

Midlands Division Administrative Instructions / Rules for 2013-14

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. If an injury or extra time is likely to delay the result being reported on time, then a telephone call to notify Russell's before the deadline will help to prepare them for a late result, and probably keep your Club off the fines list.
- 1.3 Home clubs must not only comply with the rules and regulations, but must also, when telephoning in the result to Russells, give any bonus point won by either side scoring four or more tries 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 Official 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 (neither abbreviations nor nicknames should be used)**. The cards from both the Home and Away clubs, **already countersigned by the opposition official**, must be passed to the Referee **before the match**. The referee should sign the cards after recording the official match result (and on league cards the number of tries scored by each team), and after the game hand the appropriate card back to the club administrator of both the Home and Away teams for returning to the League Secretary.
- 2.2 A club not passing the Official Match Result Card to the referee before the match may have **5** Championship points deducted. The sanction for failure to follow the instruction on the Official Match Result Card will be a fine of £25.
- 2.3 (a) **For League Games it is recommended that fully completed, signed and checked Official Match Result 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. For RFU KO Competition Games the e-mailing of cards is to the Registrar's e-mail address.**
- (b) **If (a) is not done** then for League Games a club's Official 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 checked, completed fully in all respects and signed appropriately. Duly signed checked Official Match Result Cards will be considered free of any errors. **For RFU KO Competition Games the cards are sent back to the Registrar's PO Box address, which is printed on the reverse side of the card.**

Choose **either** method (a) or (b), **not both**.

- 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 Official Match Result Card as not having Effective Registration and with their date of birth. The sanction for not complying with this Regulation will be a deduction of 5 Championship points for a League offence (or disqualification from the RFU KO Junior Vase if the Regulation is broken in the Junior Vase Competition). RFU Regulation 13.4.1 will also apply in RFU Junior Vase matches up to and including the Midlands Final. This rule treats League and RFU Junior Vase matches as one and clubs will not be able to use this Regulation once for the League and once for the RFU Junior Vase. **RFU Regulation 13.4.1 does not apply in the RFU Junior Vase KO Competition National Semi Final & Final matches as these are under RFU jurisdiction.**
- 2.6 A club shall be deducted at least **20** Championship points on each occasion that false information has been provided on the Official Match Result Card. This will be in addition to any points which may be deducted if the players in the squad were ineligible to play. **5** Championship points will be deducted for each unregistered player a club has on its Official Match Result Card (Rule 2.5 excepted). In RFU KO Cup matches the sanction will be immediate disqualification from the current Competition and probable further sanction decided by the Organising Committee.
- 2.7 In the event of a game being deemed to be abandoned under Regulation 13.6.7 (a) or (b) and also when Regulation 13.5.11 comes into play (uncontested scrums), 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.
- 2.8 At any time, whether due to weather conditions or for any other reason, when an English Clubs Rugby Union Championship (ECRUC) League game or an RFU KO Cup Competition game finishes earlier than the stipulated full 80 minutes of play (or 100 minutes in the case of extra time) timed by the referee, then the game is deemed to be abandoned and RFU Game Regulation 13.6.7 applies.
- 2.9 RFU Game Regulation 13.6.8 (a) and (b), regarding Notification to the League Secretary, must be followed by the two clubs involved when 2.7 or 2.8 occurs.
- 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 Official Match Result 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 cards going missing in the post will mean that vital information on the card is not reaching the League Secretary. It is recommended that a copy of the card is made, before posting, to cover this situation. 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. Duly completed Official Match Result Cards **not arriving** for checking will result in a fine of £25 being imposed. A supplementary squad list (or copy of the card if one was made) will still need to be sent by e-mail, so that the checking process is not compromised. Offending clubs will be notified by the League Secretary of the 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 ECRUC League or RFU Cup game may be postponed without first having the consent of the League Secretary/Cup Administrator (or MDOC Officer if the League Secretary/Cup Administrator is uncontactable). **If a game is to be postponed then the League Secretary (or an MDOC Officer if the League Secretary/Cup Administrator is unavailable) must, as soon as possible, confirm this arrangement to Russell's Agency directly.** Once the League Secretary/Cup Administrator (or MDOC Officer) has agreed the postponement then the Home club **must** also make sure that Russell's Agency is informed of the postponement as a matter of normal reporting of results procedure.
- 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 weekend of December 28th 2013 will be deemed **not** to be "a next available weekend" unless, by mutual agreement, two clubs decide to utilise this weekend. **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/Cup Administrator (or MDOC Officer if the League Secretary/Cup Administrator is uncontactable) 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 will incur a fine of £25. The League Secretary/Cup Administrator will notify Russell's of the new date for the match at the same time as notifying Russell's of the postponement . 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, and if unsuccessful, a ruling will be made by the League Secretary/ Divisional Organising Committee.
- 4.6 A club whose home ground is deemed unfit to play on should arrange for an inspection of the pitch by their ground staff, together with a local member of the Home side's Referees Society. It would help matters if the Home club also invited a representative of the visiting club to attend the inspection (where the journey is not prohibitive) in order to keep matters transparent. The consent of the League Secretary/Cup Administrator/Divisional Organising Committee must then be obtained if the decision is to postpone.
- 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 MDOC Officer if the League Secretary is unavailable) must, as soon as possible, confirm this arrangement to Russell's Agency directly.** Once the League Secretary (or MDOC Officer) has agreed the arrangement then the Home club **must** also make sure that Russell's Agency is informed of the arrangement as a matter of normal reporting of results procedure.

- 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 MDOC with disciplinary action taken / a possibility of being relegated by one or more leagues / 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 8/7 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 MDOC 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 2013-2014 the December 28th 2013 weekend only 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. **This must be done within 28 days of the player signing the Registration Form.** Clubs **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. **Registration Forms must reach the Registrar so that the process can be completed within 28 days of the player signing the Registration Form.** Faxed registration will not be accepted. Special arrangements apply to Expedited Registrations (see RFU Registration Process under Regulation 14.5.8).
- 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 (or the MDOC Secretary in his/her absence) must do so to the Chairman of the Midlands Division Organising Committee in the first instance, and if still not satisfied with the appeal decision, to the RFU in the second. Any appeal must be signed by the Club Secretary (or an authorised deputy) and one other Officer of the Club. It must be in writing and on Club headed notepaper and should be sent as an e-mail attachment or/and posted as a hard copy via the Royal Mail. An appeal by one person from a club will not be considered. The appeal should state the grounds on which the appeal is made.
- 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 not happy with having their appeal dealt with in their absence must request a personal hearing. If, however, they lose the personal appeal, they may be liable for the expenses incurred in holding that appeal, 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) should be provided. Regulations 13.7.6 to 13.7.8 should be adhered to. However, where a club Committee at Level 5 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 MDOC. The number of replacements allowed in the KO Cup Competition games, whilst the MDOC administers the proceedings, will be **three (3)**, as in league matches at the same level. (In the **Junior Vase only** teams will be able to select '**up to five (5) replacements**', as they are permitted to do in the leagues) In the **Midlands Finals** however, **seven (7) replacements will be allowed.**
- 8.2 The MDOC 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 Competitions at Twickenham.
- 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/Rule 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 MDOC, arrangements may be different. Duly completed Official Match Result Cards **not arriving** (electronically or via Royal Mail) for checking, may result in the club being disqualified from the Competition.
- 8.5 The use of unregistered players will be as allowed in Instruction/Rule 2.5
RFU Regulation 13.4.1 does not apply in the RFU Junior Vase KO Competition National Semi Final & Final matches as these are under RFU jurisdiction.

8.6 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 **2:15** pm. Earlier kick off times may be arranged if mutually agreed by the clubs involved. Earlier kick off times may be necessary in the event that extra time needs to be played, when the result after 80 minutes is a drawn game. Clubs with suitable floodlights may kick off at **3:00** pm by mutual agreement.

9. Kick-off Times for League Matches

9.1 Normal kick-off times for RFU League and RFU KO Cup matches will be **2:15** pm. in November, December, January and February, and **3:00** pm. at all other times (either kick off time may be earlier by mutual agreement). Kick-off times may be at 3:00 pm throughout the season for a Home club that has suitable floodlights, but the League Secretary, Russell's News & Sports Agency and the match referee must be informed.

10. Applications to join the RFU Leagues (English Clubs Rugby Union Championship)

10.1 An application from a club wishing to join the RFU Leagues (ECRUC) should be on Club headed paper, signed by two officers of the Club and should be accompanied by a letter from the Club's Constituent Body supporting their application. The application should be forwarded to the MDOC Secretary before April 1st of the season preceding the one when the Club wishes to join the leagues.

10.2 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, and 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. Applications to join the Midlands Division RFU Leagues from another Division

11.1 An application from a club already in the RFU leagues that wishes to transfer into the Midlands Division at the same level as it holds in another Division must be made in good time. The procedure that the Organising Committee has to implement in order to facilitate this request is a rather lengthy one involving having to contact all the clubs in the leagues that will be affected, including the ones below. All clubs will need to be given at least 12 months notice of impending inclusion and of the resulting knock on effect.

11.2 The application should be made as in 10.1 above, with a deadline date being 12 months earlier than the one as in 10.1

11.3 Clubs joining at the bottom level are more easily accommodated and will be able to follow the procedure outlined in 10.1 and 10.2 above.

12. Warning of possible sanctions

12.1 The MDOC 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 MDOC 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.

12.2 RFU Regulation 13.10.11 Sanctions, and RFU Sanctions Guidelines give a more comprehensive list of the sanctions available to the MDOC 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.

13. End of season “dead rubbers”

- 13.1 Unplayed and rearranged league matches in the month of April must be honoured.
- 13.2 The League Secretary has the ultimate responsibility and discretion to decide which game, if any, may be considered a “dead rubber” in the month of May. It is **NOT** for the clubs involved to decide between themselves without involving the League Secretary in the decision making.
- 13.3 Unplayed and rearranged league matches in the month of May, which do not have a bearing on promotion or relegation issues within that league will be those matches identified as “dead rubbers”. Only these matches need not be played, unless both sides mutually agree that they wish to play the outstanding game(s).

14. “Rolling” Substitutions (Replacements) at Levels 5 and below

- 14.1 Rolling Substitutions are governed by RFU Regulations 13.5.15 to 13.5.24.
- 14.2 Clubs are reminded of their responsibility to help manage such replacements within the Regulations.
- 14.3 At Level 5 to 8, up to a maximum of 3 players may be named as replacements and players will be allowed to “roll on and roll off” to the maximum of interchanges allowed by RFU Regulation.
- 14.4 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” to the maximum of interchanges allowed by RFU Regulation. This will mean teams will be able to maintain 15 players a side on the field of play at all times (unless a red or yellow card has been issued), other than when the game has moved to uncontested scrums when the side causing the uncontested scrums plays with 1 player fewer.
- 14.5 At Level 9 and below there is no compulsion to have 5 replacements and sides do not have to have equal numbers of replacements.
- 14.6 Replacements will be made, with the referee’s permission, at stoppages of play, with players entering the field of play from the halfway line.
- 14.7 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.
- 14.8 Rule 14.4 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.