior consent of the Union to its rearrangement.

For a mutually agreed fixture the Club Secretary or Club Fixture Secretary of both clubs **MUST** inform the Competitions Manager in writing no later than 48 hours after the fixture so the postponement can be granted by the Union.

Both Clubs must copy each other into the email correspondence to confirm the mutual agreement.

Should the request not be mutually agreed then the team who did not initially request the postponement not notify the Union confirming their disagreement within 48 hours of the day of the fixture, the Union will acknowledge the fixture as mutually agreed and no sanction be issued.

Consent to postpone fixtures in other such circumstances will not be given if sought less than 2 months prior to the fixture. (i.e. Weddings/Special Occasions) Where both Clubs have received the consent of the Union to postpone a fixture, then that fixture must be played, where practicable, within 21 days of the postponement.

If the Clubs cannot agree on an alternative date within 14 days of a postponement due to weather conditions the Union will determine the date of the rearranged fixture which will be the next available Sunday for both Clubs during the season, with this not being subject to appeal by clubs unless a mutual agreement is reached on a rearranged date.

Fixtures that are unable to be rearranged for an available Sunday will automatically be set by the Regulatory & Competitions Manager to take place midweek following Daylight Savings Time which is March 30th , 2025.

If the ground of the home Club is not fit because of weather or ground conditions or is unavailable for any other reason and the away fixture has not yet been played, Clubs should endeavour to switch the venue to the Away Club so that the fixture is played on that date.

Both Clubs must notify the Union's Fixture and Registrations Co-ordinator, in writing, of the new fixture date as soon as it is confirmed and no later than 48 hours before the newly scheduled date. This timeline may be reduced in exceptional circumstances subject to the agreement of both Clubs and the availability of a suitably qualified referee.

Each Club must notify the Fixture & Registrations Co-Ordinator in writing of the postponement or rearrangement of any fixture. If this written notification is not received from the team who did not initially request the postponement within 48 hours of the day of the fixture, the Union will acknowledge the fixture as mutually agreed and no sanction be issued.

Any dispute in respect of such cancellation, postponement or rearrangement shall be referred to the Competitions Management Committee for determination.

When ground or weather conditions demand, and if requested to do so, an opportunity **must** be given to an official representative of the visiting Club, a Union Match Official living locally of similar standing to the appointed Match Official or an Officer of the Union to view the situation in sufficient time to allow matches to be

postponed preventing unnecessary travelling. Clubs are recommended to undertake ground inspections no earlier than two hours before the scheduled kick off time except in cases where an earlier inspection is required to prevent an Away Club undertaking a long journey or in cases where the Match Official is travelling from a long distance.

Should the Clubs disagree on the condition of the ground, the match will not be played and the match will be rescheduled. The Match Official appointed by the Union will report on the matter and that report will be considered by the Competitions Management Committee.

Should the home side have the ability to utilise an artificial surface for a National League fixture then provided it is has a valid certificate issued from World Rugby, the Union expects that fixture to be played on the scheduled date unless a rearrangement is mutually agreed. Should the away side opt to not play, the fixture would be classed as unfulfilled and the respective side would likely face a sanction from the Union's Competitions Management Committee.

Please note the link to check the compliance of each surface within Wales - <https://www.world.rugby/the-game/facilities-equipment/surfaces/compliant-fields>

All matches must be played on the set dates except in the case of postponement because of adverse ground or weather conditions and/or requests from the appointed Broadcasters.

(ii) Abandoned Matches

All matches must be played to full time. The Match Official is to be the sole judge of the amount of time played. If a match is abandoned, then both Clubs' Honorary Secretaries or Fixture Secretaries must separately notify the Union of the fact in writing no later than 48 hours following the abandonment. Should there be any disputes, the CMC will have the discretion to confirm the result of the game regardless of score.

Should the difference in score be 30 or more points then the result of the fixture shall stand and be submitted including try count and there will be no requirement for a rearrangement. This is regardless of whether both teams agree or not.

If the difference in score is 29 points or less and if both Clubs agree then the Competitions Management Committee may permit the score, at the time of the abandonment, to stand. However, if both teams are in not in agreement, then the match is to be replayed. The WRU has the discretion to make decisions in relation to the result of each respective tie in the interest of fairness and integrity of the Competition.

Where such an abandoned match is to be replayed, the match will be played at the original venue or at a venue determined by the home Club. Any National League fixture which has been abandoned and is required to be played again must be rearranged by the Clubs and the date of the rearrangement notified to the Union's Fixture and Registrations Co-ordinator no later than 21 days of the original date. If details of the rearrangement are not supplied by the due date, then the Union will determine the date on which the rearranged fixture will be played. Both Clubs must notify the Union's Fixture and Competitions Manager in writing, of the new fixture date no later than four working days prior to the match being played. This timeline

may be reduced in exceptional circumstances, subject to the mutual agreement of both Clubs and the availability of a suitably qualified referee.

h. Protests and Disputes

- (i) Save for matters which fall to be determined in accordance with the Union's Disciplinary Regulations, the Competition Management Committee shall be responsible for and have discretion in dealing with any protest or dispute arising out of the National League or these National League Rules (which shall include those relating to the application of the Premier Division Criteria). Any such protest or dispute must be made by a Club in writing to the Union's Administration Manager and accompanied by a fee of £100 which may or may not be refunded. No protest or dispute relating to matches played in the Competition will be considered if made more than **48 hours** after the end of the relevant match has taken place. The Competitions Management Committee shall have discretion to investigate any breach of these National League Rules at any time and to take such action as it shall deem appropriate. The Club who the appeal is made against will also be informed of the decision to do so by the Union once it has been agreed to hear the appeal.
- (ii) Any Club that wishes to appeal a decision of the Competitions Management Committee made pursuant to these National League Rules may do so to an appeal body appointed by the Board of Directors, which may include the appointment of a legally qualified independent Chair, provided that the Club's appeal is lodged in writing, with the Union's Competitions Manager no later than 48 hours of the Competitions Management Committee's decision being notified to it, accompanied by a fee of £100 which may or may not be returned. If the decision is given orally, the period of 48 hours shall run from the date of the oral decision but otherwise shall run from the date of receipt of the decision in writing by the Honorary Secretary of the Club. Please note that there is no obligation of the WRU or Competitions Management Committee to appoint a legally qualified independent Chair.
- (iii) In carrying out their functions pursuant to these National League Rules, the Competitions Management Committee and any appeal body appointed by the Board of Directors of the Union pursuant to Rule 8i(ii) shall have the power to regulate their own procedure in respect of the matters which fall to be considered by them.
- (iv) It should be borne in mind that the bodies dealing with any protest or dispute, to include an appeal body appointed by the Board of Directors, are not courts of law and are disciplinary, rather than arbitral, bodies. A member of the Competitions Management Committee will be entitled to attend any appeal to provide the rationale for the original decision taken. The representative of the Competitions Management Committee will not be a voting member at the appeal.

When cases of an urgent nature occur then the Chair of the Competitions Committee, in consultation with the Competition Secretary and Women & Girls' Lead, shall have absolute discretion to deal with these cases. Decisions made by the Chair and the League Secretary in such cases shall be binding.

Please be aware of the WRU Disciplinary Regulations to remind players, coaches and spectators of their conduct and behaviour for all matches. Please be aware that should the Disciplinary Regulations not be adhered to then Club's may be subject to sanctions such as points deductions.

i. Penalties

(i) The Competitions Management Committee may apply any appropriate sanction it deems fit to any Club without limitation, found to be in default, or failing to comply with these National League Rules.

(i) Where any Club has been found to have included an ineligible player (that is, a player who is not registered with a Club or granted a permit or a player whose name does not appear on the team sheet submitted by the Club in a National League match), the Competitions Management Committee shall have the power to penalise the offending Club further by the loss of additional League points and scores it may have accrued during the match and expunge the result from the League table.

Added to this, the Competitions Management Committee have the right to suspend the player for a period of two weeks in line with Competition Regulations and WRU Disciplinary Regulations respectively.

Before action is taken under Rules i(i) or (ii), the Club will be offered the benefits of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Union.

(iii) An official representative of both home and visiting teams will submit an electronic team sheet prior to the kick-off. Only those players named on this list will be eligible to play in the match. An official representative of each Club has the right to examine their opponent's team list before and immediately after the match. A Club wishing to make an objection will bring it to the notice of the Match Official who will record the same. The Club raising the objection will bring it to the notice of the Union's Competitions Manager no later than 48 hours after the end of the relevant match taking place, accompanied by a fee of £100 which may, or may not be returned.

j. Match Officials

Match Officials shall be appointed by the Union for all National League matches.

k. Kick Off

The kick-off time for National League matches shall be in accordance with the Union's Resolution 15, however, it is recommended that it is standardised at 2.30pm for Sunday matches in all Divisions. Clubs may agree a different kick-off time to that specified by the Union and shall request the Union's prior approval of the same which will usually be no later than seven days prior to the date of the relevant match. Where League fixtures are scheduled to be played on the day of an international rugby union match in which the Senior Women's Welsh National Team is participating, Clubs may agree a different kick-off time to that specified by the Union and shall request the Union's prior approval of the same which will usually be no later than seven days prior to the date of the relevant match.

In the event that a relevant fixture does not take place on the date and at the time allocated to it by the Union then the Club responsible for the default may be subject to such fines and other punishments as the Competitions Management Committee consider just and equitable having regard to all the circumstances of the case.

Such discretion shall include, but is not limited to, relegating the Club concerned to the lowest Division and promoting such other Club(s) as it deems appropriate in the circumstances.

The fact that a National League Fixture is a relevant fixture shall be deemed to be an aggravating factor

A Club which fails to complete a relevant fixture and is sanctioned by the Competitions Management Committee shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Competitions Management Committee to an appeal body appointed by the Board of Directors in accordance with Rule 8i (ii) below.

I. Competitions Management Committee of the WRU

The Competitions Management Committee has the absolute discretion to adapt any area contained within these regulations to ensure the integrity of the competition is maintained and the competition is concluded in a clear, fair, and equitable manner.

The Competitions Management Committee has the absolute discretion to suspend any sanction contained within these League rules should they deem it necessary and appropriate.