

# BUCS RUGBY LEAGUE REGULATIONS

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**RUL i** The BUCS Rugby League Championships shall be conducted in accordance with the following BUCS sport specific regulations, the BUCS general regulations, and the RFL Laws of the Game.

**RUL ii** In the event that these regulations contradict the BUCS general regulations, these BUCS sport specific regulations will supersede, unless specifically stated otherwise.

**RUL iii** In the event that these regulations contradict the RFL Laws of the Game, these BUCS sport specific regulations will supersede, unless specifically stated otherwise.

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**RUL 1** There shall be a Team Championships for Men. The programme shall include leagues and knockout competitions as per BUCS general regulations, Appendix 1 ('BUCS Competition Offer and Associated BUCS Points') and Appendix 10 ('BUCS Promotion, Relegation and Knockout Information').

**RUL 1.1** BUCS and the RFL reserve the right to decide on the final structures of the Premier Tier leagues and associated playoff format/fixtures based on the geographical location and suitability of those teams eligible to compete at that level.

**RUL 1.2** All BUCS leagues sit within Tier 5 of the RFL competition structure.

**RUL 2** Each institution/Playing Entity participating in BUCS Rugby League agrees to observe the Community Game Operational Rules which includes the RFL's Anti-Doping Rules, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Rules, Safeguarding Policy, Diversity and Anti-Racism Policies, Respect Policy and any other rules and policies that may from time to time be adopted by the RFL through the RFL Board and shall ensure that each of their members, employees, officials, volunteers, spectators and similar shall observe such rules and policies and shall make it a condition of employment or engagement or of participation in any rugby league competition that each such members, employees, officials, volunteers, spectators or similar shall observe such rules and policies.

## **RUL 3 Membership, affiliations, player registrations and personnel**

**RUL 3.1** All institutions/Playing Entities must be an associated member of the RFL. Any institution/Playing Entity which applies for membership to participate in the BUCS Rugby League Championships must follow the BUCS New Member Institution Guidelines. The RFL reserve the right upon written request to review an application submitted for special case participation.

**RUL 3.2** All teams must affiliate to the RFL as per the requirements of the BUCS Sport Specific Affiliations Document by the deadline stated in the BUCS Sport Specific Document. Failure to do so will lead to sanctions as outlined in the BUCS Sport Specific Affiliations Document and possibly further disciplinary action.

**RUL 3.3** All players must be registered with the RFL prior to playing in any BUCS Rugby League fixture, as per the requirements of the BUCS Sport Specific Affiliations Document. Failure to do so will lead to sanctions as outlined in the BUCS Sport Specific Affiliations Document and possibly further disciplinary action.

**RUL 3.4** At the start of each season teams must register the following personnel with the RFL Competition Officer ([competitions@rfl.uk.com](mailto:competitions@rfl.uk.com)):

**RUL 3.4.1** Essential:

- Central point of contact
- Main University (staff) contact
- Designated Match Day contact
- Committee Details
- Head Coach (RFL UKCC Level 2 or the Teaching Equivalent)

**RUL 3.4.2** Recommended:

- Assistant Coach (RFL UKCC Level 2 or the Teaching Equivalent)
- Accredited first aider
- RFL Accredited Touchline Manager

**RUL 4** Fixture administration

**RUL 4.1** All matches shall, unless there is mutual agreement between competing teams to the contrary, be organised and staged on Wednesday afternoons with a kick-off time scheduled for 14.00.

**RUL 4.2** Any amendments to the originally scheduled fixtures must be reported immediately to the RFL Competition Officer by the home team. Fixture amendments must be agreed in accordance with BUCS general regulations.

**RUL 4.3** Any team desiring to arrange a friendly must seek permission from the RFL Competition Officer. No friendly fixtures shall be arranged on a league fixture date without prior approval of the RFL Competition Officer.

**RUL 5** Match officials should be appointed as per Appendix 5 ('BUCS Match Officials Requirements').

**RUL 5.1** The RFL (Rugby Football League) endeavours to appoint referees to as many BUCS Rugby League fixtures as possible. The minimum appointment is outlined in Appendix 5 ('BUCS Match Officials Requirements').

**RUL 5.2** In the event that the RFL cannot provide a referee for a fixture, and teams have been notified of this at least 48 hours (outside of weekends and bank holidays) before the fixture start time, then it is the responsibility of the home team to source a suitable alternative referee. This referee must hold the relevant qualifications required in Appendix 5. Teams are recommended to contact their local Referees Society to help. For a list of the Referees Society contact details, please see [here](#). If the home team are unable to source an appropriate referee and no alternative agreement is made with the away team, then the fixture shall be considered as postponed and should be rearranged in accordance with REG 14.

**RUL 5.3** It is the responsibility of the home team to confirm details of the fixture (including kit colours) with the appointed referee no later than 48 hours prior to the scheduled kick-off time. In the event of the referee not receiving communication before the stated deadline, the designated referee will not be required to fulfil the fixture. If the home team are unable to find a suitable alternative referee by following the process outlined in RUL 5.2, then it shall be deemed that they have forfeited the game rather than the match being postponed.

**RUL 5.4** Unqualified Touch Judges are only to indicate touch/touch in goal, and kicks at goal from penalties/conversion attempts. Unqualified Touch Judges cannot indicate knock-ons and

forward passes; have no jurisdiction over foul play; cannot enter the field of play, other than to judge goal kicks; are at all times subject to the authority of the referee who may overrule and may also dispense with their services if they consider they are acting in a partisan manner.

**RUL 5.5** If a club provides a qualified Touch Judge, bearing accreditation, that Touch Judge has full Touch Judge powers and responsibility, i.e. they will be used as a qualified official. This applies even if there is only one qualified Touch Judge present.

## **RUL 6 Match Day operations**

**RUL 6.1** Each team is responsible for the behaviour of its players, committee and spectators.

**RUL 6.2** Each team should appoint a Game Day Manager whose responsibility lies in the control and monitoring of spectators for the smooth running of the day and to ensure that Match Officials are escorted to and from their dressing rooms.

### **RUL 6.3 Medical requirements**

**RUL 6.3.1** As a minimum, the host institution/Playing Entity for each match must ensure that there are ample first aiders within close enough proximity of the pitch to provide immediate emergency care as and when required. Any host venue must demonstrate on request a risk assessment and plan in the event that each first aider at the venue is providing care (e.g. stopping matches from progressing until resource is available). It is recommended that a dedicated qualified first aider is pitchside for each match, but this cannot be a player named on the fixture team sheet.

**RUL 6.3.1.1** Any team found to be in breach of this regulation will be subject to the following sanctions:

- 1st offence: £100 fine
- 2nd offence: £400 fine
- 3rd offence: Suspended from participating in fixtures until proof of compliance can be provided by way of an updated risk assessment

**RUL 6.3.2 Head injuries and concussion** Sub-section 6 of the First Aid Standards (Section F6) of the RFL's Tiers 4-6 (Community Game) Operational Rules should be referred to for managing any head injuries or concussion.

**RUL 6.3.3** As well as being recorded on the RFL Team Sheet (RUL 9), any serious injury (including suspected concussion) is to be reported by teams to the RFL via their Serious Injury and Concussion Reporting Form within 24 hours of the completion of the match in which it occurred.

**RUL 7 Match balls** In compliance with the RFL Laws of the Game, size 5 balls must be used in all matches and shall be submitted to and approved by the Match Official before the commencement of the match.

**RUL 8 Duration of play** All matches shall consist of two periods of 40 minutes and a half-time interval of 10 minutes. Teams shall change ends at half-time.

**RUL 8.1 Ties in knockout competition matches** The "Golden Point" ruling will come into play, and so the first team to score points of any kind will be declared the winners. Teams are to toss a coin at the start of the "Golden Point" extra time period to determine who kicks-off and who receives.

## **RUL 9 RFL Team Sheets**

**RUL 9.1** In addition to teams completing BUCS Team Sheets (as per REG 11.2), teams and referees are also responsible for completing RFL Team Sheets for each fixture.

**RUL 9.2** The first named (home) team shall be responsible for supplying a hard copy of the RFL Team Sheet for completion.

**RUL 9.3** Prior to the match commencing, the full names (first name and last name, no initials) of all players shall be recorded and the RFL Team Sheet shall be signed by a recognised official from each team and the referee.

**RUL 9.4** Immediately following the match, the referee and recognised team officials shall complete the rest of the RFL Team Sheet.

**RUL 9.5** The referee shall be responsible for sending the completed RFL Team Sheet to the RFL Competition Officer within 24 hours of the completion of the match.

## **RUL 10 Team**

**RUL 10.1** Each team shall have no more than 13 players on the field at any one time.

**RUL 10.2** The minimum number of players on the field a team shall be permitted to start a match with shall be nine. After a match has started, should a team have less than nine players currently participating in the match then, for safety reasons, the match shall be terminated. Current participants are players on the field and players who have been temporarily suspended (sin bin). Dismissed players are not deemed as current participants.

**RUL 10.3** A team may only nominate replacements if they will have 13 players starting on the field. A team with only 9-13 players shall not be permitted to nominate any replacements and all of their players must start on the field. Limits on the number of replacements that can be named are as follows:

**RUL 10.3.1 Premier Tier league matches and National Championship knockout competition matches** Each team may nominate up to a maximum of four replacements before the start of the match.

**RUL 10.3.2 Tier 1 and below league matches and National Trophy/Conference Cup knockout competition matches** Each team may nominate up to a maximum of four replacements before the start of the match. However, a team may nominate more replacements, up to a maximum of seven, if agreed with their opposition at least 24 hours in advance of the fixture start time. If there is no agreement, then they shall be limited to four replacements.

**RUL 10.4** All substitutions are rolling, with an unlimited number of interchanges.

**RUL 10.5** Each team is required to list all starting players and replacements (substitutes) on their BUCS Team Sheet (REG 10.2) and on the RFL Team Sheet (RUL 9) for the match.

**RUL 10.6 Player matching** The following applies to Tier 2 and below league matches and Conference Cup knockout competition matches only:

**RUL 10.6.1** If a team informs their opposition via email, at least 24 hours in advance of the advertised kick-off time, that they will be fielding less than 13 players (but at least a minimum of nine in accordance with RUL 10.2) then their opposition shall be obliged to only field the same number of starting players, however they may still bring replacements as per RUL 10.3.2. The RFL Competitions Officer ([competitions@rfl.uk.com](mailto:competitions@rfl.uk.com)) and BUCS ([discipline@bucs.org.uk](mailto:discipline@bucs.org.uk)) should also be copied in

to any such communications. Both teams must also inform the referee before the start of the match of the player matching arrangements.

**RUL 10.6.2** Where at least 24 hours notice in advance of the advertised kick-off time is not given, if a team is fielding less than 13 players (but at least a minimum of nine in accordance with RUL 10.2), then their opposition is not obliged to only field the same number of starting players, but they may still agree to do so. In this circumstance, the opposition team may name those players who will no longer be starting as additional replacements to the maximum stated in RUL 10.3.2. Both teams must also inform the referee before the start of the match of the player matching arrangements.

### **RUL 10.7 Supported Teams**

**RUL 10.7.1** Where an institution/Playing Entity has a second team and/or any lower ranked team(s) within the lowest tier in their Conference, then they can apply for their lowest ranked team to be recognised as a Supported Team.

**RUL 10.7.2** An application for a Supported Team for the 2023-24 season must be submitted by email to [fixtures@bucs.org.uk](mailto:fixtures@bucs.org.uk) by Monday 16 October 2023.

**RUL 10.7.3** A Supported Team will be permitted to field up to five players per match who have established normality for a higher ranked team (Note REG 11.1.3).

**RUL 10.7.4** A Supported Team will not be eligible for promotion under any circumstances. Should a supported team occupy a promotion spot at the end of the season, the opportunity for promotion will be offered to the highest finishing team that is not a Supported Team. For the avoidance of doubt, once a team has been confirmed and recognised as supported team, in the instance that team does not field any players who have established normality for a higher ranked team throughout the season, this regulation will still apply.

**RUL 10.7.5** A Supported Team will not be permitted to compete in any knockout competition.

### **RUL 11 Reporting results to the RFL**

**RUL 11.1** The home team, in consultation with the Match Official and designated officer from the opposition, must agree the result immediately on completion of the game and report it to the RFL Competitions Officer no later than 10:00 on the first working day following the fixture.

**RUL 11.2** All postponements must be notified to the RFL Competitions Officer.

### **RUL 12 Discipline, suspensions and fines**

**RUL 12.1** In addition to the BUCS disciplinary regulations and processes the RFL is responsible for all on-field disciplinary issues and reserves the right to enforce sanctions in line with the RFL Sanctioning Guidelines.

#### **RUL 12.2 Disciplinary process**

**RUL 12.2.1** An RFL disciplinary panel is in place to deal with all discipline matters arising. The disciplinary panel shall have the full power to expel, suspend and/or fine any team, player, official or other person found guilty of misconduct and/or breach of the rules and to order them to meet any costs incurred.

**RUL 12.2.2** A written report of a Match Official on the misconduct of any team, player or official must be sent via email to the RFL Competitions Officer with a copy to the offending team for receipt inside three days from the conclusion of the game – intervening Bank Holidays excluded.

**RUL 12.2.3** Reports of brawling, defined as three or more players involved, should via email be sent by the Match Official, for receipt within three days of a match's conclusion, to the RFL Competitions Officer. Separate copies of the report must be lodged by the Match Official with the teams concerned.

**RUL 12.2.4** Any team which does not receive from the Match Official within three days a report outlining a dismissal or brawl having occurred should contact the RFL Competitions Officer immediately. The failure of a team to receive a written report will not prevent action being dealt by the relevant discipline committee.

**RUL 12.2.5** A reported team, player, official or any other person may, in their own defence submit written mitigation relating to any disciplinary matter arising, providing that they notify the RFL Competitions Officer within 7 days of receiving any such reports.

**RUL 12.2.6** Video evidence shall be an accepted method through which to defend the alleged actions that have been reported to the committee by a Match Official. Video evidence must be submitted within 10 days of the match. These must be unedited and show the game from start to finish.

**RUL 12.2.7** Team secretaries or their deputies, pursuant to the hearing having not received a verdict after five days, should contact the RFL Competitions Officer regarding the result.

**RUL 12.2.8** Should a case of alleged assault by a player, team official or spectator be lodged it will be reported to the RFL Competitions Officer by a Match Official. The Match Official will then be instructed to be available to the disciplinary committee, for the purposes of interview, due notice of which shall be given in writing. A Match Official shall in such circumstances be entitled to claim reasonable travel expenses.

**RUL 12.2.9** A player's suspension shall begin on the first Wednesday following communication of the decision by the discipline panel unless it is a six match ban in which case the suspension becomes operational with immediate effect.

**RUL 12.2.10** All RFL organised competition games, provided that they were arranged prior to the player's offence may be counted towards their list of suspended games. For players that play club rugby for their community club, any suspension will carry over into that environment.

**RUL 12.2.11** A suspended player is not permitted to play in any other game of rugby league until their suspension is served. Any player or team violating this rule will be fined not less than £100 and the offending player may also incur an additional suspension. In the event of a game having been won by a team fielding a player under suspension then the competition points gained shall be forfeited automatically. BUCS/the RFL, should it deem appropriate, reserve the right to apply other sanctions which may include a team's suspension or expulsion from the competition.

**RUL 12.2.12** If a player has been deemed ineligible to play in any RFL competitions by the National Governing Body, this would include BUCS competitions.

**RUL 12.2.13** All fines, payable to the RFL must be settled within 28 days and must be forwarded to the RFL Competitions Officer. Failure to meet this obligation shall result in the fine being doubled automatically. If a further seven days elapse without receipt of payment then the team's fixtures will be suspended.

### **RUL 12.3 Appeals**

**RUL 12.3.1** All appeals against disciplinary sanctions imposed by an RFL disciplinary panel under RUL 12.2 are to be dealt with by an independent RFL appointed panel.

**RUL 12.3.2** Teams who have the right to appeal may do so within 14 days of a decision being made. A £40 fee, payable to the "RFL", should be submitted together with an accompanying letter outlining the reason why the appeal is sought. This must be forwarded to the RFL Competitions Officer.

**RUL 12.3.3** An appeal by a team may be based solely on the following grounds: a) the finding of guilt, or b) the severity of sentence imposed.

**RUL 12.3.4** No member of the disciplinary panel actively involved in a decision taken at the initial hearing other than the RFL Competitions Officer, who has no voting rights, shall be permitted to adjudicate on matters which will be the subject of appeal.

**RUL 12.3.5** Adjudication by the Appeals Panel precludes the right of individual players or their teams towards seeking a further representation.